

INTRODUCTION

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The experience of struggling through *Ulysses* for the first time is something unusual in our cultural landscape where so much is consumable, bite-sized, and bingeable. Wrestling with and puzzling through Joyce's strange book offers readers the opportunity to stretch their minds and expand their imaginations, and so to encounter who they are in dynamic ways. In this volume, an introductory essay prefaces each of the episodes of *Ulysses* but these can be saved to read after the novel. *Ulysses*' literary allusions, as well as its foreign language phrases and historical references, are explained in the footnotes, which draw from and build upon earlier works of annotation. To produce a complete elucidation of the novel and all of its allusions and references, however, is not just impossible but undesirable, as it would put mere explanation in the place of experience and bypass the rich and suggestive ambiguities of the text. To produce a complete explanation is to take away the reason to read *Ulysses* in the first place.

Ulysses is concerned with the experience of living in a world without answers. Its 1904 Dublin, like other European cities at the beginning of the twentieth century, is in the process of being reshaped by the growing power of commerce and new technologies of transportation, reproduction, and communication. *Ulysses* shows us the questions this open-ended transformation raises, as well as the promise and opportunities

it offers. The weakening of the major structures and institutions that exercised such control over political and religious life in Ireland is communicated when Stephen Dedalus boldly tells an Englishman in the first episode: "I am the servant of two masters [...] And a third, Stephen said, there is who wants me for odd jobs" (20; 1:638, 641). When Haines fails to understand, "The imperial British state, Stephen answered, his colour rising, and the holy Roman catholic and apostolic church." Stephen doesn't name his third master. It might be Irish nationalism, his material needs, or his artistic vocation. This uncertainty, and Stephen's own uncertainty in defining himself autonomously, is endemic to a world in transformation.

Ulysses' extraordinary power to articulate early twentieth-century experience was attested to by writers who have become known, like Joyce, as modernists. T. S. Eliot wrote of the novel as "the most important expression which this present age has found," as a "book to which we are all indebted, and from which none of us can escape."¹ Virginia Woolf wrote of it with distaste in her diary: "an illiterate, underbred book it seems to me: the book of a self-taught working man, & we

¹ T. S. Eliot, "Ulysses, Order and Myth," in *Selected Prose of T. S. Eliot*, ed. Frank Kermode (London: Faber & Faber, 1975), 175.

all know how distressing they are, how egotistic, insistent, raw, striking, & ultimately nauseating.”² It might be unfair to reprint Woolf’s private reaction as she struggles through Joyce’s text – it risks obscuring the importance the novel had for her own attempts to find new ways to represent experience – but Woolf’s remarks express her sense of the revolutionary nature of the novel.

Woolf’s labeling of Joyce as “self-taught” says less about Joyce, who in fact had a degree in modern languages, and more about *Ulysses*, a novel that ransacks existing literature. Eliot himself told Woolf that “The book would be a landmark, because it destroyed the whole of the nineteenth century. It left Joyce himself with nothing to write another book on. It showed up the futility of all the English styles.”³ In this aspect of the novel’s composition, Joyce was an Irishman repurposing the culture of the master and using it to give expression to other kinds of experience. This approach answers a problem Stephen identified in Joyce’s earlier novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*; after his conversation with the Dean of Studies at University College Dublin, Stephen connects the English language to English dominion over Ireland: “How different are the words *home*, *Christ*, *ale*, *master*, on his lips and on mine! I cannot speak or write these words without unrest of spirit. His language, so familiar and so foreign, will always be for me an acquired speech. I have not made or accepted its words” (*P* 159). In *Ulysses*, Joyce takes hold of what was an ornament and tool of the British elite and turns it to new use. Because of this, identifying the sources of *Ulysses*’ literary allusions doesn’t answer the more important question that they raise: in the context of *Ulysses*, what new role do these fragments play?

An example of this Ulyssean reappropriation is Stephen’s reference to Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* in a conversation in a back room of the National Library. Stephen intends to make an impression on the Dublin literati he talks with, but not

one of simple erudition. Instead he makes creative use of a few details of the play – Hamlet’s dead father, King Hamlet, returning as a ghost to speak to him – and some scraps of biographical information – that Shakespeare left his second-best bed to his wife and that they had a son called Hamnet – to devise a story of a son who creates his own father. The men are skeptical. “Do I believe this?” Stephen even asks himself, but this isn’t the point. Shakespeare is not a badge of learning for Stephen but a tool for self-authorship. Allusion does the work not of cultural authority, but rather of invention, exploration, and questioning.

Joyce wrote to the French writer Valéry Larbaud that the reader “will know early in the book that S.D.’s mind is full like everyone else’s of borrowed words” (*L I* 263). A student and aspiring writer, Stephen is more literary than most, but his intellectual baggage is an exaggerated version of something that we all experience. We each have heads not just of what we have read but, like Stephen, of what we have heard. We think with these borrowed words. Joyce’s characters display different attitudes about this. Stephen feels overwhelmed: “Dead breaths I living breathe,” he thinks desperately as he walks alone on Sandymount Strand (49; 3:479). The older and cannier Leopold Bloom observes: “Never know whose thoughts you’re chewing” (162; 8:717–18). His wife Molly Bloom is able to enjoy this influx of language: “it fills up your whole day and life always something to think about every moment and see it all around you like a new world” (709; 18:738–39). Joyce developed a narrative mode called the interior monologue or stream of consciousness to display this passing of thoughts through his characters’ minds. Following the quick turns of their associations, memories, and realizations, *Ulysses* shows different kinds of words competing for attention, status, power. As we see characters become aware of and reflect on these words, *Ulysses* trains us critically, prompting us to consider the language that passes through our own minds.

Another revolutionary aspect of *Ulysses* occurs at a larger scale: Joyce’s reimagining of the novel as a genre. In *Ulysses*, the usual features that move us through novels – plot, character, narrative voice – are dismantled. This is not a book

² Virginia Woolf, *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*, ed. Anne Olivier Bell (London: Hogarth Press, 1978), vol. II, 188–89.

³ Virginia Woolf, *A Writer’s Diary* (London: Hogarth Press, 1965), 50–51.

that carries readers along from inciting incident to conclusion with a story in which they can lose themselves. There is no omniscient narrator telling readers what they need to know. Instead, *Ulysses* constantly reinvents itself, speaking to us in different voices and different forms. This is perhaps Joyce's answer to the huge ambition that Stephen declared at the close of *A Portrait*: "to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race" (*P* 213). In *Ulysses*, Stephen has returned from an anticlimactic exile in Paris, and the limits and compromises of his renewed existence in Dublin rankle with him as he struggles to define himself. The key terms of his earlier declaration – soul, conscience, race – resist definition. In *Ulysses*, Joyce presents a *formal* realization of Stephen's earlier ambition with a novel that takes many shapes – to list just a few: the aforementioned stream of consciousness and the parodies of different eras of English prose, and also, a narrative that merges with music, a pastiche of sentimental Victorian novels and ladies' magazines, a stageplay with hallucinatory visions, a sequence of quasi-scientific questions and answers, and so on. Through this constant shifting the novel requires us to interact with it, to make sense of it, and to reflect on our own ideas as we do so. In this way, *Ulysses* gives us the sense that we and the world can be represented and remade in new and vibrant ways. Grappling with the novel's challenges, the reader is pushed toward one of the most important rewards of reading *Ulysses*: thinking independently.

With its constant shifting of form, *Ulysses* assaults tradition in a third way: by rethinking what it is to be a person. We see this most centrally in the figure of Bloom. About eight chapters into the composition of *Ulysses*, Joyce received a request for more material on Stephen but he told his friend, the artist Frank Budgen, "Stephen no longer interests me to the same extent. He has a shape that can't be changed."⁴ Bloom is Stephen's opposite in many ways: middle-aged rather than young, an advertising agent rather than university graduate, practical rather than intellectual, sensual rather

than spiritual, husband and father, and indeed cat owner, rather than bachelor. Most crucially, Bloom is flexible rather than intransigent. One sign of his adaptability is the number of names by which *Ulysses* refers to him. While Stephen Dedalus is almost always called Stephen and Leopold Bloom most frequently called Bloom, he also appears as Poldy, Henry Flower, Leopoldo, greasabloom, Bloo, Bloowho, Bloowhose, Bloohimwhom, Lionelleopold, Seabloom, Luitpold Blumenduft, Bloom Elijah, old man Leo, and so on. His many names suggest that identity is not fixed but fluid, a work in progress that responds to changing circumstances.

Bloom differs from usual fictional protagonists who take defining action in response to situations of conflict. The central conflict in *Ulysses* is that, on this day, for the first time, Molly will take Hugh "Blazes" Boylan as her lover, in the Blooms' marital bed, no less. Boylan is an embodiment of conventional masculine ideals: rich, handsome, and commanding, with a successful business organizing concerts and publicity. He is roguishly flirtatious, sexually experienced, and ready to take action. Although Bloom does many things over the course of the day (ranging from buying a kidney for breakfast, to helping an acquaintance's widow with her insurance claim, to rescuing Stephen from soldiers and police), his lack of action regarding Molly and Blazes opens up new possibilities. Joyce said that he valued the Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen because he was concerned with "the emancipation of women, which has caused the greatest revolution in our time in the most important relationship there is – that between men and women; the revolt of women against the idea that they are the mere instruments of men."⁵ This transformation was a slow shift away from the traditional asymmetrical relationship in which husbands assumed command of their wives and, supported by the law, possession of their bodies. Molly and Bloom's relationship lacks the former mutually defining roles. Accordingly, it raises questions. What is a man? What is a woman?

Although Bloom distracts himself – "Today. Today. Not think" (172; 8:1063) – over the course

⁴ Frank Budgen, *James Joyce and the Making of "Ulysses"* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1960), 107.

⁵ Arthur Power, *Conversations with James Joyce* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1999), 47.

of the day, he reflects on Molly and Boylan's liaison as possibility, future prospect, present reality, and accomplished deed. His reflections reach into all aspects of the situation, allowing him to explore, to feel, to desire, and to imagine. He wonders about Molly, "Why did she me?" (264; 11:732) and "But how? She must. Keep young" (268; 11:875). In this empathetic and generous way, he understands sexual activity as vital to the flourishing of all women: "If not what becomes of them? Decline, despair. Keeps them young" (273; 11:1087). Bloom's thoughts about the affair are shadowed by the fact that he and Molly have not had full sexual intercourse in the ten years since the death of their son, Rudy, eleven days after his birth. Bloom wonders about his life, "I was happier then. Or was that I? Or am I now I?" (160; 8:608), and about whether he will have another son, "No son. Rudy. Too late now. Or if not? If not? If still?" (273; 11:1067).

Through this non-possessive and open-ended thinking, Bloom is creative. He speculates about the world, often in amusing ways: "Or who was it used to eat the scruff off his own head? Cheapest lunch in town" (167; 8:872–73); "Wouldn't mind being a waiter in a swell hotel. Tips, evening dress, halfnaked ladies. May I tempt you to a little more filleted lemon sole, miss Dubedat? Yes, do bedad. And she did bedad. Huguenot name I expect that" (167; 8:887–90). He wonders about parallax, and the posteriors of Greek statues. He also imagines the experiences of people he sees. Looking at a beggar boy inhaling the fumes from Harrison's bakery, he thinks: "Deaden the gnaw of hunger that way. Pleasure or pain is it?" (150; 8:236–37). Noticing a woman look critically at the shabby dress of a friend, he thinks: "See the eye that woman gave her, passing. Cruel. The unfair sex" (151; 8:269).

Lenahan, who usually occupies himself with mocking and wise-cracking, has something surprisingly insightful to say about Bloom: "He's a cultured allroundman, Bloom is, he said seriously. He's not one of your common or garden ... you know ... There's a touch of the artist about old Bloom" (225; 10:581–83). Bloom's unconventional artistry is related to his sympathetic imagination and to his ability to see beauty in everyday life, despite its demands and indignities. This

ability goes far beyond Lenahan's awareness. We are privy to Bloom's pleasure in the outhouse, "No, just right. So. Ah!" (66; 4:510), a pleasure that is developed in unconventional ways later in the novel. Molly somewhat humorously complains about: "his mad crazy letters my Precious one everything connected with your glorious Body everything underlined that comes from it is a thing of beauty and of joy for ever something he got out of some nonsensical book" (721; 18:1176–78). The nonsensical book is Romantic poet John Keats's 1818 poem *Endymion* which begins: "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever: its loveliness increases." Bloom uses Keats's phrase to refer to Molly's farts and excretions, transient and unlovely in any conventional sense.

Bloom's exploration of nonstandard erotic pleasures led to the banning of *Ulysses* for obscenity. The passage for which the novel was banned was relatively mild. It appeared in the July–August 1920 issue of the *Little Review*, an American journal which had been publishing excerpts of the manuscript since 1918. Following a complaint by the secretary of the New York Society for the Prevention of Vice, a panel of three judges ruled that the novel was obscene according to the Hicklin test: it had the tendency "to deprave and corrupt those whose minds are open to such immoral influences."⁶ In the passage which alarmed the Society, a young woman called Gerty MacDowell leans back to watch fireworks, displaying her underwear, while Bloom masturbates. It was all the more provocative to early readers as Gerty is decked out in blue and white, the colors of the Virgin Mary, connecting her exhibitionism with the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament taking place in the nearby Church. Gerty is an otherwise respectable single woman, described as "in very truth as fair a specimen of winsome Irish girlhood as one could wish to see" (333; 13:80–81). This is an encounter alien to the standard novelistic marriage plot; two strangers express desire, achieve satisfaction, and move on, albeit with some self-recrimination: "What a brute he had been. At it again?" Bloom asks himself (350; 13:745–46). The scene reveals

⁶ https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Regina_v._Hicklin. Accessed December 10, 2020.

his creative erotic interests: rather than standard sexual intercourse, such as Boylan engages in with Molly, this encounter at a distance involves underwear, role-play, and projection.

Ulysses was effectively banned in the United States after the 1921 ruling. It was published by Sylvia Beach's publishing house, Shakespeare and Company in Paris, where it fitted into a tradition of high literature that flouted conventional morals. The final book contains scenes that are far more extreme. However, in 1932 when Random House brought a case to test what was, by then, a ban only in name in the United States, District Judge John M. Woolsey celebrated Joyce's project: "In writing 'Ulysses,' Joyce sought to make a serious experiment in a new, if not wholly novel, literary genre. He takes persons of the lower middle class living in Dublin in 1904 and seeks, not only to describe what they did on a certain day early in June of that year as they went about the city bent on their usual occupations, but also to tell what many of them thought about the while."⁷ Woolsey observed that in representing honestly the thoughts, sensations and memories of characters, the stream of consciousness achieved an effect like a "multiple exposure in a cinema film," which led to the novel's difficulty for readers. In a famous formulation, Woolsey ruled that "whilst in many places the effect of 'Ulysses' on the reader undoubtedly is somewhat emetic, nowhere does it tend to be an aphrodisiac."

In its frankness, *Ulysses* shows the relationship of experience – physical, sexual, material – to the fundamental structures of society. Molly's soliloquy was criticized in the 1933 trial for its sexual explicitness and obscene language, yet her description of Boylan's "tremendous big red brute of a thing" and her account of the "determined vicious look in his eye" give us a candid image of a woman's experience of a certain kind of heterosexuality. Perhaps the most shocking scenes in the novel involve Bloom's hallucinatory encounters in Dublin's red-light district, where he adopts the position of a prostitute and engages in

sadomasochistic gender play with a brothel keeper. The sexual extremes in these scenes not only reflect the subjugation of women in Nighttown but also point to power dynamics and exploitative relations in "respectable" everyday society.

Joyce gave this novel about the pressures, dangers, and pleasures of 1904 Dublin the Latin name of Homer's hero Odysseus, the warrior king who struggles to return home after the ten-year Trojan War. Naming *Ulysses* after the *Odyssey*, one of the greatest adventures of antiquity and a foundational text of Western literature, signals that it participates in a noble lineage of texts that reinterpret Homer's Bronze Age epic, including Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and Virgil's *Aeneid*. Joyce's novel, however, takes a very different form. An epic is a long narrative poem that deals with a nationally or historically foundational moment. Its typical hero is a man of high social status, representative of the values of his society and capable of heroic deeds. As Mikhail Bakhtin writes, "The world of the epic is the national heroic past: it is a world of 'beginnings' and 'peak times' in the national history, a world of fathers and founders of families, a world of 'firsts' and 'bests.'"⁸ Joyce's *Ulysses*, however, is a novel, set on a relatively unremarkable day in the contemporary world; crucially, Joyce recasts the warrior king as an ordinary person. Bloom's valor and courage play out in a modest middle-class setting. Most importantly, the son of a Hungarian Jewish immigrant who committed suicide, Bloom is seen as an outsider by other Dublin men. He is a poor fit for their ways of socializing, wary of their songs of political oppression, and vulnerable to their gossip. His careful ways earn their scorn and suspicion. Most crucially, while Homer's Odysseus takes back his home with violence, putting to death the 108 Ithacan lords who tested his wife's faithfulness and ate up his fortune, Bloom is gentle. Returning to 7 Eccles Street late at night, he contemplates possible responses, while dealing with the conflicting emotions of "Envy, jealousy, abnegation, equanimity" (684; 17:2155).

⁷ <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/FSupp/5/182/2250768/>. Accessed December 10, 2020.

⁸ Mikhail Bakhtin, "Epic and Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination*, ed. Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984), 13.

At a general level, the Homeric parallel suggests that the city is a dangerous environment that must be navigated with skill in order to regain safety and security. Joyce also drew on features from particular episodes in Odysseus's adventures to structure individual chapters, which were accordingly called "episodes" by Joyce: the concerned son Telemachus, the less-than-helpful elder Nestor, the shape-shifting god Proteus, the captivating nymph Calypso, the intoxicated Lotus Eaters, the underworld Hades, the changeable wind-god Aeolus, the giant man-eating Lestrygonians, the (again) man-eating monsters Scylla and Charybdis, the ship-wrecking wandering rocks, the melodiously seductive and (again) man-eating Sirens, the (yet again) man-eating Cyclops, the helpful princess Nausicaa, the undead Oxen of the Sun God, the goddess-witch Circe who turns men into animals, the loyal swineherd Eumaeus, and Ithaca, Odysseus's home kingdom where his wife Penelope awaits him. Joyce stopped short of including the Homeric titles in *Ulysses*, although he made diagrams of the relation of *Ulysses* to the *Odyssey*. These "schemata" follow this introduction, along with Joyce's own description of his interest in Homer.

Joyce later regretted making the Homeric parallels explicit, as they dominated the early reception of the book. T. S. Eliot celebrated Joyce's "mythic method" as a way of imposing order on a chaotic world.⁹ Ezra Pound echoed Eliot, but in a negative mood: the Homeric parallels in his opinion are "mere mechanics, any blockhead can go back and trace them. Joyce had to have a shape on which to order his chaos."¹⁰ Yet, what Eliot and Pound describe as chaos is a world ridding itself of traditional hierarchies and forms of rule. As Joyce resituates the elements of the epic in the evolving world of the early twentieth century, the reimagined elements of Homer's myth do not provide order or answers for readers of *Ulysses*, but raise

questions.¹¹ What do Odysseus's "wisdom and courage," his famous *polytropos*, many turns, a word Homer repeatedly uses to describe him, look like in the modern city?¹² In contrast to the Homeric world of gods and warrior heroes, Joyce's *Ulysses* is an epic in which everyday life is dignified and celebrated. He wrote that it is "at the same time the cycle of the human body as well as a little story of a day (life)" (*L I* 146–47). Thus, while Stephen might articulate many of the intellectual and artistic challenges Joyce faced, the less intellectual and somewhat bumbling Bloom is his central hero, a character whose deep, sensual interest in experience opens up new dimensions of insight.

As we ponder these issues over the course of *Ulysses*, we are ourselves on a difficult journey that parallels that of the characters. Knowing that *Ulysses* reworks some of the structural elements of the epic helps us tackle the text. It begins, for example, in Homeric fashion, *in medias res*, in the middle of things. Buck Mulligan's parody of the Catholic mass in the opening scene is a re-invention of the invocation of the Muses that traditionally began epic poems. Bloom's journey to Glasnevin Cemetery in "Hades" is a version of the *katabasis*, the descent into the underworld to gain wisdom about the journey ahead. Joyce has fun with the convention of the epic catalogue, producing long lists that defy their own logic and feature increasingly unlikely and amusing elements. He also makes free with the convention of the epic digression; if Homer sometimes pauses to provide explanatory backstory to his heroes' experiences, Joyce's novel suggests that much of life is digression.

Immersing himself in the details of the moment and reflecting on the questions that they raise, Bloom is a model for the reader of *Ulysses*. As Bloom processes everything that he encounters, he takes pleasure whenever possible. The reader can find pleasure in the acoustic qualities

⁹ T. S. Eliot, "Ulysses, Order, and Myth."

¹⁰ Ezra Pound, James Joyce, and Forrest Read, *Pound/Joyce: The Letters of Ezra Pound to James Joyce, with Pound's Essays On Joyce* (London: Faber, 1967), 250.

¹¹ Reading the *Odyssey* is recommended but not necessary: in the introductory essays that follow, the contributors point out many of the Homeric references in the episodes and consider their significance.

¹² Budgen, *James Joyce*, 16–17.

of the prose, in the sudden appearance, for example, of a beautiful description of the night sky: “The heaventree of stars hung with humid nightblue fruit” (651; 17:1039). The sensual pleasures of the prose can coincide with its realistic precision and humor. Take, for example, the blonde and red-haired barmaids in the “Sirens” episode, who get a fit of the giggles when they make sly fun of an old man who has ogled them: “Shrill, with deep laughter, after bronze in gold, they urged each each to peal after peal, ringing in changes, bronzegold goldbronze, shrilldeep, to laughter after laughter. And then laughed more. Greasy I knows. Exhausted, breathless their shaken heads they laid, braided and pinnaced by glossycombed, against the counterledge. All flushed (O!), panting, sweating (O!), all breathless” (249; 11:174–79). Perhaps most pleasurable of all is the novel’s democratic urge to give everything a voice; as Bloom observes when listening to a printing press in “Aeolus”: “Sllt. Almost human the way it slt to call attention. Doing its level best to speak. That door too slt creaking, asking to be shut. Everything speaks in its own way. Sllt” (117; 7:175–77).

One of the key challenges facing the reader is that Joyce presents Dublin as the Dubliners of 1904 experience it. We are repeatedly thrust into the middle of things without any of the orientation a more conventional novel would provide. Joyce conveys the characters’ lived and living sense of Dublin through a fine-grained and indirect evocation rather than the bird’s eye view that might seem, misleadingly, objective. Frank Budgen, the English artist who became Joyce’s friend in Zurich, presents us with a Joyce who is deeply invested in a realistic depiction of the city: “‘I want,’ said Joyce, as we were walking down the Universitätstrasse, ‘to give a picture of Dublin so complete that if the city one day suddenly disappeared from the earth it could be reconstructed out of my book.’”¹³ Joyce and Budgen both took refuge in neutral Switzerland during the First World War, at a time when such destruction was newly imaginable; furthermore, by the time of Joyce’s conversation with Budgen, the center of Dublin had been heavily damaged in the Easter

Rising of 1916.¹⁴ Joyce indeed displays an unprecedented faithfulness to the streetscape of 1904 Dublin in *Ulysses*. Reputedly, he could recite the sequence of shops along certain streets, and we see this exactitude in his representation of events. In depicting the trajectories of various Dubliners in the “Wandering Rocks” episode, he used a map and a stopwatch.

We have to be careful, however, not to take Joyce’s words to Budgen literally.¹⁵ Most obviously, there is much that he must leave out in *Ulysses*. As a novel rather than a set of blueprints, *Ulysses* cannot function as a straightforward record. Furthermore, as Stephen’s conversation with the Dean of Studies shows, Joyce did not take the English language to be a transparent medium. *Ulysses* tackles the challenge of the self-articulation of a colonized country. Language is not the only obstacle to Joyce’s attempt to meet this challenge. The Dublin of 1904, like many cities, is not simply a collection of streets and buildings but a locus dense with rival acts of definition. These architectural, linguistic, and historiographical superimpositions, often registering only vaguely in the consciousnesses of its characters, are another reason why *Ulysses* is so difficult for the reader.

Two journeys across Dublin in *Ulysses* allow us to understand some of the historical events that are recalled repeatedly in the novel and that shape its cityscape. These journeys are represented from different perspectives and at different scales: in “Hades,” Bloom travels with three other men in a hired funeral coach from the modest home in Sandymount of the deceased Paddy Dignam to Glasnevin Cemetery in the northern outskirts of the city (see Map 6); and, in “Wandering Rocks,” the viceroy, King Edward VII’s representative in Ireland, processes from the Viceregal Lodge

¹⁴ See Paul Saint-Amour, *Tense Future: Modernism, Total War, Encyclopedic Form* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

¹⁵ Critics have also pointed out discrepancies in the schemata; see Don Gifford and Robert J. Seidman, *“Ulysses” Annotated* (1988; Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008) and Ian Gunn and Clive Hart, *James Joyce’s Dublin: A Topographical Guide to the Dublin of Ulysses* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2004).

¹³ Budgen, *James Joyce*, 69.

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in Phoenix Park in the west of the city to the Royal Dublin Society showgrounds in the affluent, southeastern neighborhood of Ballsbridge to open the Mirus Bazaar (see Map 10). Joyce deliberately altered the facts, shifting the Mirus Bazaar from May 31 to June 16 and providing the viceroy with a retinue in order to turn an unremarkable journey across the city into a display of colonial pomp. He represents the cavalcade at several moments in “Wandering Rocks,” an episode of nineteen vignettes situated at different places around the city, and the array of responses suggests the variety of Dublin political attitudes. In the final vignette, the viceroy is greeted by the “credulous smile” of an elderly woman (242; 10:1195). The possibility that rebellious attitudes might be concealed behind such respectful gestures is illustrated by Stephen’s father, Simon Dedalus, who brings “his hat low” and finds his salutation “graciously returned,” although he is emerging from a public urinal and is, in fact, a fervent nationalist (242; 10:1201).¹⁶ In a different kind of rebellion, Boylan flirts brazenly with the women in the retinue, “offer[ing] to the three ladies the bold admiration of his eyes and the red flower between his lips” (243; 10:1245–46). The city itself responds with a loyalty rendered ambivalent by pollution: “Poddle river hung out in fealty a tongue of liquid sewage” (242; 10:1196–97). The episode closes with the inscrutable rear end of a Dubliner of foreign descent: “the salute of Almidano Artifoni’s sturdy trousers swallowed by a closing door” (244; 10:1281–82).

An earlier response to the viceroy in “Wandering Rocks” gives us a sense of the contradictory ways history can be present in the minds of Dubliners: Thomas Kernan, tea-seller, alcoholic, and member of the Protestant Church of Ireland, celebrates both current English rule and the leaders of eighteenth-century rebellions. In the hope

of catching a glimpse of the viceroy, who has already passed down the quay, he rushes eagerly down Watling Street. Just beforehand, he thinks sympathetically of rebels: “Down there Emmet was hanged, drawn and quartered. Greasy black rope. Dogs licking the blood off the street when the lord lieutenant’s wife drove by in her noddy” (230–31; 10:764–66). Even more elliptically, he thinks: “Somewhere here Lord Edward Fitzgerald escaped from major Sirr. Stables behind Moira house” (231; 10:785–86). Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Robert Emmet were both leaders, with Wolfe Tone, of the Society of United Irishmen, which was influenced by the egalitarian and fraternal values of the French Revolution. A multi-denominational group of Irishmen, they opposed the exclusion from the Irish Parliament of all but a tiny group of Church of Ireland families who had formed the political, professional, and social elite known as the Protestant Ascendancy. The United Irishmen rebelled in 1798, and again in 1803, but were violently suppressed. The Irish Parliament was subsequently persuaded to vote for its own dissolution in the Act of Union, many of the parliamentarians enticed by promises of titles and peerages. Once Ireland was ruled from Westminster, the majority of the ruling class departed for London and Dublin’s economy collapsed. In 1904, Kernan is a shabby genteel leftover of the Ascendancy. He proudly wears a secondhand coat he believes was worn by a “Kildare Street toff.” The republican values of 1798 and 1803 do not feature in his thoughts; instead, he celebrates Fitzgerald’s aristocratic status, “Fine dashing young nobleman. Good stock, of course.” Kernan never expresses such sentiments publicly; we can only find them in the quick turns of his thoughts. He illustrates the complex and contested world of the novel and individuals’ struggles to find status in changing times.

The past hangs over the viceroy too: the cavalcade is shadowed by a double murder at the Viceregal Lodge some twenty years before, an event described with enthusiasm, and some inaccuracy, by newspaper editor Myles Crawford in the “Aeolus” episode. In 1882, the Invincibles gang targeted the Queen’s most senior civil servant in Ireland, Permanent Undersecretary Thomas Henry Burke, but they also stabbed to death Lord Frederick Cavendish, who had just

¹⁶ His passionate support for Charles Stewart Parnell is communicated in his declaration that the ghost of Parnell would torment David Sheehy (1844–1932), who defeated Parnell’s brother in a local election in 1903: “Simon Dedalus said when they put him in parliament that Parnell would come back from the grave and lead him out of the House of Commons by the arm” (157; 8:517–19).

been appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland. Some of the gang members escaped and were rumored to be living in Dublin. In “Eumaeus,” Bloom and Stephen visit a cabman’s shelter run by a man who is thought to be the driver of the Invincibles’ get-away vehicle. When a returned sailor drinking next to them talks enthusiastically of cold steel and the Invincibles’ knives, Bloom and Stephen look guardedly at the shelter keeper’s “inscrutable face,” which the garrulous narrator describes as “really a work of art, a perfect study in itself, beggaring description, conveyed the impression that he didn’t understand one jot of what was going on. Funny, very” (584; 16:598–600). History thus presents itself opaquely even to the Dubliners of 1904.

The cavalcade passes by the impressive Palladian architecture through which the Protestant Ascendancy expressed its power: the Four Courts, Grattan Bridge (named after Henry Grattan, who won full legislative independence for the Irish Parliament in 1782), Trinity College, educational institution for the Protestant elite, and the Houses of Parliament that following the Act of Union housed the Bank of Ireland. What is now known as Georgian Dublin was constructed in a massive program of urban redevelopment in the eighteenth century, funded by wealth extracted from a countryside farmed mainly by disenfranchised Catholic tenants.¹⁷ This program was led by the Duke of Ormond, whose name was given to one of the Liffey quays and the restaurant-bar where Bloom hears Simon Dedalus sing in “Sirens.” The Wide Streets Commission reshaped the center of the city, demolishing tight medieval streets to establish impressive avenues, along some of which Bloom walks in the “Lestrygonians” episode: Sackville Street (now O’Connell Street), Westmoreland Street, College Street (the location of Trinity and the Bank of Ireland), and Kildare Street.

Sackville Street features in the contrasting journey Bloom takes across Dublin to Glasnevin Cemetery, a journey which features traces of a different set of political contestations. The fu-

neral coach travels from Sandymount through the impoverished neighborhood of Irishtown (named after a fifteenth-century settlement outside the walls of the English-held Pale), before finding its way to the center of the city and traveling north up Sackville Street. At the southern end of the street, the coach passes by a monument to Daniel O’Connell, after whom the street is now named. A wealthy Catholic landowner, O’Connell worked with the Catholic Church to organize peaceful mass demonstrations to campaign for the repeal of the Act of Union and for the extension of Catholics’ voting and property rights, as well as for their right to sit as elected officials in Westminster. The massive scale of these “monster meetings” of up to a million people is suggested by the narrator’s description of the “hugecloaked Liberator’s form” (90; 6:249). O’Connell’s campaign was ended in 1843 by his refusal of violent confrontation with military forces, his imprisonment on charges of conspiracy, subsequently dropped, and the Great Famine, which decimated the Irish population.

Bloom notes the poignant beginnings of a memorial to another failed Irish leader at the northern end of Sackville Street: “Foundation stone for Parnell. Breakdown. Heart” (92; 6:320). Charles Stewart Parnell skillfully manipulated parliamentary procedure in the hung Westminster parliament of 1885–89 to push Home Rule to the top of Prime Minister William Gladstone’s agenda. His parliamentary agitation led to a number of Land Acts that reformed the Irish land system, banning exorbitant rents and unfair evictions as well as making loans available to tenants to buy their farms from landlords. In 1889, however, at the brink of Home Rule legislation, the estranged husband of Katharine “Kitty” O’Shea filed for divorce, making public the fact that Parnell had lived with Katharine and fathered three of her children. Amid public outcry, driven largely by the Catholic and Anglican Churches, Gladstone was forced to repudiate Parnell, whose Irish Parliamentary Party split and was subsequently crippled. This failure and Parnell’s death two years later, at the age of forty-five, are signaled by the sorrowful words that Bloom associates with the monument and symbolized by its inter-

¹⁷ This period spanned approximately from the beginning of the reign of George I in 1714 to the death of George IV in 1830.

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rupted beginnings. Bloom's elliptical thought, "Breakdown. Heart", refers to both the end of Parnell's life and the collapse of a political movement.

Towering over Sackville Street in 1904 was the 120-foot tall Nelson's Pillar, erected in 1805 to celebrate Admiral Nelson's defeat of Napoleon in the Battle of Trafalgar. Bloom registers its role as a tourist attraction as he hears the hawkers cry: "Eight plums a penny!"¹⁸ He notes the underdevelopment of the east side of the street and thinks of the poor people, "chummies and slaveys," chimney sweeps' boys and maids of all work, who walk under the statue of Father Theobald Mathew, the founder of an abstinence society in the nineteenth century (92; 6:319). Moving northward through the city, the carriage passes through areas that were cast into poverty after the Act of Union, with tenements in the former palatial homes of the Ascendancy. We glimpse these tenements several times in *Ulysses*: "Circe" takes place in Monto, the destitute red-light district around Mabbot Street (now James Joyce Street). Kitty Ricketts, who works in Bella Cohen's brothel, names Constitution Hill as the place of her undoing, a street in the once highly fashionable Henrietta Street area. In Glasnevin Cemetery, Bloom ponders the dead, both the great and the obscure. He is saved from the past by his characteristic immersion in the visceral experience of living, as his thoughts turn to "Warm beds: warm fullblooded life" (110; 6:1005).

Stephen offers a powerful account of the weight of history on the present. In a conversation with the headmaster of a private school that reprises his exchange with the Dean of Studies in *A Portrait*, he considers the long history of sectarian violence in Ireland. Deasy calls Stephen a Fenian, referring to radical republicans and members of the secret society, the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), that arose in the 1850s after the Famine. Abandoning the parliamentary means advocated by Parnell and O'Connell, the IRB mounted the failed 1867 Rising. Deasy, partly modeled on the Ulster Scot headmaster

for whom Joyce worked in early 1904, praises the Protestant Unionist Orange Lodges that were established in the North of Ireland in the 1790s. "You Fenians forget some things," he declares. But Stephen thinks of murders committed by members of the lodges, "The lodge of Diamond in Armagh the splendid behung with corpses of papishes" (31; 2:273–74); he thinks of the repression of Catholics that followed the victory of the Protestant William III over the Catholic James II at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, the sequence of plantations and penal laws that completed the colonization of Ireland begun under Elizabeth I. History, Stephen remarks, "is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake" (34; 2:377).

While teaching the schoolboys, Stephen ponders Aristotle's concept of potential being and thinks of historical figures as enslaved by time: "Time has branded them and fettered they are lodged in the room of the infinite possibilities they have ousted. But can those have been possible seeing that they never were? Or was that only possible which came to pass? Weave, weaver of the wind" (25; 2:49–53). We might consider *Ulysses*' unusual and challenging narrative forms as the novel's attempts to "weave" such unrealized potential. The "Cyclops" episode's key figure is the citizen, a zealous nationalist, who details atrocities of English rule and calls for an Ireland purged of all but those of Gaelic descent. Yet, the account of events in the pub where the citizen holds forth is interrupted by parodic passages. In contrast to the citizen's simple sense of Irish identity, these hyperbolic images of ancient Irish nobility often feature a blending of races. When the narrator describes the citizen as a fiercely militant Irishman, a parody breaks in with a gallery of Irish heroes that stretches from nineteenth-century Irish rebels, to High Kings of Ireland, to mythical Celtic heroes and on to figures as far-flung as Christopher Columbus and the Queen of Sheba. If the citizen describes a history of loss, the parodies picture a time of superabundance and improbable possibilities and in doing so open up new meanings for Irishness.

These parodies are part of Joyce's response to the Celtic past detailed by later nineteenth-century (often Anglo-Irish) antiquarians. This reconstructed Gaelic heritage of Neolithic and

¹⁸ Stephen is staying in one of several Martello towers constructed along the Dublin coast to ward against invasion by Napoleon by sea.