

# Interior monologue in ulysses

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Despite the various parallels and connections between Homer's *Odyssey* and Jockey's *Ulysses*, it is Jockey's determination and arrangement of his novel that sets it apart from Homer's mythological poem. Dissimilar to Homer's *Odyssey*, *Ulysses* is set in the city of Dublin on the 16th of June 1904. For Joyce, this particular date held a great amount of sentimental value as it was the day of his first date with his future wife thus questioning the idea of Joyce injecting a hint of romanticism by commemorating that particular date into a novel that has been described as vulgar and a work of blasphemy.

*Ulysses* develops over the space of twenty-four hours and despite the novel's small time frame the countless events and occurrences that the characters encounter are described in-depth and often quite humorously. Jockey's main intentions for his novel were to make it, in his opinion, as realistic as possible, 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 (*A Portrait of The Artist As A Young Man*, p. 0). To emphasize the element of realism Joyce described the characters as visiting authentic Dublin landmarks and establishments such as Dad Byre's pub and a Marcello Tower in Sandstone, Dublin. It is through Jockey's element of realism, his overall structure and the multiple modes of writing of his novel that suggests *Ulysses* is a significant conspicuous piece of modernist literature in its own right.

In *Ulysses* Joyce discards the traditionalist convention of maintaining a narrative throughout the entirety of his novel by persistently introducing other styles of writing episode by episode. Joyce continuously alters the narrator and the protagonist of the novel along with the style of how each

chapter is written switching from a conventional narrative of maintaining one solitary hero or protagonist to swapping around the central characters throughout several episodes. Furthermore, throughout each individual episode numerous themes are introduced such as death, hysterics and sexual desire. As the novel progresses and the protagonists and methods of writing change the characters' accounts of what has appeared to be everyday mundane actions, seen in the opening episodes, become more detailed and complex as they interact more with the inhabitants of Dublin and their surroundings. Within the opening episode Telemachus it would appear that the novel is following the traditional narrative writing regime as on first impressions what appears to be the protagonist of the novel, Stephen Dedalus is introduced.

Stephen is a familiar character as he is depicted as the aging and maturing central character in Joyce's *A Portrait of The Artist as a Young Man*. Through the opening chapters of *Ulysses* it would seem to be following the same routine as Joyce's previous work concerning the 1904 connector AT Stephen as *Ulysses* tells Stephen's every day, Toulouse octagons sun as eating breakfast and shaving, 'He laid the brush aside and, laughing with delight... Began to shave with care', (p. 1). The narrative throughout Telemachus conventionally follows *A Portrait of The Artist as a Young Man* as Joyce is associating his narrative with internal monologue depicting Stephen's inner voice and stream of consciousness as he performs everyday tasks. This is further reinforced in Nestor where Stephen is undertaking his role as a teacher. Joyce is continuing his narrative through Stephen's internal monologue but here a different theme is introduced.

In the previous episode the reader sees Stephen and his friend Buck Mulligan undergo their morning routine but it is in Nester where Joyce introduces a catechist style of writing through Stephen teaching his class History and English declaring that history is, 'a nightmare from which I am trying to awake', (p. 27) to which the school headmaster Mr. Deasy responds, 'all human history moves towards one great goal, the manifestation of God', (p. 7) which ultimately refers to Stephen's endless search for a father in a religious and spiritual sense noticeably mirrored with Homer's poem. Joyce remains within the inner voice consciousness that has previously been presented in the introductory episodes but it is in Calypso where the narrative is altered as an entirely different type of consciousness is presented through the character Leopold Bloom. Joyce depicts Bloom as a modernized bourgeois Odysseus developed and adapted to enhance his twentieth century revolutionary novel.

Opposing to episodes such as Telemachus and Nestor and characters such as Stephen and Buck, it is in Calypso where Joyce presents the reader with a more detailed account of a particular character even going to the extent of describing his innate love for food; 'Mr. Leopold Bloom ate with relish the inner organs of beasts and fowls. He liked thick giblet soup, nutty gizzards, a stuffed roast heart, liver slices fried with crust crumbs, fried hanchos' roes.

Most of all he liked grilled mutton kidneys which gave to his palate a fine tang of faintly scented urine.' (p. 40). It is Joyce's description of Bloom's excessive appetite and love for food that initiates the awareness that Joyce is purposely making Bloom's gluttony undeniably apparent which is the first

indication that the character of Bloom is to be vulgar and discourteous which further opposes Jockey's descriptions and details illustrated in the preceding episodes.

As Bloom's detailed characterization continues he becomes increasingly uncouth, 'By word and deed he frankly encouraged a nocturnal strumpet to deposit fecal and other matter in an unsanitary outhouse attached to empty premises', (p. 369). Joyce differs from his previous style of writing by shifting the subjects to which his characters embrace, the respectable characteristics of Stephen observed and depicted in earlier episodes are disregarded as he introduces the character of Bloom who is described as a 'perverted Jew, (p. 52) and the contrasting characters sexual nature and desire remain prominent throughout the course of the novel, the dark tangled curls of his bush floating, floating hair of the stream around the limp father of thousands, a languid floating flower', (p. 3). Bloom's narrative is similar to that of Stephens in the sense that it illustrates every day actions and events in a mundane manner yet it is Bloom's account that involves complex and in-depth detail.

Furthermore, it is through the altered narrative presenting Bloom's consciousness opposed to that of Stephens and through the rather vulgar connector AT Bloom, Joyce is able to tackle matters not Tormenter addressed such as bodily functions and sexual desires. Despite Bloom's vulgarity and his erotic thoughts and desires and the fact that he lacks the conventional heartsickness of Stephen it becomes evident that Bloom does have a high level of moral standing.

When Bloom and Stephen are wandering through the streets of Bloom becomes a provisional father figure to Stephen during his search for a higher being as Bloom's description of Stephen, 'I know him. He's a gentleman, a poet' (pg. 393) validates the respect and admiration the two men have for each other. Additionally, when his wife Molly is revealed as an adulterer he remains faithful and loyal to their marriage. Molly Bloom is an additional character Joyce uses to depict another style of narration. Her soliloquy is illustrated in Penelope, the final episode of Joyce's *Ulysses*.

Dissimilar to her husband and Stephen being parallel to Homer's mythological Greek characters, ironically Molly opposes the faithful and devoted character of Penelope supposedly her twentieth century counterpart. Throughout Joyce's novel it is Bloom that provides the main depiction of the character of Molly through his thoughts and opinions towards her ultimately giving the reader her characterization from a male point of view, Penelope is the first encounter where Molly and Bloom's relationship is viewed from her perspective.

Joyce stylizes Molly's interior monologue described throughout the final eighteenth episode entirely different to those observed in the preceding episodes. Joyce composes Molly's lamentation out of eight extensive elongated sentences with barely any punctuation enabling the reader to become enthralled by her intense and exasperated thoughts revealing yet another varying form of Joyce's writing style; Yes... Was a Flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusia girls used or shall I wear a red yes and how he kissed me under the Moorish wall and I

thought well as well him as another and then I asked him with y eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will yes. ' (pg. 25) Joyce's style of writing in the final episode distinctively differs from other episodes in Ulysses as it offers an eagerly anticipated understanding of Molly's sentiments. During her intense dialogue she continuously alternates from one subject to another and the lack of punctuation powerfully accentuates her perception and awareness of her own character flaws. Molly constantly repeats, begins and ends with the word, 'yes' to which Joyce describes as the female word' ultimately giving a character that has not held her own narrative throughout the novel, but has been portrayed by other characters, the closing statement in Ulysses.

At first glance the opening pages of Ulysses depict a false allusion of what is to succeed throughout the remaining pages of Joyce's paramount novel. Through what appears to be the initial protagonist Stephen's interior monologue illustrating his routine and monotonous every day actions whilst wandering in and around the City of Dublin in search of a divine being, abruptly changes with Joyce's sudden introduction of the character of Leopold Bloom.

The central character shifts from straight-laced Stephen to the crude and comical Bloom. Joyce's adjustment to Bloom incorporates an entirely different style and mode of writing for he dives into Bloom's conversational tongue Nils In-patent Ana meticulous ascription AT Nils credentials, social

class and background. In a further change of narration Molly Bloom is appointed her own individual episode comprised of a soliloquy presented exclusively by herself exhibiting Jockey's attitude towards feminism and the female mind.

It is through Jockey's multiple styles of writing and his modern interpretation of Homer's *Odyssey* and the insertion of realism that *Ulysses* is viewed as one of the greatest works of modern literature and a landmark piece of avian-garden Irish writing due to its radical subjects and incidences, specifically the descriptions of bodily functions, explicit sexual encounters and Jockey's use of profanity. The concept of *Ulysses* being a profound work of literature is further reinforced by Jockey's revolt against the traditional forms of narrative prose which had been the mainstream style of writing during the literary world throughout Jockey's era.

Choosing to break free from the traditionalist narrative approach Joyce presents an innovative and contemporary style of writing as each episode of the somewhat taboo novel reveals a different account of what Joyce himself describes as everyday Irish life depicted through multiple styles. It is through his multiple styles of writing demonstrated entirely differently throughout each episode that make *Ulysses* surpass other works of its kind. James Jockey's *A Portrait of The Artist As A Young Man*, Bloom, Harold. New York: Chelsea House, 1988. *Ulysses*, Joyce, J. The Echo Library 2009. Lecture and seminar notes have also been used.