

James Joyce's *Ulysses*

**Episodes 1-3:
"Telemachus," "Nestor," "Proteus"**

Michael Groden - English 454F

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Ulysses

real day (June 16, 1904)

real city (Dublin)

fictional world superimposed on it

- characters and real city

- modern characters and *Odyssey*

The Odyssey

"Mr. Joyce's parallel use of the *Odyssey* has a great importance. It has the importance of a scientific discovery. . . . In manipulating a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity, Mr. Joyce is pursuing a method which others must pursue after him. . . . It is simply a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history." T.S. Eliot in 1923

"These [Homeric] correspondences are part of Joyce's mediaevalism and are chiefly his own affair, a scaffold, a means of construction, justified by the result, and justifiable by it only." Ezra Pound in 1922

Telemachus 1) Stephen-Mulligan

gloomy artist + mocker

Odyssey: Penelope's suitors
question of characters' freedom

key

usurper

Telemachus 2) mother-father

mother's death (emotional)

"missing" father (intellectual)

Hamlet

Jesus + Catholic church & theology

Odyssey

Telemachus 3) Haines-England

Ireland-England

politics

postcolonial

"the cracked lookingglass of a
servant" (1:146)

history

"fall into the hands of German jews"
(1:667)

Telemachus - Web questions

- 1) parallels with *The Odyssey*
- 2) father - mother
- 3) "history is to blame"
- 4) narrative style: "sternly," "briskly," etc.
- 5) examples of precise style; Budgen quote
- 6) anti-Semitism
- 7) *liliata rutilantium*

Nestor

history
mother (note 2:139-50)
Deasy: money, order, horses, wisdom
Nestor in *Odyssey*: master of horses

"History . . . is a nightmare from which I
am trying to awake" (2:377)
God: "A shout in the street" (2:386)

Nestor - Web questions

- 1) history
- 2) Deasy as "wise man"

Proteus

- 1) nature of Stephen's thoughts - his dilemma as he sees it
- 2) relationship to Proteus
- 3) sea, drowning, mother, father
- 4) Joyce to Frank Budgen: "I haven't let this young man off very lightly, have I?"
- 4) example: 3:310-30

Proteus - Web questions

- 1) Proteus parallel
- 2) sea: birth (mothers), but also death and drowning
- 3) fathers
- 4) drowning: earlier mentions
- 5) "Signatures of all things I am here to read." (3:2)
- 6) Stephen's poem (3:390-407)
- 7) looking over shoulder at end

Proteus: Stephen's poem (3:390-407)

see 7:522-25 (p. 109):

On swift sail flaming
From storm and south
He comes, pale vampire,
Mouth to my mouth.

compare "My Grief on the Sea," Irish poem
translated by Douglas Hyde (1895):

And my love came behind me --
He came from the South;
His breast to my bosom,
His mouth to my mouth.