

‘Mother-Daughter Syntax’: Sound, Borders and the Inheritance of the Maternal in James Joyce’s “Eveline”

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Abstract

This article offers a re-reading of James Joyce’s “Eveline” as a transnational story. The concept of the transnational is brought into conversation with motherhood studies, more precisely, with the notion of the ‘mother-daughter dyad’ (Hirsch). The key here is to explore the formal and narratological clues that Joyce uses to convey religiously inflected inheritances of the maternal, inner splits, patterns of repression and matrophobic reflexes. Joyce partly maps Eveline’s psyche by engaging the reader in a set of delicate auditory exercises and, thereby, offers an indirect re-writing of the Orpheus myth. This article shows how the short story has been conceived as a sort of soundbox and demonstrates that Stephen Clingman’s conceptualisation of the transnational through ‘vertical’ versus ‘horizontal’ patterns of identity can be productively applied in the exploration of literary representations of mother-daughter relations as well.

Keywords: James Joyce, *Dubliners*, Eveline, transnational, Orpheus myth, inheritance of the maternal, sound

[...] [T]here is a correlation between how the self is put together and how we navigate ourselves through space and time. It is this *how* that we can understand as a form of grammar, and movement is intrinsic to its constitution. (Clingman 11) [emphasis in the original]

With your milk, Mother, I swallowed ice. (Irigaray 60)

A powerful scene unfolds at the end of James Joyce's "Eveline" (1904), of a young, dutiful daughter who finds herself paralysed on the pier, unable to elope as she had promised to do by boarding the ferry with her lover Frank, first to England and then, eventually, to South America. This enigmatic moment comes after we, as readers, have observed Eveline sitting at home, ruminating for hours over her decision while she holds two goodbye letters in her hands – one for her father and one for her brother. Sitting by the window, she recollects her childhood, her dull life, her abusive father and her deceased mother, whose deathbed plea "to keep the home together" (Joyce 30) is suddenly re-evoked without warning by a melody she hears coming from the street. It is the same melody she heard on the night her mother passed away. The sound reaches her unexpectedly; not only does it re-awaken the image or memory of the dead mother, it also seemingly rekindles a deeper *bond*, sealed with the promise not to leave the house.

First published in the *Irish Homestead* in 1904, Joyce's "Eveline" clearly concerns itself with *transnational* issues – the impulse to move and cross over into a new life, the desire to break free – but also with a deep sacrificial logic of repression – the inner invisible boundaries of the self versus outer national borders. Whereas male characters in the story seem to navigate through space without too many obstacles (her brother moves to Southern Ireland; her father's friend to Melbourne; her lover, Frank, is a sailor), Eveline remains trapped in a strange space of crossing. And, yet, as we shall see, it is precisely this in-between space coupled with the impulse to elope that discloses the contours of a more secret and hidden map – what, Stephen Clingman, in the epigraph above calls the inner "grammar" of the self. This article is a re-examination of the transnational in James Joyce's "Eveline". More specifically, my aim is to analyse how formal and thematic transnational patterns operate in the text and are used by Joyce to convey a deeper matrix connected to identity and place, movement and gender.

As a term, the 'transnational' entered literary and critical studies roughly about three decades ago. Although writers and texts have been travelling in countries and across borders since time immemorial, the emergence of transnational literary studies can be traced back to the demise of the bipolar global order in 1989, the emergence of globalisation and the increasing flow of people, ideas and commodities across national borders (Appadurai). As has been acknowledged recently by some scholars, there is no homogenous or common understanding of the term (Jay; Wiegandt). One strain within the field has explored questions of poetics and the circulation of aesthetic forms (Ramazani); another has been concerned with the impact of textual circulation on marketing, processes of reception and textual production (Adesokan). Very generally, there has been an interest in hybrid and diasporic identities. For the specific purpose of this article, however, I am particularly indebted to Stephen Clingman's own theoretical and original inflection of the term.

In his superb study, *The Grammar of Identity: Transnational Fiction and the Nature of the Boundary* (2009), Clingman makes the crucial point that a transnational approach to literature allows us to explore not only what happens to identities, characters and texts once they cross national borders. At a deeper and more philosophical level, such a framework also helps us problematise the *nature* of boundaries, both within and beyond the self (cf. Clingman 3-6). What is fundamental for my reading of "Eveline" is Clingman's insight that it is often once people put themselves on the move or contemplate the *possibility* of navigation that an inner morphology and geography of the self becomes tangible and explorable in the first place. The 'geo-psychic' material in question is far from easy to detect. It has to do with complex processes of identity formation, intersectional factors such as gender, class, and race, but also unconscious material, desires and affects, personal inclinations that reveal how the self might relate to the self, to others and to the world at large.

Clingman's book is based on the premise that movement and navigation are intrinsic to the formation and constitution of the human self – as foundational as language. 'How' we navigate time and space, Clingman writes, reflects 'how' our inner self is put together; he compares this inner 'how' to a kind of grammar made up of different possibilities, modalities, combinations (cf. Clingman 11-16). In what is one of the most original and intriguing insights of his book, he makes the point that, it is when prompted by movement that the self might reveal a more or less positive inner syntax. More specifically, he differentiates between a transitive syntax, which is open to change, difference and exploration, and an intransitive or non-generative type of syntax, that is, one that once confronted with change and difference reacts by constructing boundaries, refusing contiguity, touch and connection (cf. Clingman 28-9). Furthermore, in the attempt to define more concretely some of the dynamics and tendencies at play within the self, Clingman resorts to two notions: the vertical and the horizontal. With the former, Clingman associates mechanisms such as "repression, substitution, sacrifice" (cf. Clingman 135). These are all psychic mechanisms that complicate connection, touch and navigation. With the latter, Clingman associates navigation, transition and mutation. It goes without saying that these dimensions are not intended as fixed essences, but as potential alignments that always remain interconnected and interrelated in a dynamic way. Whether we carry within ourselves a more or less transitive grammar is something that we cannot predict, know or fix *a priori*; it very much depends on many variables: experiences of pleasure and pain, mechanisms of repression and fear; asymmetries of power; cultural and social constraints, mother-daughter relations, as we shall see. It certainly emerges and reveals itself only once we find ourselves on the move, in a *space of crossing* – in this case on the dock by the sea.

For the specific case of Joyce's "Eveline", this is a crucial notion that allows us to engage in a different type of inquiry. By placing his heroine in a space of crossing, Joyce allows readers to gain insights into a deeper drama and cartography that does not unfold or reveal itself merely on the level of plot or action. By following, combining, intersecting – eventually synthesising – a set of peculiar hermeneutical coordinates, textual clues and transnational formal elements – the reader glimpses a type of pattern that pertains to the interior life of the self. As Clingman reminds us, transnational texts can offer access to *inner maps* and inner human cartographies. Literature represents a valuable and unique archive of the wide range of possible configurations, trodden but also interrupted routes, that we have inherited throughout time (cf. Clingman 31).

A second concern of this essay is to put Clingman's original approach to selfhood and movement in dialogue with motherhood studies and, more specifically, with what has been referred to as the 'mother-daughter dyad' (Rich; Silva; Chodorow). Indeed, this article is premised on the assumption that there is a deep interconnection between the institutionalisation of motherhood, the nuclear hetero-normative family, gendered divisions of labour and how, in turn, spaces (domestic, public, geographical, political) and borders (both inner and outer) are navigated by daughters along a matrilineal lineage. If, as Clingman points out, navigation and movement are foundational for how selves are put together, we cannot ignore the extent to which mobility has always been and, to a large extent, still remains a possibility and experience conditioned by patriarchal predicaments.

Important scholarship in the field of motherhood studies has drawn attention to the fact that, within hetero-normative and Catholic cultures such as Joyce's Ireland, the process of individuation for daughters has involved a more tortuous process of de-passioning and separation from the mother, than for sons. In *Of Woman Born* (1976), a path-breaking critique of motherhood as a patriarchal and religious institution, Adrienne Rich dedicates an entire chapter to this phenomenon. The American poet and feminist intellectual was, most likely, the first one to set out the notion of a mother-daughter 'problematic' marked by paradoxical yearnings, strange mirrorings and passionate double-binds. In "Motherhood and Daughterhood", she describes the mother-daughter 'dyad' as a cathectic and passionate bond that "cracks consciousness" (cf. Rich 231); the work of separation by daughters from mothers is pictured as a relentless and laborious – potentially endless – process. Far from being a healthy form of attachment, Rich shows how the mother-daughter bond is a symptom of the limiting and stifling ways in which patriarchal structures have institutionalised motherhood on a spatial, symbolic and affective level. She mentions "impossible expectations" and idealisations imposed on women, the pressure to produce perfect daughters and an internalised degrading posture of women constantly in attunement to male needs (cf. Rich 233; 243). Mothers do not only automatically identify more intensely with

their daughters; their two biologically alike bodies mirror and attract each other; a “subliminal, subversive, preverbal” form of knowledge (cf. Rich 220) is transmitted between them. Seminal for my reading of “Eveline” is Rich’s comment on matrophobia, which she understood as a “womanly splitting of the self” (236), a psychic wound and the phobic fear of becoming like one’s mother (cf. Rich 235–6). “The mother”, Rich wrote, “stands for the victim in ourselves, the unfree woman, the martyr. Our personalities seem dangerously to blur and overlap with our mothers’; and, in a desperate attempt to know where mother ends and daughter begins, we perform radical surgery” (236). In this regard, then, it becomes evident that what transnational and motherhood studies clearly share is a general concern with the etiology and morphology of borders and, in turn, with the implications these have for the ways in which we navigate both space and human relationships.

The themes of motherhood and of the mother-daughter bond have already attracted a great deal of scholarly attention within Joyce studies. A number of critics have looked at the trope of the constraining dead mother, arguing that in “Eveline”, but also in other stories in *Dubliners*, mothers often function as disabling ‘ghosts’ that haunt and handicap the lives of their offspring (O’Gorman; LeBlanc; Paige; Rademacher). If, on the one hand, these critics have rightly detected a narcissistic dark trait in *Dubliners’* mothers, they have failed, on the other hand, to analyse how such negative sides are often a product of how motherhood and maternal roles have been institutionalised and disciplined for centuries within patriarchal Catholic societies, both on a cultural and political level.¹

Another substantial body of work has addressed Eveline’s inability to elope from a more historically inflected perspective. Laura Reinares, for example, reads the story against the context of the emergence of global sex trafficking at the beginning of the 20th century whereas Katherine Mullin has famously read it in connection with the social purity propaganda that was circulating at the time.² As

1 See, for example, Nancy Chodorow’s canonical book *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender* (U of California P, 1978). By drawing on a sociological, feminist and psychoanalytic framework, Chodorow’s was one of the first systematic studies that showed how women are not by nature ‘carers’ and ‘maternal’. Rather they learn to be mothers and the institution as well as ideology of motherhood are used to limit women’s role in society and to reproduce gendered divisions of labour as well as patriarchal capitalist structures. See also Dorothy Dinnerstein’s critique of the division of labour between male and female spheres in *The Mermaid and the Minotaur: Sexual Arrangements and Human Malaise* (Harper, 1976).

2 In *James Joyce, Sexuality and Social Purity* (Cambridge UP, 2003), Mullin provides ample evidence of the propaganda targeted at young women in Ireland against white slavery and the risk of falling into prostitution schemes at the beginning of the 20th century. The phrase “going to Buenos Ayres” clearly insinuated taking up a life of prostitution. Similarly, Reinares, in her chapter “James Joyce’s ‘Eveline’ and the Emergence of Global Sex Trafficking” in (Routledge, 2014), offers a detailed historical account of the sex trafficking industry thriving at the time through, for example, the Jewish criminal association Zwi Migdal. See also Ellen Jones’s article on social purity (2006).

interesting as such contextual readings may be, they tend to reduce Joyce's story to plot and thematic procedures, thereby hardly taking the literary ambiguity and aesthetic subtlety at play in such a carefully crafted text into account. Reinares, for example, concludes her essay by making the rather reductive and unimaginative point that, despite her oppression and miserable life at home, Eveline makes the right choice to stay in Dublin: by sailing with Frank to Argentina, surely, she would have fallen into the trap of sexual enslavement (cf. Reinares 29).

Indeed, it is by putting too much emphasis on the final scene of the story that critics have seen in Eveline an epitome of 'Irish paralysis', a concept that recurs often in Joycean literature, particularly in the reception of *Dubliners*. As Dieter Fuchs reminds us, Joyce associated this expression with "the shallow essence of the Dublin world", a dull and sterile life "fully determined by the institution of the Roman Catholic Church" (cf. Fuchs 474). Thematically, critics have tended to pick up on the symbol of dust, on the chains of family bonds, on Eveline's lack of voice and, most significantly, on the haunting presence of her dead mother. Yet, similarly to other pathologising terms such as 'trauma' or 'madness', paralysis is a term that can be easily essentialised and, thus, turned into an empty container. In reality, no matter whether mental, cultural or physical, paralysees can neither be simplified nor homogenised. Each paralysis has different meanings and carries different contents; most significantly, each paralysis comes in different *forms*. Critics, so far, have tended to read transnational elements separately from the themes of motherhood and daughterhood. I argue, however, that Joyce relies on a transnational aesthetics less to make a point about (post)colonial relations between Ireland and Britain (Uphaus) or to make plain and expose Eveline's 'paralytic condition' (Wicht) than to thematise a *boundary problematic*, which is intimately related to the 'mother-daughter dyad' as well as to a patriarchal and religiously inflected inheritance that exceeds the domestic and private sphere. As will be shown in the following, then, the figure of the mother cannot be reduced merely to a haunting 'ghost' or to an 'absent presence' (O'Gorman) and it is reductive to read "Eveline" according to a hydraulic model of paralysis versus resistance (Wicht; Williams; Ben-Merre). A more complicated hermeneutical challenge is at stake, which goes beyond the consummation of plot, climaxes and anti-climaxes, one which has to do with allowing sonoric patterns to capture the violent inner interplay of contradicting *imagos*, a vertical versus a horizontal pulling, which, eventually, precludes the possibility of change. By drawing on Clingman's model of the transnational, we will see how Joyce resorts to an articulated spectrum of sonoric and textual clues to convey a specific 'vertical' (cf. Clingman 134-145) matrix underlying Eveline's paralysis.³

3 In his article, "Rereading James Joyce's 'The Sisters' – A Bakhtinian Approach" (2006), Fuchs has already convincingly argued that, often, in Joyce's short stories, 'paralysis' and monologism are effects on the surface of the text. On a deeper level, Joyce's short stories mask a polyphonic and dynamic quality that "subvert[s] the incapacitating atmosphere of paralysis" (Fuchs 475).

THE VERTICAL AND THE HORIZONTAL IN JAMES JOYCE'S "EVELINE"

A yellowing photograph of a migrant priest; a broken harmonium; a coloured print of the promises made to Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque.⁴ The reader is likely to gloss over these three seemingly unrelated objects when reading James Joyce's "Eveline". They appear quite soon in the story. Joyce carefully places them in the living room of the eponymous heroine. Interestingly, they are not casually scattered across the room. The photograph of the priest and the print of Alacoque's promises hang next to each other above the broken instrument. To overlook them on a first reading is easy because, as readers, we are accustomed to identifying with characters and their inner conflicts; we tend to focus on *what* happens and to register spatial descriptions and material objects as part of a larger decorative setting or background against which the 'real' drama unfolds. In the specific case of this short story, moreover, the reader sees this triad of objects filtered and focalised through Eveline's point of view. As she sits by the window debating whether to elope to South America, she inspects the room and looks at the three objects; the reader is told that she has been dusting them for years "once a week" (Joyce 27). Interestingly, only the photograph of the priest catches her attention a moment longer; as she looks at it, she reflects that she could never find out the name of her father's friend who migrated to Melbourne. Otherwise, the two other objects are reviewed almost *en passant* and casually by Eveline.

With this narratological technique a double effect is reached: the reader sees through Eveline's eyes how she glosses over these familiar objects; yet, on a second or even third reading, the reader feels compelled to stop in order to take a closer look at them. Indeed, after multiple readings, a number of questions crystallise for the reader: why the photograph of a priest who has migrated to Australia? Why the print of the promises of a beatified French woman, Blessed Mary Alacoque, and not a portrait of St. Patrick, for example? Why the harmonium and not a flute? Why is the harmonium described as *broken*? Does it *have* to be broken? If

4 Born in 1647, Margaret Alacoque grew up in a fervent Catholic middle class French family. From a very early age she showed a deep and radical fascination with the world of prayer, with devotional and sacrificial practices, ranging from the celebration of Catholic sacraments to self-inflicted corporeal mortifications. She took a vow of chastity already at a very early age, soon after her first communion. Her first apparition of Christ dates back to 27th December 1673. Against the will of her family, she entered the cloister of Visitation at Paray in her early twenties, where she received several apparitions of Jesus pleading a particular devotion to his heart. She died at the age of forty-three in 1690. By the time she was pronounced Blessed by Pope Pius IX (in 1864) and canonised by Benedict XV in 1920, the cult of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus had witnessed great dissemination and transmission in Catholic Europe. It was, in particular, Pope Pius IX in particular who universalised this liturgical feast celebrated every year on the third Friday after Pentecost.

so, why? How are we to read these objects and what should we do with them? Is there a heuristic formula that Joyce asks us to detect?

This article is partly the result of long meditations around these three objects, the combination in which they appear, the narratological and aesthetic significance they have in relation to the larger themes and conflicts dramatised by the story. In their combinatory dramaturgy, these objects fulfil multiple hermeneutical functions that go beyond mere symbolism or decoration. While most critics have discussed these three objects separately and have tended to interpret them as ‘symbols’ of Catholic repression and submission or as ‘thematic’ markers of patriarchal power and paralysis, I suggest that in combination they help us identify a pattern connected to daughterhood and modes of navigating space, the relation between outer borders and inner boundaries, men-women relations, male and female devotion, the inheritance between mothers and daughters and the role that sound might play in tracing such inner cartographies.

If we take a closer look at these three objects and contextualize them within the larger themes of the story, we notice that the photograph of the priest evokes the themes of mobility and migration, and this in connection with a clerical and devotional life spent in the service of the Catholic church. This theme is directly connected to the central drama at the heart of Eveline’s life: to move or not to move? To elope or not to elope? To devote herself to Frank and if so, in what form? To break the cycle of sacrifice or to repeat her mother’s life? We should not overlook how, despite his promises to God and the official vows taken of poverty, chastity and obedience, the priest manages to navigate the oceans and to get to Melbourne. The second object, the print of the promises to Mary Alacoque, is set right next to the priest’s photograph. This print, similarly, evokes a life of devotion, mysticism and self-sacrifice, yet, with a substantial difference: Whereas the priest is turned outward, crosses national borders and moves horizontally while inhabiting a position of clerical power (he can administer and celebrate Catholic sacraments and Holy Orders), the list of promises of Margaret Mary Alacoque – a mystic famous for embracing an extreme logic of male adoration and masochistic self-annihilation – suggests a different type of devotion, all turned inward, a posture of prostration toward the vertical, God, the Absolute. Finally, the broken harmonium below these two objects embodies the idea of potential sound and music. The harmonium *could* emanate sound, which, by definition is transitive and borderless, but the sonoric route remains interrupted. Once again, there is a complex correspondence between this object and the text, both on a formal and thematic level. From the very beginning, “Eveline” is replete with sonoric notifications – the melody which reminds Eveline of her dead mother, the music at the opera, the sea shanties Frank sings to her, the ferry’s whistle in the final scene of the story.

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In a famous chapter of *The Second Sex*, dedicated to female mystics, Simone de Beauvoir refers to Mary Alacoque and denounces a particular pattern according to which women who have been indoctrinated by Catholic patriarchal culture, seek salvation by unconsciously embracing love as their supreme vocation. For de Beauvoir, however, this tendency can only result in failure: “[E]ither the woman establishes a relation with an unreal: her double or God; or she creates an unreal relation with a real being” (de Beauvoir 734). Alacoque was an extreme and interesting example in this sense. Beauvoir quotes from her memoirs, in which Alacoque recounts feeling extreme pleasure and joy while engaging in the most self-mortifying and self-abasing practices – such as cleaning the vomit off a sick person with her tongue. Beauvoir concluded her chapter by arguing that as an effect of Catholic patriarchal cultures, women efface and de-realise themselves to create a relationship with an idealised man. This, for Beauvoir, was a symptom of a deep split, of a state of mental confusion and loss of grip on the world (cf. Beauvoir 734). Whereas some critics rightly see a parallelism between the Alacoque’s promises and the promises Eveline makes to her mother, a further and more intricate parallelism is created when Eveline refers to Frank as her *saviour*. It happens towards the end of the first section of the story after Eveline has been carefully weighing up the implications of her decision, when suddenly a melody reaches her from the street, the same melody she heard the night her mother passed away. Her impulse to the horizontal is suddenly interrupted by the return of the repressed and uncanny, a *matrophobic reflex*, which reveals a deeper boundary problematic. Eveline reviews “the pitiful vision of her mother’s life [...] that life of commonplace sacrifices closing in final craziness” (Joyce 31). Suddenly she jolts, stands up and is caught by an impulse of terror: “She must escape!”, she tells herself, she cannot become like her mother and fall into the trap of the same sacrificial logic. Frank, we read, would “take her in his arms, fold her in his arms. He would save her” (Joyce 31). Suddenly the reader realises that linked to Eveline’s prompt towards the horizontal is the desire to separate and differentiate herself from her mother – a mother, we should not forget, who becomes unavailable and incoherent and yet, shortly before she dies, who finds the lucidity to plead with her daughter to keep the home together as long as she can. The pattern offered here is clear: in the attempt to escape the sense of having become the captive of her mother’s desire, Eveline attempts to expel the maternal interiorised object. Yet, it is often when we refuse and reject, that our unconscious plays a trick on us; out of guilt and a sense of betrayal a strong sense of identification arises.

The very structure and visual dramaturgy of the text suggest disconnection, division, fracture, reflecting Eveline’s psychic split. Joyce creates two specular tableaux, one the reversal or double of the other. The first sees Eveline sitting by the

window occupying a position on a threshold. She is inside, and the horizontal – the promise of freedom and change – is outside. She weighs up and contemplates the implications of her departure, but, at the beginning of the story, transitivity and navigation, exist only as approaching possibilities and projections. In the second section or fragment, the setting is reversed. Eveline is no longer inside; she is outside, where suddenly the horizontal is not only a projection or fantasy but becomes real. It is evening; she is at the dock, facing “the wide doors of the sheds [...] the black mass of the ship” (Joyce 31). In front of her is the sea, pure transitivity. Interestingly, from being her saviour Frank turns into a dark force who “would drown her” (Joyce 31). Again, this moment evokes the theme of separation, the lack of inner boundaries. The images suggest threat, castration anxiety, the fantasy of being devoured: “All the seas of the world tumbled about her heart. He was drawing her into them” (Joyce 31). The moment Eveline can embrace navigation with Frank, she is overwhelmed by distress. Eveline sets up a vertical boundary by directing appealing to God – the most vertical of instances – and starts praying. The story ends on a vertical and intransitive note. Frank departs and Eveline remains in Dublin. We see here a powerful matrix at work, one that keeps Eveline trapped within a vertical matrophobic logic that transforms each horizontal impulse into repression and prostration as she oscillates between the need for protection and the fear of becoming insane. Cutting through Eveline’s psychic map, is therefore, a *fault line*, a lack of clear boundaries between inside and outside, herself and her mother, ultimately between herself and Frank. This *fault line* in her inner cartography speaks of a syntax of connection and reciprocity, which, at the end, remains broken and interrupted.

CONCLUSION: EVELINE – A BROKEN SOUNDBOX?

There is a final pattern that we still need to explore. For, the most puzzling element of the story concerns the presence of a broken instrument, which Joyce places in Eveline’s living room. Once again, we need to ask, why is the harmonium in Eveline’s room broken? What kind of connection and reading does it imply and how does it relate to the vertical pattern we have seen so far? The dead mother’s afterlife, interrupted sound, a broken instrument, the fantasy and desire to be saved. The immediate association cannot be but with Orpheus, the mythical Greek figure who, with his lyre, famously descended into the underworld to save his beloved wife Eurydice (who died after stepping on a viper shortly after their marriage).⁵ Through the resonances and vibrations emitted by his lyre, he

5 For this insight into how Joyce re-writes the Orpheus myth, I am particularly indebted to Dieter Fuchs, our numerous conversations about this topic and his generous feedback at the yearly AAUTE Conference in Salzburg (May 2022).

descends into the underworld and is able to rescue her. Yet, in the end, he loses her again. He had promised the Gods to guide Eurydice out of the underworld and not to look back at her until they reached the upper world. Unsure whether he would be followed by Eurydice or by a shadow, Orpheus fatally turns back as soon as he spots the sun and, once again, tragically sees her vanishing behind his shoulders.

The parallelisms and thematic reversals connected to this myth are multiple. Even if indirectly, they also connect to our vertical transnational pattern on various levels. For, Joyce draws on the pagan world to explore routes of transmission and sound as well as mother-son and mother-daughter relations. We should not overlook the point that Orpheus inherited the gift of music from his mother, Calliope, the Muse of epic poetry. The wisest of the nine Muses, she is also known as Homer's Muse, the one who inspired the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*. Statues or figurative representations, traditionally portray her with a papyrus roll or a wax tablet on her knee and a stylus in her hand. Whereas the transmission between Orpheus and his mother is generative and creative (she is the one who teaches her son how to sing), in "Eveline" the transmission between mother and daughter fails. "Derevaun, Seraun! Derevaun Seraun!" (Joyce 31): many critics have speculated widely – in vain – about the possible meaning of these cryptic words pronounced by Eveline's mother before she dies. Whereas on a strictly literal level, the semantics of these exclamations remains obscure, onomatopoeically, and on a more auditory level, they evoke broken chords, the broken sounds which might well emanate from a broken harmonium. Thus, Joyce, creates a metonymic link between the body of Eveline's mother and the broken harmonium in the house. At the end of her life, Eveline's mother becomes inaccessible. She leaves behind a disfigured map.

This seems to have implications for how Eveline repeatedly transfigures horizontal sonic gifts into vertical admonitions. Even if in an ironic and ambiguous way, Joyce depicts Frank as a modern version of Orpheus. Frank tries to seduce Eveline, to rescue her from her domestic mortuary and to ferry her across the Atlantic ocean through music. "He was awfully found of music and sang a little" (Joyce 29), we are told. Sitting by the window, Eveline ruminates about and reviews the evening spent at the opera with Frank to see *The Bohemian Girl*. Yet, unlike Eurydice, Eveline does not follow Frank. As she stands by the pier undecided whether to join Frank or not, Eveline hears the ferry's whistle. This potent sonic inscription could be welcomed by Eveline as an encouraging and transitive, even festive sign. Yet, it seemingly hits her like a vertical indictment, a kind of sonic prohibition that dialectically inverts the matrophobic impulse. At the very moment that she desperately tries to separate herself from the mother, she identifies with her – is re-possessed by her – and rejects the object of desire.

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By way of attending to the sounds inner boundaries make, this article has tried to show that there is still an unmapped history of vertical versus horizontal legacies that need to be explored. These work as thin, invisible threads binding the living to the dead, daughters to mothers, the past to the present. In this essay, I have shown that Joyce creates a metonymic relation between the interrupted sonic routes in Eveline's house, her body and the text itself. In addition, through the trope of music and melodies and the iconic presence of a broken instrument in Eveline's living room, Joyce also re-writes the Orpheus myth: "Eveline" is conceived as a broken soundbox where sound (and her desire) fails to transform the internalised afterlife of the dead mother. The practice of registering sound in symbolic forms, Lawrence Kramer writes, has the power to change us because it opens up the possibility of "hearing ourselves know and feel" (cf. Kramer 9-10). Such a reading opens up a new hermeneutics and form of knowing that privileges the auditory, but not at the expense of the visual.

By drawing on Clingman's theorisation of the transnational, I have proposed a deeper inquiry into intransitive versus generative grammars of identity as inheritances of the maternal. Yet, by taking transnational elements, psychic maps and vertical versus horizontal patterns into account, this dynamic approach allows us to trace more nuanced and less predictable trajectories, where identity is never fixed but reveals itself as it moves. In this brief article, I hope to have shown that a short story like James Joyce's "Eveline" provides a small insight into an inner map we have inherited as women and daughters. By shifting our attention to inheritances of the maternal and to how space is navigated, an internalised logic reveals itself which is not predictable. An alternative way of thinking about paralysis, then, is to think in terms of vertical versus horizontal patterns. To remain paralysed means to be gripped by a vertical internal logic, a grammar which is not transitive. It can be due to refusal, projection or fear but also to internalised gendered norms of sacrifice and repression – of pleasure and desires. Yet this is neither a fixed nor an essentialised condition. It is a matter of psychic cartography. As long as the impulse to elope is given, the possibility of horizontality persists. This might be, indeed, the tortuous and painful ways in which, from mothers to daughters, horizons of freedom and longings for navigation have been passed down across the generations – through interrupted routes, out-of-tune bodies and intermittent, at times, broken syntaxes. James Joyce's "Eveline" allows us to objectify and externalise these psychic maps and, in this way, the work of navigation, at least the imaginative one, continues.

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Sintaksa mati-hči: zvok, meje in dediščina materinskega v kratki zgodbi "Eveline" Jamesa Joyca

Prispevek ponuja ponovno branje kratke zgodbe "Eveline" Jamesa Joyca kot transnacionalne zgodbe. Pojem transnacionalnega je postavljen v dialog s študijami materinskega, natančneje s konceptom diade 'mati-hči'.

Ključne besede: James Joyce, *Dubliners*, Eveline, transnacionalno, orfejski mit, dediščina materinskega, zvok