

Episode 15: Circe

Michael Donovan
Alex Assaly
Kimberly Rodda
Michael Sparrow

Michael Donovan

The Circe Phantasmagoria

Circe, "Circe"

- Odysseus: Bloom
- Odysseus' s Enthralled Men: Stephen
- Hermes Convention: Bloom' s Conscience
 - Moly: Potato Fetish
- Circe: Mrs. Bella Cohen
- Stag and Other Familiars: Prostitutes

Circe, "Circe"

- Odysseus: Bloom + Stephen
- Odysseus' s Enthralled Men: Bloom + Stephen
- Hermes Convention: Bloom' s Conscience
 - Moly: Potato Fetish + Bloom' s Parental Responsibility for Stephen
- Circe (Character): Mrs. Bella Cohen + Brothel Prostitutes
 - Bloom' s Masochism/ Sexual Guilt + Circe Episode's Phantasmagoria
- Stag/Gazelle and Other Circe Familiars: Cuckold Antlers + Zoe
 - Bloom' s Sexual Desires and Wish Fulfillment

- Odysseus: Bloom + Stephen
 - Bloom' s triumph over nymph: pg. 451
 - Bloom' s triumph over "Bello"; pg. 452
 - Return of the potato talisman: pg. 453
 - Bloom tending to Stephen (money, general welfare): pg. 455, 456, 496
 - Stephen' s offstage confrontation with Buck Mulligan: pg. 459, 495
 - "Hurt my hand somewhere" - Stephen, pg. 495
 - "Walking to Sandycowe is out of the question. And even supposing you did you won' t get in after what occurred at Westland Row station." - Bloom, pg. 506
 - Stephen' s physical action a "slaying the suitors" parallel, though he initiates, rather than follows (Odysseus or Hamlet, and not Telemachus, figure)
- Odysseus' s Enthralled Men: Bloom + Stephen
 - Bloom Unmanned by "Bello" (Circe Character): pg. 432, 433
 - Bloom turned into a meal, a "beast" and then, a whore: pg. 434, 435, 437
 - Bloom loses potato fetish (moly): pg. 389
 - Stephen Taken Advantage of by Circe Influence (money): pg. 454
 - Given: 1 pound bank note + 1 half sovereign + two crowns = 40 s
 - Cost: 3 whores at 10 s each (pg. 454) = 30 s

- Hermes Convention :
 - Bloom' s Conscience: pg. 387
- Moly (Ward Against Circe):
 - Potato Fetish: pg. 453
 - Taken away: pg. 389
 - Bloom' s Sense of Parental Responsibility for Stephen
 - "Lost cattle" pg. 436
 - Ruddy figure: pg. 497
- Circe (Character):
 - Mrs. Bella Cohen + Zoe: emasculating figure (reality) pg. 429-430
 - Bloom' s Masochism/ Sexual Guilt: "Bello" punishment (pg. 433-436) the nymph (pg. 445, 451)
 - "Circe" Phantasmagoria: the surreal, fantastic and illusory nature of the "Circe" episode is both transformative and alluring, confusing and disorienting (emasculating).
- Stag/Gazelle and Other Circe Familiars :
 - Zoe: "I never loved a dear gazelle..." - Bloom, pg. 389
 - Cuckold Antlers (brothel' s entrance): pg. 409
 - Bloom' s Sexual Desires: manifesting in multiple shapes and forms (nymph, himself as a horse/woman)

Blurring Reality and Phantasmagoria

- Reality:
 - I) Stephen, Lynch and Bloom enter Nighttown; Bloom buys meat and feeds stray.
 - II) Bloom converses with Zoe, potato talisman surrendered.
 - III) Bloom enters brothel with Zoe; Stephen, Lynch, Florry and Kitty inside.
 - IV) Bella Cohen joins.
 - V) Money exchanged and payment corrected.
 - VI) Stephen dancing, Parisian impressions, reaction to apparition/damages chandelier, confrontation with soldiers, Stephen hit, Corny Kelleher and the Watch
 - VII) Stephen conscious and unconscious, Bloom watches over

Blurring Reality and Phantasmagoria

- Phantasmagoria:
 - I) "The Gaelic League Spy" (B), Rudolph and Marion Bloom (B), Gerry MacDowell (B), Mrs. Breen (B), Tom and Sam, et al (B)
 - II) The Watch (B), Judicial Circus (B)
 - III) Lord Mayor (B), Messiah and Martyr (B)
 - IV) Whore's Virginity (B), Lipoti Virag (B), Philip Drunk and Philip Sober (S), Cardinal Dedalus (S)
 - V) The Fan (B), Bello and Feminized Bloom (B), Horse-like Bloom (B), Nymph (B)
 - VI) Lenehan and Boylan cuckolding Bloom (B), Molly (B), Father Dolan and Don John Conmee (S), Shakespeare (S), Buck Mulligan (S), Stephen's Emaciated Mother (S), Hell (S), War in Dublin (S), Edward VII (S), Crucifixion (S), Black Mass (S)
 - VII) Rudy (B)

Blurring Reality and Phantasmagoria

- Mother Apparition:
 - The only instance of a physically manifesting and interactive fantasy in "Circe", the apparition having a physical, as well as psychological, effect on Stephen. The subsequent damage to the brothel chandelier demonstrates the shared actualization of the "Circe" phantasmagoria on the text's reality.
 - "Look! He's white."
[...]
"Shite!"
[...]
"What!"
[...]
"Non serviam!" (475).

Blurring Reality and Phantasmagoria

- "Motifs are collected elsewhere in [Ulysses]... tracing them to their sources we may discover the shape of the emotional field that is collecting them." The... externalizing of motifs as tableaux, suitably costumed and equipped with lines to speak... animated by new and phantasmagoric life." (Kenner 355).
 - The use of parenthesis, personification and costuming
 - "Circe" Phantasmagoria are the Personified Apparitions of Stephen and Bloom's Guilt and Desire

Alex Assaly

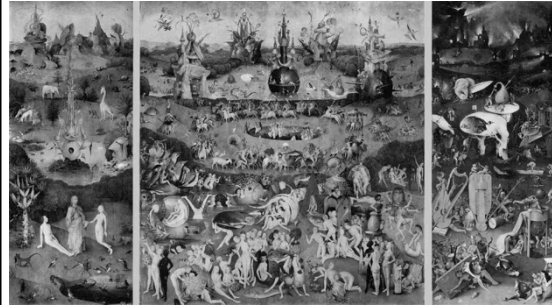
Bloom's fantasies and the descent-ascent paradigm

Bloom's Fantasies

- | Hugh Kenner | Michael Groden |
|--|--|
| ○ 1) Bloom's recent sexual guilts. Father, Mother, Molly, Mrs Breen | ○ 1) accusations: father, Molly, Mrs Breen (15:212-576) |
| ○ 2) Bloom's deeper sexual guilt. Mary Driscoll. The Trial. The Noble ladies | ○ 2) masochism: more accusations, trial (15:676-1278) |
| ○ 3) Bloom as Lord Mayor, Messiah, Martyr | ○ 3) political career (15:1355-1956) |
| ○ 4) Bloom's grandfather. Sexual knowingness. | ○ 4) Lipoti Virag (grandfather) (15:2299-2639) |
| ○ 5) Bloom's sexual guilt (youth). Change of Sex. | ○ 5) Bella/Bello, nymph (15:2750-3479) |
| ○ 6) Bloom as cuckold. Boylan and Molly. Shakespeare | ○ 6) Boylan (15:3726-3863) |
| ○ 7) The transformation: Stephen into Rudy | ○ 7) Bloom's final "vision" of Stephen at the end (15:4955-67) |

Northrop Frye and the Descent-Ascent Paradigm

- "there are therefore four primary narrative movements in literature. These are, first, the descent from a higher world; second, the descent to a lower world; third, the ascent from a lower world; and, fourth, the ascent to a higher world." (Secular Scripture 97)
- "I went up to the beautiful bed of Circe, and besought her by her knees; and the goddess heard my voice, and I spoke, and addressed her with winged words: " 'Circe, fulfill for me the promise which thou gavest to send me home; for my spirit is now eager to be gone, and the spirit of my comrades, who make my heart to pine, as they sit about me mourning, whensoever thou haply art not at hand.' "So I spoke, and the beautiful goddess straightway made answer: 'Son of Laertes, sprung from Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, abide ye now no longer in my house against your will; but you must first complete another journey, and come to the house of Hades and dread Persephone, to seek soothsaying of the spirit of Theban Teiresias, the blind seer, whose mind abides steadfast. To him even in death Persephone has granted reason, that he alone should have understanding; but the others flit about as shadows.'" (The Odyssey 10. 475-500)



Hieronymus Bosch - Garden of Earthly Delights

Physical Descent

- "On the lower reaches of descent we find the night world, often a dark and labyrinthine world of caves and shadows where the forest has turned subterranean, and where we are surrounded by the shapes of animals" (Secular Scripture 111)
- Rudolph: What you making down this place? Have you no soul? (Ulysses 357.259)

Psychological Descent - Bloom's Psyche

Hugh Kenner

Michael Groden

- | | |
|--|--|
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Kimberly Rodda

Dedalus' fantasies

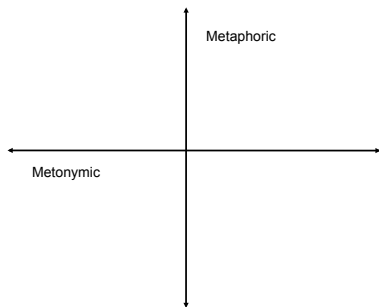
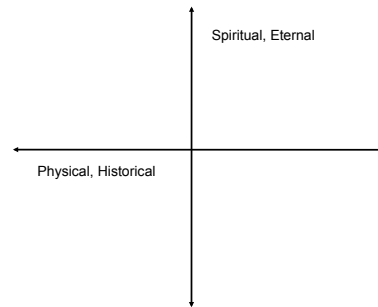
Gnosticism

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| ○ Matter = Evil/Sinful | Soul = Good |
| ○ Physical | Metaphysical/Divine |
| ○ Carnal | Spiritual |
| ○ Body | Intellect |
| ○ World | Heaven |

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- "The soul is born, he said vaguely, first in those moments I told you of. It has a slow and dark birth, more mysterious than the birth of the body. When the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from its flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. **I shall try to fly by those nets.**" *Portrait*, 171 (Chapter 5)

Joyce's Schemas

Fall 1921

- Art: Magic
- Organ: Locomotor Apparatus
- Colour: None
- Symbol: Whore
- Technique: Hallucination

Fall 1920

- Art: Dance
- Sense/Meaning: The Man-Hating Organ
- Colour: Violet
- Symbol: Personification, Pantheism, Magic, Poison, Antidote, Reel
- Technique: Exploding Vision

"Greek tragedy, in Nietzsche's view, grants us a glimpse of a 'primordial unity' that predates individualism"

872, Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism

Michael Sparrow

The Dionysian and the Apollonian

The Dionysian and the Apollonian Binary

- We will have achieved much for scientific study of aesthetics when we come, not merely to a logical understanding, but also to the certain and immediate apprehension of the fact that the further development of art is bound up with the duality of the *Apollonian* and the *Dionysian*, just as reproduction similarly depends upon the duality of the sexes, their continuing strife and only periodically occurring reconciliation.

Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy

Focalization

- The type of narration, the mode of narration, and, occasionally, the narrator are paradigmatic examples of what I consider as basic symbolic forming tools in literary art: you apply one of them, it makes a semiotic difference; you apply one of them and submit it to significant deviations, it makes yet another semiotic difference

Bundgaard, 3

MEANS OF MEANING
MAKING
IN LITERARY ART
FOCALIZATION, MODE
OF NARRATION, AND
GRANULARITY

Bloom's Vision

- As a means for the preservation of the individual, the intellect shows its greatest strengths in dissimulation... This art of dissimulation reaches its peak in humankind, where deception, flattery, lying and cheating, speaking behind the backs of others, keeping up appearances, living in borrowed finery, wearing masks, the drapery of convention, play-acting for the benefit of others and oneself. In short, the constant fluttering of human beings around the one flame of vanity is so much the rule and the law that there is virtually nothing which defies understanding so much as the fact that an honest and pure drive towards truth should ever have emerged in them.

Nietzsche, 875, On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense

- Bloom's search through Night town and the culmination of the trial put Bloom at odds with the modality of his expectations of himself and expectations he perceives from others.
- Trial pg 384-385

Stephen's Vision

- Stephen's visions are full of music and stunning visuals based in the imagery of Catholicism
- Stephen's imagination takes its cues from Cissy and theatrically inflates the situation at the moment of imminent impact by focusing upon it the traditional imagery and literary paraphernalia of tragedy and cataclysm; brimstone fires, clashing armies, darkness, earthquake and, in farcical contrasts the hysterical fright of society ladies who lift their skirts above their heads. The flow of epic conflict, of personal embarrassment and cosmic disaster is added to the crisis moment.
- **186 The New Bloom's Day Book**

Bloom//Apollo Stephen//Dionysus



- "It is odd that the intellect can produce this effect, since it is nothing other than an aid supplied to the most unfortunate, most delicate and most transient of beings so as to detain them for a minute within existence otherwise without this supplement, they would have ever reason to flee existence..."

Nietzsche, On Truth and Lying..., 875

- A person with artistic sensibility relates to the reality of dream in the same way as a philosopher relates to the reality of existence: he attends to it closely and with pleasure, using these images to interpret life, and practicing for life with the help of these events.

Nietzsche, Birth of Tragedy, 885

Discussions

- 1) Do you think Bloom learns anything from his fantasies?
- 2) Does Stephen's character have the potential to make a transformation in light of Joyce's statement?
- 3) Do you think Joyce's choice to use drama is successful?

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