



The Backgrounds of Ulysses

Then, pious Eneas, conformant to the fulminant firman which enjoins on the tremylose terrain that, when the call comes, he shall produce nichthemericly from his unheavenly body a no uncertain quantity of obscene matter not protected by copright in the United Stars of Qurania or bedeed and bedood and bedang and bedung to him, with this double dye, brought to blood heat, gallic acid on iron ore, through the bowels of his misery, flashly, faithly, nastily, appropriately, this Esuan Menschavik and the first till last alshemist wrote over every square inch of the only foolscap available, his own body, till by its corrosive sublimation one continuous present tense integument slowly unfolded all marryvoising mood-moulded cyclewheeling history (thereby, he said, reflecting from his own individual person life unlivable, transaccidentated through the slow fires of consciousness into a dividual chaos, perilous, potent, common to allflesh, human only, mortal) but with each word that would not pass away the squidself which he had squirtcreened from the crystalline world waned chagreenold and doriangrayer in its dudhud. This exists that isits after having been said we know.

—*Finnegans Wake* (185–6)

Joyce had been preparing himself to write *Ulysses* since 1907. It grew steadily more ambitious in scope and method, and represented a sudden outflinging of all he had learned as a writer up to 1914. Its use of many styles was an extension of the method of *A Portrait of the Artist*, where the style, at first naive, became romantic and then dramatic to suit Stephen's ontogeny. Now Joyce hit upon the more radical device of the undependable narrator with a style adjusted to him. He used this in several episodes of *Ulysses*, for example in *Cyclops*, where the narrator is so obviously hostile to Bloom as to stir up sympathy for him, in *Nausicaa*, where the narrator's gushiness is interrupted and counteracted by Bloom's matter-of-fact reporting, and in *Eumaeus*, where the narrator writes in a style that is constabular. The variety of these devices made T. S. Eliot speak of the 'anti-style' of *Ulysses*, but Joyce does not seem to oppose

style so much as withdraw it to a deeper level. His ebullient hand shows through its concealments.

The most famous of the devices of *Ulysses*, the internal monologue,* was also the result of earlier experiments. Joyce had been moving rapidly towards a conception of personality new to the novel. Unlike Henry James, who worked by analysis of great trends in moral life, he had begun to evolve in *Dubliners* and *A Portrait* a synthetic method, the construction of character by odds and ends, by minutiae. He did not allow his characters the sudden, tense climaxes towards which James ushered the people of his books, and preferred instead to subdue their dramas. His protagonists moved in the world and reacted to it, but their basic anxieties and exaltations seemed to move with slight reference to their environment. They were so islanded, in fact, that Joyce's development of the interior monologue to enable his readers to enter the mind of a character without the chaperonage of the author, seems a discovery he might have been expected to make.†

He had observed approaches to the interior monologue in Dujardin, George Moore, Tolstoy, even his brother's journal. He had toyed with Freud's theories of verbal association; his notes to *Exiles* first list a group of words: 'Blister-amber-silver-oranges-apples-sugarstick-hair-spongecake-ivy-roses-ribbon,' and then proceed to gloss them: 'The blister reminds her of the burning of her hand as a girl. She sees her own amber hair and her mother's silver hair. . . .'² The notion of dispensing with the gloss and slightly elaborating the key words, as if a multitude of small bells were ringing in the mind, was close at hand. Joyce's first interior monologue was inserted at the end of *A Portrait of the Artist*, where however he makes it seem less extraordinary by having Stephen write it in a journal. It had a dramatic justification there in that Stephen could no longer communicate with anyone in Ireland but himself. But it was also a way of relaxing by sentence fragments and seemingly casual connections among thoughts the more formal style of most of the narrative:

March 21, morning. Thought this in bed last night but was too lazy and free to add it. Free, yes. The exhausted loins are those of Elizabeth and Zacchary. Then he is the precursor. Item: he eats chiefly belly bacon and dried figs. Read locusts and wild honey. Also, when thinking of him, saw always a stern severed head or death mask as if outlined on a grey curtain or veronica. Decollation they call it in the fold. Puzzled for the moment by saint John at the Latin gate. What do I see? A decollated precursor trying to pick the lock. . . .

March 22. In company with Lynch, followed a sizable hospital nurse. Lynch's idea. Dislike it. Two lean hungry greyhounds walking after a heifer.

* Stuart Gilbert argues persuasively that 'silent monologue' would be a more accurate translation of *monologue intérieur*.¹

† Other writers, like Dorothy Richardson, achieved a different kind of monologue for different reasons.

March 23. Have not seen her since that night. Unwell? Sits at the fire perhaps with mamma's shawl on her shoulders. But not peevish. A nice bowl of gruel? Won't you now?

Having gone so far, Joyce in *Ulysses* boldly eliminated the journal, and let thoughts hop, step, jump, and glide without the self-consciousness of a journal to account for their agitation.

Another formative element in *Ulysses*, the counterpoint of myth and fact, was begun when Joyce first evolved the name and character of Stephen Dedalus, when he allowed the imagery of Calvary to play over the last scene in 'The Dead,' when he parodied Dante's division into three parts in 'Grace.' In his notes to *Exiles* Joyce constantly compares his characters to Biblical ones: Robert Hand is the elder brother in the parable of the Prodigal Son; Bertha's state at one point is 'like that of Jesus in the garden of olives,' and she is also like Isolde, her 'sister-in-love.' And Richard and Robert are Sacher-Masoch and Sade.³ In *Ulysses* Joyce uses not only the Homeric and post-Homeric legend, but a variety of other identifications: Stephen is not only Daedalus but Icarus, Hamlet, Shakespeare, Lucifer. Asked why he entitled his book *Ulysses*, Joyce replied, 'It is my system of working.'⁴ The principal task in the book was to find a pagan hero whom he could set loose in a Catholic city, to make Ulysses a Dubliner. Stephen Dedalus could not take this role, for he was Joyce's immature *persona*; as a mature *persona* Joyce chose Leopold Bloom. Stephen and Bloom came from opposite ends of his mind and life, but there were necessarily many resemblances, which Joyce emphasized and justified by making the older man like a father to Stephen.

This counterpoint, which Joyce from the first intended, enabled him to secure the same repetition with variations that he had obtained in *A Portrait*. In the earlier book he had conceived of the whole work as a matrix in which elements of Stephen's being might form and reform; in *Ulysses* he plays Stephen's youthful point of view against Bloom's mature point of view, often confronting them with the same places and ideas. So the two traverse at different times the same parts of Dublin, or think of like things at the same moment. They repeat each other, and then the events are recapitulated on a deeper level in the *Circe* episode, and again, in wider contexts, in the last two episodes, *Ithaca* and *Penelope*.^{*} The enclosing framework in *Ulysses* is in part the body, which supplies an organ to preside over each episode, but it is also the day, which interacts with the minds of the characters, certain hours encouraging certain moods.

^{*} There is also a repetition of incidents from *A Portrait*, often with parodic changes. Stephen's vision of the girl at the seashore, with its stages of excitement carefully delineated, is parodied in *Nausicaa* by Bloom's orgasmic but equally detached contemplation of Gerty MacDowell. In the same way, Stephen's announcement, while walking with Cranly in *A Portrait*, that he is leaving the Church in favor of art, is parodied by Bloom's announcement to his friends Mastiansky and Citron that he is giving up religion for Darwinism. See also note, p. 49.

In the end the whole day seems to terminate in Molly Bloom's nocturnal mind; life returns to its source.

Joyce did not have his book all in mind at the beginning. He urged a friend later not to plan everything ahead, for, he said, 'In the writing the good things will come.'⁵ He knew his modern Ulysses must go through Dublin in a series of episodes like those of the *Odyssey*. An early plan, communicated to his brother on June 16, 1915,⁶ envisaged twenty-two episodes; a later one, announced to Miss Weaver on May 18, 1918, reduced them to seventeen. The eventual number was eighteen. The narrative coalesced excitingly: the Cyclops as a nationalist, Circe as madam of a brothel, were principal connections with Homer, and soon there were more subtle relationships as well. The Trojan horse, for example, is scarcely mentioned in Homer, but Joyce remembered that Dante made it the reason for Ulysses' being in hell. He turned this Odyssean adventure into Bloom's misadventure in volunteering an unconscious tip about the prospects of a dark horse in the races. (Bloom is himself transformed into a horse in the *Circe* episode.) Joyce's high spirits made him see many parallels of this kind: in the *Cyclops* episode, as Stuart Gilbert notices, the cigar Bloom keeps brandishing in front of the citizen is like the spear Ulysses uses to blind the Cyclops; the post-Homeric legend tells how Ulysses stole the statue of Pallas Athena, and in Joyce's book Bloom takes an erotic, profane look at the goddesses in the National Museum. The many light-hearted cross-references of this kind have lent support to the idea that *Ulysses* is a great joke on Homer, but jokes are not necessarily so simple, and these have a double aim. The first aim is the mock-heroic, the mighty spear juxtaposed with the two-penny cigar. The second, a more subtle one, is what might be called the ennoblement of the mock-heroic. This demonstrates that the world of cigars is devoid of heroism only to those who don't understand that Ulysses' spear was merely a sharpened stick, as homely an instrument in its way, and that Bloom can demonstrate the qualities of man by word of mouth as effectively as Ulysses by thrust of spear.

Joyce's version of the epic story is a pacifist version. He developed an aspect of the Greek epic which Homer had emphasized less exclusively, namely, that Ulysses was the only good *mind* among the Greek warriors. The brawny men, Achilles and Ajax and the rest, relied on their physical strength, while Ulysses was brighter, a man never at a loss. But of course Homer represents Ulysses as a good warrior, too. Joyce makes his modern Ulysses a man who is not physically a fighter, but whose mind is unsubduable. The victories of Bloom are mental, in spite of the pervasive physicality of Joyce's book. This kind of victory is not Homeric, though Homer gestures towards it; it is compatible with Christianity, but it is not Christian either, for Bloom is a member of a secular world. Homer's Ulysses has been made less athletic, but he retains the primary qualities of prudence, intelligence, sensitivity, and good will. Consequently Joyce,

as might be expected, found the murder of the suitors at the end of the *Odyssey* to be too bloody as well as too grand. The only bloodletting at the end of *Ulysses* is menstrual. Joyce has Bloom defeat his rival, Blazes Boylan, in Molly Bloom's mind by being the first and the last in her thoughts as she falls off to sleep. In the same way Joyce enabled Richard Rowan in *Exiles* to defeat Robert Hand in Bertha's mind.

Another aspect of his hero Joyce borrowed as much from Dante as from Homer. In Dante Ulysses makes a voyage which Homer does not mention, a voyage which expresses his splendid lust for knowledge. In Canto XXVI of the *Inferno*, Ulysses says: 'Neither fondness for my son nor reverence for my aged father, nor the due love that should have cheered Penelope, could conquer in me the ardor that I had to gain experience of the world, and of human vice and worth.' This longing for experience, for the whole of life, is related to that of Stephen crying at the end of *A Portrait*, 'Welcome, O life,' but Bloom is able, with the persistent, ruminative curiosity which is his middle class correlative for Ulysses' lust, to cover even more of life and the world in his thoughts than Stephen is. He does so, too, without the element of ruthlessness that Dante, modifying Homer's picture of a less hasty hero, criticizes in Ulysses, and which is also prominent in the Stephen of *A Portrait*.

The relationship of Bloom and Ulysses has sometimes been thought to be more tenuous than this: Ezra Pound, for example, insists that the purpose of using the *Odyssey* is merely structural, to give solidity to a relatively plotless work. But for Joyce the counterpoint was important because it revealed something about Bloom, about Homer, and about existence. For Bloom is Ulysses in an important sense. He is by no means a Babbitt. Our contemporary notion of the average man, *l'homme moyen sensuel*, is a notion conditioned by Sinclair Lewis and not by Joyce. It is not a notion which is congenial in Ireland. Irishmen are gifted with more eccentricities than Americans and Englishmen. To be average in Ireland is to be eccentric. Joyce knew this, and moreover he believed that every human soul was unique. Bloom is unusual in his tastes in food, in his sexual conduct, in most of his interests. A critic has complained that Bloom has no normal tastes, but Joyce would undoubtedly reply that no one has. The range of Bloom's peculiarities is not greater than that of other men.

At the same time, Bloom maintains his rare individuality. His responses to experience are like other people's, but they are wider and cleverer. Like Ulysses, though without his acknowledged fame, he is a worthy man. Joyce does not exalt him, but he makes him special. Aldous Huxley says that Joyce used to insist upon a 'thirteenth-century' etymology for the Greek form of Ulysses' name, Odysseus; he said it was a combination of *Outis*—nobody, and *Zeus*—god.⁷ The etymology is merely fanciful, but it is a controlled fancy which helps to reinforce Joyce's picture of the modern Ulysses. For Bloom is a nobody—an advertisement canvasser

who, apart from his family, has virtually no effect upon the life around him—yet there is god in him. By god Joyce does not intend Christianity; although Bloom has been generously baptized into both the Protestant Church and the Catholic Church, he is obviously not a Christian. Nor is he concerned with the conception of a personal god. The divine part of Bloom is simply his humanity—his assumption of a bond between himself and other created beings. What Gabriel Conroy has to learn so painfully at the end of 'The Dead,' that we all—dead and living—belong to the same community, is accepted by Bloom from the start, and painlessly. The very name Bloom is chosen to support this view of Bloom's double nature. Bloom is, like Wallace Stevens's Rosenbloom, an ordinary Jewish name, but the name also means flower, and Bloom is as integral as a flower. Lenehan in the book comments about him, 'He's not one of your common or garden . . . he's a cultured allround man, Bloom is.'⁸ He achieves this distinction in part by not belonging in a narrow sense, by ignoring the limits of national life; he is not so much an Irishman as a man.

The desire Joyce has that Bloom be respected encourages him to give Bloom the power that he has himself, to infuse common things with uncommonness.* Bloom's monologue is a continuous poetry, full of phrases of extraordinary intensity. In the first chapter in which he appears, his mind wanders to thoughts of the East; he imagines himself walking by mosques and bazaars, and says to himself, 'A mother watches from her doorway. She calls her children home in their dark language.' Passing Larry O'Rourke's public house, he says, 'There he is, sure enough, my bold Larry, leaning against the sugarbin in his shirtsleeves watching the aproned curate swab up with mop and bucket.'¹⁰ Or, when he considers the cattlemarket where he once worked, he says to himself, 'Those mornings in the cattlemarket the beasts lowing in their pens, branded sheep, flop and fall of dung, the breeders in hobnailed boots trudging through the litter, slapping a palm on a ripemeated hindquarter, there's a prime one, unpeeled switches in their hands.'¹¹ Or when he thinks of modern Palestine: 'A barren land, bare waste. Volcanic lake, the dead sea: no fish, weedless, sunk deep in the earth. No wind could lift those waves, grey metal, poisonous foggy water. Brimstone they called it raining down: the cities of the plain: Sodom, Gomorrah, Edom. All dead names. A dead sea in a dead land, grey and old. Old now. It bore the

* Bloom's rather fatuous conversation in the *Eumaeus* episode must be understood in terms of the time of day and his physical exhaustion. As Stuart Gilbert writes, 'The *Eumaeus* episode—I remember Joyce's insisting on this point—was meant to represent the intercourse and mental state of two fagged-out men. Stephen is suffering from a mild hangover and inclined to be snappish, while Bloom, half asleep, rambles on—perhaps even intending his talk to have a mildly sedative effect on his young protégé. Bloom can talk and think intelligently when he makes an effort, but he's too tired to make an effort. Personally I find him rather endearing in this episode, and so I think did Joyce.'⁹

oldest, the first race. A bent hag crossed from Cassidy's clutching a naggin bottle by the neck. The oldest people. Wandered far away over all the earth, captivity to captivity, multiplying, dying, being born everywhere.'¹²

It might be supposed that this is Joyce talking for Bloom, and not Bloom's way of thinking at all, that just as the scullions in Shakespeare speak like poets, so does everyone in Joyce. But this is not so. Stephen and Molly, it is true, have their own particular forms of eloquence, although Molly's is limited in scope and Stephen's is hyperconscious; Bloom's surpasses theirs. But there are other examples of interior monologue in *Ulysses* which show none of this disparity between conversation and inward thought. In the *Wandering Rocks* episode, Father Conmee is on his way to the Artane orphanage to arrange to have one of Dignam's children admitted there, and Joyce writes: 'The Superior, the Very Reverend John Conmee S.J. reset his smooth watch in his interior pocket as he came down the presbytery steps. Five to three. Just nice time to walk to Artane. What was that boy's name? Dignam, yes. *Vere dignum et iustum est*. Brother Swan was the person to see. Mr. Cunningham's letter. Yes. Oblige him, if possible. Good practical catholic: useful at mission time.'¹³

And here is another example, of the Dignam boy himself: 'Master Dignam walked along Nassau street, shifted the porksteaks to his other hand. His collar sprang up again and he tugged it down. The blooming stud was too small for the buttonhole of the shirt, blooming end to it. He met schoolboys with satchels. I'm not going tomorrow either, stay away till Monday. He met other schoolboys. Do they notice I'm in mourning? Uncle Barney said he'd get it into the paper tonight. Then they'll all see it in the paper and read my name printed and pa's name.'¹⁴ Bloom differs from lesser Dubliners in that his internal poetry is continual, even in the most unpromising situations. It is one of the primary indications of the value Joyce attaches to him.*

The verisimilitude in *Ulysses* is so compelling that Joyce has been derided as more mimic than creator, which charge, being untrue, is the greatest praise of all. After his death, when the British Broadcasting Corporation was preparing a long program about him, its representatives went to Dublin and approached Dr. Richard Best to ask him to participate in a radio interview. 'What makes you come to me?' he asked truculently. 'What makes you think I have any connection with this man Joyce?' 'But you can't deny your connection,' said the men of the B.B.C., 'After all, you're a character in *Ulysses*.' Best drew himself up and retorted, 'I am

* Jacques Mercanton pleased Joyce by noticing Bloom's artistic nature: 'You're one of the first to say that,' Joyce told him. 'Most people have looked down on Bloom. It is like the women who say to me about Marian Bloom, "Yes, that's the way those women are." Upon which I stare at a corner of the ceiling.'¹⁵

not a character in fiction. I am a living being.'¹⁶ The incident is a useful warning. Even with a *roman à clef*, which *Ulysses* largely is, no key quite fits. Art lavishes on one man another's hair, or voice, or bearing, with shocking disrespect for individual identity. Like Stephen in the *Circe* episode, art *shatters* light through the world, destroying and creating at once. So, when Dubliners asked each other in trepidation after the book appeared, 'Are you in it?' or 'Am I in it?' the answer was hard to give. A voice sounded familiar for an instant, a name seemed to belong to a friend, then both receded into a new being. For instance, the name of Mrs. Purefoy, whose labor pains end in the *Oxen of the Sun* episode with the birth of a boy, comes appropriately enough from Dr. R. Damon Purefoy, in 1904 Dublin's leading obstetrician. As *Finnegans Wake* insists, 'The traits featuring the chiaroscuro coalesce, their contrarities eliminated, in one stable somebody.'¹⁷ Even the personages who retain their actual names, like Dr. Best himself, are often altered; so Best is depicted as saying ceaselessly, 'Don't you know?' not because this was one of his expressions, which it was not, but because it seemed to Joyce the sort of expression that the fictional Best should use.

Still Joyce made Stephen Dedalus emphasize in *Ulysses* that the artist and his life are not distinct. Stephen fabricates Shakespeare's personal development from the evidence of his work. *Venus and Adonis* demonstrates for him that Shakespeare was seduced by Anne Hathaway, like Venus, an older woman; the gloomy *Richard III* and *King Lear* testify that Anne betrayed her husband with his two brothers-in-law Richard and Edmund, whose names Shakespeare accordingly attributes to the villains of those plays; the late plays show by their lightened feelings that the birth of a granddaughter had reconciled Shakespeare to his lot.

This theory, which according to friends Joyce took more seriously than Stephen,* suggests that *Ulysses* divulges more than an impersonal and detached picture of Dublin life; it hints at what is, in fact, true: that nothing has been admitted into the book which is not in some way personal and attached. In *Finnegans Wake* Joyce goes so far as to say of Shem the Penman that, like a spider, he produced 'from his unheavenly body a no uncertain quantity of obscene matter' and 'with this double dye . . . wrote over every square inch of the only foolscap available, his own body. . . .'¹⁹ Instead of being creation's androgynous god, the artist, Joyce now says, is its squid. Of course Joyce was both.

The daughters of memory, whom William Blake chased from his door, received regular employment from Joyce, although he speaks of them disrespectfully. His work is 'history fabled,'²⁰ not only in *A Portrait* but in *Ulysses* as well. He was never a creator *ex nihilo*; he recomposed what he remembered, and he remembered most of what he had seen or had

* Stephen says he does not believe his own theory, but means that it is a parable of the relation of art to life, rather than a biography susceptible of verification.¹⁸

heard other people remember. The latter category was, in a city given over to anecdote, a large one. For the main body of his work Joyce relied chiefly upon his early life in Dublin and the later visits he had made there.* Certain comic material was ready at hand, and, in thinking back upon his native city, he prepared his great convocation of the city's eccentrics. There was Professor Maginni, the dark, middle-aged dancing master of North Great George's Street. Everyone knew his costume of tailcoat and dark grey trousers, silk hat, immaculate high collar with wings, gardenia in buttonhole, spats on mincing feet, and a silver-mounted, silk umbrella in hand. There were also Mrs. M'Guinness the queenly pawnbroker, and the five Hely's sandwichmen, each bearing a letter of the name; there was 'Endymion' Farrell, who carried two swords, a fishing rod, and an umbrella, who wore a red rose in his buttonhole, and had upon his head a small bowler hat with large holes for ventilation; from a brewer's family in Dundalk, he was said to have fallen into a vat and never recovered. Then there was the one-legged beggar known as 'The Blackbird,' who used to sing and to curse under his breath if he got nothing for it.

Less known than these, but familiar to Joyce or his family, was a cluster of other characters.²¹ When Molly Bloom objects to the singing of Kathleen Kearney, the name is a modification of that of Olive Kennedy, who appeared on a concert program with Joyce in 1902. Other names brought up by Molly had a similar basis in fact; Tom Devin's two sons were friends of the Joyces, and Connie Connolly was the sister of his Belvedere classmates Albrecht and Vincent Connolly. Even the dog Garryowen was not made up of stray barks and bites, but belonged to the father of Joyce's Aunt Josephine Murray, whom Gerty McDowell accurately identifies as 'Grandpapa Giltrap.' To find some of his characters Joyce went among the dead, the best example being Pisser Duff, whose name he delicately altered to Pisser Burke. Duff looked harmless, but was a violent man who hung around the markets, brushing down horses while their owners drank at pubs. He was beaten to death by the police in Gardiner Street about 1892, but Joyce evoked him to be a friend of the equally vicious narrator of the *Cyclops* episode. One of the most curious composites is Lenehan, the parasite who speaks French. The name is borrowed from Matt Lenehan, a reporter on the *Irish Times*, but the personality Joyce took from a friend of his father named Michael Hart, who was dead by about 1900. Mick Hart, because of his habit of speaking French, was called Monsart (that is, Monsieur Hart). He worked, as Joyce implies, for a racing paper called *Sport*, and always attended the races in flashy attire. 'Lenehan' makes his first appearance in Joyce's work

* An amusing use of later information is Bloom's advocacy of the Poulaphouca reservoir scheme, which, as Joyce knew, was later adopted, and his prediction that Nannetti would be Lord Mayor of Dublin before long, as indeed he became in 1906.

in 'Two Gallants,' when he is depicted accurately as longing to marry a rich girl. For this purpose Hart paid court for a time to the daughter of Joseph Nagle, one of the three brothers who kept a big public house in Earl Street; but nothing came of it. He knew a great deal about racing and was fond of writing doggerel; his greatest day was that, still recalled by Dubliners, when he 'tipped the double' in verse; that is, he predicted the winners of both the Lincolnshire Handicap and the Grand National Steeplechase.

Not long after this triumph he went downhill, and spent his later days in 'knocking around on the hard.' He continued to write verse; Joyce gives one of his successful productions, a limerick, in the *Aeolus* episode.* Yet, as if to belie his reincarnation *Ulysses*, Joyce includes Michael Hart in a list of Bloom's friends who are now dead.

Joyce's surface naturalism in *Ulysses* has many intricate supports, and one of the most interesting is the blurred margin. He introduces much material which he does not intend to explain, so that his book, like life, gives the impression of having many threads that one cannot follow. For example, on the way to the funeral, the mourners catch sight of Reuben J. Dodd, and Mr. Dedalus says, 'The devil break the hasp of your back.' This reaction seems a little excessive unless we know that Dodd had lent money to Joyce's father, and that the subsequent exactions were the efficient cause of Mr. Dedalus's irritation. In the *Circe* episode Mulligan says, 'Mulligan meets the afflicted mother,' a remark based upon a story current in Dublin that Gogarty, returning home late one night during his medical course, staggered up the steps of his home on Rutland Square, reciting a station of the Cross at each step until, as he reached the top of the stairs and his worried mother opened the door, he concluded, 'Gogarty meets the afflicted mother.' Stephen's allusions to 'The Tinahely twelve' and 'Cranly's eleven true Wicklowmen to free their sireland' refer

* Most of Hart's poems had to do with attempts to get money and credit; one was entitled, 'On Looking for the Loan of a Tanner [sixpence]'; another dealt with his effort to obtain a pint of stout at Darden's Public House:

One day I asked a pint on tick
From Mr. Darden, who
In lordly accents told me
'Twas a thing he didn't do.
In Fanning's I owed threepence,
In Bergin's one and four,
In McGuire's only sixpence
For they wouldn't give me more.

When makes* is gone and nothing's left
To shove into the pawn,
I ramble up to Stephen's Green
And gaze on Ardilaun.†

(* *Makes* are halfpence. † *Ardilaun* is the statue of a member of the Guinness family, who made porter.)

to a remark that J. F. Byrne had made to George Clancy; they agreed that twelve men with resolution could save Ireland, and Byrne said that he thought he could find twelve such men in Wicklow. With numerous truncated references of this sort Joyce edged his book.

The *Circe* episode offers an extended instance of Joyce's merging observations and reading into a new form. There was, to begin with, the necessity of finding an adequate setting. Following a long series of Homeric commentators who have moralized Circe's den as a place of temptation where the bestial aspects of men emerge, Joyce decided on the red-light district of Dublin for his scene. The word 'Nighttown' he had picked up from Dublin journalists, who always spoke of the late shift as 'Nighttown.' Joyce used it instead of the customary word for the brothel area, 'Monto,' so called from Montgomery Street. Monto was labeled about 1885 by the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* as the worst slum in Europe. It was concentrated chiefly in Mecklenburg Street, which became Tyrone Street and is now a dreary Railway Street, the name having been changed twice as part of an effort, vain until recently, to change its character. The street is made up of eighteenth-century houses; while some of these had by 1900 decayed into tenements, others, the 'flash houses,' were kept up beautifully by women who appeared in full evening dress before their select clientele.

Horse Show week in August was especially grand in Monto. The British officers arrived in numbers for the event, and the Monto ladies sent their cards at once to the officers' mess. The ladies drove to the races in pony traps, and afterwards a procession of innumerable cabs followed them back to Monto. The Boer War also proved a great boon to their business. In 1902 the Irish Battalion of Yeomanry returned from South Africa, and a dull-witted society paper published an anonymous poem sentimentally celebrating the heroes' return, in which however the first letter of each line formed the acrostic sentence, 'Whores will be busy.' This poem, which was quickly comprehended, killed the paper. It was correctly attributed to Gogarty, then a medical student.

Joyce's knowledge of Monto was of course as complete as his knowledge of the *Evening Telegraph*, which he used in the *Aeolus* episode. He does not have Bloom and Stephen patronize the lower numbers of Mecklenburg Street, near Mabbot Lane, since these were usually patronized by English 'tommies'; these houses were full of religious pictures, behind which the ladies kept 'coshes,' pieces of lead pipe, to prevent trouble. Joyce asked one of his visitors in the 'thirties to secure a complete list of the names and addresses on Mecklenburg Street, and seems to have retained his interest in them. A lady appropriately named Mrs. Lawless lived at No. 4; her neighbour, at No. 5, was Mrs. Hayes, a grandmotherly type. But at the upper end of the street were the principal houses. Bloom, searching for Stephen at Mrs. Cohen's (No. 82), knocks first by mistake at No. 85, but is told that this is Mrs. Mack's house. Actually

Mrs. Mack kept two houses, No. 85 and No. 90, and was so well known that the whole area was sometimes called 'Macktown.'*

As for Mrs. Cohen, she was older than Mrs. Mack, and by 1904 had either retired or died, but Joyce restored her in business because her name suited the Jewish themes in the book. Her girls were probably modelled on contemporary prostitutes. Florry Talbot, for instance, was probably Fleury Crawford.† The description of another girl, Kitty Ricketts, suggests Becky Cooper, probably the best known among Dublin prostitutes from the beginning of the century until the 'twenties.‡ Joyce was probably familiar also with Lady Betty and May Oblong (Mrs. Roberts); he reserved the latter's name for *Finnegans Wake*, where all Dublin is *d'Oblong*.²²

Yet the deeper problem of *Circe* was to relate Bloom and Stephen on the unconscious level, to justify the father-son theme that Joyce had made central in his book. He does so chiefly in terms of one trait which the two men share, their essentially inactive roles. Joyce is quite earnest about this. He has shown Bloom throughout as the decent man who, in his pacific way, combats narrowmindedness, the product of fear and cruelty, which Stephen combatted in *A Portrait* and still combats. Once it is understood that Joyce sympathizes with Bloom and Stephen in their resistance in terms of mind rather than body, an aspect of the library episode becomes less baffling. Stephen Dedalus asserts there that Shakespeare was not Hamlet but Hamlet's father. Since Stephen in so many ways resembles Hamlet, and since he obviously thinks of himself as like Shakespeare, this identification may seem capricious. But it fits Joyce's notion both of the artistic temperament and of the desirable man. Joyce, Stephen, and Bloom share the philosophy of passivity in act, energy in thought, and tenacity in conviction. Hamlet, on the other hand, is the hero of a revenge-play; however unwittingly and fumblingly, he sheds a

* The medical students had a bawdy song that began:

O there goes Mrs. Mack;
She keeps a house of imprudence,
She keeps an old back parlor
For us poxy medical students.

† This young woman's father had a political job as scrivener in the Education Board. A priest came to see him to ask that he do something about his daughter; but Mr. 'Crawford' twirled his villainous moustaches and replied, 'Well, the girl appears to be enjoying herself, and besides, she's a source of income to me.'

‡ Becky Cooper was noted for the prodigality of her charities as well as for her favors; young men who took her fancy were the surprised and sometimes embarrassed recipients of gifts of money and new clothes. A familiar song about her celebrated not her generosity, however, but her accessibility:

Italy's maids are fair to see
And France's maids are willing
But less expensive 'tis to me:
Becky's for a shilling.

great deal of blood. Joyce does not encourage this view of the artist, and so he relates Shakespeare to the suffering father, the victim, rather than to the avenging son. The artist endures evil—he doesn't inflict it. If he revenges himself, it is psychically only, by a play or a novel. 'I detest action,' says Stephen to the soldiers.²³ Because he takes this position, he belongs, in the extended metaphor which underlies all *Ulysses*, to the family of Bloom,* who tells the Citizen, 'It's no use. . . . Force, hatred, history, all that. That's not life for men and women, insult and hatred.'²⁴ They are son and father mentally, if not physically, and both of them argue that what is physical is incidental.

The kinship of Stephen and Bloom, on the surface so unlikely, is established with great adroitness. Joyce makes use of two sources to aid him, both literary; the first is Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, the second is William Blake. In the worst light Bloom's passivity in the face of Boylan's advances to Molly, and his rejection of force in the *Cyclops* episode, seem part of a willing submission comparable to that of Sacher-Masoch. In the best light they are Blake's rejection of the corporeal.

While writing the *Circe* episode Joyce drew heavily upon Sacher-Masoch's book, *Venus im Pelz*.† Much of the material about flagellation is derived from it. *Venus in Furs* tells of a young man named Severin who so abases himself before his mistress, a wealthy woman named Wanda, and so encourages her cruelty toward him, that she becomes increasingly tyrannical, makes him a servile go-between, and then, in a rapturous finale, turns him over to her most recent lover for a whipping. There are many similarities to *Circe*. The society ladies who appear to Bloom, Mrs. Yelverton Barry (a name modified from that of a suspected transvestist) and Mrs. Bellingham (an actual name) are as fond of wearing furs as Wanda. Mrs. Bellingham recounts accusingly of Bloom, 'He addressed me in several handwritings‡ with fulsome compliments as a Venus in furs and alleged profound pity for my frostbound coachman Balmer while in the same breath he expressed himself as envious of his earflaps and fleecy sheepskins and of his fortunate proximity to my person, when standing behind my chair wearing my livery and the armorial bearings of the Bellingham escutcheon garnished sable, a buck's head coupé or.'²⁵ The hero of *Venus in Furs* wears his lady's livery, has to follow her at ten paces, and suffers luscious indignities comparable to those of Balmer.

Like Severin too, Bloom is depicted as welcoming his being birched, as even requesting this privilege. Wanda, reluctant at first to yield to her

* This method of reinforcing his theme by multiplying instances of similar behavior becomes even more prominent in *Finnegans Wake*.

† W. Y. Tindall first pointed out an allusion to this book. Joyce had several of Sacher-Masoch's books in his library.

‡ See p. 449 for Joyce's use of a special handwriting.

lover's strange importunities, is gradually attracted by them: 'You have corrupted my imagination and inflamed my blood,' she tells him; 'Dangerous potentialities were slumbering in me, but you were the first to awaken them.' Mrs. Mervyn Talboys puts it more ludicrously in *Ulysses*, 'You have lashed the dormant tigress in my nature into fury.'²⁶ Severin asks to be allowed to put on his mistress's shoes, and is kicked for performing the task too slowly. Bloom is similarly set to lacing the shoes of Bella Cohen, and fears she will kick him for his ineptitude. The more fearful and hateful Bella is, the more Bloom admires her; so Bella, like Wanda, puts her foot on Bloom's neck. The willing slavery of Severin to Wanda, which is sealed by an agreement she makes him sign, is echoed in Bloom's promise never to disobey Bella, and in her announcement to him, 'What you longed for has come to pass. Henceforth you are unmanned and mine in earnest, a thing under the yoke.'²⁷

The degradation of Bloom continues. Like Severin he is forced to usher in Bella's new lover, Blazes Boylan. A scene in *Venus in Furs*, in which Severin attends Wanda at her bath, is reflected in an equivalent scene in *Ulysses*. And the climax of Sacher-Masoch's book, when Wanda, pretending affection, coyly persuades Severin to let her bind him against a pillar, and then turns him over to her new lover for a merciless flogging, is echoed in Bella's pretense of affection which facilitates her pulling Bloom's hair. Even the references to the marble statuette that Bloom takes home in the rain, and to the nymph, 'beautiful immortal,' whose 'classic curves' are pictured above his bed,²⁸ are paralleled in the 'stone-cold and pure' plaster cast of Venus to which Severin prays in *Venus in Furs*.

Closely as he followed his source, Joyce made two major modifications. First, his version of Sacher-Masoch is a vaudeville version; and second, Bloom's masochistic fantasies occur in his unconscious mind; he berates himself, and makes himself worse than he is, because he is *conscious* of having allowed too much in reality. Then masochism is modified by Blakeism. Several references are made to Blake in the *Circe* episode, the most important at its end. There Stephen falls out with two soldiers, who accuse him of attacking the king because of his declaration, 'But in here it is I must kill the priest and the king.'²⁹ Joyce has in mind here an incident that occurred during Blake's stay at Felpham, when he put two soldiers out of his garden in spite of their protests that as soldiers of the king they should not be handled so. He replied to them, or was alleged to have replied, 'Damn the king,' was therefore haled up for treason, and barely got off. (In *Finnegans Wake* the two soldiers become three, and have an equally unpleasant role to play.) Stephen does not put the soldiers to flight; rather, to parody Blake as well, they knock *him* down, but not before he has stated his contention that the authorities, religious and secular, must be defeated in spiritual rather than corporeal

warfare. This is Blake's central conception of the conquest of tyranny by imagination.*

Having displayed the body's defeat and the spirit's victory in both their ridiculous and noble aspects, Joyce brings about the mental purgation of Bloom and Stephen at the end of the episode. They are purged in a surprising way, for so reserved a book, that is, by love. The theme of family love, the love of parent for child and of child for parent, runs covertly throughout *Ulysses*. Molly Bloom's thoughts return to the lambs-wool sweater she knitted for her son Rudy, who died when he was only eleven days old. The hyperborean Stephen, who claims to have denied his family, almost yields to affection when he comes upon his sister reading Chardenal's French primer, and remorse over his treatment of his mother accounts for his vision of her at the end of *Circe*. But Bloom emerges even more decisively from the Circean sty with his vision of Rudy as he might be now:

Against the dark wall a figure appears slowly, a fairy boy of eleven, a changeling, kidnapped, dressed in an Eton suit with glass shoes and a little bronze helmet, holding a book in his hand. He reads from right to left inaudibly, smiling, kissing the page.

BLOOM

(Wonderstruck, calls inaudibly.) Rudy!

RUDY

(Gazes unseeing into Bloom's eyes and goes on reading, kissing, smiling. He has a delicate mauve face. On his suit he has diamond and ruby buttons. In his free left hand he holds a slim ivory cane with a violet bowknot. A white lambkin peeps out of his waistcoat pocket.)³⁰

Tenderness is not contrary to Joyce's temperament. This is the vision of a fond father, colored as such visions are; and the sentimental coloring is offset by the bizarre attire and the detachment of the child, both of which establish a sense of distance and estrangement from Bloom. The relation of Bloom and Rudy, as of Molly and Rudy, is profoundly moving; so is the relation of Bloom to his own father, who committed suicide by taking aconite poison.† Joyce deliberately says nothing about its emotional quality, but he has Bloom at one point recall a few snatches from the letter found at his father's beside: "To my dear son Leopold. Tomorrow will be a week that I received . . . it is no use Leopold to be . . . with your dear mother . . . That is not more to stand . . . to her . . . all for me is out . . . be kind to Athos, Leopold . . . my dear son . . . always . . . of me . . . das Herz . . . Gott . . . dein. . . ."³¹ Paternity is a more powerful motif in the book than sexual love.

* Joyce said to Stanislaus as early as October 1, 1901, 'Cruelty is weakness.'

† His death is made to take place at the Queen's Hotel in Ennis because Joyce remembered a suicide that occurred there early in the century.

The phrase, 'Be kind to Athos,' refers to Bloom's father's dog—and kindness to animals, who are so much like children, and can repay affection only with affection, is another of those quite ordinary and undistinguished aspects of human nature that Joyce underlines. Even the Citizen, like Homer's Cyclops, is good to Garryowen. The kindness of Bloom on June 16, 1904, begins with animals and ends with human beings. So he feeds his cat in the morning, then some sea gulls, and in the *Circe* episode a dog. He remembers his dead son and dead father, he is also concerned about his living daughter, and he never forgets his wife for a moment. He helps a blind man cross a street. He contributes very generously—beyond his means—to the fund for the children of his friend Dignam who has just died; and, when he begins to see Stephen as a sort of son, he follows him, tries to stop his drinking, prevents his being robbed, risks arrest to defend him from the police, feeds him too, and takes him home in what Joyce calls, half-humorously, 'orthodox Samaritan fashion.'³² Stephen will not stay the night with Bloom—the barrier between man and man breaks down only occasionally and usually only a little, and the barrier quickly reforms—but in the temporary union of the two Joyce affirms his perception of community.

The relation of Bloom and Stephen confirms Joyce's point of view in another way: Bloom's common sense joins Stephen's acute intelligence; Stephen Dedalus, the Greek-Christian-Irishman, joins Bloom Ulyssès, the Greek-Jewish-Irishman; the cultures seem to unite against horsepower and brutality in favor of brainpower and decency. The two men are contrasted in the book with those who are strong: Stephen can't swim while Mulligan swims beautifully; Bloom is only a walker, while the Citizen is the holder of the shotput record for all Ireland; and Bloom is a cuckold while Blazes Boylan is the loud-mouthed adulterer; but we spend most of the book inside Bloom's consciousness, and never enter Boylan's, as if coarseness had no consciousness. It is true that Mulligan is clever as well as strong, but it is a cleverness that goes with brutality. Stephen and Bloom, the mental men, are ranged against Mulligan and Boylan, the burly men, and Joyce's partisanship is clear.

The scheme of value of *Ulysses* comes closer to explicit expression in the *Circe* episode than it does anywhere else. It is buttressed by another passage in the *Ithaca* episode. When Bloom and Stephen are walking home to 7 Eccles Street from the cabman's shelter, they discuss a great many things, and Joyce notes, with some understatement, that their views were on certain points divergent. 'Stephen,' he writes, 'dissented openly from Bloom's view on the importance of dietary and civic selfhelp while Bloom dissented tacitly from Stephen's views on the eternal affirmation of the spirit of man in literature.'³³ While the loftiness of Stephen's statement is mocked, that literature embodies the eternal affirmation of the spirit of man is not a crotchet of Stephen but a principle of Joyce, main-

tained by all his books. It is no accident that the whole of *Ulysses* should end with a mighty 'yes.'*

In making his hero Leopold Bloom, Joyce recognized implicitly what he often spoke of directly, his affinity for the Jews as a wandering, persecuted people. 'I sometimes think,' he said later to Frank Budgen, 'that it was a heroic sacrifice on their part when they refused to accept the Christian revelation. Look at them. They are better husbands than we are, better fathers and better sons.'†³⁴ No doubt the incongruity of making his good Dubliner a Jew, and one so indifferent to all religious forms as to have sampled (without accepting) both Protestantism and Catholicism, attracted him with its satirical possibilities. But he must have been affected also by the Dreyfus uproar in Paris, which continued from 1892 to 1906; it had reached one of its crises in September 1902, just before Joyce's arrival in Paris, when Anatole France, a writer he respected, delivered his eloquent oration at the funeral of Zola, whose *J'accuse* was still stirring up Europe. A connection between the Jew and his artist-defender may have been fixed in Joyce's mind by the connection between Zola, France, and Dreyfus. When he returned to Dublin in 1903, he was in time for one of the rare manifestations of anti-Semitism in Ireland, a boycott of Jewish merchants in Limerick that was accompanied by some violence.‡³⁶

Joyce was not a propagandist for better treatment of minorities. The conception of the likable Jew attracted without overwhelming him. He decided to make Bloom amiable and even noble in a humdrum sort of way, but to save him from sentimentality by making him also somewhat absurd as a convert, a drifter, a cuckold. His remarks make clear that the two characteristics of the Jews which especially interested him were their chosen isolation, and the close family ties which were perhaps the result of it.

These characteristics he saw in himself as well, and they gave him a sense of affinity. A great deal of his own experience became Bloom's. He not only took over the theme of adultery and the address of 7 Eccles Street from his 1909 trip to Dublin; he surrounded his hero with a Joycean atmosphere. For example, the Joyce family in Dublin employed for a time a charwoman, Mrs. Fleming;³⁷ in *Ulysses* she works in a similar capacity for the Blooms. The name of the Joyces' midwife was Mrs.

* For Joyce's use of this final word, see p. 342 and pp. 516, 521-2.

† He was interested too, in the way that, as he said, 'A Jew is both king and priest in his own family.'³⁵

‡ On January 12, 1904, Father John Creagh, a Redemptorist, accused the Jews of shedding Christian blood. The boycott lasted a year. Eighty members of the Jewish community were driven out, and only forty were left. Then Creagh was withdrawn from Limerick.

Thornton; it is she who is credited with having delivered both the Blooms' children. Joyce was born at Brighton Square, and the Blooms lived there shortly after their marriage. While at Belvedere, Joyce took part in a dramatized version of Anstey's *Vice Versa*; Bloom acted in this as a boy also, though not in the same role. Both Joyce and Bloom took out books from the Capel Street Library. They shared an admiration for the poetry of Byron, and Bloom gave Molly a copy of his works during their courtship. Not all these details were unique, but their accumulation is important. Sometimes Joyce mocks himself, as in the *Nausicaa* episode, where Bloom's contemplation of Gerty MacDowell parodies the stages of Stephen's (and Joyce's own) vision of the girl at the seashore in *A Portrait*. Stephen's revulsion against his body during the retreat in *A Portrait* is paralleled in *Ulysses* by many examples of Bloom's fastidiousness. Molly's proposed concert tour of English watering places parodies Joyce's plans to buy a lute and sing Dowland's songs in the same area. This technique of self-depreciation is used especially in the swelling and ridiculing of the *Cyclops*, *Nausicaa*, and *Oxen of the Sun* episodes, but it operates less conspicuously throughout the book. Like Shem in *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce is 'for ever cracking quips on himself.'³⁸

But Bloom is more (and less) than Joyce. He had at least one Triestine prototype, for, when Dr. Daniel Brody asked Joyce later, 'Mr. Joyce, I can understand why the counterpart of your Stephen Dedalus should be a Jew, but why is he the son of a Hungarian?' Joyce, taking off his glasses and looking at him casually yet with an air of pronouncement, replied, 'Because he was.'³⁹ This prototype was almost certainly Ettore Schmitz, whose grandfather came from Hungary,* and who wore the mustache that Joyce gave to Bloom, and like Bloom had a wife and daughter.† He said once to Stanislaus, 'Tell me some secrets about Irishmen. You know your brother has been asking me so many questions about Jews that I want to get even with him.'⁴⁰ The difference in age between Schmitz and Joyce was, as Harry Levin points out, roughly the same as that between Bloom and Stephen, and Stanislaus Joyce thought there was a resemblance, although Signora Schmitz always denied it.⁴¹ Schmitz was in many ways quite different from Bloom; but he had married a Gentile, he had changed his name (though only for literary purposes), he knew something of Jewish customs, and he shared Bloom's amiably ironic view of life. Joyce could not abide the inner organs of animals and fowl, while Schmitz, like Bloom, loved them.‡ Some of these are small similarities, but Joyce had a spider's eye.

* Not from Szombathely, like Bloom's father, but from Kopcen. Joyce probably chose the former city because he knew a Triestine named Marino de Szombately.

† Another rival for this honor was Teodoro Mayer, the publisher of the *Piccolo della Sera*, whose father was a Hungarian peddler. But there is no evidence that he and Joyce were closely acquainted.

‡ So did John Joyce.

Several Dubliners helped Joyce to complete his hero. The first was the man named Hunter, about whom he had asked Stanislaus and, later, his Aunt Josephine Murray to send him all the details they could remember. But in making Bloom an advertisement canvasser Joyce had someone else in mind. This man is first mentioned in the story 'Grace' under the name of C. P. M'Coy,⁴² and is identified there as having been a clerk in the Midland Railway, a canvasser for advertisements for the *Irish Times* and *Freeman's Journal*, a town traveler for a coal firm on commission, a private inquiry agent, a clerk in the office of the subsheriff, and secretary to the City Coroner. His wife had been a soprano and still taught young children to play the piano at low terms. These facts all point to M'Coy's actual prototype, Charles Chance, whose wife sang soprano at concerts in the 'nineties under the name of Madame Marie Tallon. In the variety of his jobs, in the profession of his wife, Chance fitted the description of Bloom; and that Joyce intended to combine him with Hunter is suggested by the juxtaposition of 'Charley Chance' with 'Mr. Hunker' in *Finnegans Wake*.⁴³

'Leopold Bloom' was named with due deliberation. Leopold was the first name of Signorina Popper's father in Trieste; Bloom was the name of two or three families who lived in Dublin when Joyce was young. One Bloom, who was a dentist, had been converted to Catholicism in order to marry a Catholic woman; they had five children, including a son, Joseph, who also became a dentist and practiced like his father on Clare Street in 1903 and 1904. The son was renowned for his wit. Joyce deliberately confuses Joseph Bloom the dentist with Leopold in one chapter, and in another he lists as one of Leopold's old addresses 38 Lombard Street, which was actually Joseph Bloom's address.⁴⁴ Joyce no doubt also knew of another Bloom, who was committed in Wexford in 1910 for the murder of a girl who worked with him in a photographer's shop. He had planned a double suicide; after having killed her and, as he thought, himself, he scrawled the word LOVE (but misspelt it as LIOVE) with his blood on the wall behind him. He was let off on mental grounds and, after some time in an institution, left the country.⁴⁵ This incident presumably gave Joyce the plan of establishing Bloom's daughter Milly as an apprentice in a photographer's shop. He put the shop in Mullingar because he remembered that there was such a shop there when he visited the town with his father in 1900 and 1901.⁴⁶

The concert name of Mrs. Charles Chance, 'Madame Marie Tallon,'⁴⁷ bears a deliberate resemblance to Madame Marion Tweedy, Mrs. Bloom's concert name. In using the Chances Joyce neatly concealed their identity, however; he prevented anyone's supposing they were the Blooms by introducing them into his book as the M'Coys, and by inventing a professional rivalry between Mrs. M'Coy and Mrs. Bloom. The character which he attributes to Mrs. Bloom is also unlike that of Mrs. Chance, whom he probably did not know; it is closer to that of the buxom wife of

a fruit store owner named Nicolas Santos, with whom he was acquainted in Trieste and in Zurich. Signora Santos stayed indoors all day to preserve her complexion, for which she mixed her own creams. That Mrs. Santos had a share in Mrs. Bloom was an open secret in the Joyce family later.*⁴⁸ But the seductiveness of Molly came, it seems, from Signorina Popper. For the Spanish quality in her Joyce drew upon one of the many daughters of Matt Dillon, an old friend of his family who is mentioned in *Ulysses* too. This daughter had been in Spain, smoked cigarettes, and was considered a Spanish type.⁴⁹

If bits and pieces of Mrs. Chance, Signora Santos, Signorina Popper, and Matt Dillon's daughter helped Joyce to design the outer Molly Bloom, he had a model at home for Molly's mind. Nora Joyce had a similar gift for concentrated, pungent expression, and Joyce delighted in it as much as Bloom did. Like Molly she was anti-intellectual; and like Molly she was attached to her husband without being awestruck. The rarity of capital letters and the run-on sentences in Molly's monologue are of course related to Joyce's theory of her mind (and of the female mind in general) as a flow, in contrast to the series of short jumps made by Bloom, and of somewhat longer ones by Stephen. But he had in mind as well Nora's carelessness in such matters.

Joyce also returns to the subject that had so bothered him in his early years of living with Nora, her refusal to recognize a difference between him and the other young men she had known. Bloom observes this characteristic in Molly, but Molly manifests it independently as well. Throughout her monologue Joyce lets her refer to various men she has known chiefly as 'he,' with only occasional indication of a change of the person involved. Her husband and her past lovers, among whom Mulvey of Galway makes an unexpected appearance, are speedily interchanged in her mind. At the end of her monologue she remembers the supreme moment in Bloom's courtship of her, when

he asked me to say yes and I wouldnt answer first only looked out over the sea and the sky I was thinking of so many things he didn't know of Mulvey and Mr Stanhope and Hester and father and old captain Groves . . . and Gibraltar as a girl where I was a Flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusian girls used or shall I wear a red yes and how he kissed me under the Moorish wall and I thought well as well him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again. . . .

The 'he' who kissed her under the Moorish wall was Mulvey and not Bloom; but it is Bloom of whom she says, 'I thought well as well him as another.' Molly, like Nora, fails to differentiate, though she is paradoxical.

*The Santos family moved to Marseilles. In an unpublished letter to Sylvia Beach of October 13, 1922, Joyce wrote from that city, 'Penelope is here and flourishing. I have not seen her for eight years.'

cally aware that Bloom is rather special.* Joyce attributes to his heroine the character of woman as Nora had shown it to him, not the character, so often presumed by novelists, of an irresponsible, passionate, romantic creature. As he told Frank Budgen, Molly was intended to represent 'perfectly sane full amoral fertilisable untrustworthy engaging shrewd limited prudent indifferent *Weib.*'⁵¹ The last adjective is, appropriately, *indifferent*. If Joyce was wrong in this analysis, the error was not for lack of observation.

Apart from her prototypes, Molly is a woman who has been much misunderstood. The celebrated monologue in which 'flesh becomes word' † does not deserve its reputation as the summit of promiscuity, nor does it fit its description, by some writers, as the summit of cruel, unfair, and anti-feminine dissection. If Molly were really promiscuous in her conduct, Joyce would not have used her for heroine, for he needed an everyday woman to counterpoise Bloom's oddities. It is true that Bloom, and critics after him, lists no less than twenty-five lovers of Molly. But on examination the list contains some extraordinary names: there are two priests, a lord mayor, an alderman, a gynecologist, a bootblack, a professor. In the book it is clear that she has confessed to the priests, consulted the gynecologist, and coquetted with the rest. But only the most rigorous interpretation of infidelity—a burlesque of Richard Rowan's interpretation in *Exiles*, or of Christ's—could include these episodes.

The two lovers Molly has had since her marriage are Bartell D'Arcy and Boylan, and only Boylan has fully consummated the sexual act. Thursday, June 16, appears to be the first occasion. While adultery is not excused by its infrequency, her behavior is not unpredictable in view of the fact that for eleven years, since she was twenty-two, her husband has not had adequate sexual relations with her. Most of her internal monologue is devoted to her reminiscences of love-making before her marriage, but even these are on examination less glamorous, and much less numerous, than usually recognized. It is suggested that she was a demi-vierge when she was married. The impression of voluptuousness remains, but is based more on her longings or potentialities than on her activities. Joyce delights in heightening her into someone beyond herself, and then in pulling her back to 7 Eccles Street.

There is no reason to exalt her, because she is earthy, into an earth goddess. She has had two children, a boy and a girl, but the boy died shortly after birth. Her motherhood was only an aspect of that femininity which Joyce was trying to report. It may be objected that if she has not engendered everything, at least she accepts everything. Actually she does not. She is dissatisfied with the coarseness of Blazes Boylan, and beyond

* So Nora Joyce acknowledged in later life to Carola Giedion-Welcker, 'I don't know whether my husband is a genius, but I'm sure of one thing, there is nobody like him.'⁵⁰

† *Finnegans Wake*, 267.

that, seems dissatisfied with the male body and with the consummation of physical love. She remains a wife more than a goddess of acquiescence; married to Bloom, she will remain married, even if dissatisfied with him too. For Molly also acknowledges, though with considerable reluctance and appropriate feminine indirection, the importance of mind as opposed to body, the importance of decency, and the bonds of the family. The virile Boylan is nothing but a shell, while the much less virile Bloom is, with all his shortcomings, a man of both intellect and body.

In forming the character of Boylan, Joyce made his villain the negative reproduction of his hero. Joyce's notes for *Exiles* show that he regarded the relation of protagonist and antagonist as complicated by admiration as well as repugnance for each other. The mindless swagger of Boylan has an air about it. While Joyce's clear preference is for the mental men, the Shems, he may have had a sneaking regard for those burly men, the Shauns, with whom Boylan belongs.

The models for Boylan had to be opposite to Bloom in their manner of dress and speech, in their conduct of life. *Ulysses* supplies a few particulars, that Boylan's father was a horse dealer off Island Bridge who sold horses to the British during the Boer War, that Boylan is a flashy dresser, especially notable for his straw hat, and that he has just managed a prize fighter. The horse dealer who had his premises off Island Bridge was James Daly, who does not fit the other details except that, like all other horse dealers in Dublin, he sold horses to the British during the Boer War. There was, however, a horse dealer during the 'nineties who bore the name Boylan, and had Blazes or Blazer for a nickname. Joyce took his name, and perhaps borrowed the occupation and appearance of the character from another man named Ted Keogh. Keogh ran a junk shop under Merchant's Arch in almost exactly the same location as the bookshop where Bloom buys *The Sweets of Sin* for Molly. He did not know Joyce personally; his only connection with the family, he claimed,⁵² was that as a boy he shot a peashooter at John Joyce's top hat and hit it. Keogh in 1909 was, like his father, a horse dealer; he dressed expensively, and habitually wore a straw hat; and when Joyce visited Dublin Keogh was managing a well known prize fighter. Keogh's character was not, however, what Joyce needed for Boylan's. Some of Boylan's flashiness and breeziness may have come from Prezioso.

Boylan's first name is not Blazes, as he is always called, but Hugh; and the provenance of this name is diverting. It is likely that Joyce had in mind his classmate at University College, Dublin, the prim and proper Hugh Boyle Kennedy. Kennedy was later to become Chief Justice of the High Court, and Joyce must have keenly enjoyed his little private joke.

Joyce had fixed upon June 16, 1904, as the date of *Ulysses* because it was the anniversary of his first walk with Nora Barnacle. He was able to obtain, perhaps on his last visit to Dublin, copies of the newspapers of

that day. In his book, Bloom's fondest memory is of a moment of affection plighted among the rhododendrons on Howth, and so is Mrs. Bloom's; it is with her recollection of it that the book ends. In this sense *Ulysses* is an epithalamium; love is its cause of motion. The spirit is liberated from its bonds through a eucharistic occasion, an occasion characterized by the joy that, even as a young man, Joyce had praised as the emotion in comedy which makes it a higher form than tragedy. Though such occasions are as rare as miracles, they are permanently sustaining; and unlike miracles, they require no divine intercession. They arise in quintessential purity from the mottled life of everyday.

The theme of *Ulysses* is simple, and Joyce achieves it through the characters of Bloom, Molly, and Stephen. Casual kindness overcomes unconscionable power. Stephen's charge against Mulligan is that Mulligan is brutal and cruel;* Molly's complaint against Boylan is again on the score of brutality, of animal sensuality without feeling. Bloom is allowed to formulate this theme of the book, though in comic circumstances, when he defends love to the Cyclops, and defines it meekly but deftly as 'the opposite of hatred.'⁵⁴ It is opposite also to chauvinism and force. So in the *Penelope* episode, Molly, faithful in spite of herself, ends the day by yielding once more to her husband and dismissing Boylan as inconsequential. In Joyce's work the soul—a word which he never renounced—carries off the victory.

Whatever else about the book was unclear to Joyce in 1914, as he set himself for what he knew would be a long period of work, this point of view was firm. All the trivia of Dublin and many of Trieste must be conscripted to express it. In his art Joyce went beyond the misfortune and frustration he had grown accustomed to regard as the dominant notes of his life, and expressed his only piety, a rejection, in humanity's name and comedy's method, of fear and cruelty.

* Joyce completed in this character his analysis of Gogarty. He had written it long before for *A Portrait*, but had put it aside. The earlier version was much more essaylike:

'Doherty's gibes flashed to and fro through the torpor of his mind and he thought without mirth of his friend's face, equine and pallid, and of his pallid hair, grained and hued like oak. He had tried to receive coldly these memories of his friend's boisterous humour, feeling that his coarseness of speech was not a blasphemy of the spirit but a coward's mask, but in the end the troop of swinish images broke down his reserve and went trampling through his memory, followed by his laughter . . .'⁵³