THE UNDERWORLD EPISODE IN ULYSSES: HADES AS CEMETERY

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In the "Hades" episode of James Joyce's Ulysses, the underworld descent is represented, reduced one might almost say, to a trip through the streets of Dublin — a mini-Odyssey in itself, corresponding to the voyage Odysseus makes to the entrance of Hades — and thence to Glasnevin cemetery. Leopold Bloom, the modern Odysseus ("Ulysses" from Ulixes, Latin version of Odysseus) accompanies three men: Mr. Power, Mr. Cunningham, and Mr. Dedalus, Stephen's (real) father, in a rather run-down funeral carriage. Their aim is to bury a mutual friend, Paddy Dignam (Vere dignum et justum est, as the Jesuit Fr. Conneen says elsewhere in the novel, punning on the name). Paddy has died of a heart attack brought on by the Irishman's disease, an excess of alcohol ("Too much John Barleycorn", says Bloom). Paddy recalls one of Odysseus' men, Elpenor, who fell drunk from the roof of Circe's palace and thus became the first Shade to meet Odysseus on his arrival in Hades, and Paddy's corpse is to arrive at the cemetery before the mourners' carriage ("Got here before us, dead as he is").

The other mourners, along with the officiating priest, the caretaker, and other men who are met at the cemetery, correspond to the Shades of Homer's Book of the Dead. The correspondences have been identified in the "Gorman Plan." Cunningham is Sisyphus: "shoulder to the wheel" (also recalling Ixion); his "rock" is his drunkard of a wife who liaisoned the furniture "every Saturday almost", thus forcing her husband to ever start anew. The Irish heroes Daniel O'Connell and Parnell, whose statues the carriage passes on its itinerary, correspond to the Greek heroes Herakles and Agamemnon. Parnell's career came to an end through a woman (as a divorced man, a Protestant, he was unacceptable to puritanical Catholic Ireland), just as Herakles lost his life

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when his wife Dianeira was tricked into poisoning him. At the funeral, John Henry Menton, a solicitor who had once employed Dignam, treats Bloom rather shabbily in return for his pointing out a dent in the hat of this rather grand personage ("How grand we are this morning," Bloom comments on the snub). Bloom thinks the grudge is due to his having beaten Menton at a game of bowls many years before. Menton recalls Ajax, who, beaten for the prize of Achilles' armor by Odysseus, refuses to be placated by the latter's friendly overture in Hades. Achilles himself seems to be without a parallel. The priest who does the funeral service, Father Coffey (whose name reminds Bloom of "coffin"), is a clear allusion to the hound Cerberus: he is a "muscular Christian," and "Bully about the muzzle," with "a belly on him like a poisoned pup." The cemetery's caretaker, John O'Connell, aptly recalls Hades, the king of the underworld: he is long-lived and "never forgets a friend." Bloom is surprised that he is married and wonders how he could propose to a girl with the prospect of living in a cemetery ("Come out and live in the graveyard. Dangle that before her.") This recalls the forcible persuasion of Hades in carrying off Persephone to the nether regions.

The correspondences are not complete or perfectly matched. Achilles' shade is without a modern counterpart and Mr. Power without an ancient. Yet the parallels are striking and direct, which "may be ascribed to the near affinity of the ancient and modern narratives, each of which records a visit to the abode of the dead..." The underworld is evoked through innumerable details: the ripped-open street as the carriage approaches Glasnevin; the Dodder, the Grand, and Royal Canals, and the Liffey suggesting the four rivers of Hades; the "yawning boot" of the bum who is close to death. Yet Bloom is almost a hero by default. He is on the defensive with the other men, though he stands out from them by his wholly realistic acceptance of death, in which he shows himself to be as resourceful as his Greek counterpart. It is characteristic of his modernity, however, that this resourcefulness is a reflection of what he thinks rather than of anything he does. Outwardly, he is polite.
and civilized, accepting the rebuffs and scornful indifference of the other men without apparent reaction or, as in the incident with Menton, with only inner sarcasm. His "heroism" is, therefore, somewhat problematic.

Besides the parallels with Homer's *Odyssey*, the wealth of references and allusions to death and the underworld in the episode helps to establish a thematic unity and enriches immensely the texture of the narrative. The more important of these I shall discuss presently; others are more trivial in importance and are mainly a reflection of Joyce's relentless rhetorical skills. For a list of these allusions, the reader may consult Weldon Thornton's *Allusions in Ulysses: An Annotated List* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1968), a book with much material that is astonishingly irrelevant. The author has tracked down, for example, the source of every popular song that has a snatch or echo in the text of *Ulysses*. He is useful in identifying the political figures, though he has for some reason neglected to point out many of the classical parallels.

It will be observed upon perusal of this list that the references to death and the underworld, over a hundred in less than thirty pages of text, are in almost superfluous abundance, much more than would be necessary to establish the parallel with the *Odyssey*, which is not in fact the only artistic work alluded to. Apparently, Joyce is calling all his awesome linguistic and cultural resources, from the lofty to the banal and bathetic, to bear on death and the underworld. Many of the references are puns or trivial observations arising from Bloom's wandering and ever-curious mind. One may wonder about the seriousness with which Joyce pursued the Homeric correspondences despite their importance as a framework for this and other episodes. Allusions to Vergil's *Aeneid* are nearly as common as those to the *Odyssey*, and popular songs, Shakespeare, gravestone inscriptions, political figures, even jokes, are given almost equal weight in the plethora of references. This suggests (but does not necessarily mean) that there is no special concern with establishing Homeric parallels except, as it were, in addition to whatever else can be wittily applied to the situation. This
would diminish the seriousness of the correspondences only if it is thought that irony could not be legitimately used with regard to such serious thoughts as death, but that would be to ignore the fact that *Ulysses* is a modern work and irony is characteristic of modern fiction. Perhaps irony is the closest we can get to the high seriousness of the ancient themes.

The gloom of the underworld with its light/dark contrast may be included in the above list, but most of the references are insignificant. A possible exception is when Bloom is thinking of a man's last moments of life: "Lighten up at the last moment and recognize for the last time" (p.103). The meaning is to be "enlightened" which is one of the thematic interpretations of the underworld descent. But perhaps Bloom is only thinking of death and the common idea that a man's life flashes before him at the last moment, since he immediately adds "All that he [a man] might have done." Richard Ellmann finds the dominant symbol of the episode "midnight and dawn", which would indeed bolster the importance of light/dark in the episode. But the time of the funeral is eleven in the morning and I have found no references in the text to justify this theory. Perhaps what is meant is the symbolic meaning of the contrast, the cyclical significance (which Ellmann justifies rather well) and the overwhelming emphasis on birth/death, for which the other contrast can be said to stand for. Ellmann rightly identifies the "synthesis of the episode" as "corruption and generation". Let us examine this idea in detail.

Bloom's first thoughts in the episode concern birth and death: "Glad to see us go we give them such trouble coming", he notes of a woman showing interest in the funeral train (p.87). Mr. Dedalus' outburst about Stephen's association with the disreputable Mulligan calls to mind thoughts of Bloom's son Rudy, who did not survive infancy. Bloom remembers how Rudy must have been conceived: Molly was watching two dogs copulate and went into heat: "Give us a touch, Poldy... I'm dying for it" (p.89), to which memory Bloom sagely comments: "How life begins." At that time, Molly, a singer, had to refuse "Greystones Concert" (suggesting tombstones), as she has "Got big then" (i.e.

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pregnant). Next, Bloom’s interrupted story of a boatman who fishes a boy out of the Liffey (pp. 94-95) and is given a coin by the boy’s father recalls Charon, the boatman of Hades, who is given coins to ferry souls over the Styx. The meaning, however, is reversed, since Charon is rewarded not because he gives life but because he conveys the Shades to the abode of death. Again, when the carriage crosses paths with another funeral carriage, the latter is seen to be carrying a tiny coffin (pp. 95-96). The sadness of the child’s death is counterpoised by Bloom’s levity on thinking of the child’s parents’ next conception: “Better luck next time.” Other instances of the birth/death contrast are when Bloom ponders the fatal diseases of children (p. 90) and when he watches one of the grave diggers coil the coffin-band (p. 112), which Bloom dubs Paddy’s “navel cord.”

The notion of corruption and generation can be subsumed under the heading of regeneration or rebirth, which is one of the important figurative meanings of the underworld journey. Corruption produces life in death, and generation is birth continued to negate death. The idea of rebirth runs all through the episode. It is comically punned on when the carriage passes the statue of Smith O’Brien (p. 93) and Bloom notices the flowers someone has placed at the base to commemorate Smith’s “death day” or execution. Bloom’s wry but apt remark is “Many Happy Returns.” There is a song about a family hoping to meet “on high” (in heaven) their lost Henry (p. 91) and Bloom is haunted all day by a silly slogan for potted meat under Paddy’s obituary notice: “What is home without Plumtree’s potted meat? Incomplete.” He observes (p. 114) that “a corpse is meat gone bad” and eventually completes the association with “Dignam’s potted meat” (p. 171). Here he implicitly rejects the idea of death being anything but material, but he does have a bizarre vision of Dignam’s coffin bursting open after a bad bump and the corpse spilling out on the pavement, asking “What’s up now?” (p. 98).

When Bloom contemplates the awfulness of being buried alive,
he thinks that coffins ought to be equipped with clock or telephone to guard against it, a way for the "dead" to come back from the grave. The three day period that was the allotted time for the resurrections of Jesus and the Sumerian Goddess Inanni is alluded to in the maximum time Bloom thinks bodies ought to be kept in summer before burial. Typically, he has reversed the direction of the resurrection! At another time (p.109) he notes: "Read your own obituary notice they say you live longer. Gives you a second wind. New lease on life." The clichés here take on resonance when one thinks of rebirth. Thinking of sex in a graveyard, Bloom interprets the scene as a negation of death: "In the midst of life we are in death" (p. 108). A mourner who is paired up with Bloom at graveside, Mr. Kernan, a former Protestant, quotes to Bloom "I am the resurrection and the life" from the Protestant burial service as an example of impressive language. Bloom outwardly murmurs assent but shows his unsuperstitious nature by scorning the idea:

The resurrection and the life. Once you are dead you are dead. That last day idea. Knocking them all up out of their graves. Come forth, Lazarus! And he came fifth and lost the job. Get up! Last day! Then every fellow mousing around for his liver and his lights and the rest of his traps. Find damn all of himself that morning (pp.105-6).

The comic irony undercuts as usual the seriousness of the idea. The allusion is employed not so much to display but to utilize: Bloom's character is illuminated rather than any correspondence mechanically established. Another example of the same technique is when the mourners reverently visit the grave of Parnell (p. 112), whom they call the "chief"; "some say he is not in the grave at all. That one day he will come again." This recalls the Gospel accounts of the disorientation and Messianic hopes of the Apostles after the death of Jesus, but Bloom simply shares the humanistic words of Hynes: "peace be to his ashes " and he remains silent.

Rebirth is not always given a high coating in the episode. The idea of death to Bloom is not the Christian one of a passage to a new life but a gruesome, albeit necessary, finality: "But
being brought back to life, no" he says simply. There is a reference to a man murdered under mysterious circumstances on the premises of a house they are passing in the carriage: "body to be exhumed" (i.e. brought back to the upper world). Corruption and generation also enter in the episode through the notion of fertility, a common motif in underworld descents. Thinking of his father's grave, Bloom remembers he has to give ten shillings to the gardener, who "keeps it free of weeds." He has heard that the best opium poppies, "flowers of sleep", are found in Chinese cemeteries (p. 108), and the organic image of blood "sinking in the earth gives new life" brings on the idea of ritual murder, where Jew-killing revived Christian piety (the theme of Chaucer's "Prioress' Tale").

But Bloom's macabre humor does not abandon him for long. He thinks of using corpses as fertilizing agents: "well-preserved fat gentlemen... invaluable for fruit garden" (p.108). Blood, which is spilled in the *Odyssey* sacrifices, enters Bloom's mind when he wonders idly whether a corpse will bleed when cut. In case it does, he thinks it "better to bury them in red: a dark red" (p.99). The mourners are tempted by the smell of beefsteaks, as the Shades in Hades are by the smell of blood, an allusion that is made explicit in the episode in Davy Byrne's pub ("The Lestrygonians"), which also relates blood to regeneration:

> Not fresh blood they describe for decline. Blood always needed. Insidious. Lick it up, smoking hot, thick sugary. Famished ghosts (p.171).

These and other references establish further parallels with the *Odyssey* and other underworld descents through the emphasis in the episode on ritual and religious rites: "the art of this chapter is religion as distinguished from theology..." Libations are the drinks the mourners will hoist in a pub on the way back from the cemetery (p.98). Bloom appropriately dubs these drinks the "Elixir of life." While riding in the carriage, too, Bloom thinks of a "winding sheet" or shroud and the ritual preparations for burial (p.87). Recalling Odysseus' ritual
ablutions before entering the underworld (and Gilgamesh's bath in the river), Bloom is glad he has taken a bath, that he feels clean. The bread-crumbs from someone's picnic, which litter the coach, (p.89) may be an allusion to the grain Odysseus sprinkles on the earth. The pouring of water is recalled in the funeral service when the priest sprinkles holy water on the corpse ("shook water on them. Sleep.") This last remark shows that Bloom's understanding of ritual is nil; to him, one is as good as another, since he is reasonable enough to allow that something has to be done to satisfy the living's penchant for empty forms, even when "Father Coffey's Dublin... is devoted to burial, commerce, and other signs of death."  

Generation taken in another sense, that of progeny, points up one of the important ideas of the episode, Bloom's isolation. He is alone in relation to the other mourners, to his family, and to his country.  

This isolation motif corresponds to a similar one in the Odyssey, since Odysseus is several times, in the course of his wanderings, let down by his companions and is ultimately destined, as he learns in Hades, to reach home alone. Bloom is cut off from the other men by his being Jewish at a Roman Catholic rite, and, by extension, by his being Jewish in a Roman Catholic country, a condition amply explored in other episodes of Ulysses, notably "Cyclops" and "Circe". The isolation of the hero in relation to the Odyssean parallel is ironic, since Odysseus is set apart from his companions and from strangers he meets by his superior areté. Bloom seems to be unworthy of attention by others, notably his companions at the funeral, or at least his presence and local importance are not enough to command it. At the opening of the "Hades" episode, this is shown by the way he is not regarded as one of the company: Bloom gets in the carriage only after all the others have been seated, whereupon Cunningham asks, "Are we all here now? Come along, Bloom." In conversation, Bloom's remarks are greeted indifferently, or in one case, when he remarks on the suddenness of Paddy's death being a good thing, shocked silence (the others, being Catholic, are concerned with the necessary propriety of the last rites). There is also some barely
disguised teasing of Bloom for being a cuckold, when someone in
the carriage spots Blazes Boylan, Molly's lover, on the street.
The men suddenly show interest in her concert tour and wonder
whether Bloom himself will be going (Boylan, her manager, will
be). Again, the correspondence is ironic: the Shades in Book
XI of the Odyssey refer frequently to Penelope's fidelity. The
mild-mannered Bloom meticulously, and unheroically, examines his
fingernails. Finally, there is the snub of Menton mentioned
above. Bloom is huffed by an important Dublin man for a trivial
reason, a incident which closes the episode.

Bloom also feels anxiety at the thought of his father and
son. Like Aeneas, he "sees" his father in his visit to the
underworld, but since this man, Virag, is dead and available
only in fantasy, Bloom's filial piety is frustrated. The
distancing from classical predecessors is more complete when we
learn that Virag poisoned himself, causing the one moment of
concern for Bloom's feelings by the mourner-Shades. Bloom is
worried about generational continuity, an important notion for
a Jew, as he is cut off from both past and future. His son died
in infancy and he is afraid to visit his daughter Milly, a sort
of Molly "watered down", while in the neighborhood for fear of
her disapproval. Thinking of himself as a widower ("She would
marry another") or projecting himself into the role of the dead
man, the prospects are equally gloomy ("alone under the ground:
and lie no more in her warm bed."). There is no rebirth for
Bloom, a non-religious materialist, but one may think of his up-
beat determination to put off his morbid thoughts at last, as he
is about to leave the cemetery, as a parallel to Odysseus
setting forth from Hades with high hopes for the future; that is,
as a new beginning and, if not quite a rebirth, a "return" to
the upper world and an embracing of life:

Plenty to see and hear and feel yet. Feel live warm
beings near you. Let them sleep in their maggoty
beds. They are not going to get me this innings.
Warm beds: warm fullblooded life (p.115).

There is one final motif in the episode which, though
understated, occurs throughout Ulysses as a recurrent motif,
that of the Unknown Man. "Who is that lanky-looking galoot over there in the macintosh?" Bloom wonders when he spots him at graveside. The entrance and exit of the Man in the Macintosh are equally mysterious. There is a comic metonymy when the reporter Hynes writes down the man's raincoat as his name and he appears in the newspaper as one of the mourners, along with Bloom's mispelled name and the names of two other men who are conspicuous by not having attended. The man makes an appearance in the phantasmagoric episode of "Circe" along with other ghosts from the mind and past of Bloom. He has been associated with the unconscious ("unknown man/Unconscious") in the episode's table of symbols in the "Linate scheme."14 I have discussed how the underworld descent can be interpreted as an attempt to illuminate the dark corners of the self, the unknown or unconscious shadow element in man.15 If comic irony is part of the overall point-of-view employed in Ulysses, as it seems to be, it is typical that the mystery is never penetrated and enlightenment never takes place. Irony goes one step further if we think that the inner mind of a man is revealed as nowhere else in literature in Ulysses, while the simple mystery of the Man in the Macintosh remains unsolved.

The mysterious stranger ties together a number of other ideas we have been discussing. Number thirteen at the grave ("Death's number"), as Jesus was number thirteen at the Last Supper, he suggests both death and resurrection.16 One critic has observed that the prefix "Mac", as in names like MacDonald and MacBeth, means "son of."17 The father/son motif is reinforced, especially when the connection with Jesus, the son of God, is noted. Stuart Gilbert has identified the Homeric origin of the mystery man to an enigmatic passage in Odyssey XI, where Telemachus gives a ride in his ship to a murderer and fugitive named Theoclymenos. This character is introduced into the poem for largely unknown reasons as his story is irrelevant to the action,18 and, like the passage about the oar, may have been an interpolation. Gilbert thinks that the technique of "incubism" (Joyce's word, meaning "brooding over") in this episode establishes "a mortuary atmosphere at least as intense
as that of Homer’s 'dank house of Hades' or the Gravedigger’s Scene in Hamlet," even if the echoes of the Homeric parallel are disregarded and that with only the "most commonplace materials."¹⁹ I should say that this is what has not been done. Despite Joyce’s straining to ring every note of death and burial in "Hades", it is all too cleverly and casually done to evoke the feeling of dread that the underworld descent in the Odyssey (and other ancient myths and epics for that matter) evokes. Another way of saying this is that Joyce’s cemetery, although it contains plenty of gory detail and speculation enough for a dedicated necrophiliac, succeeds on the artistic but not the psychological level in evoking mortuary intensity. Again, one may point to the effect of the irony of most of the associations. Irony undercuts oppressiveness, so that even though the air presses down and the earth yawns in (or on the way to) the cemetery, the comedy of Bloom’s responses to the presence of death relaxes the intensity. The mention of Hamlet is to the point, but it is precisely the comedy of that early example of black humor that makes the references to it in "Hades" so appropriate.

NOTES


³From Herbert S. Gorman, James Joyce, His First Forty Years (New York, 1924); reproduced in Richard Ellmann, Ulysses on the Liffey (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1972), appendix: no page numbers.

⁴See, for example, H.J. Rose, Gods and Heroes of the Greeks: An Introduction to Greek Mythology (Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1958), for a brief discussion of the story.

⁵Gilbert, p.169.


8 Ellmann, Ulysses on the Liffey, p.59.

9 Ellmann, p.59.

10 Burns, op.cit.


12 Tindall, p.160.


14 Given in Ellmann, Ulysses on the Liffey, appendix: no page numbers.

15 Burns, op. cit.

16 Tindall, p.161.

17 Tindall, p.161.

18 Gilbert, p.172.

19 Gilbert, p.173.
What follows is a portion of an M.A. thesis from UFSC, entitled "Awakening From the Nightmare: A Study of the Democratic Hero in James Joyce's Ulysses", by Jose Celio da Silva, presently a resident of Itajubá, where he is the director of the Yazigi School of English. Because the thesis makes a different interpretation of Ulysses from the article by Thomas Laborie Burns, the editors have chosen to publish the two in sequence to give the readers of Ilha a choice of approaches to Ulysses. We have printed the "Hades" chapter as well as the conclusion of the thesis (printed first here). The entire thesis is available at UFSC Biblioteca Central.

A.G.

AWAKENING FROM THE NIGHTMARE

While in Zurich Joyce once told Frank Budgen:

I am now writing a book about the wanderings of Ulysses. **The Odyssey**, that is to say, serves me as a ground plan. Only my time is recent time, and all my hero's wanderings take no more than **e**leven hours.¹

Later on when he gave Stuart Gilbert his schema for Ulysses, he named its chapters after **The Odyssey**, and also indicated whom his characters stood for. These facts obviously show that Joyce was much concerned with **The Odyssey**. But why had he decided to follow Homer's book? Stuart Gilbert thinks it was because Joyce wanted to make Bloom's and Stephen's wanderings resemble Odysseus'. Frank Budgen indirectly suggests that it was due to Joyce's declared admiration of Homer's hero. He reproduces a conversation he held with Joyce when the writer of **Ulysses** asked him who he thought was a complete all-round character in literature. After

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several unsuccessful tries Budgen asked him:

"Your complete man in literature is, I suppose, Ulysses?"
"Yes," said Joyce. "No-age Faust isn't a man. But you mentioned Hamlet. Hamlet is a human being, but he is a son only. Ulysses is son to Laertes, but he is father to Telemachus, husband to Penelope, lover of Calypso, companion in arms of the Greek warriors around Troy and king of Ithaca. He was subject to many trials, but with wisdom and courage came through them all."

Joyce's words to Budgen seem to contribute to Gilbert's position. If Joyce held Odysseus in such high regard and was writing a book about his wanderings, his hero would naturally echo those characteristics which made Odysseus so appealing to him. There would be no reason why Ulysses should not go together with The Odyssey. Gilbert seems to be going that direction when he tries to show straightforward correspondences between Joyce's and Homer's works. If Gilbert is right, then what about Joyce's complete all-round character? Has he tried to contribute another complete hero for literature or a mock hero?

If an analysis of Ulysses is attempted only on the plan of direct parallels, Bloom is just a mock or burlesque versé of Odysseus, for he lacks all of the qualities Joyce stressed in the Greek hero. Odysseus is son to Laertes, who loves him dearly and has made a recluse of himself due to his son's long absence. Laertes stops living because he misses his son. Bloom is son to Virag, who does not give any evidence of his love for his son and kills himself for reasons apart from Bloom. Just before dying Virag talks to Bloom, but in his last wish he is more concerned with his dog Athos than with his son. Odysseus is father to Telemachus, who is youthful and alive in Ithaca. Bloom is father to Rudy, who was died eleven years ago. Odysseus is husband to Penelope, who has always been faithful and loyal to her long distant husband. Bloom is husband to Molly who has entertained a long list of lovers with Bloom's knowledge. Odysseus is lover of Calypso, who wants him not to leave her. Bloom is not his Calypso's lover any longer and she is anxious
for him to leave her house so that she can make preparations for her present lover. Odysseus is companion in arms of the Greek warriors around Troy and king of Ithaca. Bloom does not have any companion and neither does he have any leadership or power. These examples and many others which were discussed in this study would then be asserting that Joyce's central hero is mock-heroic. Joyce would, therefore, be mocking and denying the Greek myth through Bloom. But why would he mock and deny what he admired?

Odysseus was Joyce's favorite hero in literature; nonetheless, Bloom's and Stephen's wanderings deviate from his. Instead of merely reproducing The Odyssey, Joyce conceived a much more ambitious plan for Ulysses. At the same time that he acknowledged Odysseus' qualities, he decided to provide literature with an even complete hero. The Italian thinker Giambattista Vico furnished him the source of inspiration to create Bloom.

Joyce was very much impressed by Vico's three cycles of history*, and committed himself to writing a book where he could account for the divine, the heroic and the human cycles of history in Ireland. He looked at his country's past and realized that a long time it had been only a divine and heroic history. Through Stephen in "Oxen of the Sun" Joyce refers to the past of Ireland in a parable-like language and mentions that Pope Adrian IV

... in a papal bull, Laudabiliter (1155), granted the overlordship of Ireland to Henry II of England (king 1154-1189). Henry in seeking the papal permission for invasion had argued that Ireland was in a state of profound moral corruption and irreligion. The bull approved Henry's "laudable" determination to extirpate certain vices which had taken root.3

The corruption alluded to above has obviously taken place

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*Vico held that the first was the age of the gods (theocratic), the second was the age of the heroes (aristocratic) and the third was the age of man (democratic).
at a time when neither secular nor religious power dominated in Ireland, i.e., a time period when the people of Ireland were free. In 1155 state and church entered into an alliance and have ever since kept the Irish submissive. Since the twelfth century the history of Ireland has only been heroic and divine. The king of England and his lords have constituted a dominant aristocracy and the pope and his priests and alert throcacy. The Irish have never been able to free themselves from the state-church domination and the third cycle of Vico's history has never come true in Ireland.

Joyce, as Richard Ellmann points out, "held that the best political system was the democratic one." In Vico's cycles, democracy only had its turn when history became human and that is what Joyce is doing in Ulysses. The 16th of June, 1904, is a day of human history in the capital city of a country dominated by divine and heroic history.

Joyce took one of the most representative pieces of the heroic age in literature and reversed it to produce Ulysses, a representative of the human age. Bloom and Stephen are Joyce's spokesmen. Stephen is marked from the very beginning of Ulysses to be alone and unsupported in his wanderings. He is found teaching history and tells Mr. Deasy that history is a nightmare from which he is trying to awake; a sentence which is recurrent in several other passages of Ulysses. What does Stephen mean? Which history is he referring to? In "Oxen of the Sun" Stephen sees the Irish spoiled by the British government and the Catholic Church. In "Aeolus" he suggests that Lord Nelson, a representative of the king of England, looks down upon Ireland. In "Wandering Rocks" Stephen is one of the few people who do not pay homage to Father Connée, a representative of the church, or William Dudley, a representative of the king. Stephen wants to awake from his country's nightmare past and when tapping his brow he tells Private Carr in "Circe", "But in here it is I must kill the priest and the king," he leaves no doubt as to whom his nightmare is associated with. He sees the Irish as the oxen of the sun-god who have generation after generation been spoiled by the usurpation of the English crown and the Roman Catholic
Church. That is why he declares the necessity of eliminating them. Stephen, however, is not a complete character. He can only be regarded as a potential or a becoming hero. His point of view is in accordance with the general proposition of *Ulysses*, but he still needs to learn how to deal with the state and the church. Because he cannot translate his ideas into practice he is knocked down at the end of "Circe." If he comes to learn how to cope with those forces, he will become a complete character, but that is not going to happen in *Ulysses*, because he refuses to accept Bloom's helpful offer in "Eumaeus" and "Ithaca."

Stephen, however, is not the character Joyce chose to stand for the one he considered the complete character in literature. That role was reserved for Bloom. Joyce once told Frank Budgen:

*I have just received a letter asking why I don't give Bloom a rest. The writer of it wants more Stephen. But Stephen no longer interests me to the same extent.*

His words to Budgen show his special concern for Bloom. Bloom is Joyce's great creation in *Ulysses*. When he is introduced in "Calypso" there is nothing special about him. He is an ordinary human being preparing breakfast. Nevertheless, in the span of time of eighteen hours he grows so much before the reader's eyes that he becomes heroic. Bloom is Joyce's complete hero. His heroism, however, is human rather than heroic, because he shares Stephen's view that religious and heroic heroes have done a great disservice to Ireland. In "Lotus Eaters" Bloom sees the church as a wonderful organization which keeps the sacred secret so that it can fool its followers more easily. In "Hades" again he thinks that the priest who celebrates the last services in a cemetery is a cheater, because his words are directed to the audience rather than to the corpse in the coffin. He thinks that the priest says that the dead man is going to paradise just to make the living present at the ceremony keep in mind that they depend on God and His representatives to have a glorious afterlife. Bloom thinks that once one is dead he is dead. In "Aeolus" he considers newspapermen weathercocks because they are at times serving the
representatives of His Majesty and at others His Sanctity's.

To Bloom, state and church are the controllers of the winds in Ireland and have the people in their hands. In "Lestrigonians" Bloom looks at the church as a bloodthirsty institution which tells women to have many children and by following its advice they ruin their health and die little by little. He also looks at the state as being bloodthirsty because once, while taking part in a riotous demonstration, he was almost "soupied" by some policemen. In "Wandering Rocks" state and church make their physical appearance in the persons of Father Conne and William Dudley. Almost everybody salutes and greets them respectfully. Bloom simply ignores their presence. In "Sirens" he listens to a song entitled "A Croppy Boy" and takes particular interest in it. The song is about an Irish rebel in the Rebellion of 1778. The boy is going to fight against the king, but before going to the battle field he looks for a priest to confess his sins. He is trapped because instead of talking to a priest he talks to a yeoman captain disguised as a priest and meets his death. In "Cyclops" Bloom meets the citizen, who is against the exploitation of the state and calls for retribution. Bloom also thinks the state is exploiting people, but disagrees with the citizen on his policy. Bloom knows that confronting the state is useless, and he tries to show the citizen his mistake. In "Nausicaa" he recovers his strength by admiring Gerty MacDowell, while Dubliners venerate Holy Mary in a chapel nearby. By so doing, he suggests that one can do without religion. In "Oxen of the Sun" he silently shares Stephen's view in relation to the church-state coalition for dominating the Irish people. In "Circe" one of his hallucinations leads him to imagine himself a heroic, powerful leader, but he concludes that being a leader is a big mistake, and when Stephen opposes the state in the person of Private Carr, he intervenes to rescue the youth. In "Eumaeus" he offers Stephen the possibility of joining with him and learning how to deal with the oppressors, but Stephen refuses the offer. Finally in "Ithaca," when Stephen definitely declines Bloom's invitation to stay with him, he considers retirement and goes to bed. His odyssey is over.
Bloom distinguishes himself from the other characters in *Ulysses* due to the fact that he is the only one who is aware of the oppression of the church and the state and suggests a way out of it. Bloom shows that Ireland has been under the domination of those forces because the Irish have always either venerated them or opposed them revolutionarily. His proposition is that the people should ignore those forces to be free. The history of Ireland has been divine and heroic for so long a time because the Irish themselves made it possible. Those who venerate the dominating parties are their upholders and those who want to put force against force have always failed because they wanted themselves to be substitutes for the usurpers and they lacked supporters. Bloom's proposition is that the Irish should ignore those forces to make their history human and democratic. If people turn their backs to the state and the church, if they stop going to church and listening to the priests, and do not pay taxes and tributes to the representatives of the king, they will be able to awake from their nightmare. Bloom is the only character in *Ulysses* who manages to awake from the nightmare, and that is why he succeeds in his odyssey.

Now that Bloom's positions have been recalled, Joyce's words about his complete hero deserve some attention. In creating Bloom, Joyce deprived his hero of the qualities he admired in Odysseus. He went even further and made Bloom a solitary wanderer. While Odysseus could always count on someone or some deity in his wanderings, Bloom is all by himself. As if not satisfied yet, Joyce made Bloom's Penelope unfaithful to him. After making Bloom's condition the most handicapped in relation to Odysseus, Joyce had his character go through more hardships than those the Greek hero had to face. Within this context one would expect Bloom to fail; yet he succeeds. If Odysseus is to be admired because he was subjected to many trials and with wisdom, courage, a well-trained crew and the unfailing assistance of a deity came through them all, Bloom deserves even greater admiration, for he is subjected to more trials than Odysseus, and alone comes through them all unhurt. This is why Richard Ellmann says in this introduction to *James Joyce* that Joyce's discovery was that the
ordinary is the extraordinary. If somebody like Odysseus gets through a difficult situation there is nothing noteworthy about it. It should not be different because from the start he is equipped to win. Through Bloom, Joyce says that there is no point in worshipping heroic heroes. The real hero should be like Bloom. He should be given the chance to fail and his being heroic should depend on himself rather than on others. Heroic heroes spoil the people and use them as their puppets, while human heroes are concerned with the welfare and freedom of the people. Odysseus is heroic, Bloom is human. The Odyssey is an epic of the heroic age. Ulysses is an epic of the human age. This is the reason why Joyce has so systematically inverted The Odyssey. His book is not a modern version of The Odyssey. It is a new and different odyssey, a human one.

NOTAS

2Ibid., p.16.
6Budgen, op. cit., p.105.
7Joyce, op. cit., p.105.
HADES

In Book XI (of The Odyssey) Odysseus descends into Hades; the first shade he meets is that of Elpenor, one of his men who, drunk and asleep, had fallen to his death in Circe's hall. Elpenor requests that Odysseus return to Circe's island and give his corpse a proper burial; Odysseus so promises. Odysseus then speaks with Tiresias, who tells him that it is Poseidon, god of the sea and earthquake, who is preventing Odysseus from reaching his home. Tiresias then warns Odysseus: If his men violate the cattle of the sun god, Helios, the men will all be lost, the difficulties of Odysseus' voyage will be radically increased and upon his arrival home he will find his house beset with suitors, "insolent men", whom he will have to make "atone in blood." Tiresias closes his prophecy by promising Odysseus a "rich old age" and a "seaborne death soft as this hand of mist." Odysseus then speaks with the shade of his mother and sees the shades of many famous women. He speaks to the shade of Agamemnon and learns of Agamemnon's homecoming, of his death at the hands of his wife, Clytemnestra, and her lover. Odysseus speaks with Achilles and attempts to speak with Ajax. Ajax refuses to speak because he and Odysseus had quarreled over Achilles' armor after Achilles' death; Odysseus was awarded the armor as the new champion of the Greeks; and Ajax, driven mad by the gods, died by his own hands. Subsequently Odysseus glimpses other shades... Odysseus then returns to his ship and to Circe's island.1

In Hades Joyce exercises his gift for transforming material once more. His technique seems to be the one of making the direct parallels between his book and The Odyssey manifest, while he uses camouflage to reverse Homer.

Several incidents may lead the reader to think that Joyce is following The Odyssey. No other place could better stand for Hades — the dwelling place of the dead — than the cemetery of Glasnevin.

When Odysseus comes to Hades he is surprised that Elpenor, one of his men who died just before he left Circe's island, has preceded him:

The first soul that came up was that of my own man Elpenor, for he had not yet had his burial
in the bosom of Earth...

I called across to him at once: "Elpenor! How did you come here, under the western gloom? You have been quicker on foot than I in my black ship!"2

Bloom's reaction when he sees Dignam's coffin is very similar to Odysseus': "Coffin, now. Got here before us. Dead as he is."3 And when he enters the mortuary chapel and sees the casket again he thinks: "Always in front of us."4

Both Patrick Dignam and Elpenor used to drink and had sudden, unexpected deaths. The latter had swilled a lot of wine before going to sleep by himself and "roused in the morning by the bustle and din of their departure (his companions' departure for Hades), he leapt up suddenly and forgetting to go to the long ladder and take the right way down, he toppled headlong from the roof. He broke his neck and his soul went down to Hades."5

It is suggested that Dignam lost his job with John Henry Menton, one of his former employers, because he used to drink:

I often told poor Paddy he ought to mind that job. John Henry is not the worst in the world.
- How did he lose it? Liquor or what?
- Many a good man's fault, Mr. Dedalus said with a sigh.6

Another passage also proves Dignam's drinking habits:

Too much John Barleycorn... Drink it like the devil till it turn adeline.7

These quotations show that Dignam's friends are aware of the fact that he used to drink a lot and that possibly it had something to do with his death, which, like Elpenor's, nobody expected:

... Poor Paddy! I little thought a week ago, when I saw him last and he was in his usual health that I'd be driving after him like this. He's gone from us.
- As decent a little man as ever wore a hat Mr. Dedalus said. He went very suddenly.
- Breakdown, Martin Cunningham said. Heart. 8

Stuart Gilbert states that there is a direct allusion to the name of Elpenor in Mr. Bloom's description of Dignam when on page 95 of Ulysses he thinks: "Blazing face: redhot." Gilbert says that Mr. Bérard derives the name El-penor from a semitic root meaning "the blazing face," 9 and this is a clear indication that the "redhot faced Dignam" stands for Elpenor.

Odysseus follows Circe's advice when he comes to Hades. He takes the sheep she has provided him with—a young ram and a black ewe— and cuts their throats over the trench he has made so that blood pours in. Only then do the souls of the dead come out from their hiding places and approach the slaughtered sheep. Father Coffey in Ulysses is also portrayed as a well-fed black ewe whom the dead go to.

Father Coffey. I knew his name was like a coffin. Domine-namino. Bully about the muzzle he looks. Bosses the show. Muscular christian. Woe betide anyone that looks crooked at him: priest. Thou art Peter. Burst sideways like a sheep in clover.10

Father Coffey is the priest in charge of the last services at the Glasnevin cemetery chapel. The dead are taken to him before they are laid in their graves. That he is a muscular christian who bursts sideways like a sheep in clover is a clear hint that he stands for the ewe Odysseus had in Hades, and a black one too, since the priest's cassock and vestments are also black.

Notwithstanding these direct references to The Odyssey, the chapter hides reversals as well. There is no doubt that the dead in both The Odyssey and Ulysses go to the black ewe, but the outcomings of their contact with the ewe are quite different. After Odysseus has conferred with Tiresias, he addresses the old seer in the following way:

I see the soul of my dead mother over there. She sits in silence by the blood and cannot bring herself to look her own son in the face or say a
single word to him. Tell me, my prince, if there is no way to make her know that I am he. 11

The answer he gets is: "There is a simple rule which I will explain. Any ghost to whom you give access to the blood will hold rational speech with you, while those whom you reject will leave you and retire."12

Odysseus follows Tiresias’ words, which prove to be true. After the dead drink of the blood of the slaughtered ewe they can talk to him.

Father Coffey may be thought of as performing the same role as the ewe. The church he represents tells its followers that those who die in state of grace, i.e., those who die on good terms with Christ, will see light after death. The last services at the cemetery chapel have a purifying purpose. They aim at establishing direct communication between the soul of the dead and the Lamb of God, so that the former may go to heaven and talk to God himself. This conclusion would be in accordance with the Christian belief in the afterlife and the resurrection of the body, but to Bloom’s realistic and analytic mind the dead man is just a corpse, only material: "A corpse is meat gone bad."13 In his private opinion, the service at the chapel is but a show bossed by Father Coffey, who, instead of helping the dead, looks as if he has a "muzzle" and "woe betide anyone who looks crooked at him." Bloom’s description of Father Coffey makes him more similar to the terrifying guardian of Hades, Cerberus, who is a monstrous dog. When Mr. Kernan praises the service in the Irish church as simpler and more impressive because everybody’s heart is touched by words such as "I am the resurrection and the life" said in English instead of Latin, Bloom soliloquizes:

Your heart perhaps but what price the fellow in the six feet by two with his toes to the daisies? No touching that. Seat of affections. Broken heart. A pump after all, pumping thousands of gallons of blood every day. One fine day it gets bunged up and there you are. Lots of them lying around here: lungs, hearts, livers. Old rusty pumps: damn the thing else. The resurrection
and the life. Once you are dead you are dead...  

These examples are self-evident, but before putting them together the reader might mistake the incident and conclude that because the dead in Hades come to the eave and in Ulysses they go to Father Coffey, the latter is endowed with the same attributes as the former. But Joyce's Odysseus is more cunning than Homer's. Bloom has the alertness of a lizard and will not make the mistake Odysseus makes when he praises Achilles as "a mighty prince among the dead" and Achilles tells him:

Spare me your praise of death. Put me on earth again, and I would rather be a serf in the house of some landless man, with little enough for himself to live on, than king of these dead men who have done with their lives.  

Bloom is closer to Achilles when he thinks that "once you are dead you are dead." He also seems to be saying that religion wants to distort reality so that the living prostrate before it in fear that they may not be allowed to see light after death. In Bloom's view Father Coffey and his institution are selling tickets to "El Dorado," i.e., they are cheating people. The dead are just "old rusty pumps."

Another important reversion of The Odyssey in the present chapter has to do with the rivers in Hades. Stuart Gilbert says that "the four rivers of Hades have their counterparts in the Dodder, the Liffey and the Grand and Royal Canals of Dublin." Don Gifford and Robert Seidman in their introductory notes to the chapter list among the correspondences between Homer's and Joyce's Hades's "the four rivers of Hades (Styx, Acheron, Cocytus, Periphegethon) the Dodder, the Grand and Royal Canals and the Liffey." However, other authors like Max J. Herzberg, who concentrate their attention on myth, mention five rivers in Hades, not four.

Through it flowed five rivers. The first to which the shades of the dead came was called the Styx. So dreadful in colour and appearance was this river that the gods swore by it, and an oath taken "by the Styx" was never broken... Once on
the other side the ghosts wandered on until they came to the river Lethe, the river of forgetfulness. Kneeling on its shore they cupped their hands, and drank of its water. Immediately all memory of their past lives disappeared from their minds.... The other rivers were Acheron, river of woe, with its tributaries, Phlegethon, the river between whose banks flowed fire instead of water, and Cocytus, the river of wailing.18

Stuart Gilbert mentions the existence of four rivers in Homer's and Joyce's Hades but does not give himself to the work of marking their correspondences. Don Gifford and Robert J. Seidman, on the other hand, do that but fail to provide the reader with justification for their choice, which would perhaps go against the purpose of their book. Yet it would be very interesting if they had said why, for instance, the second of the rivers in Hades is missing, because there seem to be evidences of its presence in the chapter.

The subject of the conversation in Bloom's carriage is symptomatic when it approaches the Dodder river and crosses its bridge. Bloom has seen Stephen and mentions him to his father. Simon Dedalus asks if Buck Mulligan is with his son, tells everybody that Buck is corrupting Stephen, and promises to write to Buck's mother and tell on him:

He is in with a lowdown crowd, Mr. Dedalus snarled. That Mulligan is a contaminated bloody doubledyed ruffian by all accounts. His name stinks all over Dublin. But with the help of God and his blessed mother I'll make it my business to write a letter one of those days to his mother or his aunt or whatever she is that will open her eye as wide as a gate. I'll tickle his catastrophe, believe you me... I won't let her bastard of a nephew ruin my son.19

There is no doubt that Simon Dedalus wants to make his promise a solemn one, which is an indication that this river stands for the Styx. However, when one realizes that an oath taken by the Styx is never broken, he has to admit that Joyce is investing The Odyssey again. Simon Dedalus' promise is not serious at all. He will not fulfill his word and neither does he care for his son's behavior and security as he pretends to do.
The gasworks at the Grande Canal is a suggestion that it parallels the Lethe, the smoky river of forgetfulness in Hades. Furthermore, Bloom pretends to forget where he put the letter he got from Martha: "I tore up the envelope? Where did I put the letter after I read it in the bath?" Yet this is make-believe forgetfulness. He knows where the letter is. The Grand Canal symbolizes the Lethe not because of identity, but due to opposition. In the Lethe all memory of the past was banished from the dead's mind and it is exactly when Bloom comes to the Canal that his past life is recalled as if in a motion picture. The gasworks reminds him of whooping cough, an illness which Milly never got, and there is a succession of an entire chain of remembrances: his father's dog; his father's last wish; Martha Clifford, Blazes Boylan and Molly.

The Liffey represents the Acheron, river of woe. Although Joyce does not mention that river, the reader knows when the carriage reaches it because Bloom sees Smith O'Brien's statue which is near the Liffey. Sorrow may be said to be present here since somebody has laid a bunch of flowers at O'Brien's statue; somebody else was disbarred from the practice of law; Bloom's company talk about death; he remembers his son's death; pities Martin Cunningham for "that drunkard of a wife of his"; and recalls his father's suicide. Notwithstanding these instances, there are two central incidents in the section where woe would be expected by the reader and he is confronted with joking situations instead. Reuben J's tipping the boatman with a florin attests that he would not feel any grief had his son died, and their laughing at Reuben J's attitude tells the reader that they are not sad about Digman's death.

Joyce seems to have ignored Phlegethon, the river between whose banks flowed fire instead of water. Similarly, he has not given much attention to Cocytus, the last river, which has its counterpart in the Royal Canal. This was the river of wailing and the only instance of lamentation rests with Fogarty who, as a small businessman, used to trust his customers and when they did not pay him he became a bankrupt and now is said to have been left weeping.
When Odysseus meets his mother in Hades he is willing to know whether his wife is still faithful to him and he gets the following answer:

There is no question of her not staying in your house.... She has schooled her heart to patience, though her eyes are never free from tears as the slow nights and days pass sorrowfully by. 22

Bloom, on the contrary, will not ask anybody anything about Molly. He knows she has been entertaining Blazes Boylan and that he is going to his house this afternoon. The moment he is thinking about his wife and Boylan's meeting the latter comes into sight. Bloom is a little embarrassed and defensive when soon after Boylan's appearance his companions ask him questions about the tour Molly is engaged in.

— How is the concert tour getting on, Bloom?
— O very well, Mr. Bloom said. I hear great accounts of it. It's a good idea, you see...
— Are you going yourself?
— Well no, Mr. Bloom said. In point of fact I have to go down to the country Clare on some private business. You see the idea is to tour the chief towns. What you lose on one you can make up on the other.
— Quite so, Martin Cunningham said. Mary Anderson is up there now.
— Have you good artists?
— Louis Werner is touring her, Mr. Bloom said. O, yes, we'll have all topnobbers. J.C. Boyle and John MacCormack I hope and. The best in fact.
— And Madame, Mr. Power said, smiling, last but not least. Mr. Bloom unclasped his hands in a gesture of soft politeness and clasped them. 23

Some details in the above conversation deserve special attention. The fact that it takes place soon after Blazes Boylan was seen indicates that Bloom's company were not ignorant about Molly and Boylan. Bloom avoids mentioning his wife's lover's name throughout the conversation and his saying that although he is not going with his wife on the tour, he will be around somewhere in the county of Clare serves the purpose of stating that he is attentive to Molly's doings. His attitude,
however, is by no means convincing.

In Hades Odysseus also learns from his mother, who has died of grief for him, that his father has made a recluse of himself in the country, nursing his grief and yearning for him to come back. 24 Joyce tells his readers in this chapter that Bloom's father has committed suicide. To a certain extent, Laertes and Virag meet. Both of them have decided to stop living. Their reasons, however, are quite different. Laertes and his wife Anticleia ceased to live due to their heartache for their son, while Virag's reasons are unknown, though it does not appear that Bloom was the cause. It is not to be forgotten that Virag's last wish was directed toward his dog and not his son. 25 The difference of treatment displayed by Odysseus' and Bloom's parents to their sons shows that Odysseus is dearly loved by his parents and has been prepared for heroism since his childhood. On the other hand, though Bloom's father's image is dear to him, one knows that he was not his parents' pet. Odysseus was born a hero; Bloom was not born that way, but he is going to be Joyce's all-round human hero all by himself. It is possible that his task will be harder, but it is equally conceivable that he may eventually excel his model.

NOTAS

4 Ibid., p.103.
5 Homer, op. cit., p.170.
6 Joyce, op. cit., pp.102-103.
7 Ibid., p.95.
8 Ibid.
10 Joyce, op. cit., p. 103.
11 Homer, op. cit., p. 175.
12 Ibid.
13 Joyce, op. cit., p. 114.
14 Ibid., p. 40.
15 Homer, op. cit., p. 184.
16 Gilbert, op. cit., p. 166.
17 Gifford with Seidman, op. cit., p. 82.
19 Joyce, op. cit., p. 88.
20 Ibid., p. 91
21 Ibid., p. 96.
22 Homer, op. cit., p. 176.
23 Joyce, op. cit., p. 93.
24 Homer, op. cit., p. 176.
25 Joyce, op. cit., p. 90.