

### Overview

- The Basics – Darcy
- Themes – Richard
- A Cosmological Interpretation of Joyce's Schema- Melissa
- The Role of Dialogical Narration in Ithaca.- Shamus

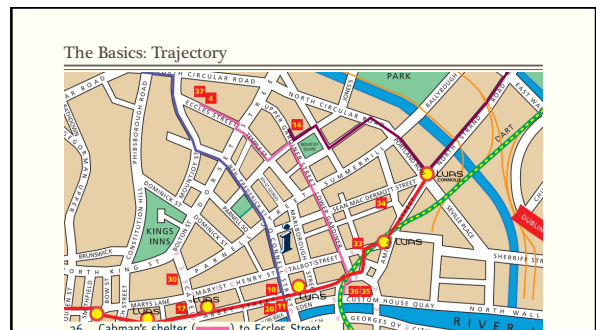
### The Basics

**Time:** 2:00am

**Characters Involved:** Bloom, Stephen, and Molly

**Starting Location:** The Cabmen's Shelter

**End Location:** Molly and Leopold Bloom's House at 7 Eccles St.



### The Basics: Plot Summary

- Bloom and Stephen walk from Cabmen's shelter to 7 Eccles Street
- Along the way, they discuss various topics.
- Bloom recalls past conversations with various Dubliners.
- Bloom thinks that the more experienced an individual becomes, the less proficient in interpersonal relations he becomes.
- Arriving at home, Bloom realizes that he has forgotten his keys in the pants he wore the previous day.

### The Basics: Plot summary

To enter or not to enter. To knock or not to knock. (81)


Bloom's decision? (82)

Bloom "climbed over the area railings, [...]grasped two points at the lower union of rails and stiles, lowered his body [...] to within two feet ten inches of the area pavement, and allowed his body to move freely in space, [...] crouching in preparation for the impact of the fall." (83-89)

The Basics: Plot summary


"Is it possible for an ordinary person to climb over the area railings of no 7 Eccles street, either from the path or the steps, lower himself from the lowest part of the railings till his feet are within 2 feet or 3 of the ground and drop unhurt."

(letter from Joyce to his aunt, Mrs. William Murray, in Dublin, 2 November 1921, *Letters 1:175, Selected Letters*, p. 286)




The Basics: Plot Summary

- The narrator gives Bloom's body size in detail.
- Bloom's height: Five feet nine inches and a half (86)
- Bloom's weight: 11 stone and 4 pounds. (91)
- Same dimensions as Joyce's friend John Francis Byrnes
- Original manuscript lists Bloom as weighing 10 stone 4 pounds.



The Basics: Plot Summary

- Bloom enters house, lights candle, takes off boots
- Stephen enters, Bloom makes fire.
- Stephen recalls other fires he's seen.
- Bloom puts water in kettle.
- Trajectory of water is listed in great detail. (164-184)
- All of the reasons that Bloom loves water are listed. (185-228)
- Reader becomes exhausted.




"I am writing *Ithaca* in the form of a mathematical catechism. All events are resolved into their cosmic physical, psychical etc. equivalents, e.g. Bloom jumping down the area, drawing water from the tap, the micturition in the garden, the cone of incense, lighted candle and statue so that 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."

*(letter from Joyce to Frank Budgen, 28 February 1921, Letters 1:183-84, Selected Letters, p. 286)*


The Basics: Plot Summary

- Bloom puts kettle over fire and washes his hands with the lemon soap.
- Stephen does not wash hands. Suffers from hydrophobia.
- Scientific description of water boiling.
- Bloom makes Cocoa.
- Bloom notices Blazes Boylan's two betting tickets.
- Bloom pours cocoa, gives his favourite cup to Stephen.
- Bloom and Stephen sit drinking cocoa whilst discussing various subjects.



The Basics: Plot Summary

- Bloom and Stephen disclose very personal information to each other.
- Bloom asks Stephen to stay the night.
- Bloom imagines how great it would be to have Stephen live there.
- Stephen declines offer.
- Bloom returns money to Stephen, they make future plans.
- Bloom steps outside with Stephen.
- Bloom shares his great knowledge of astronomy with Stephen

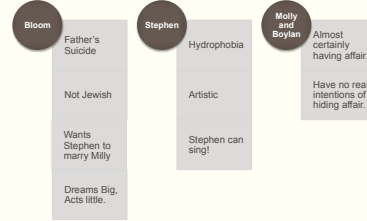


The Basics: Plot Summary

- Bloom and Stephen look through window and see oil lamp.
- Stephen and Bloom urinate in the Garden.
- Bloom opens gate for Stephen to leave.
- St. George's Church Bells ring to signal 2:30am.
- Bloom recalls the days successes and failures.
- Bloom crawls into bed with Molly, notices impress of Boylan on bed. Fantasizes about killing Boylan, divorcing Molly etc....
- Kisses Molly's rump, recounts his day to her omitting certain aspects
- They Fall asleep, sleeping head to toe.



The Basics: Additional Information About our Characters!



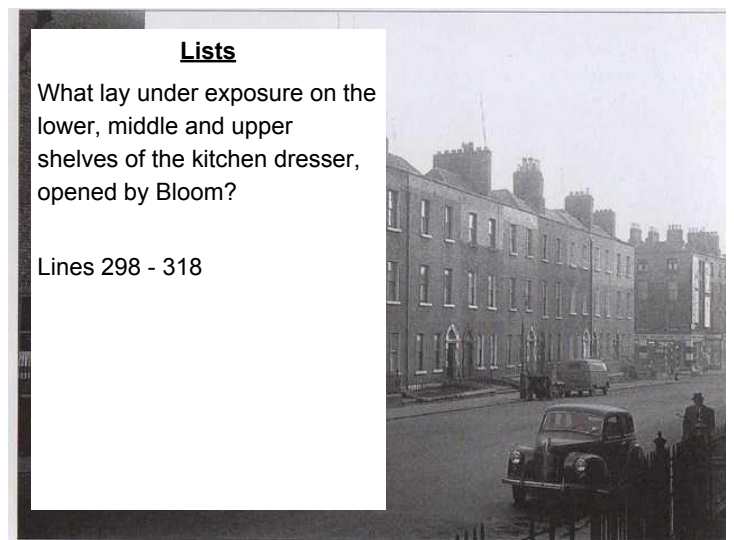
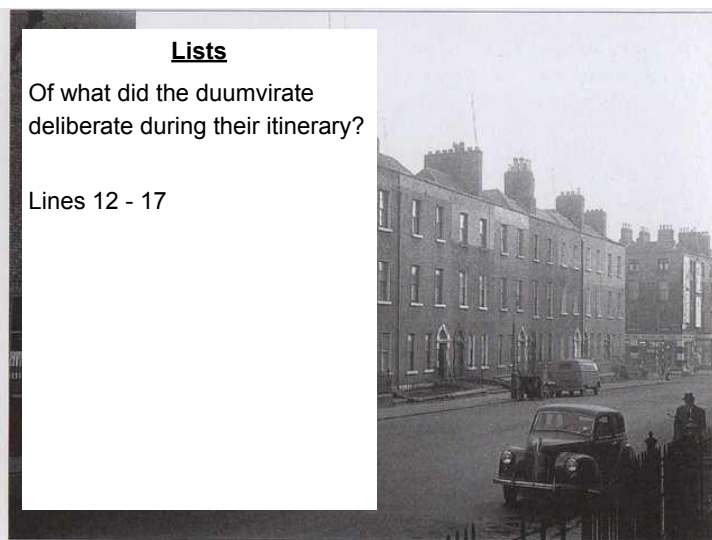
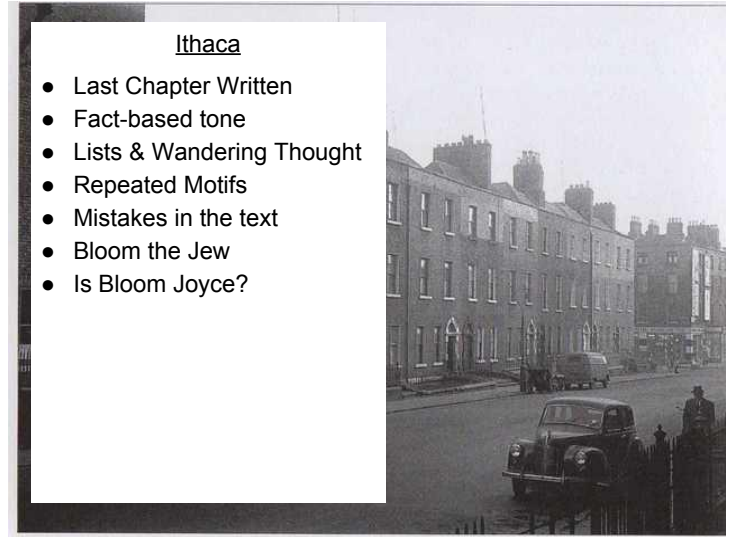
Little Sir Hughes

<i>Little Harry Hughes and his schoolfellows all Went out for to play ball.</i>	<i>Then out there came the Jew's daughter And she all dressed in green.</i>
<i>And the very first ball little Harry Hughes played</i>	<i>'Come back, come back, you pretty little boy,</i>
<i>He drove it o'er the jew's garden wall.</i>	<i>And play your ball again.'</i>
<i>And the very second ball little Harry Hughes played</i>	
<i>He broke the jew's windows all.</i>	

Little Sir Hughes

<i>I can't come back and I won't come back</i>	<i>Until she led him to a room</i>
<i>Without all my schoolfellows all.</i>	<i>Where none could hear him called.</i>
<i>For if my master he did hear</i>	<i>She took a penknife out of her pocket</i>
<i>He'd make it a sorry ball.</i>	<i>And cut off his little head.</i>
<i>She took him by the lilywhite hand</i>	<i>And now he'll play his ball no more</i>
<i>And led him along the hall</i>	<i>For he lies among the dead.</i>

End of Part 1.



### Lists

Page 584 - The Balance Sheet

A list of every item purchased by Bloom on 16 June, 1904 and every cent earned, cancelling out for a net gain of £0.



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Page 584 - The Balance Sheet

A list of every item purchased by Bloom on 16 June, 1904 and every cent earned, cancelling out for a net gain of £0.

Is anything missing?



### Lists

The tendency towards establishing factual accuracy is strongly accentuated through the use of catalogues. In "Ithaca" the catalogue is the means of representing material objects, memories or themes.

- Alexander Stevic



### Wandering Thoughts

What did Bloom do at the range?

He removed the saucepan to the left hob, rose and carried the iron kettle to the sink in order to tap the current by turning the faucet to let it flow.

Did it flow?

Lines 164 - 228



### Repeating Minor Motifs in Ithaca

- Sweets of Sin (734)
- Plumtree's Potted Meat (597)
- Forgotten latchkey (73)
- Barrington's Lemonflavoured Soap (231)
- Stephen's frayed jacket (374)
- Results of the Gold Cup (324)
- "throwaway" (332)
- Re-imagining Shakespeare (385)
- MacIntosh (2066)
- Rudolph Virag's Suicide (621 - 632)



### The Virag Suicide

#### Motif Reconnaissance

Occasionally Joyce introduced a phrase into a late episode and simultaneously planted preparations for it in earlier ones. For example, in the earliest extant of "Ithaca," he provided the complete address of the scene of Bloom's father's suicide:... From the start Joyce located the suicide in the Queen's Hotel in Ennis, but he added two references in "Hades" to link Ennis with County Clare. Obviously, even the most minute consistencies were essential. - Michael Groden

### Mistakes - Facts



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"Firstly, oscillation between events of imperial and of local interest, the anticipated Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria (born 1820, acceded 1837)..." (428-429)



**Mistakes - Facts**

“Firstly, oscillation between events of imperial and of local interest, the anticipated Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria (born 1820, acceded 1837)...” (428-429)

Queen Victoria was born Alexandria Victoria on May 24, 1819.



**Mistakes - Parallels**

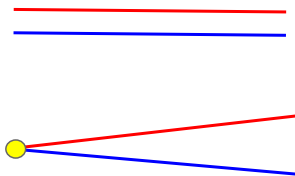
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**Parallels**

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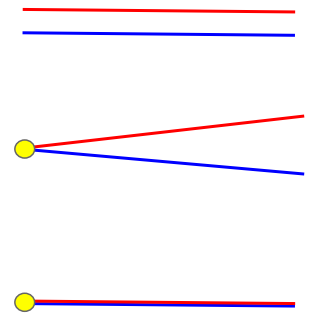
Starting united both at normal walking pace...



**Parallels**

\* What parallel courses did Bloom and Stephen follow returning?

Starting united both at normal walking pace...



### Parallels

How is one to reconcile this inconsistency? Either the paths are parallel or they are not. If they are, how can Bloom and Stephen start united? For readers there are at least three choices: 1) to ignore the inconsistency of meaning, 2) to define "parallel" generally as same or similar instead of using the mathematical definition, but to be still slightly uneasy when the rest of the answer seems to confirm the original scientific reading, or 3) to recognize the tensions here as meaningful and to try to account for them. - Joan Parisi Wilcox



### Parallels

Several major problems in interpreting **Ulysses** unfortunately gain little or no illumination from a study of Joyce's work on the book. For example, the massive collection of notes, drafts, typescripts, and proofs reveal hardly anything about the Homeric parallel.

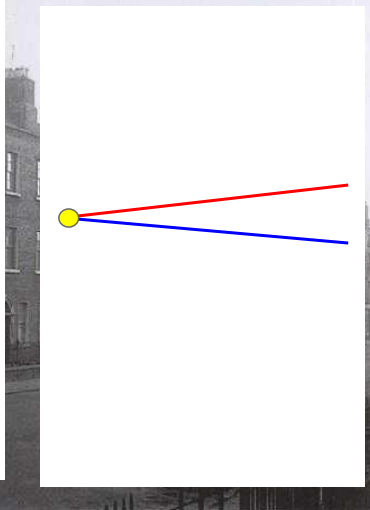
- Michael Groden



### Parallels

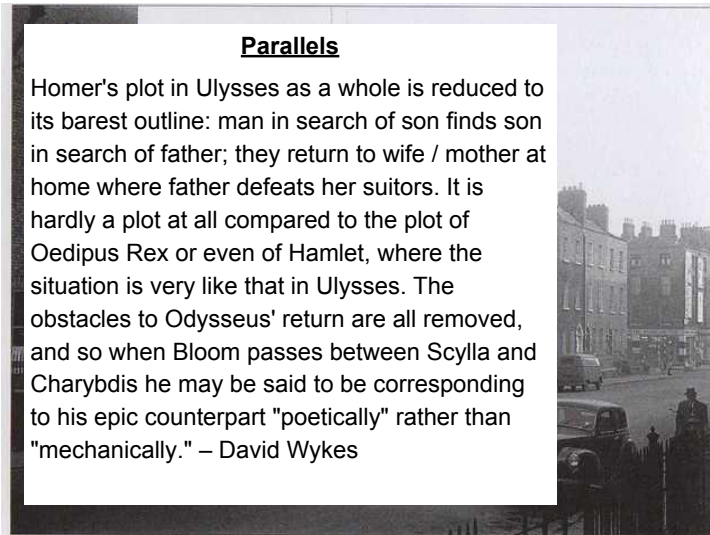
#### Starting united...

Is it possible that Joyce is giving a 'wink' to the reader, indicating that while the *Odyssey* provides a framework for *Ulysses*, the parallels are actually not parallel at all, and the similarities are further apart the further we get into the book?



### Parallels

Homer's plot in *Ulysses* as a whole is reduced to its barest outline: man in search of son finds son in search of father; they return to wife / mother at home where father defeats her suitors. It is hardly a plot at all compared to the plot of *Oedipus Rex* or even of *Hamlet*, where the situation is very like that in *Ulysses*. The obstacles to Odysseus' return are all removed, and so when Bloom passes between Scylla and Charybdis he may be said to be corresponding to his epic counterpart "poetically" rather than "mechanically." – David Wykes





**Major Themes**

Leopold Bloom, the Jew

So I without deviating from plain facts in the least told him his God, I mean Christ, was a Jew too and all his family like me though in reality I am not.

- Eumaeus 1084 - 1085



**Major Themes**

Leopold Bloom, the Jew

Indeed, because Bloom himself - Jew, cuckold, and son of a Hungarian immigrant - represents an extra-Irish dimension of experience...

- Andras P. Unger



**Leopold Bloom, the Jew**

Did either openly allude to their racial difference?

Neither.

(525-526)



**Leopold Bloom, the Jew**

What, reduced to their simplest reciprocal form, were Bloom's thoughts about Stephen and about Stephen's thoughts about Bloom's thoughts about Stephen?

He thought that he thought that he was a Jew whereas he knew that he knew that he knew that he was not. (527-531)



**Leopold Bloom, the Jew**

What, reduced to their simplest reciprocal form, were Bloom's thoughts about Stephen's thoughts about Bloom and about Stephen's thoughts about Bloom's thoughts about Stephen?

**Bloom thought that Stephen thought that Bloom was a Jew. Stephen knew that Bloom knew that Stephen knew that Bloom was not a Jew.**



**Leopold Bloom, the Jew**

How did the son of Rudolph receive this first part?

With unmixed feeling. Smiling, a Jew, he heard...

(809-810)



**Leopold Bloom, the Jew**

How did the father of Millicent receive this second part?

With mixed feelings. Unsmiling, he heard and saw with wonder a Jew's daughter, all dressed in green.

(829-831)



**Leopold Bloom, the Jew**

Rudolph Virag renouncing his name. (1869-1972)



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**What other objects relative to Rudolph Bloom (born Virag) were in the 2nd Drawer? (1874-1875)**



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**Suicide note ending with: Leopold... my dear son... always... of me... das Herz... Gott... dein... [the God of my heart] (1885-1886)**



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**Why did bloom experience a sentiment of remorse? (1893)**



**Major Themes**

Bloom is Joyce

How is one to reconcile this inconsistency? Either the paths are parallel or they are not. If they are, how can Bloom and Stephen start united?

- Joan Parisi Wilcox



But Bloom is Ulysses resurrected and transfigured, not merely recalled or commented on or explained. Bloom is Ulysses rescued from all those others who were neither Jew nor Greek, and who had kidnapped him, held him in alien captivity for too long. Bloom is Ulysses rescued from the great poets as well as the small ones, from Dante and from Tennyson, **and at the other end of the mythological spectrum from James Joyce**, from that anti-Semite, Ezra Pound, who liked to think he was the only true Ulysses.

- Leslie Fiedler

### Evidence from Text

- Both wear black.
- Both are without their key.
- Both are on journeys - figurative and literal.
- Both are depicted as having friends, but being alone
- Journey brings them together.



### Evidence from Text - Ithaca

Were their views on some points divergent? (27)

Divergent: differing

Divergent: infinite (math)

Was their one point on which their views were equal and negative? (43)

The influence of gaslight or electric light on the growth of **adjoining paraheliotropic trees.**



### Evidence from Text - Ithaca

What two temperaments did they individually represent?

The scientific. The artistic.

(559-560)



**Evidence from Text - Ithaca**

Bloom represents the past... Stephen the future. (776-780)



**Evidence from Text - Ithaca**

Simultaneous Urination (1191-1198)



**Evidence from Text - Ithaca**

Simultaneous Urination (1191-1198)

Bloom

- longer
- less rushed
- less inward
- incomplete
- divided



**Evidence from Text - Ithaca**

Simultaneous Urination (1191-1198)

Bloom

- longer
- less rushed
- less inward
- incomplete
- divided

Stephen

- more elevated
- louder
- under more pressure



**Evidence from Text - Ithaca**

Which domestic problem as much as, if not more than, any other frequently engaged his mind?

What to do with our wives.

(657-659)



**Evidence from Outside the Text**

Both Bloom and Joyce wrote "dirty" letters.



I would be delighted to feel my flesh tingling under your hand. Do you know what I mean, Nora dear? I wish you would smack me or flog me even. Not in play, dear, in earnest and on my naked flesh. I wish you were strong, strong, dear, and had a big full proud bosom and big fat thighs. I would love to be whipped by you, Nora love! I would love to have done something to displease you, something trivial even, perhaps one of my rather dirty habits that make you laugh: and then to hear you call me into your room and then to find you sitting in an armchair with your fat thighs far apart and your face deep red with anger and a cane in your hand.

Excerpt from letter Joyce wrote to Nora, December 13, 1909

Are you offended by my horrible shameless writing, dear? I expect some of the filthy things I wrote made you blush. Are you offended because I said I loved to look at the brown stain that comes behind on your girlish white drawers? I suppose you think me a filthy wretch. How will you answer those letters? I hope and hope you too will write me letters even madder and dirtier than mine to you.

Excerpt from letter Joyce wrote to Nora, December 13, 1909

### Evidence from Outside the Text

Both Bloom and Joyce wrote "dirty" letters.

Nora had a miscarriage in 1908 that strained their marriage.



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Both Bloom and Joyce wrote "dirty" letters.

Nora had a miscarriage in 1908 that strained their marriage.

Joyce associated himself with Bloom.



### Evidence from Outside the Text

Gorman records that Joyce wrote an essay at Belvedere entitled "My Favourite Hero," taking Ulysses as his subject, and the youth's praise of the Greek wanderer rather irritated the instructor who considered such enthusiasm for the wily husband of Penelope as not quite orthodox, at least from the point of view of the Society of Jesus. It is interesting that in the "Ithaca" episode Joyce bestows the authorship of this essay upon Bloom.

– David Wykes

See Ithaca Line 1635

### Evidence from Outside the Text

Both Bloom and Joyce wrote “dirty” letters.

Nora had a miscarriage in 1908 that strained their marriage.

Joyce associated himself with Bloom.

Joyce felt Nora had betrayed him, sexually.



### Evidence from Outside the Text

...at the time I used to meet you, every second night you kept an appointment with a friend of mine outside the Museum, you went with him along the same streets, down by the canal, past the 'house with the upstairs in it', down to the bank of the Dodder. You stood with him: he put his arm round you and you lifted your face and kissed him. What else did you do together?

Excerpt from letter Joyce wrote to Nora, August 6, 1909

### Evidence from Outside the Text

My eyes are full of tears, tears of sorrow and mortification. My heart is full of bitterness and despair. I can see nothing but your face as it was then raised to meet another's. O, Nora, pity me for what I suffer now. I shall cry for days. My faith in that face I loved is broken. O, Nora, Nora have pity for my poor wretched love. I cannot call you any dear name because tonight I have learnt that the only being I believed in was not loyal to me.

Excerpt from letter Joyce wrote to Nora, August 6, 1909





### Question

Is it possible that, just like Stephen's assertion about Shakespeare and Hamlet and Anne Hathaway, Joyce has intentionally confused his book, making it possible that he is either - or both - Stephen the artist and Bloom the cuckold?



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## Joyce's Schema

Scene: **House**  
 Hour: **2am**  
 Art: **science**  
 Organ: **skeleton**  
 Symbol: **comets**  
 Technic: **catechism (impersonal)**

## Technic of Ithaca

- Catechism: doctrinal manuals in the form of questions followed by memorisable answers.
  - Socratic Method (dialectical): a form of discussion (Q&A) that is reliant on logic and facts which seek to characterize general, commonly held truths (universals) shared by various instances.
- Goal = to further understanding.

## Effect of Schema

- Perspective
  - Distant, objective, scientific (art), impersonal, bare (skeletal).
  - Birds-eye-view
    - Look upon Bloom and Stephen's life trajectories from a distance.
  - Universal Perspective
    - From "the apathy of the stars" (17.2226).

## Earlier Schema

- from Joyce's earlier schema prepared in Sept. 1920.
  - ❖ Sense (Meaning) = Armed Hope
  - ❖ colour = starry, milky
  - ❖ organ = juices
  - ❖ technic = dialogue, pacified style, fusion

## Differing Perspectives

❖ "The collapse which Bloom ascribed to **gastric inanition and certain chemical compounds of varying degrees of adulteration and alcoholic strength, accelerated by mental exertion and the velocity of rapid circular motion in a relaxing atmosphere.** Stephen attributed to the reappearance of a **matutinal cloud (perceived by both from two different points of observation.** Sandycove and Dublin) at first no bigger than a woman's hand" (17.36-42).

❖ "what two temperaments did they individually represent? **The scientific. The artistic**" (17.559-60).

Parallax. Difference or change in the apparent position or direction of an object as seen from two different points.



## Astronomical Language

- "Struggling with the aridities of Ithaca--a **mathematico-astronomico-physico-mechanico-geometrico-chemico** sublimation of Bloom and Stephen (devil take 'em both) to prepare for the final amplitudiously **curvilinear** episode *Penelope*."
  - (letter from Joyce to Claud W. Sykes, spring 1921, *Letters* 1:164)

## Symbol: Comets

Q: What are comets? A: Heavenly bodies.

Danish nobleman Tycho Brahe (16<sup>th</sup> C.) compared the lack of diurnal **parallax** of the comet of 1577 with the well-known **parallax** of the Moon. **Tycho established for the first time that comets were heavenly bodies.**

The German astronomer Kepler still believed in 1619 that **comets travel across the sky in a straight line**. It was the English physicist and mathematician Isaac Newton who demonstrated in his *Principia* (1687) that ... they must move along a conic section: **circle**, ellipse, parabola, or hyperbola (Encyclopaedia Britannica).



## Bloom and Stephen: Heavenly Bodies

"Ever **he would 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, selfcompelled, 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 and after **incalculable eons of peregrination return** an estranged avenger, a wrecker of justice on malefactors, a dark crusader, a sleeper awakened...." (17.20 12-22)

- ❖ "cometary orbit"
- ❖ Curves of life
- ❖ Circular structure
- ❖ Wanderer
- ❖ Return



## Nostos (Grk): "homecoming" or "return"

- With deep inspiration he **returned**, **retraversing** the garden, **reentering** the passage, **reclosing** the door. With brief suspiration he **reassumed** the candle, **reascended** the stairs, **reapproached** the door of the front room, hallfloor, and **reentered"** (17.1269-73),



## Wanderers of the Universe

### MACRO

- "the **parallax** or parallaxic **drift of so-called fixed stars**, in reality **ever moving wanderers from immeasurably remote eons to infinitely remote futures** in comparison with which the years, threescore and ten, of **allotted human life** formed a **parenthesis of infinitesimal brevity**" (17.1052-56)

### MICRO

- "Sensible of benignant persistent **ache in his footsoles** he extended his foot to one side and **observed the creases, the protuberances and salient points caused by foot pressure in the course of walking repeatedly in several different directions.**" (17.1480-83)

## The Universal within the Particular

- ❖ "I always write about Dublin, because if I can get to the heart of Dublin I can get to the **heart** of all the cities of the world. **In the particular is contained the universal.**"  
- Joyce to Arthur Power, sometime in 1921
- ❖ "I am writing *Ithaca* in the form of a mathematical catechism. **All events are resolved into their cosmic physical, psychological etc. equivalents**, e.g. Bloom jumping down the area, drawing water from the tap, the micturition in the garden, the cone of incense, lighted candle and statue so that **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.**"  
- letter from Joyce to Frank Budgen, 28 February 1921, *Letters* 1:159-60, *Selected Letters*, p. 27

## Micro → Macro

Ex. Kettle Boiling

\*What in water did Bloom, waterlover, drawer of water, **watercarrier**, returning to the range, admire?

**Its universality**, its democratic equality and constancy to its nature in seeking its own level, its vastness in the ocean ... the restlessness of its waves and surface particles visiting in turn all points of its seaboard, the **independence of its units**, the variability of states of sea, its hydrostatic quiescence in calm, its hydrokinetic turgidity in neap and spring tides, its subsidence after devastation, its sterility ... the **multisecular stability of its primeval basin** ... its slow erosions of peninsulas and islands, its **persistent formation** ... its vehicular ramifications in **continental lakecontained streams and confluent overflowing rivers** their tributaries and transoceanic currents, gulfstream, north and south equatorial courses, its violence in seaquakes waterspouts, Artesian wells, eruptions torrents, eddies, freshets spates groundswells, watersheds, waterpartings, geysers, cataracts, whirlpools, maelstroms, inundations, deluges, cloudbursts, its **vast circumterrestrial ahorizontal curve**, its secrecy ... its **potentiality** derivable, form harnessed tides or watercourses falling from level to level, ... the inhabitants of the globe, **its ubiquity as constituting 90% of the human body**, the noxiousness of its effluvia in lacustrine marshes, pestilential fens, faded flowerwater, **stagnant pools** in the waning moon" (17.183-228)



Ex. Stephen and Bloom's urinating trajectories

"At Stephen's suggestion, at Bloom's instigation both first Stephen, then Bloom, in penumbra urinated, their sides contiguous, their organs of micturition reciprocally rendered invisible by manual circumposition, their gazes, first Bloom's, then Stephen's, elevated to the projected luminous and semiluminous shadow.

Similarly?

The trajectories of their, first sequent, then simultaneous, urinations were dissimilar: Bloom's longer, less irruent, in the incomplete form of the bifurcated penultimate alphabetical letter, who in his ultimate year at High School (1880) had been capable of attaining the point of greatest altitude against the whole concurrent strength of the institution, 210 scholars; Stephen's higher, more sibilant, who in the ultimate hours of the previous day had augmented by diuretic consumption an insistent vesical pressure (17.1186-98).



## Bloom & Stephen's Parting of Ways

"What sound accompanied the **union** of their tangent, the **disunion** of their (respectively) **centrifugal** and **centripetal** hands?" (17.1224-25).

- ❖ Centrifugal: a force that draws rotating bodies away from center of rotation.
- ❖ Centripetal: a force that makes a body follow a curved path.

## Follow the Curve back to the Beginning



"He rests. He has travelled" (17.2320).

## Socratic Dialogue in Ithaca

### Socratic Dialogue – An Overview

- Structured as a series of questions and answers between a wise tutor, and a curious student.
- Ironically not popularised by Socrates, but rather his student, Plato.
- Name derived from Plato's use of Socrates as the tutor in his dialogues
- Although popularised by Plato, numerous other authors have employed the technique, although not to the degree that Plato did

## Overview Continued

- The topic of discussion is almost always philosophical or moral in nature
- One of the ways Plato emulates the Socratic Method developed by his teacher, which uses questions to galvanize critical thought
- Often praised for its comparable readability when compared to other types of philosophical texts.
- A form adopted by the Church during the recitation of the Catechism

## Structural Use of Socratic Dialogue in Ithaca

- Who did you think would be the tutor and who the student when you started this episode?
- The student turns out to be the reader (i.e. you), and the tutor, the narrator.
- This achieves an effect wherein the narrative act of discovery is put on display rather than hidden within prose
- As we read (other books) we are constantly having questions answered, and it is from this sense of discovery that much of the pleasure of narrative comes from.

## Structural and Narrative Use Continued

- As each event happens we wonder what comes next, Joyce rips away the prose and gives us “the baldest and coldest way” to represent the events of the text
- How did this representation of events affect you? How did it make you feel? How did it allow you to understand the text?
- As we read through the episode much of the delicacy of narrative is lost. The narrator, in a way, tells us what we are thinking by suggesting questions.

## Structural and Narrative Use Continued

- For someone used to reading for typical works of literature this is somewhat disconcerting and alien
- Bloom’s exploration of his house following Molly’s tryst is equally disconcerting and alien. His furniture is moved (17.1279ff), and he constantly finds evidence of Boylan’s occupancy (17.320)
- Furthermore, Ithaca features remarkably personal subject matter (baptisms, familial suicide, adultery, etc).

## Structural and Narrative Use Continued

- Despite this, the dialogical narration, by its very nature, functions as an emotional antiseptic
- Ironically, Joyce takes perhaps the most personal episode – the one in which Bloom comes home – and undercuts it with a scientific, impersonal narration style.
- The narrator aligns Bloom with science and Stephen with art, in this episode (17.559-60)

## Structural and Narrative Use Continued

- By using a catechism as a means of relaying Ithaca Joyce aligns the final chapter with Bloom rather than Stephen. The artistic liberties one can take with prose are absent, and the scientific narration of a dialogue abounds
- Despite a scientific narrative style, the narrative itself is anything but objective.
- Bloom edits his day when he talks to Molly, leaving out significant details (17.2250-70)

### Structural and Narrative Use Continued

- The use of socratic dialogue necessitates the construction of an omniscient narrator; he must know which questions to ask, and when, as well as the proper answers
- The use of an omniscient narrator allows for Joyce to write outside the confines of free indirect discourse, instead being able to use an impartial voice.
- For instance, the narrator can use language which the Bloom would never, in his life, utter (17.185-228)

### Structural and Narrative Use Continued

- The failings of socratic dialogue is highlighted, at times, by both the tutor and the student
- The tutor will ask misleading questions (17.945-6), or speak in the negative sense (17.241-46)
- The student will answer with indecisive or vague language (17.288-90), or with overly specific and detailed accounts (17.163-182)

### Plato's Philosophy within Ithaca

- Joyce plays with two of Plato's philosophies in Ithaca
- The first, Plato's "allegory of the cave", is arguably one of the most famous philosophical concepts in the Western World.
- It creates a hypothetical situation in which people are trapped in a cave watching shadows of objects illuminated by a light.
- They believe these shadows are real objects; these people are representative of the average populace

### Plato in Ithaca Continued

- In Plato's scenario one man escapes and sees the real world, when he returns to the cave the others brand him insane and drive him out
- Plato uses this fable as a means of illustrating the philosopher's position within society
- Joyce references this parable throughout the episode; first, when Stephen watches Bloom through a windowpane illuminated by light (17.108-12); and second, when Bloom sees a light in Molly's room and takes it as a "splendid sign" of her (17.1171-77)

### Plato in Ithaca Continued

- The allegory of the cave also serves as an introduction to another of Plato's primary philosophical concepts: his Theory of Forms.
- Plato theorized that each object possessed three forms (from superior to inferior): the platonic form, the physical form, and the artistic form.
- Plato believed that the artistic form had a negative impact on one's education, being simply a mimesis of a mimesis; even going so far as to ban artists from his utopian Republic

### Plato in Ithaca Continued

- Joyce, being both self-absorbed and an artist, pokes holes in Plato's assertion all throughout Ithaca
- The episode is rife with art (17.801ff)
- Bloom turns to Shakespeare to solve problems in "imaginary or real life" (17.382-388) rather than philosophy.
- Many answers are simply lists of physical objects (17.297-319, 17.592-507), once again emphasizing the physical world and neglecting the world of platonic forms

## Plato in Ithaca Continued

- Although Plato exiles the artist from his Republic, Joyce writes that Stephen is the future (17.780) as well as placing him in the realm of art (17.560), further challenging Plato and emphasizing the importance of art, in Joyce's eyes.
- Joyce, however, allows for the philosophical as well, when he notes that Stephen (i.e. the future) was engaged in "mental composition" (17.384), and the "pleasures derived from literature of instruction" (17.385).

