THE RHYTHM OF LIFE: A STUDY OF COMIC PATTERNS

in

JAMES JOYCE'S ULYSSES

by

Anne Geraldine Keane

B.A., National University of Ireland (Galway) 1968

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department

of

English

© ANNE GERALDINE KEANE 1978

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

March 1978

All rights reserved. This work may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy or other means, without permission of the author.
APPROVAL

Name: Anne Geraldine Keane
Degree: Master of Arts
Title of Thesis: The Rhythm of Life: A Study of Comic Patterns in James Joyce's Ulysses.

Examining Committee:

Chairperson:

Paul Delany
Senior Supervisor

John Mills

Stephen A. Black

Lorraine Weir
External Examiner
Assistant Professor
University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia

Date Approved: 6 Mar 78
PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENSE

I hereby grant to Simon Fraser University the right to lend my thesis or dissertation (the title of which is shown below) to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users. I further agree that permission for multiple copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or the Dean of Graduate Studies. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Title of Thesis/Dissertation:

THE RHYTHM OF LIFE: A STUDY OF COMIC PATTERNS in JAMES JOYCE'S ULYSSES.

Author:

(signature)

ANNE GERALDINE KEANE

(name)

MARCH 7TH, 1978

(date)
ABSTRACT

This study explores Joyce's use of traditional comic values and patterns in *Ulysses*. The concept of comedy developed in chapter I is based primarily on the aesthetics of Northrop Frye and Susanne Langer, and the insights of C. G. Jung into the relationship between archaic mythic patterns and the psychological development of modern man.

The chapters which follow discuss Joyce's use of the regenerative patterns of comedy in his presentation of Stephan Dedalus and Leopold Bloom. Stephen's relationship with Dionysus, the central figure in the life-cult which gave rise to comedy, and his participation in a Dionysiac ritual of death and rebirth, are the central issues discussed in chapter II. Bloom's paradoxical mixture of comic and heroic qualities, and his affinities with the archetypal and indomitable Fool are analysed in chapter III.

The concluding chapter summarises the findings: Joyce's employment of traditional comic patterns allows him to effect a satisfactory resolution of his protagonists' dilemmas. However, his adaptation of the comic pattern to the exigencies of realistic fiction causes him to deviate in certain key ways from the traditional practices of the comedian. Joyce's main deviation from tradition lies in his internalisation of the
iv.

comic plot. Instead of battling against external obstacles, as is usual in comedy, his protagonists pass through psychological crises which are resolved in comic terms. The successful encounter with the "blocking forces" within constitutes their comic triumph. Both Bloom and Stephen remain isolated from their society, however, and there is no restoration of the social fabric implied in the outcome of Ulysses. This qualifies the comic resolution to some extent.
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to thank my senior supervisor, Professor Paul Delany, for his help and advice through every phase of this study, and my readers, Professor John Mills and Professor Stephen A. Black, for their useful comments.

I am grateful to the University of Prince Edward Island for generously affording me full library privileges, and to Professor Brendan O'Grady of U. P. E. I. whose enthusiasm for Joyce studies was a constant source of inspiration.

Lastly, I thank my husband, Michael, most sincerely for his support. Without his encouragement, truly, nothing could have been accomplished.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENT</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>STEPHEN DEDALUS AND THE COMEDY OF REGENERATION</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Stephen's Crisis</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. The Mask of the Mummer: Stephen's Dionysiac Pattern</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. The Dionysiac Frenzy: Stephen's Comic Regeneration</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>VICTIM AND VICTOR: LEOPOLD BLOOM AND THE COMEDY OF SURVIVAL</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Bloom's Crisis</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. The Unconquered Hero</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. The Return of Ulysses: Bloom's Comic Triumph</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. INTRODUCTION

Joyce's innovations, coupled with his encyclopaedic mentality, gave critics much to concentrate upon in the several decades following the publication of *Ulysses*. Their findings have greatly enlarged our vision of the book and explained many of its intricacies. Yet despite the critical attention which *Ulysses* has provoked, "the significance and stature of that book are still being assessed," writes David Hayman, "its sources and influence disputed. Despite the miles and miles of words written about it, it still defies definition, remaining open to each new reader and susceptible to new approaches."

One of the most fundamental questions raised by *Ulysses*, and one which has generated continuous critical controversy, concerns the author's attitude to his protagonists, Bloom and Stephen. Does Stephen end the day "intellectually bankrupt," another blighted soul among the paralysed intelligentsia of Dublin, or is he destined, like his author, for success as an artist? Is Bloom consigned to a future of hopelessness and frustration with an impossible wife, or does he succeed in drawing something of positive value from the experiences of June 16, 1904? And what, if anything, does the meeting between Bloom and Stephen signify?

In the pages which follow, these basic questions will be probed once more, and an attempt made to understand Joyce's
presentation and perception of his two main characters. The method followed will be an examination of Joyce's use of traditional comic values and patterns in *Ulysses*. Though the comic dimensions of the book have long been recognised, the manner in which the traditional patterns of comedy are used by Joyce to shape and control the development of his principal characters has not been fully explored.

Early commentators, shocked by Joyce's frankness and repelled by the complexity of style and structure which they found in *Ulysses*, were virtually unanimous in viewing it as a sombre and nihilistic indictment of contemporary life. Even those who recognised the comic thrust of the work for the most part found it dark and negative. A representative early review reads:

*Ulysses* is more bitter, more sordid, more ferociously satirical than anything Mr. Joyce has yet written. It is a tremendous libel on humanity... There is laughter in *Ulysses*, but it is a harsh and sneering kind, very different from the gros rire of Rabelais.

Nowadays we are in a better position to appreciate the content of *Ulysses*. We are no longer shocked by its outspokenness or intimidated by its complexity. The dedicated work of Joyce's exegetes has clarified much of its obscurity. Yet critics still remain divided in their response to the book, some continuing to view it as negative and nihilistic, others finding it a hope-filled and positive document. Thus Darcy O'Brien writes: "No goals are achieved in *Ulysses*, no quests fulfilled, no obstacles overcome, no joyful reunions celebrated," while Richard Ellmann urges that "it is no accident
that the whole of *Ulysses* should end with a mighty 'yes'."

As the shock-value of Joyce's methods recedes, his reliance upon more traditional fictional modes is becoming increasingly apparent. One of the most important of these, this thesis argues, is Joyce's use of the regenerative patterns of comedy in his presentation of Bloom and Stephen. Eugene Jolas records that Joyce "was astonished that so few people had commented on the comic spirit of his writings", an indication of how important the author considered this element to be; and while the approach taken in this study cannot claim to be new, yet it is hoped that some fresh insights into the fates of Bloom and Stephen may be gained by a reassessment of the comic patterns of the novel, particularly in the light of recent comic theory. The major critical views employed in the study are the theories of comedy put forward by Susanne Langer and Northrop Frye, and the views of C. G. Jung on the psychological development of the individual.

Susanne Langer's ideas on the subject of comic form provide a point of departure for my discussion of *Ulysses*. Joyce's well-known comments on comedy, penned during his youthful sojourn in Paris, are perfectly in tune with Langer's theories. For Joyce, comedy was "the perfect manner in art", and the feeling which it properly aroused was the feeling of joy. The "pure sense of life", sheer vital exuberance or "enjoyment", is what Langer identifies as the underlying feeling of comedy. Her theory of "felt life" provides a basic general approach to comedy which is most helpful in exploring
Joyce's adaptations of archetypal comic patterns in *Ulysses*. Langer argues that it is the function of comedy to abstract from reality and present in symbolic garb one of the fundamental forms of consciousness; comedy, she writes, "abstracts, and reincarnates for our perception the motion and rhythm of living." She bases her theory of comedy on her perception of the behavioural patterns of all organic life-forms. All living creatures, she reminds us, are imbued with a life-instinct which urges them to avoid every threat to their existence. "The impulse to survive, to maintain a pattern of vitality in a non-living universe", she writes, "is the most elementary instinctual purpose."

Langer describes the characteristic behaviour of the organism in terms of two functions--accommodation and growth: any organism, if beset by external obstacles, seeks to regain its equilibrium by attempting to avoid or overcome the agent of interference; but the organism is instinct too with vital purpose, it strives unceasingly to achieve the apogee of its potential for development, and will eagerly seize upon every opportunity to do this.

(In human terms, to survive and grow means to become engaged in the struggle to achieve ideal selfhood, to achieve one's *telos* in Aristotelian terms.) According to Jung, the struggle to become oneself, which he calls the process of individuation, is a primal human instinct, and constitutes the ultimate goal of human life. Jung relates the process of individuation to the initiation rites practised by virtually
all primitive peoples—the self is established through a series of ordeals of initiatory type. A comparable analogy between primitive ritual and comic form is established by Susanne Langer when she writes: "The same impulse that drove people, even in prehistoric times, to enact fertility rites and celebrate all phases of their biological existence, sustains their eternal interest in comedy." And elsewhere Langer writes: "Comedy is an art form that arises naturally whenever people are gathered to celebrate life, in Spring festivals, triumphs, birthdays, weddings, or initiations."

Northrop Frye, in the section of his Anatomy of Criticism devoted to comedy, offers an interpretation of the archetypal comic action similar to that outlined by Langer. Frye has in mind the usual plot material of Greek New Comedy, which accounts for his emphasis on young lovers, but nonetheless the basic comic pattern of resistance overcome can be readily perceived. The comic plot, Frye says, generally involves "a young man" who "wants a young woman." The hero's wishes are frustrated for a time by "blocking" or "opposing" characters who try to prevent the hero from achieving his love-object and fulfilling his desires. Eventually, however, the action is brought to a successful conclusion. In Frye's terms, "the obstacles to the hero's desires form the action of the comedy, and the overcoming of them the comic resolution." According to Langer, the dual movements of defense and opportunism constitute the life-rhythm, and the form of comedy presents a pattern which reflects this universal rhythm. The pattern of
comic action is "the upset and recovery of the protagonist's equilibrium, his contest with the world and his triumph by wit, luck, personal power, or even humorous, or ironical or philosophical acceptance of mischance."

The comic rhythm, dramatised in the rise and fall of the hero's fortunes, and culminating in his final victory over the forces which oppress him, can be perceived in real life only temporarily in the career of each individual, who must finally succumb to death. But on a transcendent and timeless scale, the rhythm of comedy repeats the death-and-resurrection rhythm of the natural cycle. This is a rhythm which comes to us from those compelling and impressive natural phenomena which have always fascinated and enthralled the human imagination: the sinking of the sun into the west and its upsurging from the sea at dawn, the periodic waning and waxing of the moon, the inexorable cycle of the seasons.

Comedy allows man a dynamic participation in the infinity of the cycle. Implicit in comedy is the metaphysics of resurrection, a transcendence of death. Its emphasis falls ultimately upon survival and growth, upon regeneration and revivification. Comedy, writes Joseph Campbell, is "the wild and careless, the inexhaustible joy of life invincible."

Comedy's orientation towards life was apparent from its earliest beginnings. As an art form, it is now generally accepted that comedy developed from a seasonal ritual cele-
bration of the regenerative energies of man and nature. The important point to remember about these rituals, as Langer points out, is that they were fertility rituals, and the god they celebrated was a fertility god, "a symbol of perpetual rebirth, eternal life."

They were ceremonial expressions of man's illogical faith in survival and transcendence.

The manner in which ritual became transmuted into art has been most fully documented in the case of Greek drama, but the research of Sir James Frazer and later anthropologists has demonstrated the widespread diffusion of the myth-pattern which gave rise to comedy, the story of the death and rebirth of the year-daimon or life-spirit, personified in such figures as Dionysus, Attis, Adonis, Osiris and Tammuz.

Few would now argue with Frazer's conclusion that in the universality of the vegetation myth and its concomitant ritual is revealed one of the deepest patterns of the human mind, a pattern, moreover, which Mircea Eliade implies is still essential to the sanity, if not to the survival of modern man.

A similar pattern emerges in the rituals with which primitive man marks his passage from one stage of being to another--rites of initiation and passage. These rituals, despite regional and temporal variations, invariably have two main thrusts: the celebration of life, and the transcendence of death. This vital urge to live, to survive, permeated the ancient ritual from which comedy developed.
Joyce was sufficiently familiar with the researches of Frazer and the Cambridge anthropologists on the one hand, and the works of Freud and Jung on the other, to appreciate both the ubiquity of the mythic patterns which gave rise to comedy, and the continued importance of these primitive patterns to the psychic life of modern man. He was deeply interested in the concepts of cycle and reincarnation. The theme of cyclic destruction and renewal developed by Vico became a fundamental element of Joyce's approach to life and to art. He observed that "the patterns of game and of life are subject to periodic destruction and renewal."21

The Dionysiac pattern of death and rebirth from which Greek comedy developed was thus one which interested Joyce deeply. Like many of the prominent writers of his time, he carried out some personal research on the material which formed the basis of Frazer's writings. His library contained a copy of Jane Harrison's *Mythology*, and while living in Trieste, 1912 - 1913, he delivered a series of lectures on "Hamlet" which included reference to the ritual beginnings of western dramatic art.22 In his essay on Ibsen, "Drama and Life", Joyce wrote: "Greek drama arose out of the cult of Dionysus, who, god of fruitage, joyfulness and earliest art, offered in his life-story a practical groundplan for the erection of a tragic and a comic theatre."23 Immersed as he was in the liturgy of the Catholic Church, Joyce was quick to perceive the similarities between Dionysus and Christ. He described Jesus as "the New Dionysis",24 and later in life he continued to attend Church at
Easter time "for the liturgies, which represented in their symbolic rituals the oldest mysteries of humanity."  

It was the very universality of the Dionysiac pattern which appealed to Joyce. Not only was it the pattern of comedy, but it was also that of the central figure of Christianity. Innumerable other mythic figures conformed to the same basic death-and-rebirth model, and its employment in virtually all initiation rituals opened new dimensions of application for Joyce. That this same pattern remained fully relevant to civilized, twentieth century man was made clear by the researches of Jung in the field of psychology. Such synthesis of patterns applicable over a wide range of human experience held a lasting appeal for Joyce, and became an essential feature of his art.

In discussing Joyce's presentation of Stephen, I will attempt to demonstrate that Joyce patterned Stephen's development upon a comic Dionysiac movement through "death" to rebirth. In adapting this pattern to Stephen's situation, Joyce ranged widely over its many manifestations in myth, cult and initiation rite. He drew especially on the myth of Adonis and the story of Jesus, and made use also of that modern-day relic of the archaic ritual underlying comedy, known commonly in the British Isles as the Mummers' Play.

The relationship between Dionysiac ritual and comic form has been extensively worked out by Francis MacDonald Cornford, to whom modern theorists of comedy remain indebted. Cornford has identified four main types of regeneration ritual which he suggests passed into the form of Aristophanic Old
Comedy, and thence in attenuated form into comedy as we know it today. Cornford describes these rituals as: 1) Carrying out death; 2) the battle between the old king and the new, in which victory goes to the new king; 3) the battle between winter and spring, where winter is defeated; 4) death and resurrection motifs, often imaged in the death and dismemberment of a god, followed by his rebirth. Cornford notes that in comedy the emphasis falls generously upon the resurrection element, and the reappearance of the god, i.e., the life-force, is often celebrated with a feast or a marriage, followed by a triumphal procession and songs of joy. The symbolism of the marriage and feast is clear and direct: eating and copulating are the most explicit and easily understood means whereby man assures his own continued existence and that of the race.

Comedy, then, is an art form which from its inception has sought to place before our consciousness an image of the transcendence of death. Even today, this bias remains unchanged. On this Northrop Frye offers some relevant insights. "The action of comedy", he notes, "moves toward a deliverance from something which, if absurd, is by no means invariably harmless. We notice too how frequently a comic dramatist tries to bring his action as close to a catastrophic overthrow of the hero as he can get it..." an extraordinary number of comic stories, both in drama and fiction, seem to approach a potentially tragic crisis near the end, a feature that I may call the 'point of ritual death'." James Feibleman, too, draws attention to this feature of comedy. He
writes: "One characteristic note of comedy, in evidence from archaic Greek comedy straight through to our own times is that tragedy (i.e., death) occurs, but is never wholly accepted or taken seriously. Men are slain obviously enough but the dead always arise to fight again." And finally Joseph Campbell has this to say: "The happy ending of the fairy tale, the myth, and the divine comedy of the soul is to be read, not as a contradiction, but as a transcendence of the universal tragedy of man." Thus it would appear that "carrying out death" remains the serious underlying purpose of comedy, despite the apparent frivolity of her garb.

Comedy's concern with the defeat of death ranges from confrontation with actual physical death to the more common battle against the forces which prevent one from becoming fully alive. Recalling Langer's identification of the dual thrusts of comedy, towards accommodation and growth, we may say that anything which detracts from man's ability to adapt, anything which inhibits the full development of his potential, represents a kind of death or death-force, and as such is attacked by comedy. Conversely, what is lasting and contributes to the eternal in man is celebrated and praised.

In the pages which follow, Joyce's use of the traditional structure of comedy as described by Frye and Langer will come under scrutiny. The study will concentrate on the characters of Bloom and Stephen as they make their compromises with the death forces which they encounter or carry with them during their Odyssey through the streets of Joyce's Dublin. Joyce has
internalised the traditional struggle of comedy, so that the "blocking characters" of Northrop Frye's formula have for the most part become aspects of the characters' psyche, and the overcoming of them the achievement of equanimity. I shall trace the efforts of Bloom and Stephen to achieve a state of equilibrium in the midst of the difficulties which oppress them during the course of the novel. Caught in a perverse and alien society which has partly moulded them and made them what they are, what kind of comic triumph is available to Bloom and Stephen? This is the ultimate question to which the present study addresses itself.

Bloom and Stephen each undergo a crisis in Ulysses which may be most easily understood in Jungian terms. Stephen endeavours to break free from the unwelcome pressures of authority and establish himself as an independent human being. Bloom, his life disrupted by Molly's infidelity, strives to come to terms with the departure of his youth and the inevitable approach of death. In terms of Jung's theory of individuation, Stephen undergoes a classic crisis of youth, while Bloom passes through a crisis of maturity. Each crisis is resolved in comic terms.

Cornford draws attention to a facet of comedy which is of prime importance in studying Joyce's comic methods in Ulysses. From the beginning, he notes, comedy included elements of both celebration and scorn—or as C. L. Barber describes them, "invocation and abuse". These elements, Cornford says, were interpolated into Old Comedy directly from the "magical abuse"
and "sexual magic" featured in the behaviour of the phallic chorus which led the Dionysiac revels. In the songs and posturings of the chorus, fertility was celebrated and invective poured out on the malevolent and the life-deterring.

In Ulysses Joyce employs to good effect the time-old methods of the comedian, celebration and scorn. This allows him to castigate the shortcomings of existence without consigning his characters to perdition. It allows him to steer a middle course between euphoria and cynicism, and to avoid the pitfalls of sentimentality. Both Bloom and Stephen are subjected to ridicule to such a degree that many critics have been led to believe that the viewpoint of Ulysses is wholly ironic. I hope to show that this is not so, and that the true comic values finally reassert themselves.

Particular attention will be paid in this study to the resolution which Ulysses holds out to Bloom and Stephen, and which has given rise to such divergent critical interpretations. Comic endings are difficult for the modern novelist, and he rarely produces them. The novelist writes in a genre which traditionally demands obeisance to realism, and real life offers few genuine examples of living "happily ever after". Such exuberant congés are more at home in the realm of fairy-tale. Yet the true comic ending is undeniably joyful and triumphant. Writing of comic endings, Northrop Frye suggests that they need not impress us as true, but as desirable. A more useful terminology for our purposes here would be that they impress us as authentic. And herein lies the difficulty of the novelist.
For the dramatist it is not so difficult. He is already working in a field of illusion, readily accepted by his audience. People have come to the theatre in expectation of being entertained; they are in "a holiday humour, and like enough to consent" to a willing suspension of disbelief. The air of mystery and excitement in the theatre allows the dramatist some freedom from the shackles of reason and logic which bind the novelist fast.

(Joyce's dedication to realism was great. "Life we must accept as we see it before our eyes, men and women as we meet them in the real world, not as we apprehend them in the world of faery", he writes.) Realism prevailed in his early collection of stories, *Dubliners*, which fail to achieve a comic conclusion. But Joyce's comic impulse was great, too, and in *Ulysses* he finds a way out of the dilemma of the ending to achieve a difficult balance between the demands of realism and the blandishments of comic form. He makes the comic ending authentic by rendering fantasy authentic, and this he does by couching it in the metaphor of myth. Throughout the novel, Joyce operates consistently on two levels, the realistic and the mythic. The immediate truths, with all their inevitable failures and misery, are told on the realistic level; the eternal truths, in all their comic intensity, emerge in the mythic overtones. When both coincide, as they do in moments of crisis, Joyce produces comic moments of great power. The interpenetration of reality and myth is facilitated by the stream-of-consciousness technique. This is particularly
evident in the Circe episode, the comic crisis of Ulysses, where Bloom and Stephen are immersed in a world of fantasy created from the wild turmoil of their own imaginations. Here reality, myth and dream-image fuse in a fantastic comic drama which allows the central characters to achieve a comic release at the close of the episode.

Northrop Frye describes the ending of comedy in terms of individual release and social integration. The emotional catharsis of the "Circe" episode extends to each character, but there is no obvious social integration for Stephen in Ulysses; indeed such an ending would be inappropriate for a character with his background. He had a shape which couldn't be changed. "Society", Albert Cook informs us, "always condemns, casts out and castrates its artists and saints." Stephen's individual isolation and alienation from modern society is left as it stands. But he has made some progress under the catalysing influence of Bloom, and though he departs alone, hope is not extinguished. He has come through death in a ritualistic rite de passage that presages well for the future.

The central comic character of Ulysses is, of course, Bloom. "I am now writing a book", Joyce told his friend, Budgen, "based on the wanderings of Ulysses. The Odyssey, that is to say, serves me as a ground plan." Joyce's decision to employ Homer's Odyssey as the epic counterpart to Bloom's modern Dublin voyage had obvious effects on the shape of Ulysses. The heterogeneous material of the work was given coherence by Joyce's system of Homeric correspondence. Homer's
epic furnished the shadow characters of Bloom, Stephen and Molly. Many of the minor characters too had Homeric antecedents. Each of the eighteen episodes in Joyce's novel corresponded with a comparable adventure in the Odyssey. Indeed, the marvellous complexity and ingenuity of the Homeric correspondences, which became a virtual obsession with Joyce during the writing of Ulysses, have rather obscured the simplicity of the initial conception. In his choice of mythic background for Ulysses, Joyce opted for one that was fundamentally comic in structure. The voyage of Odysseus is towards home and the re-establishment of family ties, domestic love, and societal stability. His quest ends in success and harmony. Aristotle discussed the Odyssey as a good example of comic structure, with the stricture that it would have been perfect had the suitors been treated more kindly, for it is the way of comedy to pardon its offenders. In the Odyssey, Joyce discovered a true comic hero and also a "myth which embodied eternal laws", a genuine comic myth. W. B. Stanford underscores the fundamentally comic structure of the Odyssey in The Ulysses Theme, and also draws attention to the unheroic or comic aspects of its central character. Thus there is no real conflict between Joyce's comic Ulysses and his Homeric prototype.

The patterned movement of the Odyssey adheres in outline to the traditional flow of comedy. Bloom's pattern follows that of the Odyssey. He is at first discovered in an aura of brightness and fertility, full of the spells and smells of intimate family life. He departs into the streets of Dublin,
the comic other world, there to work out his destiny for a day. During the course of that day, the dichotomy between his imagined potential and his actual achievement, rendered more acute in the light of the crisis of Molly's infidelity, creates a stream of tension which gathers momentum as the day folds in about him, to reach a strident climax in the nighttown episode. Here Bloom, like Stephen, undergoes an emotional catharsis, and afterwards plods homewards to end the day where he belongs in Molly's bed in a state of perfect, though hardly won, equilibrium.
FOOTNOTES-—CHAPTER I


8Langer, p. 327.

9Ibid.

10Ibid., p. 328.


12Langer, p. 349.

13Ibid., p. 331.

15 Ibid., p. 163.

16 Ibid., p. 164.

17 Langer, p. 331.


19 Langer, p. 331.


23 C.W., p. 39.

24 Quillan, p. 5.


27 Frye, p. 178.

28 Ibid., p. 179.

29 Sic.


31 Campbell, p. 28.


33 Frye, p. 107.

34 C.W., p. 45.

35 Frye, pp. 163-171 and passim.


"Und so lang' du das nicht hast
Dieses: Stirb und Werde!
Bist du nur ein trueber Gast
Auf der dunklen Erde."

-Goethe-

("And until you have experienced
Dying and Rebirth
You are but a sullen guest
On the gloomy earth.")
II STEPHEN DEDALUS AND THE COMEDY OF REGENERATION

Though Stephen Dedalus in *Ulysses* is not the explicitly comic figure that Bloom is, nonetheless the fundamental patterns of comedy as outlined in the previous chapter can be discerned in Joyce's treatment of Stephen too.

As we have seen, Susanne Langer discusses comedy in terms of survival. It is the genre that celebrates the life-impulse, man's capacity for endurance, self-preservation and personal growth. Frye defines the comic struggle as the conquest by youth of old ways and the old order represented by inimical authority figures who threaten to suppress the emergent individuality of the youth, and frustrate his desires. Frye draws attention to the "point of ritual death" which most comic protagonists are brought to before they can win through to their comic goal. Jung, finally, points to comparable rites of passage in the psychic life of the modern individual, marking his progress to a more advanced stage of development.

In this chapter, the relevance of these comic values and patterns to Joyce's treatment of Stephen Dedalus will be explored. To describe Stephen in comic terms may seem rather anomalous at first. He appears in "Telemachus" a sombre, introverted figure, dressed in black. Anger, envy and guilt cloud his judgment and hamper his development as an artist. His great arrogance and lack of humour make him an unsympathetic
figure. However, in order to appear in a comedy, and partici-
pate in the comic impulse, a character does not have to be
comic, or have a sense of humour. As L.C. Knights notes,
"Once an inevitable connection between comedy and laughter is
assumed we are not likely to make any observation that will be
useful to criticism." ¹

In his attempt to reconstruct an Aristotelian theory
of comedy, Lane Cooper suggests that the formula for comedy
corresponding to tragedy's purging of pity and terror was the
purging of anger and envy. ² These are precisely the emotions
which hamper Stephen's development in the preliminary chapters
of Ulysses, rendering him incapable of responding in an affir-
mative way to life. The purging of these negative emotions
within Stephen's heart constitutes an important aspect of the
comic action of Ulysses. Northrop Frye observes that the block-
ing character in comedy is often in the grip of a negative "humour"
which causes him to oppose the hero's desires for fulfillment. ³
In Stephen's case the negative "humour" lies in his own psyche
and prevents the growth to full maturity of his artistic potential.
Stephen is freed from his bitter and stultifying emotions which
bind him in "Telemachus" through his participation in a liberating
comic drama of death and rebirth.

In Ulysses, Joyce presents the continuation of Stephen's
efforts to become that self which he feels he is "ineluctably
preconditioned to become" (U 505), the mature creative artist.
For Stephen this process began in the early pages of Portrait
and progressed through a patterned series of struggles, triumphs
and reversals ⁴--Stephen's "individuating rhythm" ⁵--toward the
Daedalean decision taken at the close of the book to seek freedom through flight. But the ties which bind the young artist are not so easily severed; the pattern of struggle, triumph and reversal continues beyond the confines of Portrait to flow on into Ulysses. Portrait ends on an ecstatic note as Stephen declares his artistic destiny with a triumphant flourish. The opening of Ulysses presents a reversal of this triumph. In the "Telemachus" episode we are confronted with a much altered Stephen; his proud self-confidence has evaporated, to be replaced by a brooding hostility and that "curious mixture of sinister genius and uncertain talent" which Arthur Symonds found in the young Joyce. Later in life, in conversation with Arthur Power, Joyce described Portrait as a book of his youth and continued:

Youth is a time of torment in which we can see nothing clearly, but in Ulysses, I have seen life clearly, I think, and as a whole. It has taken me half a lifetime to reach the necessary equilibrium to express it, for my youth was exceptionally painful and violent.

A major element of Ulysses is Joyce's projection of that struggle for equilibrium onto the figure of Stephen, a struggle which for the character as for the author was "exceptionally painful and violent".

The attainment and maintenance of equilibrium is for Susanne Langer the comic impulse in action. In exploring the relevance of the comic pattern to Stephen's development, a complete analysis of his role in Ulysses would be not only beyond the scope of this study, but unnecessary for my purposes.
The discussion will, therefore, be confined to those passages which best reveal the fundamentally comic structure underlying Stephen's struggles. The remainder of this chapter is divided into three subsections. The first of these discusses the nature of Stephen's comic struggle, and its causes; the second deals with "Telemachus" where the elements of Stephen's comic pattern are initiated; the third deals with "Circe", where these patterns are brought to completion.

1. Stephen's Crisis

Stephen, who according to Joyce had a "shape which couldn't be changed", intimated in Portrait that the pattern of his life would be "to live, to err, to fall, to triumph, to recreate life out of life". The preliminary elements of this pattern can be traced in the struggle-triumph-reversal structure of the earlier book and continue into Ulysses. Stephen's flight to Paris, or rather his expectation that this alone would automatically free him from the constraints which Dublin placed upon his spirit, was an error, and ended, predictably, in failure. As Ulysses opens, he is no longer Daedalus, but Icarus, the fallen son, a "lapwing, fallen weltering...". The brave attempt to fly by the nets of family, church and country has not brought the desired freedom in which to practise his art. Drawn homeward by the mother's last illness, he finds all the old enemies, like the dragon's teeth in the fable, new-sprung to drag him down. But the pattern of Stephen's life, traceable throughout Portrait, is to wrench victory out of
defeat in a dramatic and paradoxical reversal. I hope to show that the struggle in which Stephen is engaged in *Ulysses* issues in triumph, a triumph no less effective for being symbolic and individual, rather than social. However, before we can speak of Stephen's comic triumph, we must first identify the terms of the conflict.

(Stephen struggles through *Ulysses* to overcome those same oppressors which he thought to have vanquished or escaped from in *Portrait*—Priest and King, Mother and Father, Church and State, Christ and Caesar—authority spiritual and temporal.¹⁰ His mother's death precipitated anew the old struggle for the emergent artist. Yet the struggle is different, in that while in *Portrait* the representatives of temporal and spiritual power were outside of Stephen, in a position to impose their will upon him to a certain extent and provoke an unequivocal response, in *Ulysses* the elements of the struggle have become internalised and consequently present a more pernicious threat to Stephen's free development. Like those he disdains, he too is a product of his environment, and has unwittingly absorbed into his being the very elements of that environment which his conscious self most abhors; they have become part of his personal history, that nightmare from which he struggles to awake. External authority figures have for the most part lost their hold over Stephen.)

May Dedalus is dead, and Simon, the ineffectual father, is in no position to exert pressure upon his son. But as a symbol of the abstract influences which threaten his freedom to develop as an individual, May Dedalus remains a powerful image in
The importance of the Jungian concept of separation from the mother for an understanding of Stephen has been stressed by several critics. William P. Fitzpatrick writes:

Jung's theory helps to illuminate Stephen's situation, not only in relation to his actual mother, but to Ireland and the Church as well. Stephen is consciously trying to break away from the confining memory of his mother, but her presence is ever with him, spectral and ghoulish...Jung comments that excessive dwelling on the mother and on childhood becomes a 'hostile demon which robs us of energy'. So until Stephen can overcome the destructive influence of his mother's memory he will be unable to achieve the necessary distance, the objectivity and freedom, in order to create.11

The penetration of the "blocking forces" into Stephen's psyche is presented in Ulysses as "agenbite of inwit", a continuous mental torment associated with the death of his mother which drives the young man to the edge of insanity.12 As Stephen comes to realise in Ulysses, he is involved in a struggle to "free his mind from his mind's bondage" (U 212). "In here it is that I must kill the priest and the king," (U589) he avers, tapping his forehead. To borrow a phrase from Wylie Sypher, for Stephen "the romantic quest for freedom has changed into the existential quest for an authentic self capable of being identified and sustained amid the average".13

This brings us to consider another important aspect of Stephen's struggle. Thinking that he could escape the influences of Dublin by cutting himself off from them completely, Stephen, Paris bound, adopted an attitude of cold and arrogant indifference mixed with derision toward family and friends, religion and nation. "He drove their echoes even out of his
heart with an execration". (P 175). Now he finds that these attitudes can no longer be maintained as a proper or adequate response to the realities of his human condition. Nor, indeed, did they facilitate the development of his artistic potential. Physical separation does not necessarily produce artistic objectivity, and mere indifference is sterile. Having rejected everything in a resounding fashion, Stephen is left with nothing; and as Lear so tellingly observed, "nothing can come of nothing". By disassociating himself from his artistic life-sources, Stephen rendered himself Hamlet-like incapable of action.

Thus Stephen's position in the early chapters of Ulysses has very obvious ironic dimensions. As Joyce remarked to Budgen, he has not "let this young man off very lightly." It would be a mistake, however, to view the irony, which is by no means pervasive, as a rejection of Stephen. Joyce's comic irony was truly Aristophanic in nature and intent. In his delineation of Stephen's character, Joyce uses the ironic tone to counterbalance the excesses of Stephen's temperament, following the age-old comic trend of combining celebration with scorn. According to Robert S. Ryf, Joyce's ironic tone gives a "carefully balanced view in which judgment and sympathy go hand in hand." "It is not Stephen's actions which are customarily viewed ironically," Ryf continues, "it is his attitudes. When he is deflated, it is by his own terms, and the deflations come when his attitudes are confronted by external realities.""17

Stephen's difficulties in coming to terms with reality and the consequences for his art are set forth in an ironic
sequence close to the end of *Portrait*, dealing with the composition of the Villanelle. Disappointed with his inability to court E. C. in reality with any great success, he attempts to transform his physical and lonely passion into poetic utterance. Whatever the artistic merit of the poem he composes on this occasion, it fails to conform to Stephen's own conception of his function as an artist--"to recreate life out of life". For "the real experience has been blotted out of the final creation."

The girl is not named in the poem at all. The love theme is completely depersonalised. It is the subject, rather than the artist, who has been refined out of existence. The poem emerges as a misty shadow from which all the flesh and bone of the living reality has been excluded.

Ten years earlier, Stephen had tried once before to compose a poem for his beloved, and Stephen's reference to the earlier effort is an invitation to compare them. Though the text of the first poem is not given, it is clear that it suffered like the Villanelle from a severe excision of the real and concrete:

> All the elements which he deemed common and insignificant fell out of the scene. There remained no trace of the tram itself nor of the trammen nor of the horses: nor did he and she appear vividly. The verses told only of the night and balmy breeze and the maiden lustre of the moon. (*Portrait*, 70)

After writing the verses, Stephen went to his mother's bedroom "and gazed at his face for a long time in the mirror of her dressing table". (P 71) Joyce, "master of the illuminating juxtaposition" is using the technique here to imply that
Stephen's failure to imbue his composition with vital feeling is directly related to his mother's influence over him. Until he leaves the mother's room, and ceases to narcissistically regard himself in the mirror she provides for him (i.e., the constrictions she places upon his identity), he will remain incapable of that perfect synthesis of reality and imagination which characterises the finest art. His mother's image stands between Stephen and his creative soul, preventing their fruitful union.

Clearly Stephen must establish a working relationship with his roots before he can come to terms with his present reality. He must dispel the mental dominance the image of his mother holds, embodying the coercive powers of home, Church and country. But while asserting his individuality, he must acknowledge his membership in the family of men. If he is ever to enshrine them meaningfully in art, he must admit his common ties with his fellow Dubliners and with all men. It is in this respect that the meeting with Bloom is important for Stephen. It is Bloom who facilitates Stephen's efforts to objectify his personal history while re-establishing his connection with the brotherhood of men.

But the achievement of objectivity-with-empathy must be accomplished without compromising Stephen's highly developed sense of integrity, and without stunting his potential for growth. It rapidly becomes clear that Stephen cannot reconcile these conflicting demands while he continues to live in Dublin. The grinding poverty and mental degradation which bind the
characters of *Dubliners* into the self-defilement of their death-in-life remain a threat to Stephen while he stays in the city, and present an impossible ambience in which to develop artistically. If Stephen cannot find the freedom to develop in Paris, because of the excess mental baggage he carries there with him, it is clear that "home also he cannot go". His passion for freedom and integrity, his belief in "the immemorial right of the soul to live without fetters" will not allow him to choose the sybaritic relationship which Mulligan has established with society. From the rejections implicit in the "Telemachus" episode, it is apparent that Stephen's comic pattern cannot include reconciliation with his society and we must not look for that in an assessment of his comic triumph. "You saved men from drowning", he says to Mulligan, "I am not a hero, however" (U 4).

Unlike the comic heroes of former times, today's comic protagonist cannot transform his society, but must escape from it if he is to survive. This judgment, however, does not preclude a much-needed at-one-ment with the average man, represented by Bloom.

In Joyce's treatment of Stephen, we are confronted with an internalisation of the comic plot, an archetypal comic drama played out in the deepest levels of the individual psyche. Stephen's comic struggle must be fought and won within the confines of his own mind. It is here that the "blocking forces" reside, and here they must be defeated. Joyce, with his automatic appreciation for primitive ways of thought, discerned in the comic pattern and its mythic prototypes a powerful vehicle
for psychic release, as Freud did.

In the pages which follow, we will trace Stephen's efforts to find his authentic identity in overcoming the alien influences which pervert his development and threaten him with that greatest of evils, the loss of self. "Not to possess oneself is in a way a kind of death",\textsuperscript{21} writes Ellmann. It is certainly so for the artist. Stephen's thoughts are suffused with images of death throughout the book as he struggles for self-possession. Stephen's struggle to free himself from restraint, find a common bond with his fellows, and establish for himself an authentic identity "capable of being sustained amid the average" is a battle against a form of death not unusual in the literature of comedy of all ages, and is particularly representative of the comedy of our own era.

2. The Mask of the Mummer: Stephen's Dionysiac Pattern

In Ulysses Stephen's struggle to achieve authentic individuality is modelled upon a classic death-and-resurrection scenario. In tracing Stephen's comic pattern, his relationship to Dionysus, the central figure of the life-cult, the god who every year dies and is reborn, the god whose ritual gave rise to comedy, will become apparent.

Throughout Ulysses, Stephen is "in a pivotal moment of becoming".\textsuperscript{22} Significantly, it is Bloom who draws attention to Stephen's "equal and opposite powers of abandonment and recuperation". (U673). While the writing of Ulysses was in progress, Joyce described Stephen as an "embryo" to his friend,
Frank Budgen. When "Telemachus" opens, twelve months have elapsed since the death of his mother, and Stephen prepares to be reborn. The gestation period has been a long one, for "the soul of man has a slow and dark birth..." From the pages of Jane Harrison's Themis, we glean important information on the implications of being ritually reborn:

New birth...reflects a tribal rite of initiation. Its purpose is to rid the child from the infection of his mother—to turn him from a woman-thing into a man-thing...Man cannot escape being born of woman, but he can, and if he is wise, he will, as soon as he comes to manhood, perform rites of riddance and purgation.

According to Harrison, Dionysiac ritual emerged from an initiatory ceremony of this kind, and the emblem of new birth passed on into comedy—"Something gets born at the end of comedy", writes Frye.

Evert Spinchorn again stresses the importance of Jung's concept of separation from the mother as "crucial" to an understanding of Stephen's character:

The individual human being cannot, on the one hand, find his own identity unless he breaks with his mother nor can he on the other hand, be creative unless he returns to the source of his being, his mother, and is united with her...The mythic hero learns to overcome his fear of incest, symbolized by the terrible mother, and channel his libido into the symbolic equivalent of mother.

Stephen will not become productive until he banishes forever the paralysing spectre of his mother, and turns instead to embrace her "symbolic equivalent" Jung's Anima, the feminine creative matrix of his being, his muse, his soul, his Self.

Since his mother's death, Stephen has been drifting,
aimless and unproductive, on the fringes of Dublin literary circles, passively allowing himself to fall victim to the encroachments of Buck Mulligan. If the image of his mother is the psychic obstruction which Stephen must expel, Mulligan is the external manifestation of similar antagonistic forces at work within Stephen's society. He embodies the threat to Stephen's identity and success as an artist posed by the Dublin environment. In the words of Clive Hart, "Mulligan represents most forcefully all those paralysing aspects of Dublin which have plunged Stephen into his dilemma. He is, in Stephen's view, typical of all that is worst in the Anglo-Irish: companion of an Englishman, perfidious, lacking in any spiritual awareness." Mulligan represents the triumph of the inauthentic.

The extent to which Stephen's identity is threatened by Mulligan, and the effect of this upon his personality, is set forth in the "Telemachus" episode. Mulligan has come upon Stephen during a period of incertitude, when his self-confidence is shattered and his resistance low. He becomes an enemy precisely because, at this difficult period in Stephen's life, he could so easily become a model, a type of the degenerate "artist" who cynically dances to the tune of inferiors to reap the rewards of the time-server.

When "Telemachus" opens, Stephen appears to have temporarily and unwillingly abandoned himself to Mulligan's urgings to prostitute his talent. He acknowledges self-deprecatingly that he is a "server of a servant", more in thrall to Mulligan now than to his mentors at Clongowes. But his "equal and
opposite power" of recuperation is also at work, and begins to crystallise into outright opposition to Mulligan before the close of the first episode.

Stephen's growing antagonism to Mulligan has not found favour with some readers, who find the lightness and wit of the buck a cheerful and amusing contrast to Stephen's gloom and lack of humour. To view Mulligan as more attractive than Stephen will only lead to distortion of the novel, however. Mulligan may be funny and gay to an audience of the uninvolved, which to some extent includes the reader, but Stephen is too close to the subject to appreciate the wit. The jests cut too deeply, and deal with subjects too intimately bound up with Stephen's existential anxieties, to allow him to appreciate their humour. In one way, the Stephen/Mulligan polarity is a presentation of the life-denying, cruel aspects of the comic impulse, in contrast with the main position presented in Joyce's use of a life-preserving comic structure to depict Stephen's regeneration.

Similarly, when dealing with the Bloom/Boylan opposition, Joyce gives to Boylan rather than to Bloom the usual comic role of "conquering hero". As the young man who wins the comic bride away from the foolish older one, Boylan is a horrible exaggeration of the traditional comic hero, and in this case it is easy to see where the sympathies of both author and reader lie.

Joyce intimated to Budgen that Mulligan too is intended to pall on the reader as the day goes on. It becomes clear that his brand of wit is at base sterile and destructive, malevolent and corrosive. Bloom, in "Cyclops", is confronted
with just such a character as Mulligan in the person of the unnamed narrator—witty, shrewd, popular, energetic—but brutally unsympathetic. His reportage belittles Bloom and makes a mockery of him in the eyes of his listeners. Mulligan deals with Stephen in a similar way. He repeatedly contrives to place Stephen in situations where the latter will appear at a disadvantage, and Stephen is not alone in his dislike of him. Simon Dedalus considers Mulligan a blackguard, and none of the passengers in the funeral coach dissents. Bloom, who is rarely mistaken about character, dislikes Mulligan, and perceives the deadlier side of his activities. Joyce consistently undercuts Mulligan as the book progresses, until in the end to like Mulligan is more a judgment on the reader than on Stephen. Mulligan is popular with Dublin's literary figures, but his acceptance in these circles is significant of tawdry and debased values.

Even in the "Telemachus" episode there are undercurrents which support Stephen's bitter refusal to be amused. The correlation between Mulligan and the mother, as joint enemies of Stephen's individuality, is established here in subtle ways by Joyce. During the early morning dialogue with Mulligan on top of the tower, Stephen makes two distinct efforts to assert himself. Each time, Mulligan counters by conjuring up for Stephen an image of his mother, rekindling in the mind of his companion the tormenting associations which have weakened him and brought him under Mulligan's sway. The first of these instances occurs when Stephen threatens to leave the tower if Haines remains. Mulligan frowns in disapproval, then directs
Stephen's attention to the sea, the "great sweet mother", the "mighty mother". These are the two conflicting aspects of motherhood which have caused the bitter confusion in Stephen's heart: the claim of the mother to love and to be loved, and her use of this love-bond as a powerful influence to cudgel her son into obedience. Stephen's ambivalent reaction to the mother image is further complicated by the tremendous oedipal tension she arouses in his subconscious.\textsuperscript{30}

Mulligan, perceiving the effect of his words on Stephen, is quick to press his advantage by referring directly to the death of Stephen's mother, blaming Stephen for his unnatural behaviour at her deathbed. The reminder causes Stephen's recurrent nightmare of the reproachful ghost of his mother to arise for the first time. The conjunction of the ghost-mother with Mulligan occurs most forcefully during the climax of the nighttown hallucinations, in a farcical repetition of his morning performance:

From the top of the tower Buck Mulligan, in particoloured Jester's cap of puce and yellow and clowns cap with curling bell, stands gaping at her, a smoking buttered split scone in his hand. (U 580).

The immediate effect of Mulligan's initial reference to the mother is to render Stephen once more docile and subdued. She unmans him, leaving him easy prey to Mulligan's continued attacks upon his self-image. Mulligan insidiously suggests that Stephen may be insane, and offers him numerous pseudonyms and identity-alternatives. Stephen is called by many names in the first episode, rarely by his own.
When Stephen tries to assert himself a second time the pattern is repeated, its elements more pronounced. Stephen rebukes Mulligan for his offhand remark "It's only Dedalus whose mother is beastly dead" (U 10), making it quite clear that what he objects to is not "the offence to his mother", but the derogatory reference to himself as "only Dedalus" with its implication that he is an unimportant person of no consequence.

Mulligan, stung by Stephen's rebuke, turns to go, but launches a subtle counter-thrust as he departs. He sings a few bars of Yeat's song "Who goes with Fergus", the melody Stephen sang for his mother as she lay dying. Again the reminder strikes home, and arouses old memories in Stephen's breast. And once more the image of his mother rises before him, a mingling of attractive and repulsive aspects, sweet and mighty. In a vivid fore-shadowing of things to come, the mother's aspect of inimical authority arouses Stephen to violent repudiation of her claims upon him: "No Mother. Let me be and let me live", he agonizes.

But the vision has already served its purpose and when Mulligan calls, Stephen answers, once more subdued and biddable. He has become again a servant, "a jester in the court of his master, indulged and disesteemed", (U 25), agreeing to render up his pay to his master, fetching and carrying as he is bid, eating the scraps, producing witticisms on demand to impress Haines.

Stephen's capitulation on this occasion is marked by his descent into a maternal Hell as he goes down the steps into the "gloomy domed livingroom" of the tower; into a "choking" atmosphere clouded by smoke and fumes, marked by an upside-down cross
created by the shafts of light flowing in at the high windows, and presided over by Mulligan's gowned form, a demonic and maternal figure moving busily about the fire preparing breakfast. The image conveys vividly the conjunction of Mulligan with mother, and the dangers they jointly pose for Stephen. It is this image too which is picked up in the closing paragraph of the chapter as Mulligan plunges into the sea, merging with the "great sweet mother", his voice becomes hers, "Sweettoned and sustained". No wonder Stephen views him as a usurper!

In the "Telemachus" episode, Joyce uses the dual antagonism of Mulligan and the mother to initiate the pattern of death-and-resurrection which he builds about Stephen. Quite early in the episode, Mulligan calls Stephen a "lovely mummer", and repeats with odd emphasis: "The loveliest mummer of them all." This obtrusive reference to mumming invites a comparison with the rural ceremonials and folk-plays of the British Isles known as the Mummers' Plays. The Mummers' Play is a comic folk survival of the archetypal Dionysian ritual from which literary comedy developed.

In his recent book on the subject, Alan Brody distinguishes three distinct types of mumming play: Hero Combat, Sword Play and Wooing Ceremony. In all of these, an important part of the action is devoted to a sword fight leading to a death-and-resurrection sequence: "A protagonist meets an antagonist in direct combat. One of the two falls, and is subsequently revived by a third party who acts as a Doctor."
The Hero Combat is the most widespread type of mumming play, and the only one found in Ireland. In this play, the swordfight assumes greater importance than it does in the variant types.

On reading through the verbal conflict between Mulligan and Stephen which fills the first chapter, one is struck by the numerous references to duelling, by the recurrent use of words and images borrowed from the vocabulary of fencing and swordfighting. References to sharp, pointed instruments (knives, blades, razors) abound. Stephen is called Kinch, the knifeblade. He speaks of his "cold steel" pen, and the "lancet" of his art. He "parries" Mulligan's words and "shields" the "gaping wounds" they leave in his heart. Mulligan, we are told, "hacked" through the fry on the dish; his eyes held "silver points" of anxiety; he "lunged" towards his companions a thick slice of bread "im-paled" on his knife; the number of examples could be multiplied. Of course in a sense every argument bears some resemblance to the cut-and-thrust rhythm of swordplay, but it seems that something more than an incidental resemblance is intended here. Joyce wishes to make the analogy obtrusive.

This impression is strengthened by other factors. Brody notes that the Mummers' Plays were traditionally performed by males in a circular space. The denizens of the tower are male, and the circular platform on top of the tower, and later its livingroom, provide appropriate circular locations for the action. Mulligan's "Come up Kinch, come up you fearful jesuit" substitutes admirably for the elaborate "calling on ceremony"
with which the mumming play usually opens. Animal disguises are frequent in these folk plays; Brody pays particular attention to the horse. Mulligan is described several times as "equine" and Stephen has bull overtones--of which more later. The modern mummers perform for money, as Mulligan urges Stephen to do.

Disguise plays an important role in the Mummers' Play; traditionally the player's identity was concealed by the wearing of elaborate headgear or masks, though later it became the practice in many villages to dress in character. The disguise motif is paralleled in "Telemachus" by the frequent use of pseudonyms as well as by direct reference to disguise and to dressing the part. Brody draws attention to the hat, sword and phallic symbol which are prominent pieces of equipment in the folk play. In Ulysses, Stephen's hat and ash stick assume a Pinterian importance. The stick is called a sword more than once, and is so designated during the climactic scene where Stephen uses it to shatter the lamp in the brothel. It is noteworthy too that Stephen's stick is made of ash. The Nordic tree of life, Yggdrasil, was an ash tree. Its symbolism approximates that of the phallus, both carrying overtones of continued life and fertility. Thus Stephen's ashplant acts as a suitable substitute for the sword and phallus of the folk-play.

In terms of Stephen's comic struggle against the Mother and Mulligan, a most important parallel between "Telemachus" and the Mummers' Play is to be found in Brody's discussion of the Wooing Ceremony. In this play, a young woman is wooed by several suitors, but rejects them all. An old woman enters, carrying a
"baby" which she claims was fathered by the chief mummer. The latter rejects her and denies her claim. In some versions of the play, the "baby" suddenly grows up to become the chief mummer. He is then killed by an interloper and resurrected. In others, the chief mummer is killed by a rival for the hand of the young maiden. Brody writes: "It is as a direct consequence of the wooing action that the male fertility figure, the phallus-bearer, dies and is reborn." In all versions of the play, the chief mummer is revived and goes on to successfully win the young maiden.

Brody goes to Frazer for an explanation of the figures who appear in this drama; he writes: "Whenever this double-female form appears, the old wife represents the corn spirit of the past year, while the maiden signifies the present, fruitful time. It is natural, then, that the old, dying figure should be rejected in favour of the young and fruitful one."

The relevance of these themes to Stephen's situation hardly needs elaboration. In Portrait, his developing creativity is related to youthful female figures. His vision of the bird-maiden becomes for him as it were a vision of his own creative soul, which he thinks of as female. A striking elaboration of this image occurs when he describes the creative process in terms of human reproduction: "In the virgin womb of the imagination the word was made flesh." (P 217). In Ulysses this imagery is continued with the references to fatherhood in connection with Stephen's efforts to create.
In the wooing ceremony, it is suggested that the relation between the Old Woman and the chief mummer is that of mother-son-lover, a precise parallel for the ambivalence which clouds Stephen's relationship with his own mother. Stephen's mother, with her disturbing maternal and sexual aura, functions like the Old Woman of the Mummer's Play to displace the soul-maiden and to precipitate the death and resurrection movement. Mulligan functions as the rival who threatens the chief mummer, tries to usurp his claim to the Maiden, and engages him in mortal combat. If Mulligan were to prevail upon Stephen to abandon the rigours of his self-imposed code of ethics, then Stephen's efforts to "clasp in his arms the beauty which has not yet come into the world" would be doomed to failure. The mumming theme surfaces elsewhere from time to time in the text, always in very specific contexts, and as we shall see, is used to good effect in the climax of the "Circe" episode.

In "Nestor", Stephen muses:

Across the page the symbols moved in grave morrice, in the mummery of their letters, wearing quaint caps of squares and cubes. Give hands, traverse, bow to partner: so: imps of fancy of the Moors. Gone too from the world, Averroes and Moses Maimonides, dark men in mein and movement, flashing in their mocking mirrors the obscure soul of the world, a darkness shining in brightness which brightness could not comprehend. (U 28).

This passage is preceded by a reference to the fox and grandmother riddle, which has been interpreted as a manifestation of Stephen's guilt at his mother's death:38

And on a heath beneath winking stars a fox, red reek of rapine in his fur, with merciless bright eyes scraped in the earth, listened, scraped and scraped. (U 28).
Thus in Stephen's mind, the mumming theme acts as a bridge which enables him to move forward from the inhibiting associations which circumscribe his mother-memories, to the creative, eastern, Bloomian aura suggested by the "dark men in mein and movement", Averroes and Moses Maimonides.

This association of ideas is repeated in "Proteus". Here Stephen contemplates the dog, Joyce's "mummer among beasts". The live dog ambles over to sniff the carcass of a dead dog washed up on the beach. Stephen comments: "Ah, poor dogsbody. Here lies poor dogsbody's body"; in an obscure way, he is establishing an identification between himself and the dog, for Stephen too is "poor dogsbody" (U 6), and both are mummers. He continues the analogy, equating the dog with the fox of the riddle: "His hindpaws then scattered sand: then his forepaws dabbled and delved. Something he buried there, his grandmother." The reference to the riddle is immediately followed by Stephen's recollection of the melon dream:

> After he woke me up last night same dream or was it? Wait. Open hallway. Street of Harlots. Remember. Haroun al Raschid. I am almosting it. That man led me, spoke. I was not afraid. The melon he had he held against my face. Smiled: Creamfruit smell. That was the rule, said. In. Come. Red carpet spread. You will see who. (U 47).

So once again the mumming theme which is hidden beneath the text functions to allow a transition from the death-motif represented by the fox-and-grandmother riddle to the life-motif represented by the dream of the east, with its association with Bloom.

In "Scylla and Charybdis", these themes are suggested with greater clarity, and are purposefully linked back with
their earlier appearance\textsuperscript{40} and forward to their culmination in "Circe". The scene is the exit of the National Library. Mulligan and Bloom, representatives of the death and life forces respectively appear together with Stephen for the first time. As Mulligan and Stephen are about to leave the building, Mulligan announces: "I have conceived a play for the mummers." Stephen immediately recalls his earlier association of ideas: "The pillared Moorish hall, shadows entwined. Gone the nine men's morrice with caps of indices." (U 216). Mulligan lists the characters in his play, observing as he does so "The dis-
guise, I fear, is thin." Taking the hint offered, it is not difficult to discern in the characters figures of greater import than the pornographic ones Mulligan intended.

The characters listed by Mulligan are as follows:

- Toby Tostoff (a ruined pole)
- Crab (a bushranger)
- Medical Dick and Medical Davy (two birds with one stone)
- Mother Grogan (a watercarrier)
- Fresh Nellie
- and
- Rosalie (the coalquay whore)

Mulligan, who has already threatened Stephen with murder earlier in this episode (U 200), is setting the scene for the crime. Farcical parallels can be drawn between the characters in Mulligan's play and the participants in the "Circe" climax. The "ruined pole" and the "crab" point forward to the scene where Stephen shatters the lamp: Here his mother appears as a crab and the lamp is "ruined" by a "pole"--the ashplant. Passing on to Medical Dick and Medical Davy, we see that they are described as "two birds with one stone". The word which has been omitted
is "kill". At the close of "Circe" Stephen is laid low (symbolically killed) by a single blow delivered by two soldiers of the crown, servants of the king. Mother Grogan, like Old Gummy Granny, is Joyce's satiric rendition of the "Sean Bhean Bhocht", traditional poetic personification of Ireland, and Fresh Nellie, the whore, a comparable substitute for "Caitlin ni Houlihan". Both types, representing different aspects of the abuses produced by English domination, appear in the closing scenes of "Circe" in characteristic poses.

Mulligan's play for the mummers, entitled "Everyman His Own Wife or a Honeymoon in the Hand", was obviously inspired by the phrase with which Stephen concluded his Hamlet theory: "Glorified man, an androgynous angel, being a wife unto himself." This is a concept which continues the analogy Stephen has earlier and repeatedly made, likening the act of artistic creation to the processes of human insemination, gestation and parturition acted out between the artist and his soul. In Stephen's case this process had been interrupted by the "blocking forces" which ranged themselves in his mind, preventing his union with his muse. She appears in Mulligan's cast of characters as Rosalie (the coalquay whore), a "Dark Rosaleen" figure, appropriate image of an Irish artist's "Speirbhean".

The mumming motif is followed in "Scylla and Charybdis" by a scene highly charged with significance. As before, it serves to introduce the idea of transition from death to life, from bondage to freedom. Bloom, that "dark man of eastern mien" passes between Mulligan and Stephen, effecting a sundering.
Stephen recalls the melon-dream again, and links it with a flight vision reminiscent of the "hawklike man" image at the end of portrait: "Last night I flew, easily flew. Men wondered. Street of harlots after. A creamfruit melon he held to me. In. You will see." The patterns which culminate in Circe" have here converged.

Stephen comes to a realisation that the confrontation which he has been assiduously avoiding must occur. He cannot escape his fate, but must accept it: "That lies in space which I in time must come to, ineluctably." (U 217). In accepting his destiny, his part in the rite, Stephen intimates that he will "meet himself", his mature and authentic self, the creative self he is predestined to become. As he says later in the ballad he sings for Bloom, he will be immolated "consenting": "Cease to strive. Peace of the druid priests of Cymbeline, hierophantic: from wide earth an altar.

Laud we the gods
And let our crooked smokes climb to their nostrils
From our blessed altars." (U 218).

By accepting his role as the "victim predestined", Stephen says, he will find peace, the peace of the hierophantic priests, the druids. "Hierophantic" is a key term; it identifies the portent of the mumming theme pursued here at length, and also the function of Bloom for Stephen. A hierophant is an initiating priest, expounder of sacred mysteries. It is a term derived from archaic Greek usage, and appropriate for use in connection with mumming. Alan Brody, following the Cambridge scholars and The Golden Bough, relates the death-and-
resurrection movement of the mummers play to the mystery rites of ancient Greece, and particularly to the ritual celebrated in honour of Dionysus, from which comedy developed. In the mummer's play, therefore, Joyce found ready to hand all the elements of the essential comic pattern assembled in a form which, with his delight in parody, he would have found greatly to his liking. The mumming play, with its central Dionysiac figure struggling through death to rebirth, its ambivalent mother and its grim rival, provided a set of tailor-made analogues to fit the situation which Joyce had contrived for his young artist.

Consideration of the mumming theme in relation to Stephen brings us to a conception of the young artist in the role of a Dionysiac figure. As Joyce once wrote to Nora, "Can you not see the simplicity which is at the back of all my disguises? We all wear masks." Stephen wears many masks in Ulysses, but they are all subsumed in the mask of the chief mummer. He is poor dogsbody, a common Joyce inversion which points up his association with the divine victim/victor. Beneath the masks of Stephen it is possible to discern the clear contours of a Dionysiac figure, playing out a comic drama of death and rebirth. Joyce, who wished his readers "to understand always by suggestion rather than direct statement", has provided abundant material in Ulysses to support this view.

The identification of Stephen with Dionysus in Ulysses continues a trend already established in Portrait. Several critics have drawn attention to Dionysiac elements in the
earlier presentation of Stephen. In an article entitled "Stephen Kouros", Doreen M. Gillam identifies Stephen with Dionysus and argues for a direct relationship between Dionysiac ritual as outlined in Jane Harrison's *Themis* and the climax of the fourth chapter of *Portrait*. E. Bernhardt-Kabisch refers to the rites of the mystery gods in his exploration of the meaning of the words intoned for Stephen by the bathing youths: "Bous Stephanoumenos! Bous Stephanephoros!", and dilates on the theme of bull sacrifice:

Bous is the Greek word for bull, bullock, etc. Stephanoumenos means 'being crowned' or 'wreathed' for various occasions, notably sacrifice. The bull is, of course, one of the archetypal cultural, religious and mythological symbols; various godheads have been identified with it, and the notions of strength and fertility have always been associated with that animal. Moreover, the bull has been the victim of various types of ritual sacrifice. One is the killing, tearing to pieces, and eating of a bull, by which the death and laceration of Dionysus was enacted, and which embodied the notion of the eating of the flesh and drinking of the blood of the killed god—essentially the pattern of the eucharist. In the Roman Attis-cult, a bull was killed, and the blood of the killed beast was believed to wash away ones sins. ...It is therefore quite probable that the phrase 'Bous Stephanoumenos' alludes to certain rites in which a bull was killed.

Robert Graves notes that Dionysus had epiphanies as a lion, a bull and a serpent; he was born in winter as a serpent, became a lion in spring, and was killed and devoured as a bull at midsummer. The ritual "death" of Stephen in the "Circe" episode, falling on June 16th, coincides with the Irish midsummer. In Ireland, Spring begins on the first day of February, a day still marked in rural Ireland with fertility rituals
which have survived from ancient times. Thus May, June and July are the summer months, and June 15th and 16th are the midsummer days.

Stephen's identification with the bull (god) becomes a pervasive theme in *Ulysses*, nowhere more emphatically than in that chapter devoted to all things bullish and bovine, "Oxen of the Sun". Here Stephen, describing himself as "Bous Stephanoumenos", vaunts his power over time and mortality, claiming to be able to bring the dead to life:

> You have spoken of the past and its phantoms, Stephen said. Why think of them? If I call them into life across the waters of Lethe will not the poor ghosts troop to my call? Who supposes it? I, Bous Stephanoumenos, bullockbefriending bard, am lord and giver of their life. He encircled his gadding hair with a coronal of vineleaves, smiling at Vincent." (U 415).

Here, in a chapter dedicated to fertility, Stephen is unequivocally identified with Bacchus/Dionysus. Drunk, half-mad, with the vine-leaves and tipsy smile of the wine god, he makes his claim to be the lord of life, as Dionysus is.

About the Dionysiac matrix which encloses Stephen, Joyce builds freely with material drawn from comparable mythic patterns. These serve not only to reinforce the basic comic pattern but to extend and deepen its implications. The parallels between the myths of Dionysus, Adonis, Demeter, Orpheus and similar year-daimons were pointed out by Frazer and his followers. The archetypal pattern of Death-and-Rebirth repeated itself again and again. Like the cultural anthropologists, Joyce appreciated the similarities between the life-story of
Jesus and the gods of the mystery religions. "Jewgreek is Greekjew"; "to the mythical mind, such contradictions do not contradict". The great Easter drama of death and rebirth, repetition of a universal archetype, held a lasting appeal for him. As Sypher points out, the Easter ritual can be viewed as a magnificent comic drama, a Divine Comedy of the soul. Thus when Stephen is identified with Jesus, as he is throughout Ulysses, we are given the Dionysiac pattern, expressed with new, emphasis.

In a similar way, Joyce exploits the myth of Adonis to intensify his delineation of Stephen's relationship with his mother. As Venus emasculated Adonis, Stephen, like Shakespeare with whom he identifies, is psychically unmanned by the image of his mother. She is for him "the greyeyed goddess who bends over the boy Adonis, stooping to conquer" (U 191); Stephen's "deam qui laetificat iuventutem eum" is also "La belle dame sans merci". (U 433).

The ambivalence of the female figure in the Adonis myth is a recurrent feature of the vegetation myths. C. H. W. Johns writes of Tammuz, whose "Canaanite name Adonai gave rise to the Greek Adonis" and who "was later identified with the Egyptian Osiris": "The name may mean 'son of life'. He was a form of the sun-god and bridegroom of Ishtar (the terrible mother). He was celebrated as a shepherd, cut off in early life, or slain by the boar. Ishtar descended to Hades to bring him back to life." A similar ambivalence marks the women associated with Dionysus. The mothers and nurses of his train are also wooed
by the god, and the maenad may at any moment turn from a gentle mothering creature into "a bloodthirsty beast of prey" who "tears into pieces the young life which she loves most dearly". The mummer's play, as we have seen, retains aspects of the primordial ambivalence of the female in the figure of the Old Woman who claims the chief mummer as both son and consort, and is somehow instrumental in bringing about his "death".

In summary then, the comic ritual of death and rebirth, the Dionysiac liberating pattern, stands at the symbolic centre of Joyce's presentation of Stephen, and in his representation of this pattern, Joyce ranges widely over its manifold variations in myth, folk tradition and Christian lore. The heavy downward pull of the death-movement is carried in *Ulysses* by the themes of rivalry, betrayal, death, sterility and guilt which burden Stephen throughout the day, and which are to be found also portrayed in the various forms of the archetypal myth from which comedy developed. Conversely, the dynamic upward thrust of the comic rebirth movement is represented in the themes of escape, cyclical recurrence, defeat of death, metamorphosis, growth and creativity.

3. The Dionysiac Frenzy: Stephen's Comic Regeneration

The culmination of the comic structure which underlies Stephen's development in the novel occurs in "Circe". Here the repressive spectre of his mother is exorcised in a symbolic gesture of liberation, and here Stephen becomes the chief actor in the age-old "rite which is the poet's rest", the Dionysiac
ritual of death and rebirth.

In Portrait we read of Stephen: "In vague sacrificial or sacramental acts alone his will seemed drawn to go forth to encounter reality: and it was partly the absence of an appointed rite which had always constrained him to inaction." In "Circe" Stephen finds the appointed rite, and participates willingly in it in a final effort to cast off the chains of inertia and unproductivity which have hitherto imprisoned him in the dark ways of his bitterness, "stagnant, acid and inoperative."

Joyce's delineation of Stephen's Dionysianism was undoubtedly influenced by Nietzsche's passionate presentation of Dionysus in his philosophic works. As a young man, Joyce was thoroughly familiar with Nietzsche, and found in his books ideas congenial to his own nature and character. According to John White, "Nietzsche was instrumental in Joyce's discovery of himself", and Richard Ellmann reports that Nietzsche was the chief prophet of the tower during young Joyce's period in residence. Young pre-Portrait Joyce clearly conceived of himself as the incarnation of Nietzsche's Overman. He read Thus Spake Zarathustra in 1904 at the age of 22, and shortly afterward we find him signing himself "James Overman" in a letter to George Roberts. Stephen, in so many ways Joyce's fictional counterpart, is also 22 in 1904 and has inherited his author's Nietzschean bent. He is "toothless Kinch, the Superman", and Mulligan describes him as "hyperborean", a term Nietzsche employed in his Antichrist. Zarathustra, Nietzsche's Overman, is referred to
several times in *Ulysses*. Clearly, we are being directed to Nietzsche for a deeper understanding of Stephen's nature, and particularly of his Dionysian nature. Dionysus was Nietzsche's most powerful conception, replacing the earlier figure of Zarathustra. There was not a great deal of difference between these two figures—in *Ecce Homo* Zarathustra is explicitly identified with Dionysus, who thereafter became the chief mouthpiece for Nietzsche's central concepts: the will to power, overcoming, vitalism, the Superman, eternal recurrence, creativity, reverence for life. Dionysus was for Nietzsche the great Overman, the great yea-sayer, full of the joy of life, the passionate will "to procreate, to be fertile, to return". Zarathustra/Dionysus, the accepter, cries "Aye, for the game of creating, my brother, there is needed a Holy Yea unto life". This is what has been lacking in Stephen up till now, this wholehearted acceptance of the human condition he has been born into. In "Circe", Stephen grows into the fullness of his Dionysian personality when he cries out "Damn death. Long live life". Stephen, like Nietzsche's Dionysus, is passionately on the side of the living.

Though Nietzsche's outlook on life, like his philosophy, may be best described as a form of tragic stoicism, his central, Dionysian concepts—acceptance, yea-saying, joy, creativity, eternal recurrence, will to power—are more normally associated with the comic view of life and comic values. This would certainly have been the case with Joyce, whose turn of mind betrayed a "celtic frivolity" ever ready to view potentially tragic material in a comic light, according to his brother.
The doctrine of will to power in a comic context requires explanation. The words usually convey negative ideas of force, and wilful domination. Nietzsche's use of the term differs considerably from the vulgar usage, however. According to Harry Hatfield, Nietzsche used "will to power" as a substitute for "struggle for existence". Rose Pfeffer explains further: "His concept of will to power is power over self, a power which strives towards self-improvement and self realization. Nietzsche's "will to power" contains not only the impulse toward self-preservation—the endeavour to persist in their own being—but also a drive toward enhancement and growth, toward heightening of power." These dual impulses, toward preservation and growth, are precisely those identified by Susanne Langer as the basic drives of comedy. Thus in Nietzsche's Dionysus, Joyce found a philosophic underpinning for his mythopoeic constructs about the figure of Stephen, which coincided happily with the comic spirit of his fiction.

In "Circe" Joyce draws together the many threads with which he has woven Stephen's Dionysianism into a perfect and powerful union of myth and reality. The comic release movement wells up from Stephen's subconscious to find expression in external action. He wills his own liberation into being in a conscious and deliberate acceptance of his role in the ritual of rebirth. As the blocking forces are in his own mind, he must perforce be the agent of his own deliverance. It is for him to free his mind from his mind's bondage. In "Circe" Stephen confronts at last the blocking forces which have hampered his
development and prevented his fruitful communion with his own dark female poetic soul. If Hugh Kenner is to be believed, Stephen has already tackled his rival Mulligan at the train station, in a minor skirmish which foreshadows the decisive battles to be fought in Mabbot Street. The violent sequence of events which closes this chapter enables Stephen to abandon his mother and work through the hampering negative attitudes to Church and country which have paralysed him, allowing him at last to cross the divide which separated him from his muse.

The importance of the death and rebirth ritual is underscored in numerous ways before the climax actually occurs. Stephen's part in "Circe" is by no means as extensive as Bloom's, and his earlier appearances tend to be overshadowed by the amazing virtuosity of Bloom's hallucinations. But almost every one of Stephen's turgid utterances in the early pages of "Circe" is significant in terms of the Dionysiac pattern. To trace the dense and complex interweaving of vegetation myth, Christian ritual, Hebrew lore, folk drama and Nietzschean Dionysianism which Joyce employs in his dramatic rendering of Stephen's regeneration, we must begin with Stephen's first appearance.

As Stephen and Lynch make their way through the crowded entrance of Mabbot Street, they pass close by Cissy Caffrey and the two British soldiers who are to figure later in the attack upon Stephen which leads to his "death". The bawd sings a salacious song, the main burden of which is that someone has stolen away "the leg of the duck", an obvious, though unusual, phallic symbol, stolen away by a female. This is an oblique
reference to the manner in which Stephen's fount of creativity has been stemmed by his mother. Stephen answers the whore's song with one of his own, a "chant of joy" which the narrator identifies as "the 'introit' for paschal time". (U 431). Thornton, in his annotation of this passage, points out that in fact Stephen is chanting "the Antiphon that is used with the Asperges during Paschal time"—Easter to Whitsun—as Joyce, with his intimate knowledge of Church liturgy, would have been well aware. In Stephen's chant, therefore, two distinct values are underlined, one by its presence, the other, as is so often the case with Joyce, by its absence. The narrator focusses our attention on Easter, with its drama of death and resurrection out of which arose salvation. Salvation, the triumph over death, rings out in the last line of the chant. The connection with Whitsun reminds that the coming of the Holy Spirit occurred as a result of Christ's death and resurrection. The implication is that for Stephen the sequence will be similar: first the death, then the rebirth and the coming of the gift of tongues and fire, what Stephen's genius needs.

Joyce's secret footnote, uncovered by Thornton, draws attention to the rite of Asperges, the sprinkling of holy water on the congregation which accompanies the paschal chant in the liturgy. This rite is derived from the practice of Moses, who sprinkled his people with the blood of the sacrifice. An identical ritual was observed by other peoples in connection with bull sacrifice. In this way the benefits to be derived from the sacrifice were distributed to the people. This
association with blood sacrifice and its beneficial effects is important in terms of Stephen's fate: like Dionysus, the sacrificed bull-god, Stephen, Bous Stephanoumenos, will be struck down at midsummer. Therein, his song implies, lies the way of salvation; and so Stephen's song of triumph is linked with a dream-image of his gesture of self-liberation, the shattering of the lamp.

For Stephen, there are two significant gestures in "Circe": the breaking of the lamp, and the fight with Private Carr. Stephen underlines the importance of gesture:

So that gesture, not music, not odours, would be a universal language, the gift of tongues rendering visible not the lay sense but the first entelechy, the structural rhythm. (U 432).

Gesture, he intimates, is to be the key of enlightenment which will reveal to all the "structural rhythm" when the potential becomes actual for the first time. Rhythm he has elsewhere defined as the relation of part to part, or of part to whole in a work of art.69 This gesture is to reveal the key structure, the "significant form" underlying the surface chaos. His meaning becomes clearer when he identifies the gesture he has in mind—it is the elevation of bread and wine at consecration. He hands his stick to Lynch so that he can himself mime the consecration action:

Stephen thrusts the ashplant on him and slowly holds out his hands, his head going back till both hands are a span from his breast, down turned in planes intersection, the figures about to part, the left being higher. (U 433).

Why should Stephen call attention to the act of consecration in
this elaborate way, and in what way can the consecration be said to be a "universal gesture" whose portent may be understood by all? The answer lies in Church liturgy: "When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus, until you come in glory." The sacrifice of bread and wine repeats the sacrifice of Christ's death, and his triumphant defeat of death in the resurrection. This movement through death to rebirth is, Stephen says, the underlying structure through which the artist will achieve his telos, the potential will become actual, and Stephen will find himself. The eucharistic sacrifice is universal because it is archetypal, repeated everywhere in myth and ritual.

When Stephen next appears for a brief period on page 503, he is still musing on the significance of the ritual of death and rebirth. He presses the point made earlier about the universality of the ritual; it provides a constant archetypal pattern, capable of many variations, one which continues throughout the ages to provide inspiration for the artist:

The rite is the poet's rest. It may be an old hymn to Demeter or also illustrate Caela enarrant gloriam Domini. It is susceptible of nodes and modes as far apart as hyperphrygian and mixolydian and of texts so divergent as priests haihooping round David's that is Circe's or what am I saying Ceres' altar and Davis's tip from the stable to his chief bassoonist about his almightiness. Mais, nom de nom, that is another pair of trousers. Jetez la gourme. Faut que jeunesses se passe. (U 503/504)

In this extremely complex passage, Stephen underlines the essential similarity between the Jewish and the Greek traditions, a connection which has been hovering in his thoughts throughout
the day, and has appeared in association with the cluster of images which surround the mumming theme in earlier episodes: Averroes and Moses Maimonides, those dark men of eastern mien, were noted for their efforts to reconcile Greek, Hebrew and Christian traditions. Demeter and Ceres were corn goddesses, similar in nature and function to Dionysus. Stephen compares the songs composed in their honour and used in the vegetation ritual to the hymns of David which illustrate Caela enarrant gloriam Domini, "the heavens declare the glory of the Lord". There is a more subtle identification established between Jew and Greek by Stephen here: Thornton notes that in his transcription of the Latin original, Stephen has substituted the word Domini (Lord) for Dei (God). "The Lord" is a title traditionally applied to Jesus. Significantly, it was also the title by which Adonis was known; his name is derived from a Syriac word Adon, Lord. So we get the equation: Jesus=Lord=Adon=Adonis=Dionysus. The significance of the synthesis for Stephen lies in the common ritual of death and rebirth which unites the various traditions he mentions. Their individual diversity cloaks a fundamental unity of pattern. This point can be discerned too in the "double entente cordiale" with which he closes his remarks: "Jetez la gourme. Faut que jeunesse se passe." Sowing wild oats might be the ostensible reason for Stephen's visit to the brothel, but the phrase can be read as a veiled allusion to the mystery rites: the seed, scattered and buried in the ground, symbolised the death and burial of the Corn goddess, and ritual death was a universal feature of the initiation rites which solemnized the
passage of youth to maturity: "Faut que jeunesse se passe".

The cap, next to speak, gives the same message more clearly: "Jewgreek is Greekjew. Extremes meet. Death is the highest form of life." And Stephen elaborates further with a musical analogy: the fundamental and the dominant are separated by the greatest possible interval which is the greatest possible ellipse consistent with the ultimate return. Through the ritual of death which he is about to undergo, Stephen will pass from youth to maturity, his fundamentally artistic nature will become dominant, and he will be freed to embark upon what is for him the highest form of life, the life of the creative artist. This is the burden too of the well-known comment with which Stephen ends his revelations for the moment:

What went forth to the ends of the world to traverse not itself. God, the sun, Shakespeare, a commercial traveller, having itself traversed in reality itself, becomes that self. Wait a moment. Wait a second. Damn that fellows noise in the street. Self which it itself was ineluctably preconditioned to become. 

Ecco! (U 505).

This apparently disjointed utterance marks a profound realisation of the essential unity of all creative beings. It is another of Stephen's obscure equations. In the Old Testament, God was often referred to as Adonai, because of an unwillingness on the part of the Hebrews to pronounce the sacred name of Yahweh. Adonai, as I have noted earlier, was the Canaanite name for Tammuz, a form of the sun god. Elsewhere, the same god was known as Adonis. "God, the sun," puns on "God the Son", who is Jesus. The Christmas Antiphons in the Roman Catholic breviary list among the titles of Jesus "O Adonai". Shakespeare has been
likened to Adonis by Stephen in the library discussion, and so to himself: "And my turn when?" The last element of the equation is of course Bloom. As creative everyman, he is the concrete manifestation of Stephen's sense of the fundamental similarity of pattern which causes all paths to converge on Calvary, "See, moves to one great goal." (U 563). Each individual repeats the pattern of the ages, the "vast cyclic movement of the earth and her watchers." And Stephen, in allowing himself to repeat this primordial pattern while searching out his own individual destiny will thereby become that "self" which he was "ineluctably pre-conditioned to become".

The climax of "Circe" in which Stephen's separation from his mother precedes his ritual death, is ushered in by the two elements which appeared in earlier episodes in conjunction with the mumming theme: the fox and grandmother riddle (U 558-9) and the melon dream (U 571). It is the dream, with its promise of freedom, which finally brings Stephen to the point of confrontation: "No, I flew. My foes beneath me. And ever shall be. World without end. Pater! Free." (U 572).

He leads a wild dance, a maddened Dionysus with his train of whores. The night air is filled with clash and clamour, as in the archaic revels of the god. It is a "dance of death" which ends in sudden silence, and into the silence his enemies float, malignant: Mulligan and the mother, enemies of his soul's freedom. Their message is unchanged. Mulligan repeats his earlier accusation: "Kinch killed her dogsbody bitchbody. The pity of it." May Dedalus, garbed in decayed bridal and reeking
of the grave rises up before her son, a terrifying and repulsive apparition. The sudden confrontation with both his enemies is almost too much for Stephen. He begins to weaken, to shiver with "fright, remorse and horror". The fetters of death close in about him as the spectre glides closer: "All must go through it, Stephen. You too. Time will come." But Stephen is for life, not death, and her words are without hope. He asks her instead for a word of life, the secret word which unlocks the mysteries of maturity, the "word known to all men." She has no secrets to reveal to him however, no word of life, only threats and lamentations. As before, she presses her love-claim, that powerful and ambivalent tie which had worked so effectively to subdue Stephen in the past to a state of regressive docility: "Years and years I loved you, O my son, my firstborn when you lay in my womb." She tries to draw him back into the folds of the Church, under the aegis of the Hangman God. But the time has come for Stephen to break through from the mother's sphere. Her words have the effect of at last rousing him from his apathy to a vigorous repudiation of her claims upon him. He rejects her image of "God the Punisher" for his own of God the creative word. The mother's words of death are intolerable to one who "would not accept to die like the rest and pass away" (U 395), but longed like Shakespeare of the sonnets to transcend death through art, in "spiritual copulation" with his muse: "In woman's womb word is made flesh but in the spirit of the maker all flesh that passes away becomes the word that shall not pass away." (U 391). "In the beginning was the word and in the end
the world without end." (U 509). He lifts his ashplant in an apocalyptic gesture of defiance, and in a moment the deed is done:

Times livid final flame leaps and, in the following darkness, ruin of all space, shattered glass and toppling masonry. (U 583).

The shattering chandelier becomes for Stephen a "gate of access to the incorruptible eon of the gods" (U 416). It is the end of passivity and inactivity for Stephen, the end of an era and the beginning. With his sword 'Nothung' he has broken through the barriers which parted him from his beloved, as Siegfried did.79

But before he can join his beloved, Stephen has yet one more trial to undergo: "Struggle for life is the law of existence", he says. (U 589). Creation cannot take place without sacrifice, without the death of a "living being who is immolated"80... "Violent death is creative."81 Freed from the monstrous haunting, Stephen must yet work out a new, creative relationship with the stultifying powers she has so long represented; if not with Priest and King, then with God and Nation.

The next confrontation takes place almost immediately. Rushing down the stairs of the brothel and out into the street, Stephen becomes embroiled in a quarrel with Cissy Caffrey and the British soldiers, representatives of the soul-destroying relationship between Ireland and England; in Stephen's bitter imagery, the whore's copulation with Brute Force.

It is uncertain what Stephen said to Cissy to enrage her redcoat friend. Several suggestions are offered in the text.
The bawd claims that he wanted her to "go with him", but this is unlikely, considering his opinion of her: "probably neuter. Ungenitive"; ("the girl's telling lies"). Stephen does not need ungenitive females right now, but fruitful ones. It is probable, as the soldier suggests, that he insulted her when he addressed her in the "vocative feminine", a euphemism which could cover a multitude of rather nasty possibilities. Stephen does not begin his ecstatic wooing of Cissy until later, as we shall see by and by, and then only while labouring under a misapprehension. What is certain at this point is that he invites the confrontation; he refused to be removed by Bloom when the latter urges: "Come home. You'll get in trouble", answering "I don't avoid it." Instead he continues to irritate the soldiers: "I seem to annoy them. Green rag to a bull." They are the "necessary evils" who will cure by killing. Stephen sees the confrontation as inevitable and therefore desirable. He must fulfil the Dionysiac pattern in order to be reborn.

As the action rises in a crescendo to the climax, Stephen achieves a resolution of his internal conflicts with God and nation. He says to Private Carr: "You die for your country, suppose... But I say: Let my country die for me." He appears, in effect to have abandoned his country. But then a curious thing happens; for no discernible reason, Stephen effects an abrupt volte face, and affirms his country in a Nietzschean paean to life: "I don't want it to die. Damn death. Long live life!" (U 591). Despite the deficiencies which he
perceives all about him, personified in Mulligan, in Cissy Caffrey, in Old Gummy Granny, Stephen yet can turn from outright rejection to a new and transcendent patriotism, an affirmation of an Ireland that "belongs to him."

A similar phenomenon occurs during Stephen's hallucination of the Black Mass. Despite the blasphemy, the central image of the scene, Mina Purefoy's swollen belly, is, as W. P. Fitzpatrick points out, "basically an affirmation of life and gestation; an affront not to divine creation but to the hangman god of Stephen's earlier fantasies." Moreover, at its peak the blasphemy is dramatically reversed by the agency of the ubiquitous Adonai Creator, God, type of Christ and Dionysus, who changes dog to god and death to life: "And the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." (U 600). Stephen by-passes the immediate defects of the Irish Church to affirm the central principle of life from which flows the order of the Universe.

The actual battle between Stephen and the soldiers has many points of similarity with the Mummers' Play. Indeed, throughout Stephen's crisis in "Circe" a mingling of elements drawn from all three variants of the play can be discerned. Before the ghost of his mother appears, Stephen dances a "sword dance" with his ashplant, which he describes as a "dance of death". He rejects his mother as the Chief Mummer rejects the "Old Dame Jane" figure of the "Wooing Ceremony". In the final conflict with the soldiers, Stephen is identified as a "sable knight", while his opponent is "merry St. George"; a dark knight (Turkish Knight) and Saint George were the most common opposing
champions of the "Hero Combat". The bout of fisticuffs is precipitated by Stephen's "ecstatic" wooing of Cissy Caffrey, brought on by Bloom's addressing her in ritualistic terms: "Speak you! Are you struck dumb? You are the link between nations and generations. Speak, woman, sacred lifegiver." As a youthful fertility figure, Cissy matches perfectly the young female figure for whose attentions various suitors vie in the "Wooing Ceremony"; and in "Circe" the issue is identical: the suit of the chief mummer is rejected, and as a result of the wooing the hero falls, struck down by a rival. That we are to consider this a symbolic death is underlined by the appearance of Corny Kelleher, the undertaker, death wreath in hand. The appearance of the watch has its analogue too in the folk-play, where in some versions the death of the chief mummer is followed by a quasi-legalistic apportioning of blame. The father and son theme which Joyce weaves about the figures of Bloom and Stephen finds its echo in the folk drama, where the resurrection is preceded by a short lament for the victim, identifying him as the son of the lamenter:

Horrible, terrible, what hast thou done? Thou hast killed my only dearly beloved son.

There is one other important respect in which Stephen's story parallels the mummers play: Brody notes that the resurrection of the "dead" victim is treated very casually: "The resurrection itself is invariably the most perfunctory part of the cure section of the play. After the doctor has administered his medicine, the victim simply revives. Occasionally he will
complain of a backache or claim he has seen wonders, but never for more than four lines at the most." In Ulysses we are given:

Preparatory to anything else Mr. Bloom brushed off the greater bulk of the shavings and handed Stephen the hat and ashplant and bucked him up generally in orthodox Samaritan fashion, which he very badly needed. (U 613).

Finally, in the mummer's play, the chief mummer ends by turning to woo his lady a second time, and winning her. While Stephen lies in his death-sleep he reaches out his arms to his dark lady, true object of his ardent desire, and clasps her to his curved body in a symbolic embrace. She comes, appropriately, in the words of Yeats' song, no longer a repository for charnel-house memories, but a means of access to his mother's replacement: "A girl. Some girl.", the feminime matrix of his creativity. Bloom spoke more truly than he knew when he described this as the "best thing that could happen" to Stephen. His libidinal energies have been transferred from the mother to their more appropriate object, Stephen's muse.

The final image of "Circe", Bloom's sentimental vision of his son Rudy, picks up and repeats the implications of Stephen's comic pattern. Rudy resembles Stephen in carrying a "rod" and wearing a helmet; Stephen's hat is also his "casque". The little figure wears glass shoes, a Cinderella touch: all comedy is a Cinderella story, a voyage from metaphoric rags to riches.

The mythic figures of Christ and Adonis which were so intimately involved in Stephen's pattern of regeneration are anologued here in the association of mauve and violet with Rudy, and in the little white lambkin he carries. Violets were said to
spring from the blood of Adonis, and the lamb is both a symbol of Jesus and a sign of Spring, time of renewed hope and vigor. Rudy, like Stephen, was dead and is come to life.

The resemblance of the comic pattern to primitive initiation rites has already been noted. Stephen's struggle in "Circe", a confluence of patterns drawn from diverse mythic sources, has several elements in common with initiation ritual, as outlined in Mircea Eliade's *Rites and Symbols of Initiation*. Bloom's part in the scene may be best understood too in terms of initiation ritual. Throughout the death-and-resurrection sequence Bloom acts the part of "secret master", the hierophantic figure of the melon dream, introducing the neophyte Stephen into the lore of manhood, and after the ceremony caring for him physically as the older tribesmen did in these ceremonies. He certainly takes on a ritualistic tone when speaking to Cissy Caffrey just prior to the attack of Private Carr, and Stephen follows his lead, as the initiate is bound to do during the ceremony.

The tone of "Eumaeus" is reminiscent of initiatory practices. Stephen's taciturnity and dullness during the episode must not be interpreted as an inability on his part to achieve contact with Bloom. Not only may his conduct be excused by the lateness of the hour, but it is appropriate to Stephen's role as neophyte in an initiatory sequence. According to Eliade, the initiation ceremony proper is usually followed by a period during which the novice must observe certain prohibitions, often dietary. He is frequently forced to stay awake until late in the night,
and usually has an appointed guardian who tends him, feeds him and generally watches over him. In keeping with his role as neophyte, Stephen will take only liquid nourishment, ("Liquids I can eat."), and speaks little, as though he had to relearn the skills of eating and communicating, like a new-born infant.

Once the initiatory period is over, Eliade states, the initiate departs from his teacher to take his place in society as a mature and independent individual. Stephen's departure from Bloom's house signals the final phase of his emergence from immaturity. Many have viewed his departure as a rejection of Bloom, a failure on Stephen's part to perceive Bloom's worth, but this is not so. With Bloom, Stephen has achieved a measure of pleasantness and normality which he was incapable of expressing in his earlier human relationships. But though Bloom can do much for Stephen, he cannot do everything. As Epstein argues, Stephen does not need a father, he needs to become a mature, self-sufficient, creative individual. It soon becomes clear that Bloom's plans are inappropriate for him. Newly-emerged from the paralysing effect of his mother obsession, Stephen is not prepared to accept a pseudo-mother, and, intent on achieving fatherhood himself, he needs no pseudo-father either.

Yet Bloom clearly aspires to be both:

The queer suddenly things he popped out with attracted the elder man who was several years the other's senior or like his father. But something substantial he certainly ought to eat, were it only an eggflip made on unadulterated maternal nutriment... (U 656).
Also, Bloom's plans for a fashionable and profitable singing career for Stephen make it clear that the mind of a small-time businessman is incapable of understanding the needs and aspirations of the artist:

...he would have heaps of time to practise literature in his spare moments when desirous of so doing without its clashing with his vocal career... (U 664).

With his newfound maturity, Stephen can perceive the limitations of the man who has befriended him. He fends off the other's smothering embraces, because he must not become too indebted, and thus compromised. But at the same time he is able to retain his awareness of Bloom's finer qualities, and to feel at ease in his company. As they walk towards Eccles St. Bloom and Stephen converse amiably, rambling in a desultory fashion over a variety of subjects as men do when they are relaxed and friendly. Stephen has not behaved like this with anyone else. In Bloom's company, he can even make affirmations; he speaks of "the eternal affirmation of the spirit of man in literature" (U 666), and "affirms his significance as a rational animal proceeding syllogistically from the known to the unknown..." (U 697).

When he finally leaves Bloom's house after a companionable cup of cocoa, Stephen's departure is accompanied by a cluster of hopeful images, luminous signs: the heaventree of stars, the flight of a comet, the light from Molly's bedroom window, the first signs of approaching dawn. The offer of a bed for the night is gratefully and amicably declined, and Stephen
goes out of "the house of bondage into the wilderness of inhabitation" to work out for himself his destiny as an artist.

In conclusion, Joyce, through his manipulation of the archetypal comic pattern as it appears in myth, folk-drama and primitive initiation ceremony, has presented a convincing picture of Stephen's comic regeneration. Stephen has defeated the "blocking forces" which paralysed him and has passed through a revivifying ritual of death and rebirth. An important aspect of the effect of the ritual on Stephen is his reversal of his former bitterly antithetical attitude to God and to Ireland. Unable to see anything worth affirming before, in the closing phases of "Circe" he both accepts and affirms. This constitutes a major advance in Stephen's position vis-a-vis his world. Moreover, he has been able to achieve with Bloom a degree of friendly companionship, a link with common humanity, which augurs well for his future as an artist, and there is reason to believe that the ritual which he has undergone, purgative as well as restorative, will stimulate Stephen's natural energies and enable him at last to achieve artistic potency.
FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER II


4 See Clive Hart's discussion of the structure of Portrait in James Joyce's Ulysses (London: Methuen, 1968), pp. 29-33. p. 31: "In every case there is a rise of urgency, an ecstasy, and a fall."

5 A phrase used by Joyce in his original sketch for A Portrait of the Artist, which he wrote on Jan. 7, 1904. See Ellmann, pp. 149-152.


8 Budgen, p. 105.


14 Budgen, p. 51.
See pp. 12-13 above.

Ryf, p. 164. Most critics now accept S. L. Goldberg's assessment of Joyce's use of irony in the presentation of Stephen. Like Ryf, Goldberg sees Joyce's irony as a "qualifying criticism" which "does not imply a total rejection of its object in the least. Irony and sympathetic understanding, even love, are not necessarily incompatible, nor is there any reason why Stephen's potentialities as an artist should be dismissed because he is very immature and clearly portrayed as such. To think so is surely to miss Joyce's point, to ignore the process of growth upon which he insists." The Classical Temper: A Study of James Joyce's Ulysses (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1961), p. 110. Bryan Reddick, "The Importance of Tone in the Structural Rhythm of Joyce's 'Portrait'", JJQ VI:3 (Spring 1968), pp. 201ff. gives a useful summary of changing attitudes to the nature of Joyce's irony in Portrait; cf. also Thomas F. Staley, "Stephen Dedalus and the Modern Hero", Approaches to Ulysses (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press, 1970), pp. 3-28.

Ryf, p. 168.


Ellmann, p. 207.

Ibid., p. 259.

Fitzpatrick, p. 124.

Budgen, p. 216.

See Carl Niemayer, "A Ulysses Calendar", JJQ XIII (Winter 1976), p. 188.


Frye, p. 170.


Hart, p. 44.

Budgen, p. 116.
Several critics have dealt with this aspect of Stephen's relationship with his mother. cf. Alan Dundas, "Re Joyce: No Inn at the Womb", MFS VIII (1962-3), pp. 137-147; Schechner, pp. 27-33, and passim; Spinchor, passim.


32Ibid., p. 5.

33"In Mythologies and Religions, the principal meanings of Tree-symbolism...are bound up with the ideas of periodic and unending renewal, of regeneration, of 'the source of life and youth' of immortality and of absolute reality."--Mircea Eliade, Myths, Dreams and Mysteries, translated by Philip Mairet (London: Collins, 1968), p. 21.


35Ibid., p. 106.

36Ibid., p. 107.

37For a comprehensive study of the "father" theme in both Portrait and Ulysses see E. L. Epstein, The Ordeal of Stephen Dedalus: the Conflict of Generations in James Joyce's 'A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man' (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1971). I am considerably indebted to the fresh insights provided by Epstein in his assessment of the relationship of Stephen and Bloom. Epstein sees Bloom as another father figure who will prevent Stephen from achieving his literary goals. Stephen is striving to be a father, not to find one. Thus his future is secured only if he parts from Bloom. Formerly, critics felt that the primary theme of Ulysses was the search for the father, and as this reaches no very satisfactory conclusion, it was difficult to make any favourable prophecies of future artistic success for Stephen. Epstein's book opens up Ulysses once more and allows Stephen a more auspicious outcome to his quest.

38Thornton, in his Allusions in Ulysses (Charlotte, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), pp. 30-31, makes the point that in the original version of the riddle, the fox was burying his Mother, not his grandmother.

39Budgen, p. 53.

40Mark Schechner draws attention to "the constant interjection of daggers and poleaxes" into Stephen's discourse in the library episode. (Joyce in Nighttown, pp. 25-26). In this respect "Scylla and Charybdis" echoes "Telemachus", continuing the underlying analogy to the swordfight which is an important aspect of Joyce's technique in presenting the mumming motif.
The "Speirbhean" was the muse of the Gaelic poets. Throughout Portrait and Ulysses, Joyce employs a complex pattern of Rose symbolism in his presentation of Stephen's emotions, gradually establishing a correlation between the Rose and Stephen's Muse, as in the bird-girl scene. See Barbara Seward, "The Artist and the Rose", rpt. in Joyce's Portrait: Criticisms and Critiques, ed. Thomas E. Connolly (New York: Appleton Century-Crofts, 1962), pp. 167-180. The rose symbol bears a like burden of meaning in Ulysses, where it represents the female Stephen aspires to woo, his creative soul.

Brody, p. 54: "...the roots of the men's ceremonial lie in a ritual which takes some common shape in many primitive societies and which is most clearly documented in the studies of Attic tragedy and comedy by scholars like Murray, Binney, Cornford and Harrison." On p. 80, Brody argues for "an analogous relationship between the ritual death and resurrection of the men's ceremonial and yet another primitive fertility action: the Buosophonia or ritual ox-murder."


Budgen, p. 21.


53 Ibid., p. 179.

54 Portrait, p. 159.


56 Ellmann, p. 178.


58 Thornton, p. 13.

59 Nachless, III, 791. Quoted by Harry Hatfield, "Nietzsche and the Myth", p. 43.


62 Hatfield, p. 45.


64 Ibid., pp. 162-3.


66 Thornton, p. 359.

67 "Absence is the highest form of presence".

68 See the excerpt from E. Bernhardt-Kabisch, p. 49 above.

69 Portrait, p. 206.


Louis F. Hartman writes: "The Hebrew word 'adônâi means literally "my lords", but it was also used as a plural of respect in addressing an individual lord. The full formula for addressing the God of Israel, 'adônâi Yahweh, "my Lord Yahweh", was often shortened into 'adônâi alone. This word then came to be used as another name for Yahweh...In later Judaism the word Yahweh was considered too sacred to be pronounced, and 'adônâi was substituted for it." Encyclopedia Dictionary of the Bible: A Translation and Adaptation of A. Van Der Born's Bijbels Woordenboek, Second revised edition, 1954-1957, trans. Louis F. Hartman (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), p. 35.

Mircea Eliade notes that separation from the mother, sometimes in a brutal fashion, is a universal feature of initiation. Rites and Symbols of Initiation, p. 4.


See Epstein, p. 163. Note too that Harry Hatfield gives a good deal of attention to Nietzsche's attitude towards Wagner. Nietzsche considered Wagner a Dionysian musician, and identified him with the god in The Birth of Tragedy. It is appropriate that Stephen, in the midst of his Dionysian frenzy should associate himself with the hero of a work composed by Nietzsche's Dionysian musician.

Eliade, Myths, Dreams and Mysteries, p. 185.

Ibid., p. 186.

Stephen, identifying Bloom as the persona of the melon dream, accepts him in the role of hierophant, the one who reveals the mystery, and is misled when Bloom addresses Cissy in ritualistic terms. Nonetheless, though his muse is the true object of his quest, his momentary aberration in pursuit of Cissy does bring the confrontation with the soldiers to its climax, and thus speeds Stephen on his way.

Fitzpatrick, p. 139.
84 Weston, p. 95: "The action consists in a general challenge issued by Saint George and accepted by the Turkish Knight. A combat follows, in which the Turk is slain."

85 Brody, p. 80.

86 Ibid., p. 52.

87 Ibid., p. 59.

88 Morris Beja, "The Wooden Sword: Threatener and Threatened in the Fiction of James Joyce", JJQ II:1 (Fall 1964), p. 34: "The stick has generally been felt to be, in Joyce's work, something beneficial, a symbol of the tree of life, a phallic image of creative power."

89 Frye, p. 44.

90 Eliade, Rites and Symbols of Initiation, pp. xii, xiii.

91 Ibid., pp. 14-16.

92 Epstein, p. 173.
"The time has come wherein a man of timid courage seizes the keys of hell and of death and flings them far out into the abyss, proclaiming the praise of life..."

James Joyce
III. VICTIM AND VICTOR: LEOPOLD BLOOM AND THE COMEDY OF SURVIVAL

In the fictional world of Ulysses, June 16, 1904, is for Leopold Bloom, no less than for Stephan Dedalus, a day of traumatic emotions and events. It is the day on which his wife, frustrated by a long period of inadequate sexual relations with her husband, embarks upon an illicit affair with the "worst man in Dublin" (U 92), Blazes Boylan.

From the moment in early morning when Boylan intrudes himself into the Bloom household through the medium of a letter of assignation addressed in "bold hand" to "Mrs. Marion" (U 61) Bloom is thrown into a state of profound mental agitation. The effort to come to terms with his wife's adultery occupies him throughout the day, and causes him to undertake a critical process of self-evaluation. Molly's infidelity throws into sharp focus all the frustrations and failures of his life, and forces him to review his inadequate and ineffectual performance as a husband and father.

Bloom's situation offers certain parallels to Stephen's. Each man begins his day a victim of usurpation: Stephen's place as artist in Ireland has been taken by Mulligan, while Bloom is about to be replaced in Molly's bed by Boylan. Each man is alienated from his own past and from the surrounding Dublin community. In effect, Bloom's isolation in Dublin society is more complete than Stephen's. Though Stephen feels out of tune
with the religious and political affiliations of his forebears, he is nonetheless a native Irishman, sharing a common background of nationality and creed with the men of Dublin. He has voluntarily cut himself off from home, church and community; his isolation is of his own choosing, consciously adopted to protect his artistic integrity. But Bloom is an outsider malgré lui, eagerly desiring inclusion in a society which rejects him. Despite his best efforts to fit in, he will always be a stranger in Dublin. His alienation is a development of his character and a symptom of his essential rootlessness, his role as cosmic waif. He is the Jew among the Gentiles, outcast, despised. His mixed origins—Hebraic—Hellenic—Hungarian—Hibernian¹—proclaim him always the outsider. He shares no common heritage of race or creed with the men of Dublin; their treatment of him ranges from open hostility to contemptuous tolerance. He is never offered frank and open friendship or companionship.

Both Bloom and Stephen are shown initially caught in the grip of a paralysing inertia which interferes with their ability to fulfill their assigned roles, Stephen as artist, Bloom as husband and father. Both are failures in their own eyes and in the eyes of the world. Each is filled with frustration at his inability to create, and overcome with a crushing sense of guilt which oppresses and defeats him. Finally, as a consequence of his psychic paralysis, each is separated from the feminine source of life and creativity—Stephen from his muse, and Bloom from Molly.

In Stephen's case, it was helpful to discuss his
emotional conflict in terms of the plot-material of New Comedy: a young man desires union with a young woman, but the union is prevented by blocking forces which the hero must overcome before he can win the comic bride. Thus, in Joyce's internalisation of the comic plot, Stephen seeks to establish a fruitful relationship with the feminine, creative element of his artistic soul, but is prevented from doing so by the blocking forces which exist in his own psyche. Only by successfully overcoming these blocks to his development, symbolised in the numinous image of his dead mother, can he hope to achieve union with his muse, and emerge at last from the chrysalis of immaturity to become a mature and productive artist.

Bloom's problem too can be viewed in terms of the traditional comic plot. He is separated from the woman he loves, his wife Molly, the feminine, creative life-source with whom he desires union. Moreover, as Stephen's problems are generated and nourished within "the rare atmosphere of his own rare thoughts", so Bloom's marital problems arise primarily from his own attitudes and inclinations. The "blocking forces" which separate him from his wife are generated by the idiosyncrasies of his sexual nature. In Bernard Benstock's appraisal of the situation, "Bloom alone has been responsible for the break in normal marital sex relations with Molly". We are told that he has at home "a seedfield that lies fallow for the want of a ploughshare." The death of his infant son, Rudy, ten years before had a profound psychological effect on Bloom. He admits he could never "like" sex after, and the problems in the Bloom
marriage began when the boy died. There are hints in the text that Rudy was born deformed, a "mistake of nature", and that Bloom blames himself for the defects of the child: "If its healthy its from the mother. If not the man." Although his longing for a son is great, he has been impotent since the boy's death, and unable to try to create another. (U 96).

In addition to the trauma caused by Rudy's death, Bloom's difficulties in asserting himself as a husband and father-creator are compounded by his deviant sexual appetites: his anality, his voyeuristic tendencies, his latent masochism which makes him secretly desire his own cuckolding. David Hayman speaks of "Bloom's tacit encouragement" of his wife's affair, and adds that "Molly's infidelity serves a psychological need in Bloom."4 Joyce underlined this aspect of Bloom's character when he remarked to Frank Budgen5 that Bloom belonged to the same family as Richard Rowan, another who invited his own cuckolding for complex psychological reasons.

In the broader spectrum of the comic rhythm as discussed by Susanne Langer, Bloom's situation contrasts with that of Stephen. Stephen expresses the urgent need for growth, the urge and compulsion to self-development which Langer identifies as one aspect of the life-impulse; Bloom represents the alternative of retrenchment and accommodation Langer sees as no less necessary to survival. The distinction is not as clear-cut as the foregoing analysis would indicate, however, for Stephen must make accommodations with his past and with the surrounding world in order to achieve growth, while Bloom must grow to a
new self-awareness and self-acceptance in order to be able to make his compromises with things as they are.

Thus the comic pattern, in addition to developing certain parallels between the two figures, also contributes to the elaborate system of contrast and counterpoint which Joyce established between Bloom and Stephen and which many critics have drawn attention to: citizen/artist, body/mind, Jew/Greek, homewardtending/outwardbound, centrifugal/centipetal, Father/Son, mature/young.

Finally, as Jung's theories of individuation provided a critical apparatus which helped to elucidate aspects of Stephen's comic conflict, so too are they useful in exploring Bloom's. In Jungian terms, Stephen experiences a crisis of youth in *Ulysses*, while Bloom experiences a crisis of maturity, a crisis which brings him face to face with death. In this chapter interest will centre on Bloom's encounter with death and his search for an effective means to overcome it. The transcendence of death is, as I outlined in my introduction, the serious underlying business of all comedy. While Stephen struggles to escape a spiritual death, Bloom must battle against the feelings of pessimism and gloom which overtake him as the awareness of his own eventual dissolution begins to weigh heavily upon him.

The argument is subdivided into three sections: section 1 sets forth the nature of Bloom's crisis; section 2 deals with Bloom's comic/heroic nature; section 3 discusses the manner in which Bloom attempts to resolve his problems. Ultimately, Bloom's success in his quest for equilibrium lies in the comic
constitution of his character. Where Stephen had a "shape which couldn't be changed", Bloom, like his Homeric prototype, is many-sided, polytropic. It is in his comic capacity for accommodation and compromise that his salvation lies. Thus, while in the discussion of Stephen's comic pattern the emphasis was placed upon structure, in dealing with Bloom the concentration will be primarily on character.

1. Bloom's Crisis

In many ways, Stephen's struggle in Ulysses is simpler than Bloom's. He has one objective in life--to write well, to become an artist. His comic pattern deals with his efforts to throw off the blocks and hindrances which keep him from achieving this goal. When he leaves Bloom's house at dawn, we feel that he has come a long way towards overcoming the negative attitudes which formerly paralysed his creative powers. He has worked his way out from under the mother complex which was smothering him, and her ghost will trouble him no more. As Morris Beja writes, the "Circe" climax "is only one of many times that Stephen has made the claim that he will not submit, yet we sense that this time it is probably true and that he will never have to repeat it again." Freed of his mother's monstrous haunting, Stephen has been able to affirm his attachment to his nation, and pay homage to the divine principle of creativity whence springs all life. As he parts from his mentor, Bloom, his earlier mood of bitterness, anger and self-pity has given way to friendlier, more positive feelings of gratitude
and amicability, feelings of a kind which he has never formerly displayed in the book. He departs into the "wilderness of inhabitation" to serve his art, undoubtedly with far greater chance of success than before.

Unlike his protégé, Bloom has no future career of brilliance to carve out for himself. His task is to come to terms with things as they are, his triumph a triumph of endurance. The contours of his life are firmly fixed within the confines of Dublin's city limits. He has a wife of long standing, an adolescent daughter, and a humdrum job as a canvasser for advertisements on a daily newspaper. For him there will be no voyaging overseas, no getting away from it all. He is firmly and inescapably established in the tawdry world of Edwardian Dublin.

The contrast between the possibilities open to the two characters is reflected in their different ages. Stephen is young, talented, with the best part of his life before him. Bloom is already middle-aged. Like Homer's Odysseus he is

\begin{quote}
A man of an older time, of a former generation, 
\end{quote}

Bloom is thirty-eight years old and his life is half over. His dreams are dead as dust and come to nought. His talents are not literary. The imminence of his wife's infidelity precipitates him into a personal crisis of major proportions, one which causes him to question all aspects of his being and the very purpose of life itself.

Some insights into the radical nature of Bloom's crisis may be gained from Jung's analysis of the problems of middle
age. Quite apart from the question of direct influence, Jung's work is pertinent to Ulysses because both he and Joyce were dealing with similar primary human situations, and Jung's clinical dissection of the subject helps to illuminate Joyce's artistic one.

Jung was primarily interested in the psychic disturbances experienced by older men, during that critical period of middle age when "one has reached the zenith of life, and suddenly or gradually as the case may be, is then confronted with the reality of the end--death;" when, in order to advance, the shining sphere must submit to descend and disappear, at last, into the night-womb of the grave.

This sudden confrontation with the void is usually brought on, as in Bloom's case, by a great disturbance in one's personal life--divorce, loss of job, financial difficulties, illness. The sudden shock causes the individual to bring his whole life into review. It is a time for taking stock. The realisation comes that the youthful period of growth and development is over. The hopes and dreams of youth fade away, to be replaced by an oppressive sense of the transience and impermanence of all earthly achievement. Life loses its meaning. It is a phase of great disillusionment. The individual feels lost, alone and insecure.

Unless he is to succumb to neurosis, the individual must now attempt to win through to a new and positive attitude to life. "At the stroke of noon," writes Jung, "the descent begins. And the descent means the reversal of all the ideals
and values that were cherished in the morning."12 The individual must abandon the motivations of youth and find new worth and meaning in the human condition, which includes the acceptance of death, but also goes beyond it. In the words of Jolande Jacobi, "it is a question of moving from an ego-centred attitude to an ego-transcending one, in which the guiding principles of life are directed to something objective, and this can be anything from one's children, one's house, one's work, to the state, humanity, God."13

The achievement of this new state of being necessitates a difficult period of intense self-scrutiny; death must be faced, the fact of ageing must be accepted without trying to escape and recall youth. There can be no going back. But the possibilities for further spiritual growth must be understood. A radical transformation of the self is needed, and this is achieved through understanding what it was in the self which caused all the failures of the past, through acceptance and assimilation of the symbolic seeds of death, the negative or "shadow" qualities, in one's own nature, which reduce one's effectiveness. If this task is successfully accomplished, it leads to a greater maturity of personality, psychic wholeness, new hope and a positive attitude to the future.

The application of these theories to Bloom's situation is revealing. His immediate problem, Molly's infidelity, forces upon him an unhappy awareness of his own frailty, his own mortality. Molly's adultery becomes the central image in a catalogue of his general disillusionment and sense of failure.
He is overcome by an oppressing sense of his own imminent decline into death and decay.

Bloom, "soon old but when was young" (U 285), vacillates between two contrasted images of himself, past and present, young and ageing.\(^{14}\) He looks back to the period of his courtship of Molly and the early years of his marriage, happier times when he was young and alive, fruitful and energetic, full of vitality and male-assertive, and contrasts this with the desolation of his present existence, standing on the threshold of old age with nothing to look forward to:

Me.
And me now. (U 176).
Soon I am old. (U 285).

He views Molly as the generatrix of life itself and associates her with images of luxuriant gardens, vegetation, perfume, rich fruit and flowers of every kind. The scene of their first union on Howth returns to his mind in language made impressive by the rich fertility of its imagery:

Hidden under wild ferns at Howth. Below us bay sleeping sky. No sound. The sky. The bay purple by the Lion's Head. Green by Drumleck. Yellowgreen towards Sutton. Fields of undersea, the lines faint brown in grass, buried cities. Pillowed on my coat she had her hair, earwigs in the heather scrub my hand under her nape, you'll toss me all. Oh wonder! Cool soft with ointments her hand touched me caressed: her eyes open upon me did not turn away. Ravished over her I lay, full lips open, kissed her mouth. Yum. Softly she gave me in my mouth the seedcake warm and chewed. Mawkish pulp her mouth had mumbled sweet and sour with spittle. Joy: I ate it: joy. Young life, her lips that gave me, pouting. Soft, warm, sticky gum jelly lips. Flowers her eyes were, take me willing eyes. Pebbles fell. She lay still. A goat. No-one. High on Ben Howth rhododendrons a nanny-goat walking sure-footed, dropping currants. Screened under ferns she laughed, warmfolded. Wildly I lay on her, kissed her;
eyes, her lips, her stretched neck, beating, women's breasts full in her blouse of nun's veiling, fat nipples upright. Hot I tongued her. She kissed me. I was kissed. All yielding she tossed my hair. Kissed, she kissed me. (U 176)

Molly becomes identified in his mind with the ripe fields of Agendath Netaim, the model farm at Kinnereth in Palestine, with its immense melonfields and bright orange groves which are "always the same year after year" (U 60). She is a sort of buffer against change and death. At Dignam's funeral in the churchyard, Bloom is almost overcome as he ruminates morbidly upon surroundings fetid with corruption and decay. He consoles himself by thinking of his wife and the warm comfort of the conjugal bed:

Let them sleep in their maggoty beds. They are not going to get me this innings. Warm beds: warm fullblooded life. (U 115)

Earlier in the morning, Bloom's spirit, crushed by a sudden influx of pessimism at the thought of his advancing age, revives as he hurries homeward to be near Molly's "ample bedwarmed flesh" (U 61). She represents the comfort and security, the warmth and the loving companionship of home, and his present separation from her is a bitter torment.

In contrast with his vision of the fertile East, which Bloom associates with the time of his triumphant possession of Molly and "young life", he sees his present failure as a husband and father, ageing and impotent, in terms of utter desolation. His eastern garden is transformed into a sterile wasteland dominated by images of old age and death. He sees in his imagination a:
Barren land, bare waste. Vulcanic lake, the dead sea: no fish, weedless, sunk deep in the earth. No wind would lift those waves, grey metal, poisonous foggy waters. 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 oldest, the first race. A bent hag crossed from Cassidy's clutching a noggin bottle by the neck. The oldest people. Wandered far away over all the earth, captivity to captivity, multiplying, dying, being born everywhere. It lay there now. Now it could bear no more. Dead: an old woman's: the grey sunken cunt of the world. (U 61)

As the concepts of youth, fertility, and ripeness are embodied in the mental images Bloom associates with his wife, so he figures forth his image of old age in this chilling picture of an aged haglike female, grey and barren. The thought fills him with desolation: "Grey horror seared his flesh...Cold oils slid along his veins, chilling his blood: age crusting him like a salt cloak." (U 61)

The centrality of the youth-age problem to Bloom's personal crisis in Ulysses is emphasised in "Wandering Rocks." Here Bloom is epiphanised in the Joycean sense as he expresses his longing for lost youth in the pitiful cry of his inner self: "Young! Young!" Not only is Bloom placed here at the centre of Dublin, but the passage occurs virtually in the middle of the "Wandering Rocks" episode, which is the central or pivotal chapter of Ulysses. Thus the very structure of the book points to the significance of the problem of ageing to Bloom's dilemma.

Bloom is filled with horror at the thought of his own mortality. The feeling that his time is running out, not only in the immediate sense of the inexorable approach of Molly's four o'clock deadline, but in the broader sense of ageing, is
emphasised by the constant recurrence of allusions to the passage of time. Bloom is surrounded by clocks throughout the day—St. George's clock in "Calypso", the cuckoo clock in "Nausicaa", the clock on the ballast office "worked by an electric wire from Dunsink." (U 167) Tension grows as he notes the passing minutes which bring the moment of his betrayal closer: "He raised his eyes and met the stare of a bilious clock. Two. Pub clock five minutes fast. Time going on. Hands moving. Two. Not yet." (U 173)

Margaret Church draws attention to the prominence of "time-tension" in "Sirens":

As four o'clock nears, Bloom's thoughts turn more and more often to the clock. In the Sirens episode he thinks, "Not yet. At four, she said. Time ever passing. Clock hands turning." A sense of the flowing of time becomes paramount. The Siren episode is full of taps, snaps ("Sonnez la cloche"), ticks, and crepitations. As well as supplying the musical pattern, these sounds emphasize the passing of time which for Bloom is agony at present.

Bloom's agony extends from the realisation that the moment of loss is upon him to a deeply pessimistic sense of human mutability, of the inexorable and seemingly pointless passage of generation after generation. He comments on the senseless cruelty of the human situation: "Let people get fond of each other: lure them on. Then tear asunder. Death. Explos. Knock on the head. Outtohelloutofthat. Human life." (U 277)

Life is a stream, always flowing on, impossible to halt, "like holding water in your hand". (U 165) He notes the changes time has wrought in his companions: Josie Breen, who used to be a tasty dresser, has deteriorated to a carelessly-dressed frowsy
middle age, only her eyes retaining something of their erstwhile
lustre. Molly has grown older and plumper, he has himself
acquired an extra roll of fat about his midriff which he
palpitates nervously.

In "Lestrygonians" Bloom is overcome with disgust for
the processes of life, which he sees as a hopeless routine of
"shoving food in one hole and out behind." (U 176) This is "the
very worst hour of the day", (U 164) when, plunged deep in gloom,
he finds no consolation in the concept of cycle, but sees the
passage of generation upon generation as a hopeless round where
people are born, live and die "to no end gathered", cities rise
and decay in pointless succession, and "No one is anything".
(U 164) This morbid sense of futility reaches cosmic propor-
tions in Bloom's realisation that the stars and planets are
subject to the same process of gradual degeneration which governs
the life of man: "Same old dingdong always. Gas, then solid,
then world, then cold, then dead shell drifting around, frozen
rock..." (U 167).

Bloom's bitter awareness that his life is passing away
from him is aggravated by the fact that he has no son to come
after him. And, despite the fact that he has been initiated
into three different religions, he is at heart an unbeliever.
Thus he hopes for no paradise of bliss into which to propel his
individuality when life is over. Unlike Stephen, who aspires to
achieve transcendence of mortality through art, Bloom's lack of
talent denies him the possibility of constructing a comparable
monumentum aere perennius. His sense of failure and frustration
at his inability to produce a son is linked closely to his inability to accept the fact of his own dissolution. His image would have lived on in his son, key to a natural eternity of being through the seed of life which he was capable of generating. For him as for Queen Victoria, the "son was the substance. Something new to hope for not like the past she wanted back, waiting. It never comes." (U 102) The death of the infant Rudy was a severe blow to Bloom, because it denied him a personal investment in the future, the one easy form of continuance available to him. "I too last of my race" he thinks. "No son. Rudy." "Soon I am old". (U 285) Milly too is leaving him, growing up, about to become a woman. Her developing adulthood reminds him that he is ageing, his generation is about to be replaced by hers, her ascent is his decline.

Now he is about to lose Molly as well, and contemplation of his rival Boylan reinforces his bitter fear of ageing. Boylan is a younger man, and he makes Bloom feel old by comparison. ("I. He. Old. Young.) (U 271) The youth/age antithesis is constantly surging up from Bloom's subconscious in connection with Boylan: "He was in the Red Bank this morning. Was he oyster old fish at table. Perhaps he young flesh in bed." (U 175) Even the narrative voice joins in the refrain in "Sirens" when Bloom is referred to several times as "old Bloom", while Boylan is described as a "young gentleman." (U 257, 262, 263) Boylan, in addition to being a young man, is vigorous and potent, constantly spoken of in phallic terms: "Who's getting it up?" "Boylan is a hairy creature." (U 172 & 173)
He is little more, in effect, than a grotesque phallic symbol, overpoweringly virile and male. Bloom, ageing and impotent, views the ostentatious potency of his rival with trepidation.

Jacobi's interpretation of certain aspects of Jung's theory of ageing offers vital insight into Bloom's reaction to his rival:

Men find it even more difficult to grow old than women. They fear the loss of virility, which they identify with vitality. This can drive them to the most astonishing antics and to all kinds of attempts to hang on to being young. They equate instinct, potency strength with their human value... and their self confidence becomes precarious. The picture of primitives who kill the leader of the tribe as soon as he is no longer capable of begetting progeny and has thus become totally useless still lives unconsciously in the soul of modern, civilized man, and throws him into agitation.

Bloom's obsessive mental indignation at the placing of the ad. for Plumtree's potted meat, with its relevance to his own impotent, incomplete and unblissful home life, under the obituary column of his newspaper indicates that he is feeling that angst of the ageing male which Jacobi alludes to. His further ruminations on the gustatory preferences of primitives, revolving about the limerick on the unfortunate Mr. MacTigger, (U 171-2) with its emphasis on the benefits to be derived from consuming the "parts of honour" circles about the same theme.

The association of sexual virility with social worth is made quite explicit in "Circe"; when Bloom has his dreams of worldly power and success (U 482), he swears his oath of inauguration with his hand on his testicles. Helmut Bonheim comments: "Here he assumes a power over church and state which he never
had in reality in his own family, and he assumes that his power in both spheres resides in the sexual function.\textsuperscript{18} Significantly, his dreams of grandeur end in death. It is little wonder then that the advent of Boylan should have a profoundly disturbing effect on Bloom, for subconsciously his arrival threatens Bloom with extinction.

The youth/age antithesis which gives rise to Bloom's anxiety is further elaborated by associating both Bloom and Boylan with solar imagery. We note from the beginning that Bloom is sensitive to the sun's influence. When the sun shines his temperament is sunny; when it is shaded, Bloom's disposition undergoes a corresponding transformation: His early morning vision of desolation is brought on when a cloud covers the face of the sun, \textsuperscript{(U 61)} while his vivid recollection of Howth he attributes to the effect of the wine, which he associates with heat and sun. \textsuperscript{(U 175)} He reads books entitled "Was Jesus a Sun Myth" and "In the Track of the Sun," and muses on the possibility of continually travelling around in front of the sun in order to "never grow a day older technically" \textsuperscript{(U 57)}. He is saved from embarrassment or worse on several occasions when his adversaries are blinded by the sun \textsuperscript{(U 183, 343)}. At his moment of greatest power on Howth, he tells Molly that "the sun shines for you." \textsuperscript{(U 782)}

The theme of Bloom's association with the sun has been pursued by Michael Beausang,\textsuperscript{19} who argues that Bloom, like Odysseus, is "a solar hero", or year daimon. In dealing with Stephen, we noted that the Dionysiac vegetation myth underlying
comedy was vital to an understanding of Stephen's comic pattern. Joyce uses the same referents in Bloom's case. John Vickery too calls attention to Bloom's "affinities with the dying and reviving god," and remarks on "The extent to which Joyce's novel is structured on such Frazerian archetypes as the scapegoat and the dying god."

In the scheme of solar symbolism employed by Joyce, Bloom is the sun on the wane, or the sun at night gone round to the other side of the earth—a concept pregnant with meaning in terms of his anality. His rival Boylan is the hot sun at the zenith; his rise marks Bloom's descent. Boylan meets Molly during a performance of Ponchielli's "Dance of the Hours" and Bloom feels their liaison is fated: "Time makes the tune."

Boylan descends on Eccles Street, an absurd amalgam of Priapus and Apollo: "By Bachelor's Walk jingled Blazes Boylan bachelor, in sun, in heat, mare's glossy rump atrot, with flick of whip, on bounding tyres: sprawled, warmseated, Boylan impatience, ardent bold." "Dandy tan shoe of dandy Boylan socks skyblue clocks came light to earth."

The solar pattern and the contrast in ages between Bloom and Boylan correspond to the usual plot-formula of New Comedy, which typically displays the son's rise to fortune at the expense of the foolish old father. Boylan, the "conquering hero", is assigned the part usually allotted to young men in comedy—he successfully wins Molly, the comic bride, while Bloom, the cuckolded husband, is confounded. John Gross comments that "at one level the novel presents a comic inversion of the oedipal
triangle, with Bloom as a dethroned, impotent, and clownish father figure," while Bonheim describes Bloom as "[a] failed father, [an] archetypal paternal buffoon." 

Martin Grotjahn interprets the standard comedy formula in the following manner:

The psychodynamics of comedy can be understood as a kind of reversed Oedipus situation in which the son does not rebel against the father but the son's typical attitudes of childhood longing are projected upon the father. The son plays the role of the victorious father with sexual freedom and achievement, while the father is cast in the role of the frustrated onlooker. The reversed Oedipus situation is repeated in every man's life when the younger generation grows up and slowly infiltrates and replaces the older generation in work and in life. The clown is the comic figure representing the impotent and ridiculed father.

Grotjahn's analysis serves as a precise summary of Bloom's dilemma. He is the ageing clown figure suffering the encroachments of the young. Molly's infidelity has broadened out to become for her husband a typical Jungian problem of the contamination of death. In an inversion of the usual processes of the comic plot, Joyce focusses attention and sympathy on the plight of the cuckolded father rather than on the son. Boylan is parodied mercilessly, but the mind of the author plays about the possibilities of redemption open to a character such as Bloom--frail, flawed, impotent, victimised--"an unheroic father without the father's customary power and yet possessing some other appeal." 

Clearly, if he is to survive the ordeals of his day and achieve psychic wholeness and balance, Bloom must follow the path to self-acceptance indicated by Jung. He must recognize
the folly of longing for a return to youth; he must transform his fear of ageing into acquiescence. His abhorrence of life's natural course, his evasion of Boylan, are inadequate responses to the difficulties of his situation. What is needed is a heroic effort to face up to reality, and an admission of the weaknesses of his own character. Bloom does have the strength and the courage to accomplish this transformation, a strength derived from the constitutional adaptability of his comic character. If Boylan is the "conquering hero", Bloom is the "unconquered hero", (U 264) one who survives in the end in spite of everything. As S. L. Goldberg writes, "the joke on Bloom is fused with the recognition of his strength."

2. The Unconquered Hero

The success of Bloom's quest for equilibrium lies to a large extent in the paradoxical composition of his character. In creating Bloom, Joyce described one of the outstanding comic heroes of modern fiction. Many critics have seen in Bloom no more than a pathetic little figure, flawed and paralysed like the society in which he moves, doomed to a life of hopelessness and frustration in the insensate labyrinth of the modern city. Thus for Harry Levin, Bloom was an "apologetic little man... the complete misfit of all literature...the apotheosis of those blighted types that Joyce sketched in Dubliners." Yet there is in Bloom a degree of largeness and resilience which belies this critical stance. Though an outcast and an alien, Bloom is no mere victim of society or circumstance. While he frequently
shares the sins of his society, and adds more than a few of his own, he is not definitively dominated by his faults, he is not defeated. If he is cast in the role of scapegoat betimes, the contours of the scapegoat are insufficient to encompass him. In the words of L. A. G. Strong, "his affinities are with Falstaff rather than with Lear," and like Falstaff he rises from among the dead and the paralysed when the battle is over to creep away to a place among the living. As Albert Cook observes, "you cannot kill a comic hero." 

Bloom is a curious mixture of the comic and the heroic, and from that mixture he draws his endurance and his vitality. He is both inferior to the accepted human norm and superior to it, both despised and admired, heroic and ridiculous. It was Joyce's belief that "Even the most commonplace, the deadest among the living, may play a part in a great drama. The great human comedy, in which each has his share, gives limitless scope to the true artist." Bloom, even more obviously than Stephen, is an example of Joyce's comic mingling of celebration with scorn. Though Bloom is consistently undercut by his comparison with the great figures of myth and history--Christ, Moses, Elijah, Ulysses--he is also ennobled. While Joyce has endowed Bloom with his share of "lacklustre commonness," he has also given him moments of heroism, when the Homeric analogy seems more parallel than parody. In effect, as David Daiches comments, Bloom is "someone who in spite of everything strikes a blow for man."
"The constant in comedy is the comic view of life or the comic spirit," writes R. W. P. Corrigan; "the sense that no matter how many times a man is knocked down he somehow manages to pull himself up and keep going...Comedy celebrates his capacity to endure." Bloom is such an enduring spirit; he has the qualities of soul necessary to enable him to overcome the defeats of his day: his radical alienation within his society, his wife's adultery, his loss of potency, his daughter's growth to maturity, his father's suicide, his son's death, Stephen's departure, the imminence of old age and the awareness of the approach of death. He succeeds in maintaining a balance between the contradictory elements of his character, between the qualities of the hero and the contortions of the clown. His success lies in the fact that he does find the courage to recognise his own inadequacies, the source of many of his problems. Like his Homeric prototype, he is "subjected to many trials, but with wisdom and courage [he comes] through them all." 

Bloom dominates the comic world of Ulysses, and an assessment of his success within the framework of its comic structure must involve a consideration of his character both in comic/realistic and in mythic terms, as Bloom and as Ulysses. Though Joyce deleted the Homeric chapter headings before sending his book to the printer, he retained the Greek title, an intimation not only of the structural affinities between his creation and Homer's Epic, but of the functional identification to be perceived between his central character and Homer's Odysseus. The Homeric parallels provide a rich source of parody
which Joyce exploits continuously throughout *Ulysses*. There is something inherently laughable in the identification of Bloom, ineffectual, circumscribed and flawed, with the intrepid prince of Ithaca, and the exact timbre of Joyce's irony in making the comparison has interested many critics. On the surface, Bloom has little in common with Ulysses. In Joyce's work, the adventures of Odysseus are comically reduced in scope, so that instead of encounters with exotic goddesses, kings and giants, Bloom treads his modern middle-class way through encounters in newspaper offices, pubs and sleazy taverns. Yet here as elsewhere, the blade of Joyce's irony is double-edged, and is designed to highlight the deficiencies of Bloom's world more than of Bloom himself. It gradually becomes clear that Bloom shares with Ulysses the qualities of mind and spirit which rendered the Ithacan prince unique among the heroes of Greek epic, and that Ulysses' voyage over sea serves as an appropriate parallel for Bloom's danger-filled quest into the abysses of the self.

Indeed Joyce found the conflicting elements of Bloom's character already present in Homer's *Odysseus*, and used them to build a character "in the round", a fully realised Ulysses for the modern world.

The Greek hero exercised a compelling fascination on the mind of the Irish author before he evolved into the figure of Bloom. He first encountered Odysseus in Charles Lamb's *Adventures of Ulysses*, a work which opened his mind to the symbolic potential of the character. The schoolboy Joyce was immediately captivated by Ulysses, and made him the subject of a class
essay entitled "My Favourite Hero," preferring the "man of many wiles" to the belligerent Ajax or the fiery Achilles. Later, when he had conceived the notion of modelling his modern burgher on the Greek hero, he surveyed all available sources in an effort to deepen his understanding of the character. W. B. Stanford records that Joyce consulted the works of Ovid, Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare, Racine, Fenelon, Tennyson, Stephen Phillips, D'Annunzio, Hauptmann, Victor Béard, and Samuel Butler's The Authoress of the Odyssey. No doubt he also consulted the Victorian translation of Butcher and Lang. The result of his researches was the achievement of an unusually broad conception of Ulysses' character. He saw Ulysses as profoundly human, and expressed his feelings in the following terms: "The most beautiful, the most human traits are contained in the Odyssey... Now in mezzo del cammin I find the subject of Ulysses the most human in world literature."41

Ulysses was not noted for outstanding bravery or skill in arms; he manifested that ambivalence and ambiguity which became central to Joyce's view of the nature of man. But for Joyce, Ulysses was a good man--"goodnatured and decent"42--and he intended Bloom to resemble him in this. Joyce came to appreciate Ulysses as the most complete all-round character in literature, and his completeness was the key to his humanity: he described the Odyssey as "greater and more human than...Hamlet, superior to Don Quixote, and Dante, to Faust..."43 To Budgen he explained further: "No age Faust isn't a man...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." Like Bloom, Ulysses is well endowed with
human bonds, well knitted into the great chain of being.

In terms of his character, it was the versatility of
Ulysses which appealed to Joyce. From this was derived his
lasting quality, his staying power. It was his comic opting for
survival at the expense of heroics which distinguished him from
the other Greek heroes. Joyce was impressed with the diversity
of Ulysses' characteristics, the manifold facets of his person-
ality revealed in Homer's account. He recognised Ulysses' vitali-
ty as a mythic archetype. Ulysses was a complex character
capable of infinite adaptation, to a far greater degree than the
other heroes of the Iliad; his companions-in-arms were rigidly
heroic and belonged properly only in the narrow sphere of war
and siege. But as Joyce pointed out to Budgen, "The history of
Ulysses did not come to an end when the Trojan war was over. It
began just when the other Greek heroes went back to live the
rest of their lives in peace."45

W. B. Stanford, in his masterly expose of Ulysses' character,46 emphasises the unusual features which rendered him
suitable for portrayal after portrayal in later ages. What
emerges from Stanford's study is a very human figure, an
"untypical hero" combining in his character many ambiguous
elements, a mixture of heroic and knavish features. His out-
standing qualities are prudence, intelligence, cunning and
adaptability, attributes which, as Stanford points out, are not
ethically weighted, but may be used for good or evil purposes. Thus on the one hand Ulysses preaches moderation, and is civilised, magnanimous, humane and self-controlled; on the other, he is the arch deceiver, fabled for his trickery and his "notoriously flexible attitude towards truth." Because of this ambivalence, he is treated with suspicion and mistrust. Even in the pages of the Iliad, where he appears at his most heroic, Stanford detects a "deeply felt prejudice against Odysseus." Stanford draws attention too to Ulysses' unheroic and unconventional interest in food, his occasional greed and his eroticism; his amorous adventures with Calypso, Circe and Nausicaa seem curiously out of harmony with his professed love for home and Penelope.

In his discussion of Ulysses' contradictory characteristics, Stanford traces their genesis to pre-Homeric archetypes, suggesting that Ulysses originated in a combination of Solar Divinity and archaic Wily Lad, year daimon and fool, both of which Joyce incorporates into the figure of Bloom (Old Slyboots). The identification of Ulysses as a Solar Divinity or year god is well documented in Homeric scholarship; Joyce could have come across it in the pages of Gilbert Murray's The Rise of the Greek Epic, thus receiving good authority within the Ulyssian tradition for his association of solar imagery and cycle with Bloom.

Tracing certain aspects of Ulysses' character to the Wily Lad or Trickster is also illuminating, because it establishes his affinities with the most primitive type of Buffoon
figure,\textsuperscript{51} who vacillates between the opposed extremes of cleverness and folly, one whose closest modern counterparts are the fair-show pulcinella and the circus clown.\textsuperscript{52}

According to David Hayman, Joyce "appreciated in the fool the oldest, freshest and most spontaneous of all comic creations...He knew enough about psychology (Jung and Freud) and folklore (Frazer) to understand the broader implication of clowning."\textsuperscript{53}

Susanne Langer identifies for us the buffoon's true nature:

He is the indomitable living creature fending for itself, stumbling and tumbling from one situation into another, getting into scrape after scrape and getting out again, with or without a thrashing. He is the personified \textit{\textit{\textit{\textit{el}an vital...}}His whole improvised existence has the rhythm of primitive, savage, if not animalian life, coping with a world that is forever taking new and unexpected turns...now triumphant, now worsted and rueful, but in his ruefulness and dismay he is funny, because his energy is really unimpaired.\textsuperscript{54}

The buffoon is a living symbol of the regenerative powers of man, a personification of the comic impulse. His volatile transition from triumph to failure to triumph again is a miniature paradigm of the rhythm of comedy, and both reflect the essential rhythm of life itself. The career of the clown is analogically related to the structure of comedy.

By uniting in Ulysses the elemental figures of year-daimon and Wily Lad, Homer created the embryo of a splendid comic hero, a powerful fusion of the two elements present in comedy from its inception: the spectacle of the cyclic defeat and triumph of the year god, and the dynamics of the archetypal Trickster/Buffoon. Feibleman felt that Homer had a deep understanding for comedy, and writes:
Indeed the whole of the Odyssey forms a vast comic pattern, and the protagonist one with an ideal goal, whose adventures and misadventures in the course of its pursuit necessitate many compromises. His cunning efforts to reach home form a symbolic representation of the whole question of dealing meditately with the shortcomings of actuality.  

Ulysses, in short, is fundamentally a comic character, capable of adapting to virtually any circumstance; one whose greatest claim to fame is the comic ability to survive at all costs. Bloom brings to fruition the comic potential implicit in the character of the Homeric Ulysses; and as Ulysses has some elements of the clown, so Bloom has some elements of the hero.

Taking his cue from Victor Berard's *Les Phoeniciens et L'Odyssee*, Joyce makes his modern Ulysses a Semite. This allowed him to draw upon two fertile traditions for his depiction of Bloom--the Wandering Jew and the Schlemiel--archetypes which aided Joyce in the presentation of both Bloom's comic weaknesses and his heroism.

Bloom's isolation, as a Jew and an outcast in a Christian city, forces him to be self reliant. He is obliged to develop the qualities of inner strength which eventually enable him to overcome both the threats posed by his environment and the weaknesses of his own character. As Clive Hart writes, "Bloom survives whole at the end of his Odyssey, but it is thanks to his toughness, rather than to any compassion to be found in the Dublin he inhabits."  

The Jewish connection allows Joyce to present more fully Ulysses' proverbial love of home and family, his longing to return to his homeland. Joyce considered the Jews to be "better
fathers and better husbands and better sons than we are."57

Bloom exhibits an unusually high degree of uxoriousness, and throughout the day expresses a zionist longing to return--to recapture the fertile joys of his youthful relationship with Molly, to re-establish his lost kingdom, to restore his homeland. The Jewish theme of Agendath Netaim summarises all he has lost and hopes forlornly to recapture.

Bloom's Jewishness is also a rich source of comic material. Anthony Burgess writes that he "can never be treated normally. He is either a figure of fun or a foreign mystery."58 Sig Altman, in his study of the comic image of the Jew, makes the claim that "the Jewish identity is itself a kind of automatic comic device."59 Bloom is in fact one of the first of a long series of modern schlemiel heroes.60 He has all the traditional weaknesses and strengths of the schlemiel.

According to Ruth Wisse, the schlemiel is a version of the traditional Fool, sharing many of the latter's characteristics and stock comic situations.61 In "Lotus Eaters" and "Hades", Joyce employs Bloom in the iconoclastic role of the traditional Fool to mock the religious observances of the Dubliners and the behaviour of their priests. His ignorance of Church symbolism, coupled with his pragmatic approach to the rituals, combine effectively to debunk the sentimental hypocrisy and pious posturings of his fellow citizens.

The Schlemiel, however, is also a symbol of "an entire people in its encounter with surrounding cultures,"62 especially in his capacity to be victimized. Ruth Wisse’s study of the
schlemiel provides valuable insight into Bloom's nature as fool and as victim. Bloom has all the traditional defects of the schlemiel; he is weak, vulnerable, socially inept and ineffectual; his masculinity "is undermined by his wife at home and by the aggression of the environment." He is a cuckold, a butt and a scapegoat, humiliated and despised, a source of amusement and irritation to all, a hapless victim of unfortunate misunderstandings; he is absurdly pragmatic. In his abjuration of "force, hatred, history" and all that, he undermines the whole ethos of male heroism. But Bloom also shares the schlemiel's peculiar strength; the schlemiel is an adept in the art of survival in hostile circumstances. Wisse comments on his "continuing ability to experience frustration without yielding to desperation or defeatism".

The schlemiel triumphs by his ability to re-interpret an intolerable situation; if he fails in action, he scores in his reactions. As Wisse writes, "in an insane world, the fool may be the only morally sane man." His heroic potential becomes apparent in his encounter with the brutality of the surrounding world; the schlemiel is gentle and humane, kindly, generous and decent. He meets brutality with a weak but tenacious affirmation of his humanity, he counters animosity with tolerance.

Joyce is careful to present both the heroism and the comicality of Bloom's schlemiel nature. At first the comic ineptitude of his dealings with others is emphasised. Awkward and out of place as he moves about the city, he passes from one unfortunate encounter to another, and even the reader begins to
enjoy the jokes at his expense. But Bloom also shares the civilised humanitarianism of the schlemiel, and as this aspect of his character becomes more evident, we are forced to a reassessment of our earlier attitudes.

The combination of heroism and schlemielishness is strikingly apparent in the "Cyclops" episode, Bloom's most violent collision with the hostile forces of the degraded world he inhabits. The denizens of Barney Kiernan's pub are brutal, narrow-minded bigots, violent men with little control over their lives or their passions, ready to transform animosity into aggression at a whim. Though Bloom becomes their victim partly through his own schlemielish behaviour, his attitudes of tolerance and goodwill cause him to rise in our estimation.

It is typical of schlemiel literature that Bloom's misfortunes in this episode are prefaced by an absurd misunderstanding. The Throwaway tip, which he imparted unawares, turns out to be a winner, and the pubsters become incensed because Bloom does not share his supposed winnings by standing a round. In addition to this provocation, Bloom's clash with the citizen becomes inevitable because the citizen stands for "force, hatred and history," which the schlemiel is diametrically opposed to and undermines by his very existence. Bloom incautiously engages this bad-tempered man in argument upon every point, taking the humanitarian view, the civilized and rational approach, in rash counteraction of the citizen's intolerant nationalism and savage belligerance. He argues against competitive sports before one who made his reputation as a shot-putter
and has lived on his laurels ever since; he extols the anti-
treating league to one who is a shameless cadger of drink, and he argues against the position of the patriots before a profes-
sional "Sinn Feiner", preferring compromise to clash, life and love to death with honour. And besides all that, his genuine concern for the underprivileged is an abomination to his attacker, who for all his prating Fenianism betrays his people and his cause by slyly profiting from the misfortunes of an evicted tenant and buying up his land.

Throughout the encounter, Bloom displays a thoroughly schlemielish obtuseness in his failure to appreciate the dangers of his situation and the nature of his adversary. But though forced to flee for his life, he emerges the clear moral victor in the encounter. When finally provoked to a verbal defence of his maligned race, he openly declares his Jewish affiliations in heroic defiance of his bigoted adversaries.

Schlemiel, fool, clown, cuckold, Bloom is a combination of several comic types. He has the weakness and vulnerability of the fool, but also his endurance, his resilience. From each of his shadowy forebears—Odyssean hero, Wandering Jew/Schlemiel—he inherits two opposed sets of characteristics; one emphasises his weaknesses, the other his strength. But above all he inherits from each archetype the ability to survive, to achieve that state of balance between his weaker and his better self necessary for the maintainence of equilibrium. Bloom has the resili-
ence of the natural clown, and as Richard Pearce writes, "the clown succeeds because of his moral and physical resiliency."
In the introduction to his *Adventures of Ulysses*, Lamb wrote: "The agents in this tale, besides men and women, are giants, enchanters, sirens: things which denote external force or internal temptations, the twofold danger which a wise fortitude must expect to encounter in its course through this world." We have watched Bloom emerge unscathed from his most hazardous encounter with external force in the "Cyclops" episode. His battles with the enemies within are longer, more subtle, and harder fought, but he has the balanced constitution needed to survive these encounters also. As we shall see in the next section of this chapter, Bloom turns the traditional adaptability and resilience of the comic hero to good account in the course of his struggle with himself.

3. The Return of Ulysses: Bloom's Comic Triumph.

We saw in the first section of this chapter that Molly's infidelity became for Bloom the medium through which he is forced to an awareness of the contamination of death, an awareness which shocks him to the very core of his being and threatens to upset his precarious psychic balance. As the problem of Molly's adultery initiated Bloom's crisis, so it is in coming to terms with his wife's behaviour that he achieves a resolution of the broader questions of mortality it raises. It is through understanding the extent of his own responsibilities for his troubles that he becomes reconciled with the inevitable. For Bloom the road to salvation and liberation lies in self-knowledge and self acceptance.
Bloom is a man caught in a difficult situation, and one from which there is no escape. Throughout the day he is restless both physically and mentally, unable to find peace until he solves his problems. As he begins his Odyssey through Dublin, three possibilities are open to him: a) he can degenerate entirely into a state of weak and passive effeminacy, a dull apathy; b) he can rebel, or c) he can learn to accommodate cheerfully to circumstances which he cannot alter, and still find purpose and meaning in a life which is less than ideal.

The first of these alternatives—total degeneration—is a very real possibility for Bloom. As Joyce first conceived the character, he was to be modelled on a Dublin Jew named Hunter, rumoured to be a cuckold. Joyce intended to use him for a short story entitled "Ulysses" to be included in *Dubliners*, one more chapter in that damning chronicle of hopelessness, frustration and paralysis. Though he escapes inclusion in *Dubliners*, Bloom lives in the city which for Joyce was the centre of paralysis, and is acquainted with several of the characters who appear in the short stories, sharing many of their interests and daily activities. It is little cause for wonder that the minor characters provide Bloom with a series of possible mirror images which he finds repulsive and threatening: Bob Doran, who periodically drinks himself into a stupor to escape the sense of failure and entrapment he has to live with every day; Dennis Breen, whose inflexibility and inability to look upon the vicissitudes of life with humorous tolerance drives him insane—Dublin is full of such types who "ought to
Perhaps the most threatening of all is C. P. McCoy, a "little man" and a failure whose case is so similar to Bloom's that the latter finds contact with him intolerable.73

Because of his position as outsider, Bloom manages to escape many of the deadening forces which quell the spirit and individuality of the Dubliners. In "Lotus Eaters" we watch him as he protects his spirit from the encroachments of religion, narcotics, nationalism, drink, collective authority and the other "lotuses" with which Dublin abounds. But he ends the chapter under the spell of his own particular lotus, a form of narcissism which makes him derive his greatest satisfaction from his own self in isolation from others, dissipating his powers and energies in futile contemplation of "his navel, bud of flesh" and "the limp father of thousands, a languid floating flower" (U 86), a practice which acerbates his sexual problems on the home front and threatens to neutralize his magnanimity and his heroism.

The second alternative--rebellion--is never a viable alternative for Bloom. Rebellion would involve abandonment of Molly, or confrontation with Boylan. Neither of these courses appeals to Bloom, indeed neither would be consistent with his nature. He is not the sort to be out acting "like a madman."74 The use of force is quite alien to his character. "How can people aim guns at each other?" he asks in "Nausicaa"; "Sometimes they go off." (U 379) In this respect, Bloom differs sharply from Odysseus, who, though he would choose an alternative
to direct confrontation whenever possible, was nonetheless ready
to take swift and warlike action when the need arose.

Bloom is a gentle man, a compromiser who can neither
force his wife into submission, nor manfully confront his rival
for her affections. His inability--or unwillingness--to trans-
late his mental resistance into external action has frequently
been interpreted as a sign of weakness and effeminacy--indeed
Joyce suggests that our entire civilisation is incapable of
understanding the pacifist mentality:"Our civilization, be-
queathed to us by fiery adventuriers, eaters of meat and hunters,
is so full of hurry and combat, so busy about many things which
are perhaps of no importance, that it cannot but see something
feeble in a civilization which smiles as it refuses to make the
battlefield the test of excellence." However, Joyce himself
was in full agreement with Bloom's tactics. He too eschewed
violence all his life, avoided confrontation politics and argued
against subjugation by force which is only "productive of ill-
will and rebellion." The narrator in "Cyclops" characterises Bloom quite
correctly when he heaps scorn on the idea of "Old lardyface
standing up to the business end of a gun." "Gob, he'd adorn a
sweepingbrush, so he would, if he only had a nurse's apron on
him. And then he collapses all of a sudden, twisting around all
the opposite, as limp as a wet rag." (U 333) Bloom's reaction
is the classic reaction of the comic man confronted by an obsta-
cle; he will twist and turn to avoid direct combat, and achieve
his ends by other means.
Unwilling to succumb to defeat, unable to rebel, it is to the third alternative that Bloom's progress tends—accommodation. This is consistent with his comic nature, but it is by no means an easy task. Bloom's reaction to the situation in which he finds himself is at first inadequate and inappropriate, and consequently affords him no mental relief. He can neither accept the fact of ageing nor the fact of Molly's adultery. He longs to bring back his youth, recapture the past and "reclaim the whole place." He indulges in a puerile exercise of mental and physical evasion of Boylan, unable to come to grips mentally with his cuckolding. He blames his failure with his wife, not on his own weaknesses, but on the traditional frailty of women, which, he argues, makes a husband's betrayal inevitable. He bolsters up his ailing ego by engaging in illicit long-distance flirtation with various substitutes for his wife—the servant girl in the morning, whose hips "like moving hams" attract him; the gentlewoman mounting a carriage; Martha Clifford the clandestine letter-writer, and the promiscuous Gerty McDowell.

The futility of these exercises is underlined in the "Nausicaa" episode. Here, wearied alike in body and spirit, and attracted by Gerty's youth as well as by her offer of titillation without involvement, Bloom masturbates within sight of Howth in a vain attempt to regain the vigor and potency of his younger days. "We'll never meet again," he thinks, "Goodbye dear. Thanks. Made me feel so young." (U 382)

Bloom sees Gerty/Nausicaa as a substitute for his wife. He associates her with flowers and perfume as he does Molly, and
consciously compares this occasion with the idyllic tryst on Howth: "The year returns. History repeats itself. Ye crags and peaks I'm with you once again." (U 377) But he soon realises that his encounter with Gerty is a sterile parody of that first fruitful union with Molly. His youth is gone and cannot be recalled: "Never again. Only once it comes." (U 377) he muses sadly. Instead of flowing into the fertile womb of his wife, his seed is scattered amid stones and arid sand, "hopeless stuff," where "nothing grows". He admits the futility of longing for youth to return, for "it never comes the same." And he also recognises the folly of trying to console himself with poor substitutes for Molly. "I am a fool perhaps," he admits; "he [Boylan] gets the plums. I get the plumstones." (U 377)

His reaction is a fall into pessimism. Gerty's physical lameness is a reflection of Bloom's spiritual lameness at this juncture, as Martha's dessicated flower images forth the dry infertility of Bloom's liason with her. Bloom's misdirected efforts to escape himself, and return to youth, lead to a mental cul-de-sac where he is unable to define himself, unable to make any progress towards achieving that understanding of his own nature necessary for solving his dilemma. He has dissipated his energies in futile efforts to get back the past, whereas he should have been trying to prepare for the future. As the "Nausicaa" episode closes, he writes in the sand "I. Am. A." but fails to complete the sentence. He remains undefined. In a sudden access of despair, he decides to withdraw from the lists and resign himself to a future of flaccid and compliant
impotence. The encounter with Gerty has literally "drained all the manhood" (U 377) out of him, leaving him sad and defenceless, and for the moment utterly disillusioned. Like Rip Van Winkle, who slept for twenty years, waking to find his life over, Bloom resolves to become a "sleeper", to allow his affairs to degenerate in disarray, as he drifts off into a weakly acquiescent sleep to the ironic tweeting of a nearby cuckoo clock.

It is the low point of Bloom's day. However Bloom, like Stephen, is imbued with powers of recuperation with which to combat his impulses of hopelessness and self-abandonment. He comes to realise that he cannot escape the inevitable, but must face up to it if life is to be tolerable. Evasion is no answer, and substitutes for his wife offer little comfort. Bloom must accept the passage of a phase in his life when he was young and virile, and recognise the limitations of his own nature. But he must also learn to assert his value as a human creature, in spite of those limitations. The common equation of individual worth with virility and sexual potency is a myth which he must demolish for himself if he is to achieve that transcendent state of wholeness and balance which Jung argues awaits all those who are not afraid to seek themselves.

The antidote to Bloom's depression is of course Stephen, who enables the older man to realise that he can find his ultimate security and meaning in harbouring the race, in cherishing and preserving the rising generation, even when its members are not of his own flesh and blood. Contact with Stephen facilitates Bloom's passage from an "ego-centred"
position to an "ego-transcending" one. C. H. Peake accurately points out that Bloom "needs someone to serve, help, guide and advise, someone in whose fortunes he can take an interest, someone who will provide an object for his paternal feelings and his altruism..." Bloom's interest in Stephen is first aroused by the powerful humanitarian impulses which prompt his interest in all the suffering and the oppressed. His broad, all-encompassing humanity is the best part of his nature, and the one which sets in momentum his ultimate effort to "escape the trap of self and renew universal connections."

Stephen's significance as liberating agent for Bloom may be understood by reference to the situations of Jesus and Elijah, both of whom are introduced as antecedent types of Bloom. Both of these figures were sonless, but they left instead spiritual sons or disciples to carry on when they departed. Stephen's disquisition on paternity, with its emphasis on spiritual bonds or "apostolic succession", rather than blood relationship, prepares us for the emergence of a spiritual kinship between himself and Bloom, a relationship also hinted at in the recurrent references to metempsychosis which persist in Bloom's thoughts during the day. Bloom confirms the relationship by adopting the role of initiating elder to the neophyte Stephen at the close of "Circe" and throughout the remainder of their time together. In opting for a spiritual rather than a bodily child, Bloom can be secure in the knowledge that he is not in fact sonless, but has found in Stephen a stake in the future. Through this relationship, Bloom finds the bridge which takes him from the pessimism
of "Noone is anything" to the cosmic affirmation of the phrase "Nought nowhere is never reached." It is a new and liberating attitude which presages for Bloom a transcendence of death like that achieved by his mythic forebears Jesus and Elijah, who defied the normal course of life by rising bodily into the sky in magnificent transcendence of mortality. The ascension motif reaches toward an affirmation which defies the narrow bounds set by reason and hedged in by death in the liberating transports of Divine Comedy.

As spiritual son, Stephen functions to allow Bloom access to a new mode of being. The fruit of the first phase of life, writes Jacobi, is the bodily child; the fruit of the second phase is the spiritual child. When, at the close of "Circe", Bloom sinks into reverie and sees in a vision the figure of his own son Rudy above the prone body of Stephen, this vision signifies the emergence of Bloom from the deadness of the past to a new investment in the future. Jung comments on the ubiquity of the child motif, and notes that "in dreams it often appears as the dreamer's son." He continues:

One of the essential features of the child motif is futurity. The child is potential future. Hence the occurrence of the child motif in the psychology of the individual signifies as a rule an anticipation of future developments, even though at first sight it may seem like a retrospective configuration. Life is a flux, a flowing into the future, and not a stoppage or a backwash. It is therefore not surprising that so many of the mythological saviours are child gods... In the psychology of the individual...the child paves the way for a future change of personality. In the individuation process, it anticipates the figure that comes from the synthesis of conscious and unconscious elements in the personality. It is therefore a symbol which unites the opposites; a
mediator, bringer of healing, that is, one who makes whole. I have called this wholeness that transcends consciousness the "Self". The goal of the individuation process is the synthesis of the Self. 

However, before Bloom arrives at this position, he must first undergo a comic purgation analogous to that endured by Stephen in the fantasy world of "Circe". Strengthened by his encounter with Stephen which takes place appropriately in the house of new birth, Holles Street maternity hospital, Bloom is able to find the courage to draw up from the depths of his psyche the perverse elements of his own nature which he had been unwilling to confront, and finally, to reconstruct the scene of his own cuckolding by Boylan. Abandoning the vain effort to rationalise his position, he liberates for scrutiny those base tendencies in his own nature which make him invite his own cuckolding, and views himself as he really is. This process is a necessary prelude to self-understanding and self-acceptance. All the traits of character which contribute to his capacity for self-defeat are projected in the hallucinatory sequence of "Circe": his subservience to women, his anality, his voyeuristic tendencies, his feelings of guilt about his sexual and religious aberrations, and his nostalgic longing for "the dear dead days beyond recall." "The sins of the past are rising against you," he is told, "Many. Hundreds." (U 537) The act of calling forth and facing the repressed material of memory and desire serves to liberate Bloom from their restrictive influence.

In "Circe", both Bloom and Stephen pass through patterns of regeneration modelled upon Dionysiac archetypes. The episode
is in the dramatic mode, with stage directions, exits and entrances, rapid scene shift and costume change. It is a fantastic comic drama modelled on the archaic ritual of regeneration from which comedy developed. The atmosphere of archaic revel is reinstated in the Dublin brothel, and Bloom, borne away on the lunatic tide, gives himself up to the misrule of the moment. Reason is put to sleep (Bloom is literally exhausted) and the forces of unreason take over to effect their health-giving process of rehabilitation.

Bloom's relationship in "Circe" to the year king or vegetation divinity in his capacity as victim or scapegoat has been extensively explored by John Vickery. During this episode Bloom is confronted by hallucinatory figures who accuse him of various misdemeanours, sexual misconduct and perverse behaviour, and threaten him with death. He is mockingly assigned the classic function of the Hebrew scapegoat, "to carry the sins of the people to Azazel, the spirit which is in the wilderness," (U 497) and elected to carry the scapegoat's heavy burden of shame and guilt. "When in doubt, persecute Bloom" is the cry of his accusers. (U 464)

Vickery writes: "Bloom's divine nature is made quite explicit. He is linked with Frazer's dying and hanging gods in general and more particularly with Dionysus who has come to be regarded as preeminently the archetype of human sexuality." In keeping with his role as divine scapegoat, and his part in a comedy, Bloom plays out the ritual of mock king or lord of misrule, an essential preliminary to the sacrifice of the
scapegoat which passed almost unchanged into the realms of
comedy. He is hailed as Lord Mayor of Dublin and King of
Ireland, and receives homage from dignitaries drawn from both
the secular and the religious spheres. His function as fertility
daimon is underlined by his manner of taking the oath of office,
with his hand on his testicles (U 482). The ritualistic nature
of the carnival sequence is emphasised by Bloom's reply to the
comment "This is indeed a festivity." (U 489): "You call it a
festivity", he says, "I call it a sacrament."

His temporary reign is marked by Utopian schemes for
"general improvement all round". The access of an age of misrule
is heralded by Bloom's call for "general amnesty, weekly carnival,
with masked licence, bonuses for all...free money, free love and
a free lay church in a free lay state." (U 489-490) It is of
course a ridiculous dream, and soon gives way to the sombre
tones of accusation and sacrifice. Bloom is successively stoned
(U 497), and burnt to death. (U 498-9) He contemplates suicide
like his father (U 499). He lies face down upon the earth in
the attitude of passive sacrificial victim, and dies (U 544) and
finally he is cast from a cliff into the sea to be drowned.
(U 550)

But in Bloom's case, as in Stephen's, the ritual of
death is a preparation for rebirth. The pattern of the dying
god myth implies the persistence of life. Thus each of Bloom's
"deaths" carries comic implications of survival or regeneration.
He is saved from hanging "by metempsychosis" when Paddy Dignam's
ghost returns from the grave to plead his case. (U 473) For the
stoning, "soft pantomime stones" (U 497) are used, causing no real harm. When he is burned to death, it is amid "phoenix flames, and in a "seamless garment marked I. H. S."(U 498) which identifies him with Christ, one who survived a scapegoat death and rose again in triumph from the grave. Bloom's suicide decision is ironically undercut by the failure of the whore Zoe to be impressed, and by Bloom's immediately becoming Zoe's "baby" (U 499, 500); as Vickery points out, "According to Fraser, persons undergoing a death and rebirth ritual are frequently obliged to simulate infancy in both its physical and intellectual manifestations."87 We have already noted a similar phenomenon in the behaviour of Stephen during the "Eumaeus" episode.

Significantly, the one death which is without immediate promise of rebirth is the death, face to the earth, which is the culmination of Bloom's encounter with Bella Cohen, the most potent of his adversaries. Bloom defended himself against his earlier accusers by pleading his humanism: "I am doing good to others," he claimed (U 453). But the previous trials have weakened and exhausted him, lowering his resistance; so that when he is confronted by the powerful whoremistress "all in him that is slave to women rises to take charge of his whole being."88 "Enormously I desiderate your domination," he admits. "I am exhausted, abandoned, no more young." (U 528) He sinks into a piglike state of debased effeminacy, while Bella becomes the masculine Bello, lashed into perverse fury by the docile and masochistic Bloom. "What you longed for has come to pass," Bello crows. "Henceforth you are unmanned and mine in earnest
a thing under the yoke." (U 535)

During the encounter with Bello, Bloom is urged to look upon his sexual behaviour as swinish and brutish. He is forced to confess "the most revolting piece of obscenity in all his career of crime" (U 538), his perverse preference for Molly's rump: "I rererepugnosed in rererepugnant." Finally Bello taunts him with a graphic account of the consequences of his behaviour: his wife is lying in the arms of a "man of brawn" and his rival Boylan is comfortably installed in Bloom's bed. Bloom is not yet ready for this, and Bello's words leave him wretched and broken, overcome with remorse, shame and guilt. He succumbs weakly to death. (U 541-544)

The final chapter in Bloom's ordeal is given over to the nymph, who tries to capitalise upon his feelings of guilt and his subjection to Bello by urging him to abandon things of the flesh completely: "No more desire", she urges, "Only the ethereal." (U 552) To do as the nymph suggests would mean an unacceptable abdication of self for Bloom; his unsentimental acceptance of the human body in all its aspects has been a marked feature of his character. Bloom is by nature a comic man, and his motto throughout the day might well have been the Terentian one: "Nothing human is alien to me". Nathan A. Scott asserts that "The comic man is unembarrassed by even the grossest expression of his creatureliness."89 He can see that his quirks and weaknesses are only human, and the admission makes life tolerable.
Bloom is saved from final defeat at the hands of the nymph by a comic accident—the popping of his pants button; this tiny and insignificant occurrence is nonetheless sufficient to recall his mind to the reality he is being urged to forsake. His comic instinct for survival reasserts itself, and he suddenly recovers his self-possession. His commonsense approach to experience returns, he has come through the crisis. The aberrations of his psychosexual nature have not destroyed his manhood. That mental resilience, that psychological strength which he displayed in earlier episodes returns to effect his release from the thralls of Circe. "The real saviour of Bloom was a spiritual 'Moly', a state of mind," writes Budgen.90

In Bloom's case as in Stephen's, the comic reversal takes place suddenly, with neither preparation nor explanation. Just as Stephen abruptly turns from rejection to acceptance in his attitude to God and Nation, thereby liberating himself from the frustration and sterility of his earlier attitudes, so too Bloom inexplicably reasserts his humanity at the crucial moment, and returns from the pits of bestiality to full possession of his wits, and a sane and balanced approach to life.

Such unexpected transformations are not unusual in comic works; Frye writes that "unlikely conversions, miraculous transformations, and providential assistance are inseparable from comedy."91 The satisfactory outcome of the comic movement need not impress us as true, Frye adds, but as "desirable", and it is usually brought about "by manipulation". The realm of the comic ending, in other words, is not the realm of rational,
factual experience, but of feeling. Joyce's methods are there-
fore true to the hallowed tenets of comedy, appealing "not to 
the intellect but to feeling, to acceptance without complete 
understanding." 92

The act of participating in the Dionysiac comic pattern 
has liberated both Bloom and Stephen from their chains. The 
change in Bloom is immediately apparent. In place of his earlier 
feelings of guilt and shame, he can now assert that "lapses are 
condoned". Quickly and contemptuously he dismisses the nymph, 
rebuffs Bella Cohen and retrieves his talisman, the potato. His 
self-assurance regained, he turns his attention to the task of 
helping his spiritual son, Stephen, through the closing phases 
of his ordeal. He takes charge of the situation in the brothel 
in a competent fashion and stands by Stephen during the brawl 
with the soldiers. Fully recovered, he can now at last bear to 
look upon the scenes of his cuckolding by Boylan (U 566-7). He 
spares himself nothing. Yet the vision does not reduce him to 
despair. Despite his humiliation, Bloom has plumbed the depths 
of his own nature in a way which will enable him to be finally 
reconciled with Molly's adultery in "Ithaca".

The completion of Bloom's comic pattern is to be found 
in the "Ithaca" episode. Here the two poles of Joyce's depic-
tion of Bloom, the comic/realistic and the mythic, reach their 
final crescendo. Through the overwhelming accumulation of 
factual information which fills the pages of the episode, Bloom 
is paradoxically released from the constraints of realism and 
his archetypal significance is revealed and affirmed. In
Joyce's words, "not only will the reader know everything, and know it in the baldest, coldest way, but Bloom and Stephen thereby become heavenly bodies, wanderers like the stars at which they gaze."  

On the realistic level, there is a constant interplay between Bloom's humanism, which is admirable, and his idiosyncrasies, which are ridiculous. His comic and heroic elements are intermeshed to the last, and irony and sympathy vie for the upper hand. It is clear that he has not changed his ways; he remains as remarkable in his sexual behaviour after "Circe" as before. He makes several efforts at persuading Stephen to extend his stay in the Bloom household, viewing him as a possible replacement for Boylan; Molly's photograph is produced for Stephen's admiration, his cocoa is fortified with her special cream, and various schemes are proposed by Bloom to bring the two together. However, his plans for Stephen come to nothing when the younger man refuses to cooperate. But just as a prolonged liaison with Bloom would have been bad for Stephen, so too would such an arrangement have crippled Bloom. We need to know that he is capable of defeating the suitors by himself, without the aid of a "rival agent of intimacy." (U 733)  

After Stephen leaves, Bloom defines his attitude to Boylan, and works his way to the humane rationalism of his final perspective. He finds that the act of adultery has deprived him of nothing; adultery is not a crime of great significance, he argues. His final assessment is made in terms curiously reminiscent of Langer's biological explanation of the life-
instinct; adultery is

not more abnormal than all other altered processes
of adaptation to altered conditions of existence,
resulting in a reciprocal equilibrium between
the bodily organism and its attendant circumstances..."
(U 733)

One might say the same of Bloom's attitude.

The burning of the Kinnereth advertisement symbolically
represents Bloom's advance from his earlier reactions to his
cuckolding. It is not his nature which has changed, but his
attitude. He no longer hungers for the past, or for lost youth,
but is content to take his present pleasures where he finds them,
secure in the knowledge that he has survived another day. The
act of adultery does not really matter a great deal any more,
because Bloom is now prepared to admit without reservation his
anal preferences. His feelings of envy, jealousy, abnegation
and equanimity are finally resolved into a feeling of satisfac-
tion as he embraces his wife, and salutes those "adipose poste-
rior female hemispheres, redolent of milk and honey" (U 734).
Kinnereth, Paradise Lost, has been transformed into a warm
female bottom, Paradise Regained, and Bloom drops off to sleep
at peace with himself and with the world.

The ironies implicit in this resolution are obvious.
Bloom has adjusted to his wife's adultery, he has achieved a new
level of self-awareness and self-acceptance, but the difficul-
ties in the Bloom marriage remain unsolved. Bloom's request for
breakfast in bed may indeed herald a new era, or it may not; but
in the end that does not matter. Bloom's final vindication
comes not on the literal level, but on the level of myth. As
A. Walton Litz writes, "The ironies of the novel still operate on a literal level—Molly is unfulfilled, Bloom unsatisfied—but these are of lesser importance beside the primeval realities which close the episode."\textsuperscript{94}

As "Ithaca" moves to a close after the departure of Stephen, Bloom is transformed into a fertile archetype of cyclic renewal. The mythic transformations of this episode provide a vital resolution of Bloom's battle with mortality. It is on this level that he completes the conquest of time begun in his association with Stephen. The possibility of endless cyclic renewal is opened to Bloom as his identity as a man merges into and is overshadowed by his potential as an archetype. Metamorphosed into Everyman,

\begin{quote}
Ever would he wander, selfcompelled, to the extreme limit of his cometary orbit, beyond the fixed stars and variable suns and telescopic planets, astronomical waifs and strays, to the extreme boundary of space, passing from land to land, among peoples, amid events. Somewhere imperceptibly he would hear, and somehow reluctantly, suncompelled, obey the summons of recall. Whence, disappearing from the constellation of the Northern Crown he would somehow reappear reborn above Delta in the constellation of Cassiopeia..." (\textit{U} 727-8)
\end{quote}

Time is lost in infinity, and Bloom as Nightsun whirls off in an eternal round of parting and return.

Bloom's "passport to eternity" is reinforced by his wife's sleepy monologue. In Molly's rhapsody, Bloom appears in his role as comic man, irrepressible and indomitable, if absurd; and by making no distinction between her acceptance of Bloom as lover and her acceptance of any man who comes to mind, Molly too destroys the concept of individuality, thereby allowing
Bloom access to an anonymous series of Beings who eternally service woman and recreate life. The Blooms united in sleep on their marriage bed represent symbolically the primal union of Earth-Mother and Heaven Father, fertile and everlasting.

As Bloom passes into sleep, the text is suffused with images of rebirth: the return to the womb, the child (potential future), the roc's auk's egg, the sailor's return, Darkinbad the Brightdayler. The spirit of renewal prevails and Bloom will wake again to walk the earth once more, a unique, unconquerable cosmic Everyman. "Like the Viconian ricorso, the final moment of 'Ithaca' is both an end and a beginning." 95 The mythic overtones of "Ithaca" present an affirmation of life, a commitment to renewal born of the novel's affiliations with the primeval cyclic pattern which gave rise to comedy, and which continues to confer on the genre its meaning and its dynamism.
FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER III


5Budgen, p. 315.

6See above, pp. 6-11.

7Beja, p. 39.


9The extent of Joyce's knowledge of psychoanalysis has been treated of by several critics, notably by Hoffman and Schechner. The latter supplies a comprehensive survey of critical comment on the subject. Joyce was acquainted with psychoanalysis for a number of years before he left Trieste in 1915, and his interest continued throughout his stay in Zurich, the home of Jung's school of psychoanalysis. Schechner comments that while composing Ulysses Joyce looked to psychoanalysis "at the very least as scientific validation of his own artistic practices." (Schechner, p. 18).


14. The analysis of Bloom's situation which follows is analogous to the approach taken by Michael Klug in the article cited above (Footnote 2) and I have found Klug's views useful and enlightening. However, Klug projects for Bloom a return to married bliss, whereas the bias of this thesis does not demand such a solution. Bloom may indeed regain his position as active husband with Molly--the possibility is not eliminated by Joyce; however, his comic triumph depends not upon his assumption of a self-assertive stance with his wife, but on his acceptance of himself as he is--with his flaws and his impotence--and on his ability to find promise and contentment in life despite this. See below, p. 100 and passim.


16. Flaubert, one of the few writers whose work Joyce claimed to have read all through (See Budgen, p. 181) described "Karagos", the Turkish Buffoon, in the following way in his Voyage a Carthage, 1858: "Je crois le type en decadence. Il s'agit seulement de montrer le plus possible de phallus. Le plus grand avait un grelot qui, a chaque mouvement de reins, sonnait; cela faisait beaucoup de rire." (Cited by Karl Kerenyi in The Trickster: A Study in American Indian Mythology, by Paul Radin, p.184). Perhaps Boylan's "jingling" derives from this source.

17. Jacobi, p. 22.


20. See above, chapter II, pp. 52-53 and passim.


22. Ibid., p. 393.

23. In "Circe" Bloom is specifically called "Nightsun" by Virag (U 515).


27 Bonheim, p. 20.


32 R. W. B. Lewis' discussion of the modern protagonist in The Picaresque Saint: Representative Figures in Contemporary Fiction (New York: J. B. Lippincott Coy., 1959) provides excellent material for an appreciation of Bloom's dual nature, both saint and sinner, hero and fool.

33 Joyce, C. W., p. 45.

34 Fritz Senn, "Book of Many Turns", JJQ X:1 (Fall 1972), p. 33.


36 Corrigan, p. 3.

37 James Joyce; see Budgen, p. 16.

38 W. B. Stanford, The Ulysses Theme, p. 3.


41 Ellmann, "Ulysses, the Divine Nobody", Yale Review 47 (Autumn 1957) p. 64. Quoted from Joyce's conversations with George Borach, Zurich 1917.

42 Ibid., p. 65.

43 Mario Praz, "Notes on James Joyce", Mosaic VI:1 (Fall 1972) p. 89. From conversations with George Borach.
The Ulysses Theme; in the discussion of Ulysses' character which follows, I have relied, to a large extent, upon Stanford's work for my information.


Karl Kerényi emphasizes the relationship between the Trickster and the Buffoon throughout his discussion of the type; see Radin, The Trickster, pp. 173-191.

C. G. Jung, "On the psychology of the Trickster Figure" in The Trickster by Paul Radin, p. 204.

David Hayman, "Forms of Folly in Joyce", p. 264.

Langer, p. 342.

Feibleman, pp. 24-5.


Quoted in Stanford, The Ulysses Theme, p. 186.

See discussion of "Circe", pp. 125-126 below.

Ellmann, James Joyce, p. 238.

The similarities between Bloom and Bob Doran are emphasised by the latter's words to Bloom in "Cyclops": "Shake hands brother. You're a rogue and I'm another."

Ellmann makes the point that both Bloom and C. P. McCoy are based on a single prototype, a Dubliner named Charles Chance; James Joyce, pp. 385-6.

Joyce contrasted Bloom's reaction to his cuckolding to that of the hero in a French play, "Le Cocu Magnifique", who behaved "like a madman" when he suspected his wife of infidelity. See Budgen, p. 315.

Joyce, C. W., p. 94.

Ibid., p. 17.


See above, p. 89.


Jacobi, p. 45.

83 Ibid., p. 83.


85 Ibid., p. 395.

86 Many theorists of comedy have discussed this aspect of the connections between comedy and ritual; see particularly C. L. Barber, "The Saturnalian Pattern in Shakespeare's Comedy", rpt. in Comedy: Meaning and Form ed. R. W. Corrigan, pp. 363-377.

87 Vickery, p. 397.

88 Budgen, p. 241.

89 Nathan A. Scott Jr., "The Bias of Comedy and the Narrow Escape into Faith", rpt. in Comedy: Meaning and Form ed. R. Corrigan, p. 93.

90 Budgen, p. 230.

91 Frye, p. 170.


93 Budgen, p. 257.


95 Ibid., p. 404.
IV. CONCLUSION

An understanding of Joyce's use of traditional comic patterns is helpful for exploring the development of Stephen and Bloom within the novel, and for understanding the manner in which their personal struggles are resolved. The eventual parting of Stephen from Bloom, when viewed in the context of the arguments developed in this thesis, is not a negative occurrence, but the natural and logical conclusion of his quest for self-sufficiency and independence. Passing through a day of crisis, both Bloom and Stephen draw upon comic values to bring some measure of order and serenity into their lives.

In exploring the relevance of the comic impulse to Stephen's development, I took the liberty of interpreting the death-and-rebirth movement, which Joyce drew upon from myth, fertility cult, initiation rite, Christian ritual, and folk-drama, as implicitly comic. Vickery speaks of "the backward turn of Stephen's mind and sensibility, an almost deliberate reaching out toward the ancient and mythopoeic."¹ By freely accepting his Dionysiac role in a mimetic ritual of death and rebirth, Stephen thereby expels the repressive image of the mother from his consciousness. This enables him to work out a new affirmative attitude to God and to his nation, and removes the mental obstruction which prevented him from creative communion with his muse. His relationship with Bloom, reflecting that of neophyte
to hierophant in an initiatory sequence, aids him in his passage to a more mature and accepting state of consciousness. With Bloom, Stephen is able to relax, to abandon the hostile vigilance, the mistrust and self-pity, which marred his relationship with others. He accepts Bloom as "the accumulation of the past", whereas formerly history had been a "nightmare" from which he struggled to awake. Though he does not accept a place in Bloom's household, and goes out into the world alone, he parts from the older man in good spirits. Under Bloom's tutelage, Stephen has become reconciled to his roots, and to the bonds which unite man to man.

For Bloom too, the comic patterns of Ulysses promise relief. No longer striving to avoid his fate, he accepts it with equanimity, and returns to his home and his wife a more complete, integrated individual capable of meeting whatever the future offers with aplomb. His buoyant nature, mingling the comic with the heroic, enables him to accommodate to the realities of his existence without pessimism.

To Stephen Joyce gives the linear movement of comedy, from a state of bondage to release through a progression from difficulty to "death" to rebirth. With Bloom, the emphasis is on the circular movement of comedy and the idea of cyclical return. In both of his aspects, as fool and as hero, as Buffoon and as Sun-God, Bloom reaches toward the timeless. In the concluding chapter to her study of the Fool, Enid Welsford writes:
But if the fool is "he who gets slapped", the most successful fool is "he who is none the worse for his slapping"... How comforting then to be persuaded that the blows are always harmless, that the victim is never hurt, above all that Death himself is a hoax and that the whole world does not bear the tree on which Marcolf can be hanged. The elasticity of the Fool is one of his chief attractions...

Bloom's adroit evasion of his enemies, be they physical or mental, is true to the tradition of the Fool; and what he cannot evade he learns to accept. In Stephen, Bloom perceives "the predestination of a future" (U 689) promising him a spiritual participation in the creative, life-endowed new generation, consoling him for all he has lost in the past. Finally Bloom is himself propelled into the timeless mythological sphere where he becomes one with those celestial beings who wheel through an infinite series of partings and triumphant returns. "Darkinbad the Brightdayler" passes into sleep to the "incipient intimations of proximate dawn."

It must be allowed, however, that though Joyce employs traditional comic patterns to effect the release of his protagonists, his manner of using them differs dramatically from conventional practices. The normal comic plot, as Northrup Frye makes clear, demonstrates the victory of a young man against forces of oppression which exist within his society. His victory is both personal and social, and signals the emergence of a new "free" society. The hero's triumph is celebrated by public ritual acts, marriage and feasting. His victory is to be considered permanent, and the new society which crystallises about the hero and his comic bride presages the arrival of a new era.
Joyce internalises the comic plot, with a consequent emphasis on individual release rather than upon social integration. He isolates his protagonists from start to finish, and when *Ulysses* ends they are as far from inclusion in their society as they were before. Their comic resolution is psychic rather than external. Bloom and Stephen are pitted against blocking forces which exist in their minds rather than in the world around them, and their comic triumph lies in their overcoming these mental blocks. Both characters succeed in doing this, and in winning through to their comic brides. But in each case the victory is so ambiguous and so nebulous that many have failed to see it. In Stephen's case, not only are the terms of the conflict psychic but so is the prize; his "comic bride" is the feminine creative soul within, with whom he seeks fruitful union in order to create; it is in the "virgin womb of the imagination" that the word is made flesh. We may presume that Stephen's union with his muse takes place "offstage", as the conventional comic hero's physical union with his newly-won bride often does. With Stephen the emphasis is totally on soul, and no doubt this is why he does not meet a "Nora" in *Ulysses*, but only metaphorically salutes the image of the creative female in Molly Bloom, projected through the light flowing from her bedroom window.

In Bloom's case, the separation from his "comic bride", Molly, is the external manifestation of a deep-seated psychological problem. It is to the solving of his personal problems that Bloom must direct his energies, and once that is done, his
return to his wife follows as a matter of course, almost as an afterthought. We are given few assurances that the problems in the Bloom marriage have been definitively solved, and though Bloom orders breakfast in bed, whether he will get it or not remains a matter for conjecture.

As comic heroes in the conventional sense, therefore, both Bloom and Stephen are atypical. At the close of *Ulysses*, nothing has changed except in the minds of the protagonists. Viewed through the eyes of the world, none of their quests can be said to end in unqualified success. Stephen does not write anything, and Bloom is not suddenly transformed into a paragon of triumphant virility. Moreover, their roles as possible comic heroes are further qualified by contrasting each with a far more likely candidate. The dashing and self-confident Mulligan, popular and amusing, seems capable of carrying off all the laurels, while the youthful lothario Boylan carries off Bloom's wife, Molly. Yet in each case Joyce is careful to undercut the more dominant and worldly-successful ones, so that Bloom and Stephen are returned to a more positive position.

The internalisation of the comic plot, though it denied to Joyce's protagonists that fullness of triumph which closes the conventional comedy, was nonetheless of great value to Joyce. The traditional comic ending, as I argued in the Introduction, has become impossible for the modern novelist, because it fails to coincide with his sense of reality. It is no longer possible to accept the convention that the comic hero succeeds in transforming his society, and establishing
permanently a new, free and just regime where all men can find happiness and fulfillment. When comedy first developed, it expressed the need for a stable community, because this was most urgently required for the harmonious survival of man at that time. Now the pendulum has swung over to the opposite extreme, and there is an equally urgent need to protect the individual from an over-powerful and degenerate society which takes little account of personal needs. By internalising the comic plot, Joyce was able to evade the normal bounds of reason and logic in a way denied to the more conventional novelist. He gained clear access to the realms of mythology, which have absolute validity for the human subconscious. He exploited the relationship between comedy, myth and psychology most fruitfully in depicting the struggles of Stephen and Bloom, and was consequently able to afford his protagonists a much fuller personal triumph than would otherwise have been possible. T. S. Eliot declared that Joyce had made the twentieth century possible for art; he also made comedy possible for the twentieth century.

Many have come to Ulysses with a preconceived notion of what a novel should contain, and turned from it disappointed. Joyce refuses to be confined within the critical mould. He is not greatly interested in "go-ahead plot", and his characters simply cannot be defined or assessed solely in terms of their human actions. The mythological dimension is of equal importance, and the comic resolution of Ulysses depends upon it.

Comedy by its nature is not subject to the confines of the material universe. The final triumph of the hero, though
expressed in physical terms, is symbolic of spiritual values outside of the realms of reason: transcendence of death, rejuvenation, eternal becoming, everlasting vigor, unquenchable life. To include these values in the resolution of Ulysses, Joyce attacks the restrictions of rationality in his three final episodes. In "Eumaeus", the rapprochement of Bloom and Stephen develops in spite of the tired prose which fills the pages with a mass of verbiage. Throughout "Ithaca", reason and factual analysis are rendered ludicrous by exaggeration, a technique which Joyce uses all through Ulysses to undermine the unaccept-able--witness his treatment of Boylan and the gigantism of "Cyclops". In Molly's episode, there is no account taken of reason at all in her freerunning prose, a river of pure feeling. Yet as Susanne Langer points out, in the realm of art it was feeling which gave rise to form. Molly's soliloquy recalls the malleable creative medium from which all feeling life developed, and her final "yes" accepts life with all its contradictory passions and manifestations.

In the final analysis, Joyce's comic sense takes him back over the realms of New Comedy to a more primitive phase. His comedy draws on those archaic well-springs of human experience from which comedy originally took its genesis, and it is only through understanding the manner and extent of Joyce's use of these archaic comic patterns that we can form an accurate assessment of the fates of Bloom and Stephen, and the final thrust of the novel.
FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER IV

1Vickery, p. 365.
2Welsford, p. 314.
3See Frye, p. 164.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Works by James Joyce


Other Works


Epstein, E. L. "King David and Benedetto Marcello in the Works of James Joyce." *JJQ* VI (Fall 1968): 83-86.


Gross, Harvey. "From Barabbas to Bloom: Notes on the Figure of the Jew". *Western Humanities Review,* XI (1957): 149-156.


Lauer, Christopher. "A Certain Element of Play in Joyce's Work". 


---


Praz, Mario. "Notes on James Joyce". *Mosaic* VI (Fall 1972): 85-100.


Quillan, William H. "Composition of Place: Joyce's Notes on the English Drama". *JJQ* XIII (Fall 1976): 4-26.


Thompson, Lawrence, A Comic Principle in Sterne, Meredith and Joyce. Oslo: British Institute, 1954.


