

## JAMES JOYCE “ULYSSES”

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**Annotation:** James Joyce's famously dense and unconventional modernist novel *Ulysses* follows the advertiser Leopold Bloom as he goes about his day in Dublin, Ireland on June 16, 1904. Although the novel's plot is deceptively simple, its structure, style, and literary and historical references are incredibly complex.

**Key words:** avant-garde, epic, anti-Semitic, illicit, pharmacist.

James Augustine Aloysius Joyce (2 February 1882 – 13 January 1941) was an Irish novelist, poet and literary critic. He contributed to the modernist avant-garde movement and is regarded as one of the most influential and important writers of the 20th century. Joyce's novel *Ulysses* (1922) is a landmark in which the episodes of Homer's *Odyssey* are paralleled in a variety of literary styles, particularly stream of consciousness. Other well-known works are the short-story collection *Dubliners* (1914), and the novels *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) and *Finnegans Wake* (1939). His other writings include three books of poetry, a play, letters, and occasional journalism.

Joyce was born in Dublin into a middle-class family. He attended the Jesuit Clongowes Wood College in County Kildare, then, briefly, the Christian Brothers–run O'Connell School. Despite the chaotic family life imposed by his father's unpredictable finances, he excelled at the Jesuit Belvedere College and graduated from University College Dublin in 1902. In 1904, he met his future wife, Nora Barnacle, and they moved to mainland Europe. He briefly worked in Pula and then moved to Trieste in Austria-Hungary, working as an English instructor. Except for an eight-month stay in Rome working as a correspondence clerk and three visits to Dublin, Joyce resided there until 1915. In Trieste, he published his book of poems *Chamber Music* and his short story collection *Dubliners*, and he began serially publishing *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* in the English magazine *The Egoist*. During most of World War I, Joyce lived in Zürich, Switzerland, and worked on *Ulysses*. After the war, he briefly returned to Trieste and then moved to Paris in 1920, which became his primary residence until 1940.

*Ulysses* was first published in Paris in 1922, but its publication in the United Kingdom and the United States was prohibited because of its perceived obscenity. Copies were smuggled into both countries and pirated versions were printed until the mid-1930s, when publication finally became legal. Joyce started his next major work,

Finnegans Wake, in 1923, publishing it sixteen years later in 1939. Between these years, Joyce travelled widely. He and Nora were married in a civil ceremony in London in 1931. He made a number of trips to Switzerland, frequently seeking treatment for his increasingly severe eye problems and psychological help for his daughter, Lucia. When France was occupied by Germany during World War II, Joyce moved back to Zürich in 1940. He died there in 1941 after surgery for a perforated ulcer, at age 58.

Ulysses frequently ranks high in lists of great books, and the academic literature analysing his work is extensive and ongoing. Many writers, film-makers, and other artists have been influenced by his stylistic innovations, such as his meticulous attention to detail, use of interior monologue, wordplay, and the radical transformation of traditional plot and character development. Though most of his adult life was spent abroad, his fictional universe centres on Dublin and is largely populated by characters who closely resemble family members, enemies and friends from his time there. Ulysses in particular is set in the streets and alleyways of the city. Joyce is quoted as saying, "For myself, 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."

Ulysses is a modernist novel by the Irish writer James Joyce. Partially serialized in the American journal *The Little Review* from March 1918 to December 1920, the entire work was published in Paris by Sylvia Beach on 2 February 1922, Joyce's fortieth birthday. It is considered one of the most important works of modernist literature and has been called "a demonstration and summation of the entire movement".

The novel chronicles the experiences of three Dubliners over the course of a single day, 16 June 1904, which fans of the novel now celebrate as Bloomsday. Ulysses is the Latinised name of Odysseus, the hero of Homer's epic poem *The Odyssey*, and the novel establishes a series of parallels between Leopold Bloom and Odysseus, Molly Bloom and Penelope, and Stephen Dedalus and Telemachus. There are also correspondences with Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and with other literary and mythological figures, including Jesus, Elijah, Moses, Dante, and Don Giovanni. Such themes as antisemitism, human sexuality, British rule in Ireland, Catholicism, and Irish nationalism are treated in the context of early 20th-century Dublin. The novel is highly allusive and written in a variety of styles.

Artist and writer Djuna Barnes quoted Joyce as saying, "The pity is . . . .the public will demand and find a moral in my book-or worse they may take it in some more serious way, and on the honour of a gentleman, there is not one single serious line in it. ... In *Ulysses* I have recorded, simultaneously, what a man says, sees, thinks, and what such seeing, thinking, saying does, to what you Freudians call the subconscious."

According to the writer Declan Kiberd, "Before Joyce, no writer of fiction had so foregrounded the process of thinking". The novel's stream of consciousness technique, careful structuring, and experimental prose-replete with puns, parodies, epiphanies, and allusions -as well as its rich characterisation and broad humour have led it to be regarded as one of the greatest literary works. Since its publication, the book has attracted controversy and scrutiny, ranging from a 1921 obscenity trial in the United States to protracted disputes about the authoritative version of the text.

At 8 a.m., Malachi "Buck" Mulligan, a boisterous medical student, calls aspiring writer Stephen Dedalus up to the roof of the Sandycove Martello tower, where they live. There is tension between Dedalus and Mulligan stemming from a cruel remark Dedalus overheard Mulligan make about his recently deceased mother and from the fact that Mulligan has invited an English student, Haines, to stay with them. The three men eat breakfast and walk to the shore, where Mulligan demands from Stephen the key to the tower and a loan. The three make plans to meet at a pub, The Ship, at 12:30pm. Departing, Stephen decides that he will not return to the tower that night, as Mulligan, the "usurper", has taken it over.

Stephen is teaching a history class on the victories of Pyrrhus of Epirus. After class, one student, Cyril Sargent, stays behind so that Stephen can show him how to do a set of algebraic exercises. Stephen looks at Sargent's ugly face and tries to imagine Sargent's mother's love for him. He then visits unionist school headmaster Garrett Deasy, from whom he collects his pay. Deasy asks Stephen to take his long-winded letter about foot-and-mouth disease to a newspaper office for printing. The two discuss Irish history and Deasy lectures on what he believes is the role of Jews in the economy. As Stephen leaves, Deasy jokes that Ireland has "never persecuted the Jews" because the country "never let them in". This episode is the source of some of the novel's best-known lines, such as Dedalus's claim that "history is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake" and that God is "a shout in the street".

Stephen walks along Sandymount Strand for some time, mulling various philosophical concepts, his family, his life as a student in Paris, and his mother's death. As he reminisces he lies down among some rocks, watches a couple whose dog urinates behind a rock, scribbles some ideas for poetry and picks his nose. This chapter is characterised by a stream of consciousness narrative style that changes focus wildly. Stephen's education is reflected in the many obscure references and foreign phrases employed in this episode, which have earned it a reputation for being one of the book's most difficult chapters.

The narrative shifts abruptly. The time is again 8 a.m., but the action has moved across the city and to the second protagonist of the book, Leopold Bloom, a part-Jewish advertising canvasser. The episode opens with the line "Mr. Leopold Bloom ate with

relish the inner organs of beasts and fowls." After starting to prepare breakfast, Bloom decides to walk to a butcher to buy a pork kidney. Returning home, he prepares breakfast and brings it with the mail to his wife Molly as she lounges in bed. One of the letters is from her concert manager Blazes Boylan, with whom she is having an affair. Bloom reads a letter from their daughter Milly Bloom, who tells him about her progress in the photography business in Mullingar. The episode closes with Bloom reading a magazine story titled "Matcham's Masterstroke", by Mr. Philip Beaufoy, while defecating in the outhouse.

The novel is constructed as a modern parallel to Homer's epic poem *Odyssey*.

All the action of *Ulysses* takes place in and immediately around Dublin on a single day (June 16, 1904). The three central characters - Stephen Dedalus (the hero of Joyce's earlier autobiographical novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*); Leopold Bloom, a Jewish advertising canvasser; and his wife, Molly Bloom, a professional singer - are intended to be modern counterparts of Telemachus, Ulysses (*Odysseus*), and Penelope, respectively, and the events of the novel loosely parallel the major events in *Odysseus's* journey home after the Trojan War.

The book begins at 8:00 in the morning in a Martello tower (a Napoleonic-era defensive structure), where Stephen lives with medical student Buck Mulligan and his English friend Haines. They prepare for the day and head out. After teaching at a boys' school, Stephen receives his pay from the ignorant and anti-Semitic headmaster, Mr. Deasy, and takes a letter from Deasy that he wants to have published in two newspapers. Afterward Stephen wanders along a beach, lost in thought.

Also that morning, Bloom brings breakfast and the mail to Molly, who remains in bed; her concert tour manager, Blazes Boylan, is to see her at 4:00 that afternoon. Bloom goes to the post office to pick up a letter from a woman with whom he has an illicit correspondence and then to the pharmacist to order lotion for Molly. At 11:00 am Bloom attends the funeral of Paddy Dignam with Simon Dedalus (Stephen's father), Martin Cunningham, and Jack Power.

#### Used literature

1. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Ulysses-novel-by-Joyce>
2. [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulysses\\_\(novel\)](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulysses_(novel))
3. <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/4300>
4. <https://www.amazon.com/Ulysses-James-Joyce/dp/0679722769>.