

# THE AESTHETICS OF MUSIC AND MYTH: JOYCE, MANN, NIETZSCHE

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This essay expounds the intrinsic relationship between music and myth, first given explicit license in Nietzsche's ›The Birth of Tragedy‹, and explores how it occurs in Joyce's ›Ulysses‹ and Mann's ›Doctor Faustus‹. It juxtaposes Nietzsche's "Apollo/Dionysus dichotomy" and his conception of "Dionysian music" with Joyce and Mann's literary depictions of music and myth, thereby elucidating the major themes, characters and narrative of both novels and shedding light on the music-myth configuration.

Dieser Beitrag untersucht am ›Ulysses‹ von Joyce und Manns ›Dr. Faustus‹ eine innere Beziehung zwischen Musik und Mythos, wie sie erstmals Nietzsches ›Geburt der Tragödie‹ thematisiert. Die Dichotomie von Apollinischem und Dionysischem, die Nietzsche für sein Konzept einer „dionysischen Musik“ gebraucht, wird dabei dem Bild gegenübergestellt, das Joyce und Mann für Musik und Mythos entwickeln. Diese Konfiguration wirft dabei jeweils ein Licht auf die wichtigsten Themen, Charaktere und Erzählweisen der beiden Romane.

## *1. Forging the Connection: Music and Myth from Nietzsche to the Modern Novel*

Music and myth have perpetually functioned as sources of inspiration for artists, philosophers and writers over the centuries. Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) was amongst the first to communicate the significance of the relationship between the two in his first major published work ›The Birth of Tragedy‹ (1872). Nietzsche's preoccupation with music and his conception of the "Dionysian", remain a central focus throughout his oeuvre, in his philosophical writings (for which he is most famous), but also in his poetry (particularly the ›Dithyrambs of Dionysus‹, 1888) and, naturally, evidenced by his musical compositions.<sup>1)</sup> Nietzsche considered himself,<sup>2)</sup> and is remembered, as one of the great stylists in the German language, and in his writing the poetic, musical and philosoph-

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<sup>1)</sup> For examples listen to: Friedrich Nietzsche, ›Compositions of his Youth‹ (1857–63) released in 1995 and ›Compositions of His Mature Years‹ (1864–82) released in 1996, Albany Records (Albany, NY).

<sup>2)</sup> See "Why I Write Such Good Books" in: FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE, *Ecce Homo: How To Become What You Are*, trans. by DUNCAN LARGE, Oxford 2007, pp. 36–88.

ical often converge. For the generation of writers who came after Nietzsche, who were interested in breaking down disciplinary and artistic boundaries, his presence was unavoidable. This essay seeks to expound the music and myth connection in relation to Nietzsche's early aesthetic thought, in particular his conception of the Apollo/Dionysus dichotomy and Dionysian music, which has remained surprisingly underexplored in relation to the modern novel. For Nietzsche, in 'The Birth of Tragedy', the Apollonian and Dionysian are symbolic of artistic impulses which, when combined, result in the pinnacle of tragic art, last observed in pre-Socratic Greek tragedy. The Apollonian is representative of the rational, the image, it appeals to logic and is best represented in the plastic arts. The Dionysian by contrast represents the irrational, intoxication, it appeals to emotions and instincts and is best represented in music. Nietzsche attributes the annihilation of Greek tragedy to Socrates, and his disciple, Euripides, who elevated the Apollonian (to a new form 'Socratic') at the cost of repressing the Dionysian in tragic art. This interrelationship, as will be evidenced, is palpable in two of the twentieth century's great novels: James Joyce's 'Ulysses' (1922) and Thomas Mann's 'Doctor Faustus' (1947).<sup>3)</sup>

There are myriad factors that led to the resurgence of music and myth as subjects in the modern novel. Following on from the rise of the novel in nineteenth century Europe, the early to mid-twentieth century saw an unprecedented shift in the novel's role as an artistic medium. The novelists of this period of literary modernity sought to renounce, modify and in some instances abandon altogether the rules and conventions of the traditional novel in a bid to inject new life into what they considered to be a stagnant artform and thus make it a suitable vehicle through which to tell the story of their turbulent epoch. As such, the novel became one of the most successful art forms in which to explicate the cultural crisis of the first half of the twentieth century. Artistic introspection, the quest to understand the "creative impulse" and artistic creation *per se*, along with the hyper-aesthetic representation of life in all its grandeur and minutiae, became entwined in the modern novel. This experimentation led to a number of philosophical questions: *what is art?* *What is the role of the artist?*

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<sup>3)</sup> Alongside these two novels (and others by Joyce and Mann), there are numerous works of literary prose in the first half of the twentieth century which depict music and can be read successfully in terms of Nietzsche's dichotomy, for instance: D'ANNUNZIO'S 'The Flame' (Il fuoco, 1900), E. M. FORSTER'S 'Howard's End' (1910), ROMAIN ROLLAND'S 'Jean-Christophe' (1904–1912), PROUST'S 'In Search of Lost Time' (À la recherche du temps perdu, 1913–1927) and HERMANN HESSE'S 'Steppenwolf' (1927). All these texts allude to the conflict between the sober act of artistic creation and the intoxicating effects music, fictional or otherwise. Though less explicit in terms of the Apollo/Dionysus dichotomy, one could add to this list works of fiction by D. H. LAWRENCE, VIRGINIA WOOLF, DOROTHY RICHARDSON and many others.

*Where does the “creative impulse” come from? What is artistic creation? How do the arts interact?* Indeed, it led to a more fundamental questioning of “man’s position and function in the universe.”<sup>4)</sup> It is therefore unsurprising that so many artists of the period sought to represent alternative artistic media in their own, leading to a deeper exploration of the role and nature of art and culture in a manifestly tumultuous period of world history. This re-evaluation ultimately led to an interplay of artistic media which is still being cultivated today.

Joyce’s ›Ulysses‹ and Mann’s ›Doctor Faustus‹ span the first half of the twentieth century, a politically tempestuous though artistically rich period, in which the novel underwent this radical transformation. The long novel offered a unique platform in which authors could attempt to re-create an emotional and performative condition of music in prose (as opposed to rendering music in its more closely related medium, poetry), as well as providing a medium in which to explicate technical and philosophical ideas about music. The prominence of music as a subject, and indeed of fictional composers, in late nineteenth and early twentieth century literature evidences this development of an interplay of the arts. In much the same way as the Romantic composers looked to myth, to classical literature and beyond, for stories to set to music, modern novelists looked to music, and philosophies of music, to achieve something like the emotional resonance and artistic unity of which that particular artform is distinctly capable. However, the relationship between music and literature is by no means one-sided: as Peter Dayan emphatically declares: “without literature’s demonstration of the import of that which escapes and cannot be seen, thought, analysed, or represented, we would have no means to maintain that music, as such and in general, could exist”,<sup>5)</sup> denoting the close and symbiotic relationship between the two art forms.

The relationship between music and literature is, however, often nebulous. Joyce and Mann, among numerous other modern authors, were drawn to the ineffability of music, however this preoccupation has led, as Emilie Carpoulet noted, to a muddying of the term “musicality” in literary criticism. Carpoulet questions “If musicality denotes the inherent musical qualities of music, then what do we make of a musical novel whose musicality cannot be understood apart from its non-musical context, since a musical novel is not an association of two distinct media but a fusion of the two?”<sup>6)</sup> Carpoulet’s solution is to see

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<sup>4)</sup> JOHN A. CUDDON rev. by CLAIRE E. PRESTON, *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, London 1979, p. 516.

<sup>5)</sup> PETER DAYAN, *Music Writing Literature: From Sand via Debussy to Derrida*, Surrey 2006, p. 95.

<sup>6)</sup> EMILIE CARPOULET, *Voicing the Music in Literature*, in: *European Journal of English Studies*, 13:1 (2009), pp. 79–91, p. 86.

“musicality” as “a travelling concept which belongs neither to music nor to literature” and that we should “consider [...] music in terms of a living, fluid and unbounded musicality, that we may legitimately study the implications of a musical conception of art.”<sup>7)</sup> Following from Carpoulet’s evocation of Mieke Bal’s ›Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide‹ (2002), in which Bal (and subsequently Carpoulet) argues that the issue at stake is not whether the concept of musicality “is used rightly or wrongly but whether it is used relevantly”<sup>8)</sup> and “whether it may help us to better understand, express and communicate our thoughts rather than merely stirring up the already muddled terminological waters of interdisciplinary scholarship.”<sup>9)</sup> This essay seeks to explore a notion of musicality in ›Ulysses‹ and ›Doctor Faustus‹ in order to elucidate some of the most challenging prose fiction ever written. The two novels exist on a distinct musical spectrum: Joyce presents the reader with radical musical poetics in language, most famously in fugal form in his “Sirens” episode; and Mann offers a meditative, technical and evocative explication of music in a faux biography of an anti-heroic, modern fictional composer. The innovative approach of this essay, however, is to explore the unique musicality of each novel via the intrinsic connection that exists between music and myth.

In an atmosphere of crisis modern writers felt a profound disillusionment with a cumulative and therefore positive teleological view of history and, like countless artists and thinkers before them, they felt the pull of myth. As J. B. Foster points out: “myth is [...] a direct response to the mood of modernity, since it is capable of providing a long-term continuity to replace the one that was lost, of giving a better perspective from which to assess the significance of the loss, or of creating a sense for new cultural possibilities.”<sup>10)</sup> Nietzsche had captured the spirit of the interplay between music and myth in ›The Birth of Tragedy‹, a book which, though he would later scathingly critique in his “At-

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<sup>7)</sup> Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>8)</sup> MIEKE BAL, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide*, Toronto 2002, p. 32. Cit. in CARPOULET, *Voicing* (cit. fn 6), p. 89.

<sup>9)</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>10)</sup> JOHN B. FOSTER, *Heirs to Dionysus: A Nietzschean Current in Literary Modernism*, New Jersey 1981, p. 418. This incredibly useful study denotes the significance of Nietzsche’s early aesthetic thought, including the relevance of the Apollo/Dionysus dichotomy, to literary modernism. Foster’s primary literary examples are D. H. Lawrence, André Gide, André Malraux, and Thomas Mann. While this study does point toward the often overlooked significance of ›The Birth of Tragedy‹ to literary modernism, it does not address what the present essay seeks to analyse: the intrinsic relationship between music and myth in modern literature. Foster does explore the relevance of ›The Birth of Tragedy‹ to Mann’s ›Doctor Faustus‹ but he only makes cursory reference to Joyce. Moreover, Foster’s study is not much concerned with music, its relation to myth, or indeed the relationship between music and literature, all of which are of central concern to this essay.

tempt at a Self-Criticism" (1886), had great appeal for writers attempting to grapple with the relationship between intellect and life, instinct and rationality. Nietzsche's compelling cultural analysis, which anticipated the mood of modernity and encapsulated its crisis, was expressed in a highly literary prose style, which understandably appealed to the authors that followed him. There are myriad fruitful points of connection between Nietzsche and the modern novelists of the early to mid-twentieth century, however, rather than attempt a further study of influence (of which there are now a plethora), the aim here will be to expound the relationship between music and myth that Nietzsche gave license to in his first major work. Nietzsche's aesthetic mythology, in relation to the "spirit of music", is the basis, he argues, of all art. Of the few notable literary scholars who have worked on myth and modernism, Michael Bell in ›Literature, Modernism and Myth‹ (1997) has come closest to uncovering the significance of the relationship between music and myth, and its relevance to modernist writing. This occurs in his discussion of the "Sirens" episode of ›Ulysses‹. Bell rightly observes that "music has been a vital metaphor and structural device for modernist writers seeking a transcendence of time."<sup>11)</sup> In addition, he states that Bloom's mathematic musings about music (which, in keeping with the Homeric myth, ultimately free him from its intoxicating effects and allow him to journey on) can "direct us towards the corresponding aspect of the narrative technique: what is perceived as an emotional or spiritual experience in time is in fact a structure of mathematical, spatialised relations."<sup>12)</sup> The link to myth becomes palpable when Bell implicitly moves from Bloom's response to the music in "Sirens" to his broader role as Odysseus and the Homeric myth in general:

The timeless order apparently enshrined in myth is the product of a secular aesthetic structure, as when Nietzsche spoke of putting 'the stamp of the eternal' on experience. The aesthetic is the condition by which modern sensibility creates an *equivalent* of the mythic. The story of Odysseus, in so far as it is a cultural myth, suggests a timeless structure of experience given to the writer, but Joyce's spatialising holds the archaic structure in *counterpoint* to its modern re-enactment. As the modern *construction* of a world unfolds the older sense of a *given* form, neither has its complete meaning by itself. Mann's sense of the mythic [...] as being at once a primitive condition from which it is necessary to escape and the most sophisticated condition to which one should strive, is embodied in this self-conscious reconstruction of the already given.<sup>13)</sup>

<sup>11)</sup> MICHAEL BELL, *Modernism and Myth: Belief and Responsibility in the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge 1997, p. 76.

<sup>12)</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>13)</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 77–78.

In linking the timelessness of music and myth (and the attraction of modern writers to such timeless qualities), as well as invoking Nietzsche's aesthetics and Mann's view of myth, Bell is implicitly denoting the striking significance of the relationship between the two, a connection that this essay makes explicit. Bell also continually stresses the importance of Nietzsche and Mann to modernist conceptions of myth: Mann, he claims, owing to his "self-consciousness about the mythic makes him an excellent lens through which to consider both modernism and the period of its break-up."<sup>14</sup>) Indeed Bell's study takes as its broadest line of enquiry the notion that modernist writers, in their self-conscious mythopoeia (to use Bell's preferred term), recognise a world view as such (i.e. as a world view) while "living it as conviction, [...] a paradox formulated by Thomas Mann: 'although in the life of the human race the mythic is indeed an early and primitive stage, in the life of the individual it is a late and mature one.'<sup>15</sup>) Bell continually returns to Mann's phrase in his theorisation of myth and discussion of literary modernism. However, Bell's study, besides this transitory foray into the musical dimension of the "Sirens" episode of ›Ulysses‹, is not overtly concerned with music and therefore his brief discussion of Nietzsche's ›The Birth of Tragedy‹<sup>16</sup>) does not rely heavily on the Apollo/Dionysus dichotomy, nor does it contain any substantial evaluation of Dionysian music, the central bases for this work. Musicologists have long been fascinated with composers who set myth to music,<sup>17</sup>) as myth often functions as an emblem of a kind of literature which transcends conventional historical subject matter and compliments the idea of "universality". For modern novelists, too, music performed this function; music's ineffability paradoxically provides a similarly holistic, universal expression to myth. The intersection of music and myth therefore poses a unique challenge for those writers, such as Joyce and Mann, who attempt to grapple with it.

It is the assertion of this essay that by considering this intersection of literary uses of music and myth, first given explicit license in Nietzsche's ›The Birth of Tragedy‹, one can attain a deeper insight into ›Ulysses‹ and ›Doctor Faustus‹. In both music and myth, Joyce and Mann saw the attractive paradox of choosing to represent ineffable subject matter that also performed the function of offering a more universal form of expression (music creating an emotional response via its universal language, myth with its ancient and evocative symbol-

<sup>14</sup>) Ibid., p. 161.

<sup>15</sup>) Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>16</sup>) Ibid., pp. 24–30.

<sup>17</sup>) For more on various composers' attraction to the aesthetics of myth see EERO TARASTI, *Myth and Music: a semiotic approach to the aesthetics of myth in music, especially that of Wagner, Sibelius and Stravinsky*, The Hague 1979.

ism). The retelling of the Sirens and Faust myth, and the musical qualities of the prose through which they are expressed, evokes a vivid and rich image in the reader's imagination and exposes both authors' artistic and philosophical preoccupations. We know that Thomas Mann was aware of Harry Levin's critical introduction to Joyce, and as Hans Rudolf Vaget has pointed out, it led him to describe Joyce as a "brother" and "the greatest literary genius of our epoch."<sup>18)</sup> Vaget also rightly emphasises however, that Mann did not confront any of Joyce's works directly. The significance of the relationship between the two writers comes then not in their personal relationship<sup>19)</sup> but in their literary preoccupation with music and myth. As Mann himself wrote to the mythologist Karl Kerényi: "It appears that a confrontation with the mythical sphere becomes the crowning, the chosen task of the greatest novelists."<sup>20)</sup> Moreover, for Mann, the exposition of Nietzsche's (via Wagner's conception) of myth is particularly palpable as he, and indeed his protagonist, are placed firmly in German intellectual lineage. The theory of myth as a subject with ancient origins, which offers a more holistic form of expression than conventional historical subject matter, was powerfully attractive to the literary modernists, as it was to Wagner and Nietzsche before them. Joyce and Mann saw myths functioning as living symbols containing universal, primordial properties which can transcend history. It is this aspect of myth that made it such a popular subject for Romantic composers; it is also clear that myths in which music plays a central role, such as the Sirens, Orpheus and Eurydice, Don Juan and so on, were particularly attractive to modernist authors.

Ernest Schonfield, in one of the few comparative studies of Joyce and Mann, writes that both novelists "update myth and relativize it by subjecting it to contemporary psychology."<sup>21)</sup> This is indeed the crux from which to approach

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<sup>18)</sup> HANS RUDOLF VAGET, Mann, Joyce, Wagner: The Question of Modernism in *Doctor Faustus*, in: HERBERT LEHNERT, PETER C. PFEIFFER (eds.), Thomas Mann's 'Doctor Faustus': A Novel at the Margin of Modernism, Columbia 1991, pp. 167–169, p. 168.

<sup>19)</sup> Mann often compares himself to Joyce as shown in a letter to Erich Kahler dated 23 December 1944: "[...] I have sometimes ventured to regard Joyce as a playmate, although also as an antagonist; for I am a decided traditionalist, even though I have often had my fun with the old forms and have – reverently – taken liberties with them". In: An Exceptional Friendship: The Correspondence of Thomas Mann and Erich Kahler. Translated by RICHARD and CLARA WINSTON, Ithaca, London 1975, p. 95. For more on Mann's reception of Joyce see: EVA SCHMIDT-SCHÜTZ, Doktor Faustus zwischen Tradition und Moderne: Eine quellenkritische und rezeptionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu Thomas Manns literarischem Selbstbild, Frankfurt/M. 2003, especially the chapter "Joyce mit Maßen", pp. 29–109.

<sup>20)</sup> Mythology and Humanism: the correspondence of Thomas Mann and Karl Kerényi. Translated by ALEXANDER GELLEY, Ithaca, London 1975, pp. 44–45.

<sup>21)</sup> ERNEST SCHONFIELD, Mann re-Joyces: The Dissemination of Myth in *Ulysses* and *Joseph, Finegans Wake* and *Doctor Faustus*, in: Comparative Critical Studies, vol. 3, no. 3 (2006), pp. 269–290, p. 270.

Joyce and Mann's retelling of myth, given that both of their preoccupations was to tell the story of their age and to do so from distinct national perspectives (Irish and German), while keeping the eternal and transcendental in mind as they transpose their respective myths onto the landscape of modern Europe. Moreover, when we consider Joyce and Mann's retelling of myth in relation to their aesthetic rendering of music in prose (given the proximity of music and myth in ›Ulysses‹ and ›Doctor Faustus‹), we move closer towards an understanding of the possibilities and range of the long novel as an art form. To represent the intersection of two ineffable subjects (music and myth), is both an artistic challenge and a literary innovation; Joyce thus makes the music of the ›Odyssey‹ modern and Mann makes the Faust myth musical.

## 2. *From Apollo to Bloom: Resisting Songs in the "Sirens"*

Since I wrote the *Sirens* I find it impossible to listen to music of any kind...  
 – Letter from Joyce to Harriet Weaver on 20 July, 1919

Much ink has been spilled in an attempt to resolve the musical conundrums of the "Sirens" episode of ›Ulysses‹. The latest study which addresses the question of whether the episode can be considered according to the eight regular parts of a "fuga per canonem", has been undertaken by Michelle Witen in ›James Joyce and Absolute Music‹ (2018). Witen argues that "the National Library of Ireland's 2002 acquisition of Joyce's papers requires that critics rethink prior dismissals and interpretations of Joyce's claim of having written an eight-part *fuga per canonem*."<sup>22</sup>) Witen refers back to Joyce's early handwritten drafts and offers a highly convincing argument demonstrating the manifest ways in which he structured the "Sirens" episode to contain "all the eight regular parts of a *fuga per canonem*."<sup>23</sup>) Witen's conclusive study demonstrates the manifest ways in which Joyce incorporated a fugue in the "Sirens", arguing that Joyce did not need external musical reference points but rather relied on his own demonstrable musical knowledge. The musical allusions in Joyce have also received much attention, most notably in work of Zack Bowen.<sup>24</sup>) However, rather than focus on the technical musical structure of the "Sirens" and the musical allusions in it, let us turn to Joyce's performative use of prose via varied musical techniques, and its connection to the retelling of the ancient myth of the Sirens, with reference to the central tenets of Nietzsche's ›The Birth of Tragedy‹.

<sup>22</sup>) MICHELLE WITEN, *James Joyce and Absolute Music*, London 2018, p. 126.

<sup>23</sup>) *Ibid.*, p. 163.

<sup>24</sup>) See: ZACK R. BOWEN, *Musical Allusions in the Works of James Joyce: Early Poetry Through Ulysses*, Albany 1975.

Joyce uses numerous conventional literary techniques to evoke the condition of music and its emotional resonance, in particular: alliteration (including sibilance and assonance), onomatopoeia, puns and wordplay. These literary devices are ancient in origin, but the unique and experimental way in which they are used in ›Ulysses‹ elevates them to modernist status. Joyce's playfulness with language is unparalleled in the period in which he is writing and the force with which he uses language to create a musical impression almost leaves the music of his prose ringing in the "internal ear" of ›Ulysses' readers. The sound of Joyce's prose is one of its highest merits and the "Sirens" episode of ›Ulysses‹ is one of the more explicitly musical in the novel; when read aloud the text begins to reveal Joyce's musical preoccupations. The sound and repetition of the affirmative "yes" that ends the novel lead Derrida to his ›Ulysses Gramophone: Hear Say Yes in Joyce?‹. As Derrida proclaims in this work: "*Yes in Ulysses* can [...] only be a mark that is both spoken and written, vocalized as grapheme and written as phoneme, yes, in *a word gramphoned*."<sup>25</sup>) The visual and aural qualities of written language in Joyce are thus, if we follow Derrida to his conclusion, of equal importance, the latter of seemingly greater import if we consider Joyce's explicit musicality. An additional layer can be read here in relation to Nietzsche's Apollo/Dionysus dichotomy, and in comparison, to Mann's notion of the "earman" and "eyeman" in ›Doctor Faustus‹, which will soon be elucidated. However, to return to the immediate performative/musical aspects of the prose, an excerpt of the introduction to the "Sirens" will evidence the intrinsic musicality of this episode:

Chips, picking chips off rocky thumbnail, chips. Horrid! And gold flushed more.  
 A husky fifenote blew.  
 Blew. Blue bloom is on the  
 Gold pinnacled hair.  
 A jumping rose on satiny breasts of satin, rose of Castille.  
 Trilling, trilling: I dolores.  
 Peep! Who's in the... peepofgold?  
 Tink cried to bronze in pity.  
 And a call, pure, long and throbbing. Longindying call.  
 Decoy. Soft word. But look! The bright stars fade. O rose! Notes chirruping  
 answer. Castille. The morn is breaking.  
 Jingle jingle jaunted jingling.  
 Coin rang. Clock clacked.  
 Avowal. Sonnez. I could. Rebound of garter. Not leave thee. Smack. La cloche!  
 Thigh smack. Avowal. Warm. Sweetheart, goodbye!  
 Jingle. Bloo.

<sup>25</sup>) ANDREW J. MITCHELL, SAM SLOTE, *Derrida and Joyce: Texts and Contexts*, New York 2013, p. 49.

Boomed crashing chords. When love absorbs. War! War! The tympanum.  
A sail! A veil awave upon the waves. (U, 11.1–21)

The opening lines of the “Sirens”, or the “prelude”<sup>26</sup>) to the episode, are meaningless without the pages that follow.<sup>27</sup>) They initially appear to the reader as random sonorous phrases which demonstrate a preoccupation with sound rather than narrative. However, after a close reading of the chapter, one soon realizes that it actually comprises of a series of leitmotifs introducing the themes, songs, characters and what Lawrence L. Levin has called the “voices” of the “Sirens” episode, all interwoven to evoke a practical and emotional condition of music which simultaneously sustains the ancient myth of the Sirens. Levin points out that “these voices would be those of Miss Douce and Miss Kennedy (the Sirens), Bloom, Simon Dedalus, Lenehan, Boylan, the piano tuner, Dollard, and Pat the waiter, with Cowley, Lidwell, Kernan, and Goulding functioning as free counterpoint.”<sup>28</sup>) Timothy Martin developed Levin’s idea and deliberates on what might be called Joyce’s “narrative counterpoint” – the idea that “Five characters in “Sirens” have what amount to their own leitmotifs. Bloom’s “Bloowho,” Boylan’s “jingle,” the piano tuner’s “tap,” Miss Kennedy’s “gold,” and Miss Douce’s “bronze.” They form a quintet of three men and two women who move independently through the chapter [...] and pursue their own thoughts.”<sup>29</sup>) This seems a plausible reading of the leitmotifs in “Sirens”. Indeed, the characters’ leitmotifs reoccur and develop poignantly throughout the novel: Miss Kennedy’s “gold” and Miss Douce’s “bronze” leitmotifs are an obvious example of this development, as they comingle and are replayed throughout *Ulysses*.

As Joyce said, “Writing a novel [...] was like composing music, with the same elements involved. But how can chords or motifs be incorporated in writing? Joyce answered his own question, ‘A man might eat kidneys in one chapter, suffer from a kidney disease in another, and one of his friends could be kicked in the kidney in another chapter.’”<sup>30</sup>) The opening immediately demonstrates

<sup>26</sup>) Some scholars refer to the opening of the “Sirens” as an “overture” but as Witen highlights, those who have focused on music in *Ulysses*, such as Alan Shockley, Heath Lees, Werner Wolf, and Brad Bucknell, refer to it as a prelude, which she concurs is more plausible. See: WITEN, *Absolute Music* (cit. fn. 22), p. 120 and p. 166.

<sup>27</sup>) As early as 1941 Levin in his classic *James Joyce: A Critical Introduction* claimed that “The introductory pages should be read as a thematic index to the following pages, but without the sequel they are meaningless.” HARRY LEVIN, *James Joyce: A Critical Introduction*, Connecticut 1941, p. 99.

<sup>28</sup>) LAWRENCE L. LEVIN, *The Sirens as Music: Joyce’s Experiment in Prose Polyphony*, in: *James Joyce Quarterly*, vol. 3, no. 1 (1965), pp. 12–24, p. 14.

<sup>29</sup>) RUTH BAUERLE (ed.), *Picking up Airs: Hearing the Music in Joyce’s Text*, Urbana, Chicago 1993, pp. 107–108.

<sup>30</sup>) RICHARD ELLMANN, *James Joyce*. New and revised edition, New York 1983, p. 436.

the parallels Joyce marks between score and narrative, music and literature, by populating his introduction with literary leitmotifs. That Joyce develops and utilizes a musical technique that flowered in Wagner's music drama is no surprise: as Slote highlights, Joyce's paper "Drama and Life," delivered in Dublin in 1900, takes inspiration not just in name from Wagner's "Opera and Drama" (1851) but also in the idea that drama has the ability to overpower other literary forms because of its ability to portray truth through an interplay of passions, resulting in a communal art.<sup>31)</sup> The leitmotif (assigning each character their own sonorous phrase) is central to this and thus we see Joyce pushing the limits of the novel by incorporating techniques typical to music drama. As Martin writes "much of *Ulysses* is composed of repeated words and phrases that function as leitmotifs – both literary and Wagnerian – do: helping from the stream of narration, providing 'rhythmic' form, developing texture as well as structure."<sup>32)</sup> This perhaps offers partial explanation as to why Eliot raises the question of 'Ulysses' in relation to the limits of the novel as a form<sup>33)</sup> or Harry Levin having described it as a "novel to end all novels."<sup>34)</sup> Joyce's musical success as an author however lies in the variety of techniques he uses to express music. As previously mentioned, the musicality of the prose itself via such literary techniques is impressive, however Joyce's uses of literary cadences, leitmotifs, trills and even a literary "tuning up" of the "orchestra" (i.e. of his characters) elevate the musical qualities of "Sirens". This tuning up can be evidenced by such narrative description as: "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" (U, II.80–83). The variation of the same phrase is much like a string player tuning up, emphasising Miss Kennedy's place in the quintet. Moreover, we later encounter further evidence of this kind of technique: "Bloom unwound slowly the elastic band of his packet. [...] Bloom wound a skein round four forkfingers, stretched it, relaxed, and wound it round his troubled double, fourfold, in octave, gyved them fast" (U, II.681–684).

The elastic band here is often described as representing the bands that tied Odysseus to the mast of his ship, solidifying the link with the original myth.<sup>35)</sup> I would suggest in addition however, that Bloom's motion of winding and unwinding the band evokes the tension and release of tuning strings, demons-

<sup>31)</sup> SAM SLOTE, *Joyce's Nietzschean Ethics*, New York 2013, pp. 6–7.

<sup>32)</sup> TIMOTHY MARTIN, *Joyce and Wagner: A Study of Influence*, Cambridge 1991, pp. 158–159.

<sup>33)</sup> T. S. ELIOT, 'Ulysses', *Order and Myth*, in: *The Dial*, LXXV (Nov. 1923), pp.480–483, p. 483.

<sup>34)</sup> LEVIN, *Critical introduction* (cit. fn. 27), p. 207.

<sup>35)</sup> DECLAN KIBERD, *Ulysses and Us: The Art of Everyday Living*, London 2009, p. 174.

trating Bloom's part in the quintet alluded to earlier, providing yet another instance of the connection between music and myth. Joyce himself told Georges Borach in 1919: "I finished the Sirens chapter during the last few days. A big job. I wrote this chapter with the technical resources of music [...]: *piano, forte, rallentando*, and so on. A quintet occurs in it, too, as in *Die Meistersinger*, my favorite Wagnerian opera [...]."<sup>36</sup>) This description reminds us of two famous letters from Joyce dated 20 July and 6 August 1919 to Harriet Shaw Weaver, a patron and supporter of his, where he relates how he found it impossible to listen to music after composing the "Sirens" episode and confirms that it was written according to the "eight regular parts of a *fuga per canonem*: and I did not know in what other way to describe the seductions of music beyond which Ulysses travels."<sup>37</sup>) The interweaving of literary techniques and orchestral parallels as a means to evoke music is where we see Joyce exercising his linguistic virtuosity, and when we consider this in relation to his treatment of the original Homeric myth, we see Joyce at his most accomplished.

Joyce's use of abstraction and literary technique evokes both the "condition" and "sound" of music while simultaneously sketching out the events and action that unfolds in the chapter, an additional level of complexity is added when we consider this in relation to his depiction of myth. The artistic preoccupation with myth is a trope of Romantic music, in which composers see in myth an emblem, with ancient origins, of a type of literature in which the conventional mimetic properties of language are transcended. In literary modernism, music too provides this function, it offers a form of expression that lies beyond language. Therefore, myths in which music plays a central role, such as the Sirens myth, are of particular interest to modern novelists such as Joyce, as they provide a model of related ineffable subjects that pose an exciting and testing challenge to represent in prose. The following quote exemplifies how Joyce deals with the myth of the Sirens (as told in Homer's *Odyssey*) in relation to Bloom, his hero, and his Odysseus:

Draw near, illustrious Odysseus, man of many tales, great glory of the Achaeans, and bring your ship to rest so that you may hear our voices. No seaman ever sailed his black ship past this spot without listening to the honey-sweet tones that flow from our lips and no one who has listened has not been delighted and gone on his way a wiser man. For we know all that the Argives and Trojans suffered on the broad plain of Troy by the will of the gods, and we know whatever happens on this fruitful earth. (Hom. Od. 12.185–193)<sup>38</sup>)

<sup>36</sup>) GEORGES BORACH, JOSEPH PRESCOTT, *Conversations with James Joyce*, in: *College English*, vol. 15, no. 6 (Mar., 1954), pp. 325–327, pp. 326–327.

<sup>37</sup>) *Letters of James Joyce*, vol. I. Ed. by STUART GILBERT, New York 1957; reissued with corrections 1966, p. 129. Henceforth *JL* 1 in the text.

<sup>38</sup>) HOMER, *The Odyssey*. Translated by ROBERT FAGLES, London 1997, pp. 161–162.

–O greasy eyes! Imagine being married to a man like that! She cried. With his bit of beard! [...]

–Married to the greasy nose! She yelled.

Shrill, with deep laughter, after, gold after bronze, they urged each each to peal after peal, ringing in changes, bronzegold, goldbronze, shrilldeep, to laughter after laughter. And then laughed more. Greasy I knows. Exhausted, breathless, their shaken heads they laid, braided and pinnacled by glossycombed, against the counterledge. All flushed (O!), panting, sweating (O!), all breathless.

Married to Bloom, to greaseabloom. (U, 11.169–180)

This comic parody of the “Sirens song” emphasizes the significance of the music and myth connection. This example is as close to the sound of the Sirens’ song that we get in ›Ulysses‹. Their “song” is not melodic, lyrical or beautiful but sexual, animalistic and cacophonous as the Sirens “shriek,” “pant,” “laugh,” and so on. Throughout the episode however, men sing, often beautiful lieder; this clever inversion of the Sirens myth illustrates how Joyce expands and retells the myth in a bid to articulate music – he uses the musicality of his prose to elucidate this inversion of the Sirens myth while keeping “actual” music playing in the background of the narrative, striking through intermittently with key lyrics of the songs, often verging on puns and alluding to major themes and events of the novel. On a more banal level it is also representative of the period, as women would not have been allowed in the bars and pubs and therefore, unlike in the home where families would sing together, in public places, men must be the singers. This is exemplified in the songs: “Love and War”, “M’appari” (from Flotow’s comic opera ›Martha‹), and “The Croppy Boy”, to which we will return later. The inversion of the Sirens myth also points to the fact that one of the primary functions of the Sirens is to distract Bloom from the startling recollection that Blazes Boylan will soon cuckold him. All the language of this passage suggests as much, the “bronzegold” of Miss Douce and Miss Kennedy, our Sirens, convey their narrative function to distract: the bronze and gold allude to the shimmering of their hair and clothes and as vocalists they are abrasive and hard to ignore. Joyce has inverted the myth of the Sirens as its traditional function is no longer fit for modern purposes, “they still want to draw their victims back into the past: but their outmoded art offers little benefit to modern-day people, among whom only the elite are still given the chance to listen to it (e.g. opera).”<sup>39)</sup>

In spite of the unconventional functions of the Sirens in this chapter, the link to ancient mythology is palpable, as Kiberd notes: the Sirens “stand beside the ‘reef’ of their counter, their shoes and stockings cracked and dirty like the

<sup>39)</sup> KIBERD, *Ulysses and Us* (cit. fn. 35), p. 174.

unseen fishtails of beautiful mermaids, while their satin blouses shimmer.<sup>40)</sup> Moreover, the amused barmaid's depiction of Bloom's "greasy eyes" on to his "greasy nose", culminating in the cadence repetition and a trill: "married to Bloom, to greaseabloom", denotes a reference to the sea as domain of the Sirens and a uniting of the sea image with Bloom and subsequently Odysseus.<sup>41)</sup> This description also curiously leaves out the body part that the episode is dedicated to: the ear. Bloom, as voyeur, also "eyes" a "poster, a swaying mermaid smoking mid nice waves. Smoke, mermaids, coolest which of all. Hair steaming: love-lorn" (U, 11.299–301). The episode is full of such subtleties which unite music and myth. Finally, and most unambiguously, Simon Dedalus (Stephen's father) declares to one of the Sirens "That was exceedingly naughty of you, [...] Tempting poor simple males" (U, 11.201–202), though noticeably they did not tempt these males with their "song". The union of high (myth) and low (music) culture in this episode is symptomatic of Joyce's major literary preoccupation on unifying high- and low-brow subjects. In his motivation to present lowly subjects with dignity in his narrative, and by analysing the relationship between myth in relation to music, we are able to attain a deeper insight into both Joyce's concerns as an artist and ›Ulysses‹ itself.

Conversely to the points made earlier, Joyce also uses music to articulate myth: the song "Love and War" sung by Cowley and Dollard and whose text reveals the major conflicts of the episode harks back, obliquely, to the Homeric source: the Sirens' song promises love's pleasures after the perils of war. Like the lover and the warrior in the song, Bowen observes: "the boys in the Ormond Bar decide musically to blend love's wounds with battle's scars / And call in Bacchus, all divine / To cure both pains with rosy wine."<sup>42)</sup> The songs sung in the Sirens episode, such as "Love and War", are multifaceted and serve many purposes. The quote below refers to the scene in which the song "Love and War"<sup>43)</sup> features most prominently in ›Ulysses‹:

[Dollard's] gouty paws plumped chords. Plumped, stopped abrupt. [...]  
Jingle a tinkle jaunted.

Bloom heard a little sound. He's off. Light sob of breath Bloom sighed on the silent blue-hued flowers. Jingling. He's gone. Jingle. Hear.

–*Love and War*, Ben, Mr Dedalus said. [...]

Over their voices Dollard bassooned attack, booming over bombarding chords:

–*When love absorbs my ardent soul* . . . [...]

–War! War! cried Father Cowley. You're the warrior.

<sup>40)</sup> Ibid., p. 171.

<sup>41)</sup> LEVIN, *The Sirens* (cit. fn. 28), p. 17.

<sup>42)</sup> BOWEN, *Musical Allusions* (cit. fn. 24), p. 171.

<sup>43)</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 170–171 for the full song "Love and War", where the constituent "Lover" (tenor) and "Soldier" (bass) sing the last stanza in unison.

—So I am, Ben Warrior laughed. I was thinking of your landlord. Love or money. [...]

— . . . . . *my ardent soul*

*I care not for the morrow.*

In liver gravy Bloom mashed potatoes. *Love and War* someone is. Ben Dollard's famous. Night he ran round to us to borrow a dress suit for that concert. Trousers tight as a drum on him. Musical porkers. Molly did laugh when he went out. Threw herself back across the bed, screaming, kicking. With all his belongings on show. (U, 11.452–557)

The passage illustrates Joyce's technique and intentions well: Bloom hears Boylan's developed leitmotif, "Jingle a tinkle jaunted" which reminds him that Boylan is now leaving to embark on his lover's tryst with Molly. The lyrics of the song intersperse the narrative which itself is music in prose: the sibilance of Boylan's "jingle" is followed by the "bassooned", "booming" of Dollard's bass over "bombarding chords" pointing to the fact that Ben Dollard is singing the wrong part, he is a bass and thus should be singing the "War" while Cowley takes up the tenor "Love". The "War! War!" also recalls one of the opening lines, once again signifying how Joyce develops leitmotifs introduced at the beginning of the episode. Moreover, the song forces Bloom to recall the past: Molly laughing at Dollard's inappropriate clothing on a previous evening. This all reinforces my observation that songs and the Sirens function independently to tempt Bloom into distraction, and though he occasionally succumbs, like Odysseus he is bound for home. The utilisation of music and myth here is emblematic of Joyce undertaking with precision and skill Ezra Pound's modernist imperative to "make it new". In other words, we have evidence of Joyce modernising the Sirens myth so it is fit for purpose: functioning on an aesthetic level (the Sirens' physical and sexual attraction) and on a musical level (the songs sung by men in the bar), combining to form differing powerful forms of temptation and distraction. Songs such as the aria Simon Dedalus sings from the opera *Martha* also affect Bloom, leading him to mediate in stream-of-consciousness narrative with amusing puns such as: "Tenors get women by the score. Throw flower at his feet. When will we meet? My head it simply. Jingle all delighted" (U, 11.686–687); the "jingle" here referring once more to Boylan and his leitmotif, soon to be "delighted" by his sexual encounter with Molly. Moreover, the singing of Ireland's "native doric", "The Croppy Boy", also tempts Bloom to distraction and to reflect on the fact that he is the "last of his race", more apt, of his name, due to the untimely death of his only son, Rudy, a running theme in the novel. Nevertheless, Bloom ultimately resists temptation, as the effect of music is "too irrational for a man as measured as he"<sup>44</sup>) as Kiberd describes him. One passage in particular leads us to this assumption:

<sup>44</sup>) KIBERD, *Ulysses and Us* (cit. fn. 35), p. 180.

Numbers it is. All music when you come to think. Two multiplied by two divided by half is twice one. Vibrations: chords those are. One plus two plus six is seven. Do anything you like with figures juggling. Always find out this equal to that. Symmetry under a cemetery wall. He doesn't see my mourning. Callous: all for his own gut. Musemathematics. And you think you're listening to the ethereal. But suppose you said it like: Martha, seven times nine minus x is thirtyfive thousand. Fall quite flat. It's on account of the sound it is. (U, II 228)

Bloom's meditation on the essence of music in mathematical terms is typical of his rationale and consequently he, like Odysseus, escapes the intoxicating effects of music. This is not to say that Bloom was not susceptible earlier in the chapter to the intoxicating effects of music, as Witen suggest with reference to the fugal form of the "Sirens" episode:

The fugue, as the highest form of absolute music, uses its subject (fugue) as both its material and its structure. "Sirens" is structured as a fugue but the episode also incorporates the thematic material of the fugue in order to generate the condition of music of the fugue (flight, forgetting). Bloom's susceptibility to the condition of music is demonstrated by his dissolution of self into music and the degeneration of the narrative into the swarm of Bloom's impressions.<sup>45)</sup>

Rather than have Bloom physically restrained, Joyce depicts Bloom as having psychologically transcended the intoxication of the Sirens.<sup>46)</sup> Bloom reduces music to its mathematical and scientific properties (vibrations, symmetry, numbers and so on) in his psyche, which has a sobering effect on our reading of the inebriating experience of the last hour at the Ormond Bar.<sup>47)</sup> The dichotomy between the intoxicating power of music and the materialist essence of it, which occurs in Bloom's stream of consciousness, is a trope in philosophy, musicology and literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and one which is dealt with explicitly in ›Doctor Faustus‹. Furthermore, this dialectical relationship can be read as a response to, and development of, Nietzsche's main argument in ›The Birth of Tragedy‹, in which he demonstrates how the rational impulse, the Apollonian, has been favoured to such a degree that it has morphed into the Socratic, principally by Socrates' disciple Euripides in art. This trend, which has lasted for millennia, has overshadowed the intoxicating Dionysian and thus, for Nietzsche, *true* tragic art and culture has declined into obscurity.

The coexistence of the two artistic forces represented by the Greek myths, Apollo and Dionysus, is, according to Nietzsche, not only the foundation of all

<sup>45)</sup> WITEN, *Absolute Music* (cit. fn. 22), p. 39.

<sup>46)</sup> This is typical of Joyce's method of myth updating in that he shifts action from the physical to the psychological. For example, Bloom will "mentally" slay Molly's suitors in "Ithaca".

<sup>47)</sup> The narrative here also foreshadows the style of "Ithaca" in which Joyce posits science (Bloom) against art and religion (Stephen) offering a significant contrast to Stephen's stream of consciousness in "Proteus" and lecture in "Scylla and Charybdis".

art but where art reaches its peak and what artists must strive towards. Thus, we see Bloom has his foundations in the Apollonian (or Socratic) in ›Ulysses‹ (as expressed by his stream of consciousness on the rational, mathematical qualities of music here) contrasted by Stephen Dedalus, with his Dionysian characteristics, evidenced by his literal (drunkenness) and intellectual (artistic) states of intoxication. The key development being that Joyce retreats from the mythic sphere and brings these two deities into the modern world. Stephen's self-destructive nature echoes a Dionysian longing for suffering, for dissolution, which occurs later in "Circe". In "Sirens" however, Stephen is conspicuous by his absence: as he represents the Dionysian in ›Ulysses‹, he is not necessary to this episode. Bloom's psyche is however made clearer in Joyce's music chapter, where we are presented with his Apollonian affinities: his temporary intoxication, distraction, is as much a result of the plastic qualities of the barmaids (their clothes, hair and so on) as the music. Bloom often thinks of them in sculptural and pictorial terms. His Apollonian rationale is made plain in his mathematical reflection on sonic art. It is uncanny how directly Joyce appears to be responding to Nietzsche's conception of aesthetic mythology in relation to the spirit of music as the foundation of all art, presented in ›The Birth of Tragedy‹ in the form of the Apollo/Dionysus dichotomy.

Harking back to his Homeric source, Joyce investigates the power of music: sonically by evoking music in prose via avant-garde literary techniques and aesthetically by rewriting the myth of the Sirens. In the "Sirens" episode we see an instance of the "musicalization" of myth and the "mythologization" of music. Indeed, in focusing on the music-myth connection in ›Ulysses‹, we begin to see the cultivation of Joyce's ultimate artistic aims.<sup>48)</sup> Harry Levin wrote that: "Joyce's efforts to achieve immediacy lead him to equate form and content, to ignore the distinction between things he is describing and the words he is using to describe them".<sup>49)</sup> This description is certainly applicable to the performative musicality of the "Sirens" episode, as has hopefully been made clear. However, the definition of "musicality" needs some qualification here, given that Joyce's use of music in ›Ulysses‹, and particularly in the "Sirens" episode,

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<sup>48)</sup> Timothy Martin in his excellent ›Joyce and Wagner‹ (cit. fn. 32) informs us that "myth and leitmotif are intimately related in Joyce's last work, as they are in the works of Thomas Mann, for a tenet of mythic art, that history repeats itself with a difference, is reflected in the repetition and variation of these hundreds of leitmotifs throughout the text" (p. 159). Martin believes the myth/leitmotif connection is taken to its extreme in Joyce's last novel, in that "both history and leitmotif repeat themselves with a difference in *Finnegans Wake*" (p. 160). This is certainly the case and on the surface, this connection seems more pertinent to ›Finnegans Wake‹ than ›Ulysses‹. However, it is in ›Ulysses‹ that Joyce begins experimenting seriously with the leitmotif as a literary technique and explores its potential.

<sup>49)</sup> LEVIN, Critical introduction (cit. fn. 27), p. 87.

is often nebulous. Joyce wrote to Harriet Shaw Weaver on 18 March, 1930: “I have always insisted that I know little about literature, less about music, nothing about painting and less than nothing about sculpture; but I do know something about singing, I think.”<sup>50</sup>)

As Witen rightly clarifies, Joyce’s false modesty in this letter functions to highlight his superior knowledge of singing rather than denigrate his knowledge of music and literature, particularly given that he wrote this letter in the aftermath of the publication of ›Ulysses‹.<sup>51</sup>) Aside from stressing Joyce’s belief in his own practical knowledge of singing, this letter hints at the significance of song vs music in ›Ulysses‹. For example, Joyce liberally employs songs in the “Sirens” episode, but, more notably, he mimics musical form and uses musical techniques to achieve a level of sonority in his language that makes the prose performative, resulting in a distinct musical poetics. Joyce presents the reader with sonic segments of language, as well as song lyrics, which are presented in a way that is congruous with the strict fugal form in which they are rendered. In other words, songs appear as the chief instance of “real” music in “Sirens”, but the chapter simultaneously adopts a musical form and techniques typical to instrumental music to add an additional layer to the musicality of the prose. In this sense the very definition of “music” becomes multifaceted, as has been evidenced in the “Sirens” where Joyce presents his unique musical poetics in a bid to define how language can recreate a practical condition of music while simultaneously depicting “actual” songs that are being played and sung in the bar, that Joyce achieves this in a musical architecture as strict as fugal form is a testament to the complexity and aspiration of Joyce’s music chapter. In the following section on Mann’s music novel we will see an altogether different method of musical depiction, yet arguably nowhere does the musicality of the prose reach such intensity as in the “Sirens”, where Joyce pushes his musical poetics to its limit.

### 3. *Apollo, Dionysus and Faust in Mann’s ›Doctor Faustus‹*

As with Joyce’s ›Ulysses‹, a unique and elucidatory reading experience emerges when one focuses on the depiction of music and myth (and the relationship between the two) in Thomas Mann’s ›Doctor Faustus‹. Mann notes that he first had the idea of conceiving a Faust story in relation to ›Tonio Kröger‹ in 1901,<sup>52</sup>)

<sup>50</sup>) LI, p. 291

<sup>51</sup>) WITEN, *Absolute Music* (cit. fn. 22), p. 1.

<sup>52</sup>) “I have down for the 27th. ‘Dug up the three-line outline of the Dr. Faust of 1901. Association with the Tonio Kröger period.’” THOMAS MANN, *The Story of a Novel: The Genesis of Doctor Faustus*. Translated by RICHARD and CLARA WINSTON, New York 1961, pp. 17–18.

however, it will be forty-six years between this demonic impulse and the publication of ›Doctor Faustus‹. Thomas Mann's friend and colleague Erich Kahler offers the explanation in his classic study ›The Orbit of Thomas Mann‹ that ›Tonio Kröger‹ treats "The innate conflict between the bourgeois and the artist, the inevitable, inborn alienation of the artist from the common world [...]. This personal problem of his, together with the corresponding outer problem of the cultural situation in which he grew up, directed Thomas Mann toward the Faustus motif".<sup>53)</sup> It is significant however that Mann, consciously or not, waited until writing his "music novel" before realizing his Faust story. In having his Faust character be a musician Mann is both responding to a historically productive relationship (that between music and myth which we find in the work of Romantic composers) and stating the explicit cultural and artistic "Germanness" of his protagonist. For Mann, the very best of Germany is represented by her music: it is therefore unsurprising that he conceives of Adrian Leverkühn as a musical genius in the line stemming from Bach to Beethoven to Wagner.<sup>54)</sup> Leverkühn also acts as a surrogate composer for Mann's contemporary Schoenberg and his ilk.

In response to Nietzsche's challenge that "without myth every culture loses the healthy natural power of its creativity"<sup>55)</sup> Mann places Leverkühn firmly within the German Faust tradition and portrays him as a Dionysian anti-hero (in Nietzsche's sense) so as to reinstate both the value of myth and reflect the tragedy of their shared culture. Mann's retelling of the Faust myth aligns most closely with the tales set out in the ›Faustbuch‹, a pseudo-biographical chapbook of stories concerning the life of Johann Georg Faust (Doctor Faustus) published by Johann Spies in 1587<sup>56)</sup> and yet in many ways, as with Leverkühn's

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<sup>53)</sup> ERICH KAHLER, *The Orbit of Thomas Mann*, New Jersey 1969, p. 111.

<sup>54)</sup> This recalls Nietzsche's claim that "Out of the Dionysian root of the German spirit a power has arisen which, having nothing in common with the primitive conditions of Socratic culture, can neither be explained nor excused by it, but which is rather felt by this culture as something terribly inexplicable and overwhelmingly hostile – *German music* as we must understand it, particularly in its vast solar orbit from Bach to Beethoven, from Beethoven to Wagner". FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE, *The Birth of Tragedy and The Case of Wagner*, translated by WALTER KAUFMANN, New York 1967, p. 119. All further references will be to this edition, henceforth shortened to BT in the body of the text.

<sup>55)</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>56)</sup> As Kahler pointed out, there are two major features Mann lifts from the Spies Faust book, firstly "that Faust was of humble but respectable parentage, but so precociously clever that a wealthy relative adopted him and paid for his schooling and university studies. Here, then, is the psychological genesis of an aspiring, arrogant, and perverted mind turning from theology to black magic. The second important feature is, of course, the pact with the Devil. So swiftly says the Spies book, did Faust advance in the art of magic that he was soon a position to trace the magic circle and summon up an evil spirit". KAHLER, *The Orbit of Thomas Mann* (cit. fn. 53), pp. 98–99.

“Lamentation” in relation to Beethoven’s Ninth symphony, it is a reaction to, and negation of, the Faust stories that came before it, particularly Goethe’s *Faust*. In linking the fate of his Faust with that of Germany in the early twentieth century, Mann, unlike Goethe, leaves the fate of his Faust and the possibility of redemption lingering in the air, unresolved. Yet in having his Faust be a musician, Mann is also extending the traditional confines of the myth itself, as conventionally the Faust figure is willing to trade his soul for worldly knowledge, experiences that happen during his time on earth. Leverkühn however makes his pact in exchange for intoxicating time in which to create authentic, revolutionary music that will live on after his death; in other words, Leverkühn trades his soul, his mental sanity and ultimately his life, for the possibility of immortality in music. This music, which Leverkühn, prompted by the devil, believes will break through the cultural epoch is the only hope for redemption that Mann provides us with.

This draws on one of the more complicated aspects of the myth: whether the corrupted soul, or in this case the corrupted music, can ever be saved; and in keeping with the allegory, Mann invites us to reflect on whether Germany can be redeemed after the horrors of National Socialism and the Second World War. Mann seems to imply that the possibility of such salvation will come from the spheres of art and culture. The privileged position of music in German intellectual history (and the relationship between music and the demonic) has been mentioned in the first half of this article and will be discussed here in relation to the Faust myth. The demonic music is aided by the devil and is the result of Adrian’s “signing of the pact” marked by the syphilitic infection that comes from his sexual union with the prostitute Esmerelda.<sup>57</sup>) The main complication of Mann’s nefarious retelling of the Faust myth here stems from the fact that the incident with Esmerelda is seemingly of secondary importance when considering Adrian’s “fate.” The reader infers that the decision to enter into a pact with the devil, along with Adrian’s decision to become a musician, were established much earlier in the novel. Mann’s retelling of the Faustian myth, his negation of the prior versions of the myth, along with various episodic negations of high cultural achievements, such as Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, give the novel an air of finality. In essence, *Doctor Faustus* is a novel of conclusions, both in music and myth, in which the fate of both are intimately bound to the fate of Germany.

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<sup>57</sup>) The inspiration for the meeting between Adrian and Esmerelda is based on an anecdote of Nietzsche’s visit to a brothel as a student, which Mann reproduces almost verbatim in his novel from Nietzsche’s friend Paul Jakob Deussen’s account of the incident: PAUL DEUSSEN, *Erinnerungen an Friedrich Nietzsche*, Leipzig 1901, p. 29.

Mann's tendency to rewrite myth is of the utmost importance and we must consider not only his rewriting of the Faust myth but also his response to the Apollo/Dionysus dichotomy and the concept of Dionysian music, set out by Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy* as the foundation of all art, an idea in which the union of music and myth is at the fore. The dichotomy is particularly prevalent in Zeitblom's narrative description of the devilish oratorio "Apocalipsis cum figuris". The description of Adrian's creative process (post-infection) evokes the Dionysian: when composing "Apocalypse", Leverkühn remained "in a state of high tension [...] his rush of ideas gave him no rest, made him their slave" (DF, 378).<sup>58</sup> Zeitblom's language not only alludes to the Faustian pact in which Leverkühn is promised "[g]reat time, mad time, most devilish time, in which to soar higher and higher" (DF, 246) but also makes explicit the Dionysian presence in Leverkühn's creative process and in the composition itself. This is not to suggest that the myths of Faust and Dionysus are interchangeable, as T. J. Reed perceptively points out: "the Dionysia[n] is not a myth like Faust. It is a way of describing forces observable in man and society."<sup>59</sup> Thomas Mann's preoccupation with Dionysus does more than affirm the Adrian-Nietzsche link, which has been well documented by a number of scholars,<sup>60</sup> it is fundamental to our understanding of the novel. To emphasise the Dionysian in Leverkühn, whose life and work reflects the period in which he lives, is to insinuate "that political and social phenomena, [...] are psychological in origin [...] And that origin is shown to be Dionysian".<sup>61</sup> This is evident if one subscribes to the prevailing view that Mann's novel is a reflection on and diagnosis of Germany's decline into Nazism and attempts to understand and salvage Germany's culture and identity; "Dionysus was after all the god of regeneration, something German culture and Mann himself had been seeking".<sup>62</sup> It is clear then, that Mann's preoccupation with Faust and Dionysus in the text is multifaceted – evidenced by Leverkühn's artistic process, the return to primitivism and barbarism, and as suggested by Reed, the psychological origin of Germany's descent into Nazism.

To explore the links between Leverkühn, Germany, music and myth in more detail I will turn to Zeitblom's description of the "Apocalypse" oratorio itself:

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<sup>58</sup>) All subsequent references to the English edition are taken from: THOMAS MANN, *Doctor Faustus: The Life of the German Composer Adrian Leverkühn As Told by a Friend*, translated by JOHN E. WOODS, New York 1999.

<sup>59</sup>) TERENCE J. REED, *Thomas Mann, The Uses of Tradition*, second edition, Oxford 1996, p. 397.

<sup>60</sup>) One thinks of, for example, ERICH HEINTEL'S 1950 study *Adrian Leverkühn und Nietzsche*.

<sup>61</sup>) REED, *Thomas Mann* (cit. fn. 59), p. 399.

<sup>62</sup>) *Ibid.*, p. 406.

Frozen within in it [ordered music], as a [...] barbaric rudiment of premusical days, is the sliding tone, the glissando – a musical device [...] in which I have always tended to hear something anticultural, indeed anti-human, even demonic. What I have in mind is Leverkühn's [...] extraordinary frequent use of the sliding tone [...] that its dissonance is the expression of everything that is lofty, serious, devout, and spiritual, while the harmonic and tonal elements are restricted to the world of hell [...] Adrian's powers of sardonic imitation, deeply rooted in the melancholy of his own nature, become productive here in parodies of the diverse musical styles in which hell's insipid excess indulges: burlesqued French impressionism, bourgeois drawing-room music, Tchaikovsky, music hall songs, the syncopations and rhythms and rhythmic somersaults of jazz – it all whirls round like a brightly glittering tilting march, yet always sustained by the main orchestra, speaking its serious, dark, difficult language and asserting with radical rigor of the work's intellectual status. (DF, 394–95)

The use of the glissando, which Zeitblom describes as “anticultural”, “anti-human”, and “demonic”, conveys Leverkühn's conscious lapse into barbarism which indicates the fulfilment of the Devil's prophecy that Adrian: “will break through the age itself, the cultural epoch [...] and dare at barbarism [...] because it comes after humanitarianism [...] barbarism has a better understanding [...] than does a culture [...] which saw only culture, only humanitarianism, but not excess, not the paradox, the mystical passion, the ordeal so utterly outside bourgeois experience” (DF, 258–59). This is significant as it not only elucidates Mann's own unsettling view that barbarism is itself born out of liberal humanism, but also reinforces the Nietzschean view that it is a necessary condition for art in order to reaffirm a spiritual unity between the artist and Dionysus. Leverkühn's “sardonic imitation” imbued with the “melancholy of his own nature” results in the parodies referred to in the last quote. These parodies are described by Zeitblom as “productive” as Adrian is simultaneously avoiding artistic sterility, pre-empting the development of the formally rigorous twelve-tone system and mirroring Germany's descent into barbarism; the latter of which Zeitblom is either seemingly unaware or in denial. This is shown by Zeitblom's consistent rejection of the claim that Leverkühn's work could be seen as an example of barbarism as he states: “Soullessness! – I know very well that is what people mean when they attach the word “barbarism” to Adrian's creation. Have they ever, if only with the reading eye, listened to certain lyrical passages [...] in the *Apocalypse* – pieces of song, accompanied by a chamber orchestra, which, like a fervent plea for a soul, could bring tears to the eyes of a harder man than I?” (DF, 396–97).

Here it is the Apollonian lyric and not the Dionysian music that Zeitblom is defending against charges of barbarism. In other words, the lyrical passages appear as language: we are told they have the capacity to appeal to “the reading eye”, and are therefore outside the realm of absolute, or pure, instrumental

music which underscores these vocal passages with such rigour that it can reduce listeners to tears. Mann is weaving Nietzsche's complex dialectic between Apollo and Dionysus into Zeitblom's reaction to and defence of the "Apocalypse" here: as Nietzsche proclaims in 'The Birth of Tragedy,' "Apollonian *illusion* whose influence aims to deliver us from the Dionysian flood and excess" (BT, 129). It is clear that Zeitblom is susceptible to such an Apollonian illusion whereas Leverkühn, having consciously made his Faustian pact, is not; indeed, Mann's depiction of Leverkühn almost leads the reader to believe he is conscious of the dialectic between the two myths throughout the novel, as exemplified by his conflicting emotional and physical states during composition and *in* the compositions themselves. The "Apocalypse" foreshadows both Leverkühn and Germany's downfall and although Zeitblom cannot accept the charge of barbarism, he is inclined to "see some objective connection or symbolic parallel" (DF, 360) between Leverkühn's health and Germany's impending disaster. The allegory of the Faustian bargain leading Leverkühn and Germany into such decline is expressed entirely through musical composition, taking the connection between music and myth to its most extreme.

The description of the "Apocalypse" reminds the reader of the contents of the letter outlining Adrian's conversation with the devil in Palestrina. Amongst varied topics of debate recounted in the letter, there is a brief moment when the devil discusses the limits of language. When asked by Adrian to give a description of hell, the devil retorts that it "is the secret delight and security of hell [...] that it lies hidden from language" (DF 261). This would suggest that there are certain things, hell in this case, which are outside the boundaries of language, as language is merely capable of providing "weak symbols" (DF 261) to represent what it fails to describe. A parallel can be drawn between hell and music as in this instance Mann is talking of the unknowable, the supernatural, just as one cannot *know* Adrian's music, as it is fictional. However, it is interesting that immediately following the devil's discourse, Mann provides a vivid description of hell:

That is the secret delight and security of hell, that it cannot be denounced, that it lies hidden from language, [...] which is why the words 'subterranean,' 'cellar,' 'thick walls,' 'soundlessness,' 'oblivion,' 'hopelessness,' are but weak symbols. One must, my good man, be entirely content with *symbolis* when one speaks of hell [...]. It is right to say that it will be quite loud in a sound-tight hell, loud beyond measure, filling the ear to more than overflowing with bawling and squalling, yowling, moaning, bellowing, gurgling, screeching, wailing, croaking, pleading, and exuberant tortured cries, so that no one will hear his own tune, for it is smothered in the general, tight, dense, hellish jubilee and abject trilling extracted by the enteral of the unbelievable and unanswerable. (DF, 260–261)

The onomatopoeic “bawling and squalling, yowling, moaning, bellowing, gurgling, screeching, wailing, croaking, pleading, and exuberant tortured cries”, is a clear parallel of Zeitblom’s later description of the hellish music of Leverkühn’s “Apocalypse” with its “yowls, yelps, screeches, bleats, bellows, howls, and whinnies, to the mocking, triumphant laughter of hell” (DF, 397).<sup>63</sup>) The language employed by both the devil and Zeitblom is emotive and creates a vivid image of hell and Adrian’s music in the reader’s imagination. Mann’s use of onomatopoeia and the rapid succession of words also demonstrate how he uses language to musical effect and reminds us of the “Sirens” episode of *Ulysses*, though the latter takes these literary devices to their extreme. This, I would argue, implies that Mann is rejecting the assumption that language is *ipso facto* incapable of representing music; just as the devil nullifies his declaration that hell cannot be represented by language. In essence Mann treats music as a novelist treats any subject, and although there are clear examples of Adrian’s music being grounded in reality, such as the irresistible comparison between his early orchestral impressionism and Debussy and Ravel, his development of twelve-tone technique and Schönberg (to whom it is really indebted) and a later comparison of the Faust cantata to Beethoven’s “Ode to Joy”, it is ultimately irrelevant to *hear* Leverkühn’s music outside of Mann’s literary depiction of it.<sup>64</sup>)

Leverkühn’s music resides outside the aural realm, but the question of how Mann represents his music is still highly significant. Thus we turn to Mann’s representation of Leverkühn’s music and technique via literary methods in the novel: firstly, the incorporation of the H-E-A-E-Es (B-E-A-E-E-flat in English notation) motif, and secondly the incorporation of the twelve-tone technique of composition; as evidenced in both the “Brentano Cycle” and Leverkühn’s

<sup>63</sup>) The effect here is much the same in the original German: „Das ist die geheime Lust und Sicherheit der Höllen, daß sie nicht denunzierbar, daß sie vor der Sprache geborgen ist, daß sie eben nur ist, aber nicht in die Zeitung kommen, nicht publik werden, durch kein Wort zur kritisierenden Kenntnis gebracht werden kann, wofür eben die Wörter ‚unterirdisch‘, ‚Keller‘, ‚dicke‘, ‚Mauern‘, ‚Lautlosigkeit‘, ‚Vergessenheit‘, ‚Rettungslosigkeit‘, die schwachen Symbole sind. Mit symbolis, mein Guter, muß man sich durchaus begnügen, wenn man von der Höllen spricht [...] Richtig ist, daß es in der Schalldichtigkeit recht laut, maßlos und bei weitem das Ohr überfüllend laut sein wird von Gilfen und Girren, Heulen, Stöhnen, Brüllen, Gurgeln, Kreischen, Zetern, Griesgramen, Betteln und Folterjubel, so daß keiner sein eigenes Singen vernehmen wird, weils in dem allgemeinen erstickt, dem dichten, dicken Höllengejauchz und Schandgetriller, entlockt von der ewigen Zufügung des Unglaublichen und Unverantwortlichen.“ THOMAS MANN, *Doktor Faustus: Das Leben des deutschen Tonsetzers Adrian Leverkühn erzählt von einem Freunde*, Frankfurt/M.1980, pp. 330–331.

<sup>64</sup>) This is not to say composers haven’t tried to realise Adrian’s music, for example: GEOFFREY GORDON’S *The Doktor Faustus Concerto for Cello and Orchestra*, commissioned by the Copenhagen Philharmonic, which first premiered on 31 January 2014, at the Royal Danish Academy of Music, under guest conductor RORY MACDONALD.

final and most significant composition the “Lamentation of Dr. Faustus”. One of the major ways Mann incorporates musical technique in the novel is through Leverkühn’s use of the note sequence signifying the name “Hetaera Esmeralda”, the prostitute from whom Leverkühn knowingly contracts syphilis – solidifying his Faustian pact. It appears chiefly in the song which Zeitblom describes as “probably the most beautiful of the thirteen Brentano lieder [...] “Oh sweet maiden, how bad you are,” [...] and then in [...] *Lamentation of Dr. Faustus*” (DF, 166). This motif foreshadows Leverkühn’s development of the twelve-tone technique and functions in “Oh Sweet Maiden” as the closest example thus far of “strict style”, as Leverkühn outlines in the following:

“Just once, in the Brentano cycle,” he said, “in the song ‘Oh Sweet Maiden.’ It all comes from [...] a row of intervals capable of multiple variation, taken from the five notes B-E-A-E-E-flat – both the horizontal and vertical lines are determined and governed by it [...] It is like a word, a key word that leaves its signature everywhere in the song and would like to determine it entirely. [...] One would have to proceed from here and build longer words from the twelve steps of the tempered semi-tone alphabet, words of twelve letters, specific combinations and interrelations of the twelve semi-tones, rows of notes – from which, then, the piece, a given movement, or a whole work of several movements would be strictly derived. [...] Free notes would no longer exist. That is what I would call strict style.” (DF, 205)

Leverkühn likens his musical technique to “a key word that leaves its signature everywhere in the song”, a description that both implies Wagnerian leitmotif; the disease which will leave its mark, physically and mentally, on the composer; and demonstrates instances of language being *necessary* to represent music. It is worth pointing out at this juncture that nowhere in the novel does Mann incorporate musical notation, even though it would be entirely justifiable given the faux-biography style. Therefore, one can only assume that Mann believed language to be a satisfactory tool to express even the most technical of musical ideas. The motif itself constitutes an example of the dichotomy between Apollonian and Dionysian forces at work in Leverkühn: Adrian, although Dionysian in his pursuit and development of a strict rational mathematical method to create enharmonic music, ultimately creates an Apollonian system of composition whilst remaining entirely Dionysian in his passion for Esmeralda,<sup>65</sup>) for whom the work is cryptically devoted. Here we have a palpable example of how music and myth are inextricably linked. Moreover, we see the first true example of Leverkühn experimenting with musical style and technique, and as Reed argues, the piece is “actually born out of intoxication, not just in that Adrian’s

<sup>65</sup>) OSMAN DURRANI, *The Tearful Teacher: The Role of Serenus Zeitblom in Thomas Mann’s Doktor Faustus*, in: *The Modern Language Review*, vol. 80, no. 3 (1985), pp. 652–658, p. 657.

serial method is invented after he infects himself, but because it stems from the source of his infection: Esmeralda”,<sup>66</sup>) alluding to his Faustian pact and the Dionysian state from which the piece was composed. This is further evidence of the configuration of music and myth in the novel. It is from this moment, however, that Leverkühn alternates between bouts of productive ecstasy and unproductive ill health, a feature of Nietzsche’s own life. The representation of Leverkühn’s music in conjunction with the Faust myth can shed light on aspects of his character that may otherwise have been overlooked: it is through his music that we discover the details of his life.

Leverkühn’s five-tone motif anticipates the development of his version of twelve-tone technique and is grounded in the phrase “For I die as both a wicked and good Christian” (DF, p. 512) [„denn ich sterbe als ein böser und guter Christ“], which of course consists of twelve syllables. This technique is the chief mode of composition used in Adrian’s final work “The Lamentation of Dr. Faustus” and the piece as a whole is worth discussing as it can illuminate many of the novel’s themes. Firstly, the “Faust” cantata is described as being laden with “echo effects” (DF, 510): Mann repeats the word “echo” to induce its sound effect in the reader’s imagination and to allude to the memory of Leverkühn’s recently deceased nephew, known to him as Echo – who died, we infer, as a result of Leverkühn’s breaching of his Faustian pact. The mournful echo effect of the cantata is a small but poignant example of how Mann uses music via myth to convey key events of the novel. This incident demonstrates how the music reinforces ideas that the reader is already aware of, but there are many other incidents where music through myth functions as the *only* tool through which to understand Mann’s intentions and the overarching themes of the novel. The major theme of the piece of ‘Faustus’ is worth looking at in detail:

The words, “For I die as both a wicked and good Christian,” provide the general theme for this work of variations. If one counts syllables, one finds twelve in all, and the theme is set to all twelve tones of the chromatic scale, [...] The theme lies at the basis of every sound heard, or better, it lies almost like a musical key, behind everything and builds the single identity of the most varied forms – the same identity that reigns between the crystal chorus of angels and the howls of hell in the *Apocalypse* [...] what a profoundly demonic jest! – as a result of the absoluteness of the form, music is liberated as language. (DF, 512)

Zeitblom’s narrative description of this music functions in various ways and informs our reading of Leverkühn’s fate. To die as both a “wicked and good Christian” is the theme that “lies at the basis of every sound heard [...] like a musical key”, a somewhat juxtaposing assertion theologically speaking, but

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<sup>66</sup>) REED, Thomas Mann (cit. fn. 59), p. 386.

significant nonetheless as it is from this dichotomy that the reader's subjectivity comes into play, as we must determine whether there is hope for Leverkühn after his imminent death. The theme provides the musical key because within this mode of composition there can be no formal key, as Leverkühn earlier discovered as a music student when discussing the cycle of fifths, which informs his development of this strict style. Pre-sensual-intoxication, Leverkühn was unable to harness what he was on the verge of discovering as a student, i.e. strict style, and formulate it into a liberating technique of composition; conversely, post-sensual-intoxication, he not only nurtures this technique but masters it. As Robert Vilain points out, Leverkühn "is fascinated by music, not as a form of emotional self-expression but for its abstract intellectuality, the arithmetical and geometric patterns discernible in it or creatable with it".<sup>67</sup>) The Dionysian intoxication symbolized by his signing the pact with the devil (and his physical encounter with Esmeralda), results paradoxically in this intellectually cool form of compositional technique from which "purely expressive" music occurs. The sense of the Dionysian is most prevalent in the music in Faust's descent into hell in which "an orchestral piece of grand ballet music, a gallop of fantastic rhythmic variety" is described by Zeitblom as "an overwhelming eruption of lamentation after an orgy of infernal gaiety" (DF, 513). That this is born out of a work of the "utmost calculation" is the essence of Nietzsche's argument in *The Birth of Tragedy*: "Dionysus speaks the language of Apollo; and Apollo, finally the language of Dionysus; and so the highest goal of tragedy and of all art is attained" (BT, p. 130).

In approaching Leverkühn's music through a consideration of myth we are confronted with questions surrounding his fate and the possibility of salvation. It is clear that Leverkühn is consciously concerned with redemption: he confesses his sins to his peers and by implication appeals to the outside world from which he has isolated himself. This emotional appeal is as uncharacteristic as the purely expressive "Faustus" composition, but it does reveal a sense of hope for his music, as ultimately it is for the music that Leverkühn died and through which he may enter into posterity. This offers a partial explanation as to why our somewhat unreliable narrator, Zeitblom, perceives to hear the high G of the cello resonating in the quiet after all other instruments have ceased playing "Faustus". Foreshadowing the melancholy fact that after Adrian's collapse and eventual death all that is left is his music. It appears a perfectly sensible reading of the novel to assume there is hope for Leverkühn's music, if, as has been well established by numerous scholars, there is indeed a link between Germany and

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<sup>67</sup>) ROBERT VILAIN, Mann, *Doktor Faustus*, in: PETER HUTCHINSON (ed.), *Landmarks in the German Novel* (1), Oxford 2007, p. 206.

Leverkühn; it follows that if there is hope for Germany's cultural future there must also be hope for Leverkühn's music: this is the crux from which to understand the "Faustus" composition.

The purely orchestral conclusion of the piece is described as taking "the opposite path of the ›Ode to Joy‹, negating by its genius that transition from symphony to vocal jubilation. It is a revocation" (DF, p. 514). In other words, music is born out of language, as the opposite is true of Beethoven's piece. This may function as a productive way of understanding the novel as a whole; while it is perhaps an attractive proposition to identify Leverkühn and his music with existing composers and compositions, Mann, I would argue, is creating fictional music in his narrative for the realm of the imagination, for literary purposes, and to "hear" it is irrelevant. This is not to say that it is unhelpful to have aural reference points, particularly in the work of Beethoven, Wagner and Schoenberg, but we should not lose sight of the fact that Mann's primary focus is, of course, literary. If one recalls Kretzschmar's "terrifying tale" (DF, p. 62) at the beginning of the novel, of Beethoven struggling to finish the Credo with its problematic fugue (DF, pp. 62–63), it is noteworthy that Beethoven would not "hear" his late work in the strictest sense either. This is not so different from Leverkühn's own situation: he does not actually hear any of his work performed and in a heightened dramatic and rare moment in which Adrian is about to perform parts of "Faustus" for a private audience, he collapses in a Dionysian fashion, striking a "strongly dissonant chord" (DF, p. 527), reminding us of his visit to the brothel where he first saw Esmeralda (DF, p. 152) and Nietzsche's collapse in Turin.<sup>68</sup> The association with Beethoven and finality is made most obvious by Zeitblom who refers to the "Lament" as an "Ode to Sorrow" (DF, p. 514), the melancholic counterpoint to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

#### 4. *The Aesthetic Interplay of Music and Myth*

The aesthetics of music and myth denote a literary preoccupation in the first half of the twentieth century (and beyond) that has been strikingly neglected. This essay has demonstrated how the central tenets of Nietzsche's ›The Birth of Tragedy‹ can assist in uncovering fundamental features of two famously complex novels that may otherwise have been overlooked. While there remains work to be done on this topic given the broader context of literary modernism, this essay has indicated a productive literary configuration that aims towards a profound notion of artistic intermediality. For Joyce, Odysseus is the most

<sup>68</sup>) KARL S. GUTHKE, *Genius and Insanity: Nietzsche's Collapse as Seen from Paraguay*, in: *Exploring the Interior: Essays on Literary and Cultural History*, Cambridge 2018, pp. 319–336, p. 320.

complete character in literary history, he is at once father, son, warrior, husband, lover, and so on. Joyce retells the myth by making the extraordinary hero ordinary, but no less multifaceted. For Mann, Faust is the archetypal tragic German antihero, and Mann reopens the issue of Faust's fate in a bid to draw parallels with the relationship between art and nation, progress and destruction. Joyce and Mann, as well as updating Homeric and Faustian myths, both depict, respond to and reformulate Nietzsche's early aesthetic mythology. The dichotomy between the intoxicating power of music and the rational method of composition is explored explicitly in the "Sirens" episode of ›Ulysses‹, in which it occurs in Bloom's stream of consciousness as he reflects on the music being played in the Ormond bar and it occurs in ›Doctor Faustus‹ at length through the representation of Mann's Dionysian antihero Adrian Leverkühn and his music.

Perhaps most fundamentally of all, this essay has sought to expound the often nebulous issue of representing an artform (music) belonging to the sphere of Dionysus in another art form belonging to that of Apollo (the novel). The musicality of Joyce's writing, particularly in the "Sirens", aptly recalls Walter Pater's famous declaration that "all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music".<sup>69</sup>) As Samuel Beckett, in relation to Joyce's final novel, "Work in Progress" (later ›Finnegans Wake‹), lucidly tells us: Joyce's prose "is not about something, it *is that something itself*."<sup>70</sup>) Conversely, this essay has presented an argument against the primacy of music in ›Doctor Faustus‹; Mann's technique being more reflective than imitative, provides a philosophical meditation on the relationship between music, myth and nationhood with the theme of finality underscoring the narrative. In ›Ulysses‹, Joyce exercises his linguistic virtuosity and grasp of modernist technique to push the boundaries and explore the potentialities of the English language, resulting in a radically new musical poetics, while simultaneously grounding his story and characters' in a prehistoric myth that lies at the foundation of Western literature. In ›Doctor Faustus‹, Mann provides a deep and sustained technical and philosophical meditation on the essence of music by conveying with great plausibility the genesis of an anti-heroic genius composer, culminating in his development of an avant-garde compositional technique, fuelled by a Faustian pact; a highly original retelling of the myth which makes Faust a musician.<sup>71</sup>) In both ›Ulysses‹ and ›Doctor

<sup>69</sup>) WALTER PATER, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, ed. and intro. by ADAM PHILIPS, Oxford 1986, p. 86.

<sup>70</sup>) SAMUEL BECKETT et al., *Our Exagmination Round his Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress*, London 1929, p. 14.

<sup>71</sup>) PATRICK CARNEGIE'S ›Faust as Musician: a study of Thomas Mann's novel Doctor Faustus‹ (1973) remains the best study of this fascinating aspect of the novel.

Faustus, there is much subtle and explicit material in the narrative depiction of music and myth which highlights the intrinsic relationship between the two. In approaching the relationship between music and myth in the modern novel we can cultivate a more profound understanding of the overarching themes, characters and narrative of the literary work as well as elucidate the broader artistic and philosophical aims of the author. It is in such prose writings as ›Ulysses‹ and ›Doctor Faustus‹ that the interplay of music and myth reaches its zenith.