Spring 1982

Spirituality In Ulysses By James Joyce: Bloom's Substantive Relationship With God

William Hallinan
Carroll College

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholars.carroll.edu/langlit_theses

Part of the Literature in English, British Isles Commons

Recommended Citation
https://scholars.carroll.edu/langlit_theses/66

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Languages and Literature at Carroll Scholars. It has been accepted for inclusion in Languages and Literature Undergraduate Theses by an authorized administrator of Carroll Scholars. For more information, please contact tkratz@carroll.edu.
SPIRITUALITY IN ULYSSES BY JAMES JOYCE:
BLOOM'S SUBSTANTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
graduation with honors to the Department of English at
Carroll College, Helena, Montana

William John Hallinan
March 23, 1982
This thesis for honors recognition has been approved for the Department of English.

Mr. Henry Burgess, Director

Dr. Joseph Ward

Mr. James Bartruff

March 23, 1982
To:

All my family members, friends and teachers who have borne with patience my ignorance and obsession with becoming more human.

Thank you.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## DEDICATION ................................................................. i

## PART ONE
### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Chapter

I. **INTRODUCTION** ..................................................... 1

The backgrounds of *Ulysses* and Leopold Bloom  
James Joyce, the human being  

II. **THE CHARACTER OF LEOPOLD BLOOM** .................. 18

The common man  
His fight against anti-blooming forces  
His goodness

## PART TWO  
### GOD IN ULYSSES

### III. **THE GOD CONCEPT** ........................................ 26

The God of goodness and wholeness  
The God apart from inhumane institutions  
Substantiation  
The mystery of life: fullness, freedom, creativity

### IV. **THE CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD IN ULYSSES** .......... 43

His relationship to fate and moral freedom  
The emphasis on the secular  
Acts of compassion and goodwill  
Freedom of spirit

### V. **CONCLUSION** ..................................................... 66

Criticisms  
Joyce's Catholicity  
Literature as the affirmation of the human spirit

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY ............................................. 80
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

A reactionary and a renegade, James Joyce divorced himself from the Catholic Church in 1898. Since then, many critics for good reason have chosen to see him as a purely secular writer, whose concern for a spiritual element in life is lacking. They have read his condemnation of the Catholic church, felt the vehemence of his insults. They have imagined his characters--Dedalus, Bloom, Molly, Mulligan, Earwicker, Shem, Shawn--who by their thoughts and actions testify to Joyce's want to spiritual fervor. They read Joyce and shake their heads at his spiritual poverty. But, this kind of reading of James Joyce is unjust. It is not fair to a man educated by the Jesuits for twelve years and whose sole mission during his lifetime, besides caring for his family, was to express the "holy spirit of joy in literature." This thesis is intended to clarify the misconception that Joyce was unconcerned about the spiritual substance of life. It will demonstrate the great depth of Joyce's immersion into an all-embracing spirituality. This spirituality led him beyond the bounds of religious institutions and the restraints of political ideology. This thesis treats James Joyce's Ulysses by placing special emphasis on its principal character, Leopold Bloom. Essentially, it answers these two questions: Where does a spiritual relationship exist between

1
man and God in Ulysses? And secondly, what are the characteristics of this relationship in Ulysses?

Ulysses is a complex masterpiece. No attempt will be made to explain the entire scope of the novel, but a few facts help to elucidate its main theme, and thus may help to cement the character of Leopold Bloom in his proper context. Ulysses takes place on June 16, 1904 (Ulysses, p. 229). In 783 pages it describes the 18 hours of Mr. Leopold Bloom's day. His day is described in detail. Not only are his actions accurately accounted for, but the very content of his thought is monologanomly articulated. Bloom comments on himself and is commented upon by friend and foe alike. Ulysses is a very complex novel. It is large--783 pages. And when broken down, each episode of Ulysses performs several functions at once: it tells the story, parodies a literary style, signifies an art or science, represents a part of the human body, presents an appropriate bodily symbol, is dominated by a color and sometimes by a sense, and finally, but not lastly, presents a parallel which is worked out in "rich and secret detail" in Homer's Odyssey.

Thematically, Joyce saw Ulysses and his odyssey as an all-embracing theme which described life fully. Joyce searched for the fullest expression of life in its best and noblest form. The theme of the Odyssey offered Joyce a rich and intricate background on which to develop his own themes of the paternal, pacifistic, cultural and artistic elements of a good life. In Joyce's own words:

The most beautiful, all-embracing theme is that of the Odyssey. It is greater, more human, than that of Hamlet, Don Quixote, Dante, Faust. . . . The most beautiful, most human traits are contained in the Odyssey. . . . I find the subject of Ulysses the most human in literature. Ulysses didn't want to go off to Troy; he knew'
the official reason for war, the dissemination of the culture of Hellas, was only a pretext for the Greek merchants, who were seeking new markets. When the recruiting officers arrived, he happened to be plowing. He pretended to be mad. Thereupon placed his little two-year-old son in the furrow. Observe the beauty of the motifs: the only man in Hellas who is against the war, and the father. ... Ulysses is also a great musician; he wishes to and must listen; he has himself tied to the mast. The motif of the artist, who will lay down his life rather than renounce his interest. ... I am almost afraid to treat such a theme; it is overwhelming. 3

Homer's Odyssey is a noble prototype for Joyce's Ulysses. The themes in the Odyssey are complete. They subtly express the nuances of life. But in Joyce's Ulysses, even though it is filled with many marvelous and great themes, a simpler theme underlies the work and is intimately connected to Joyce's own spirituality. Ulysses expresses Joyce's only piety: "a rejection, in humanity's name and comedy's method, of fear and hatred." 4

Leopold Bloom is Joyce's Ulyssian counterpart. Like Ulysses, he is fully human. He has his strengths and his weaknesses. Joyce defends Bloom as being the fullest expression of what it means to be human in literature. What Joyce means by a complete hero is that the hero participate in a full, compassionate and active existence. He must appreciate and experience each facet of life as it reveals itself. In a conversation with Frank Budgen, Joyce discusses his idea of the complete hero, using Ulysses as his example:

"Do you know of any complete all around character presented by any writer?" To Budgen's nomination of Christ Joyce objected, "He was a bachelor, and never lived with a woman. Surely living with a woman is one of the most difficult things a man can do and he never did it."

"What about Faust," Budgen asked, "or Hamlet?"

"Faust!" Joyce said. "Far from being a complete man he isn't a man at all. Is he an old man or a
young man? Where are his house and family? We don't know. And he can't be complete because he is never alone. Mephistopheles is always hanging around him at his side or heels. We see a lot of him that's all."

"Your complete man in literature is, I suppose, Ulysses?"

"Yes," said Joyce. "No age Faust isn't a man. But you mentioned Hamlet. Hamlet is a human being, but he is a son only. Ulysses is a son to Laertes, but he is a father to Telemachus, husband to Penelope, lover of Calypso, companion in arms of the Greek warriors around Troy, and king of Ithaca. He was subject to many trials, but with wisdom and courage came through them all."

"What do you mean," said Budgen, "by a complete man? For example, if a sculptor makes a figure of a man then that man is all round, three dimensional, but not necessarily complete in the sense of being ideal. All human bodies are imperfect, limited in some way, human beings too. Now your Ulysses . . . ."

"He is both," said Joyce. "I see him from all sides and therefore he is all round in the sense of your sculptor's figure. But he is a complete man as well—a good man."

Bloom is this sculpted piece embodied in literature. It is important to Joyce that Bloom be viewed as a good man, for that is what Joyce intended him to be. Bloom's experience of life must be sound and well-rounded. The obvious criticism of Bloom's character is that it is not complete. It lacks a spiritual dimension. Ulysses in the Odyssey certainly interacted with the gods. Can the Ulyssian hero, Bloom, as an atheistic Jew participate in the spiritual side of life? Does Joyce mean to deny in Bloom the existence of a Supreme Being who created life and interacts with it? The answers to these questions are not as obvious as they at first appear. Bloom, in fact, does demonstrate a spiritual side to his character. Joyce, using his literary techniques of cunning, has concealed Bloom's spirituality. Yet, it is the very essence of his life. It is the source of his
goodness. Joyce refuses to make obvious the obvious. That is not his art. Bloom is the complete man, the all round hero!

James Joyce's Character

To appreciate the spiritual aspect of Ulysses as fully as possible, it is helpful to understand a little of James Joyce's complex character. Four parts of his character are worth noting. The first is Joyce's great passion for life. This passion expresses itself in his faith in the goodness of the soul, his love for his wife, and his attitude toward his country. His faith is characterized by a determination for freedom, a fight against threatening forces such as the Catholic Church or Irish Nationalism, and a firm belief in the unity between the body and the soul. The second is Joyce's philosophical and educational backgrounds. Educated by the Jesuits, Joyce studied Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, and the Celtic empiricists. The third is Joyce's conviction of substantiation, that is, that the spiritual must be substantiated in daily life to be intelligible. The fourth part is Joyce's positive way of celebrating living.

James Joyce was a man of immense spirit. His passion for life was split between the sensual and the intellectual. In Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man one can explore the extent of this passion. Desiring the joys of the flesh, yet burdened by the years of Catholic training and discipline, Joyce attempted to integrate the two in his life and writing. Eventually, he succeeds. His passion expressed itself in his intense concern for living in a spirit of freedom. Freedom for Joyce meant throwing off the ropes of religion and nationality. Humans must be free to do what comes most naturally: being curious, compassionate and loving.
Born on February 2, 1882, Joyce was the oldest boy in a large family. His family was poor, due to the drunken inconsiderateness of his father, who fancied himself to be a gentleman. Home life for James alternated between the periods of his father's drunken ostentatiousness and the sharp pangs of hunger. James was educated at Clongovos Wood College, Belvedere College and finally at the Royal University in Dublin. In his teens he wrote, whored, drank and wandered the streets of "dear, dirty Dublin." From a climate which systematically strove to subjugate men to a burdensome life, Joyce was to develop his belief in the power of the soul to bring goodness into the world. He saw his own artistic soul as an example of this. When his tensions were mounting because of living in Dublin, he wrote in a letter to Lady Gregory: "All things are inconsistent except the faith in the soul, which charges all things and fills their inconsistency with light." He believed that every human soul was unique, and when he met his future wife, Nora, his belief was confirmed. Nora was a simple young lady from rural Galway and James was a poor struggling artist. Nora's influence on James was amazing. Nora confronted Joyce with the simply beauty of her soul. She trusted, believed and forgave. All his life he had searched for the human expression of integrity which he had sought so feverously in his intellectual and artistic life. Joyce's belief in the soul was confirmed: "I have enormous belief in the power of a simple and honourable soul. You are that, are you not, Nora?" With Nora, Joyce raised a family. For Joyce, the family was the fruition of their mutual love. It represented a holy bond to life, to love and to creation. Joyce began to see a basic organic wholeness to life. Life, spirit and body conjoined and revealed their mysteries through common everyday experiences.
Joyce's great spirit of concern for the growth of the individual can also be seen in his relationship to his homeland, Ireland. Joyce thought that a person could not grow as an individual in Ireland. At some point, the traditions, customs or ignorance of the Irish would inhibit a person, causing him to stagnate. Joyce felt he was stagnating as an artist in Ireland. That is why he left Ireland. For Joyce, exile was the only means of "objectifying an obsessive subject matter." Exile would free him from stagnant atmosphere. From his banishment, his writing would "forge the uncreated conscience" of his own people. Joyce wanted individuals to grow because he loved the individuals of Ireland. At the same time he could love those individuals, he could hate them for letting themselves become submissive to Catholic or British authority, when they should be challenging some of the actions or tenets of such powerful authorities. They should be challenged in such a way that their authority led to a better and more whole human life. Joyce vehemently attacked both the authorities and personalities in Ireland who, he felt, misled or even hurt his fellow Irishmen. The further development and growth of the individual is the most important thing.

Another aspect to Joyce's character was his conviction of moral freedom. He never denied the freedom to others which he claimed himself. The moral freedom of individuals to think, choose and act on their own is the hallmark of Joyce's ethics. This hints of his underlying assumption of the goodness within men. According to Joyce if people are left on their own, that is, allowed to act freely without the impingements of harsh traditions or burdensome politics, they will
enjoy a good quality of life, for the good people among them will keep matters in order. Joyce had great faith in the dignity of free individuals. He said this of Ulysses: "It is the mark of a skeptic, but I don't want it to appear the mark of a cynic. I don't want to hurt or offend those of my countrymen who are devoting their lives to a cause they feel to be necessary and just."\textsuperscript{13}

This conviction of Joyce, allowing everyman his freedom to act on his own behalf, clashes dramatically with religious practices and political thought. In fact, this belief of Joyce was developed in reaction to the restrictive moral principles of the Irish Catholic Church and to the British rule of Ireland. Joyce was an advocate of the freedom of the human being above both. One of the reasons that Joyce, like his hero, Stephen Dedalus, became an artist was that art opened "'the fair courts of life that priest and king were trying to keep locked.'"\textsuperscript{14}

His reaction to the Irish Catholic faith can most vividly be seen in the events surrounding his mother's death. In 1903, his mother, wracked by the pain of cancer of the liver, lay on her death bed. For him, his mother had always been an island of consistency in a swift and troubled life. He sought her understanding for all the radical things he did, and her chastisement for going one step too far. His mother was a devout Catholic and purely Irish in character. She bore ten children and three still born. Her husband mistreated her in a degrading, condescending manner. But she was maintained, supported and strengthened by the church and its priests.
James saw her as a martyr figure. She was martyred, in his mind, by the priest who counselled her not to stand up against her husband, even though her human rights were being abused. She was a victim of her Irish ignorance and priestly counsel. In a letter to his new love, Nora, Joyce describes his mother's death like this:

My mother was slowly killed. I think by my father's ill treatment, by years of trouble, and by my cynical frankness of conduct. When I looked on her face as she lay in her coffin—a face grey and wasted with cancer—I understood that I was looking on the face of a victim and I cursed the system which had made her a victim. . . .

Six years ago I left the Catholic Church, hating it most fervently. I found it impossible for me to remain in it on account of the impulses of my nature. I made secret war upon it when I was a student and declined to accept the positions it offered me. By doing this I made myself a beggar but I retained my pride. Now I make open war upon it by what I write and say and do. 15

Joyce saw himself, like his mother, as a victim of the Catholic Church in Ireland. He was a victim of any one or any force which tried to repress his artistic spirit. As a victim, Joyce felt compelled to fight back. He stood firm in his convictions either from tenacity, fear or pride. He never gave in, not even at his mother's death bed. Richard Ellmann narrates with harsh simplicity:

Her fear of death put in her mind of her son's impiety, and on the days following Easter, she tried to persuade him to make his confession and take communion. Joyce, however, was inflexible, he feared, as he had Stephen Dedalus say later, "the chemical action" which would set up in his soul "by a false homage to a symbol behind which are massed twenty centuries of authority and veneration." His mother wept and vomited green bile into a basin, but he did not yield. His aunt Josephine Murry argued with him, and Joyce said, "I believe in a Supreme Being," but made no other concessions. 16
Joyce's tenacity of conviction extended itself acidly toward the Irish character. Joyce was disgusted by the Irishman's narrow-mindedness and want of free thought. He hated the way they submitted to British rule. For Joyce they were all talk and no action. And, if by chance they happened to act, it was violently—in a spirit of frustration. For Joyce, the Irishmen simply could not act constructively, they were paralyzed by the whole atmosphere of Irish life. In the taverns, on the political scene, and spiritually, Ireland exhibited all the symptoms of a paraplegic. Her biggest handicap was her inability to help herself in a modern Europe. This sense of paralysis permeates Joyce's collection of short stories, The Dubliners, and it supplies the background for Stephen Dedalus' artistic flight to freedom in The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. It is this overwhelming sense of helplessness Joyce is fleeing in his art. As Stephen Dedalus says:

> When the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets.17

Through all these turbulent years, Joyce developed his philosophy toward life. It solidified in his character and he never abandoned his conviction in the basic goodness of a free man. This great faith drove him on in his art to strike vengefully at the forces which dehydrated the soul of its good waters. In a letter to Lady Gregory he says: "And though I seem to have been driven out of my country as a misbeliever, I have found no man yet with a faith like mine."18 Joyce's overriding concerns are freedom and integrity. His thirst for freedom is characterized by his standard not to deny others the freedom he claimed for himself. His integrity can be witnessed in his
relations with his mother, the Catholic Church and the Irish character. He wants people to believe fiercely in freedom, then to have the courage to act on their conviction as he acted on his at his mother's death bed. These two aspects of Joyce's character, spirit and conviction, are summed up in *The Portrait of the Artist*:

*I will not serve that in which I no longer believe whether it call itself my home, my fatherland or my church: and I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my defense the only arms I allow myself to use—silence, exile, and cunning. . . . I do not fear to be alone, or to be spurned for another or to leave whatever I have to leave. And I am not afraid to make a mistake, even a great mistake, a life long mistake and perhaps as long as eternity too.*

Along with Joyce's tremendous faith in the spirit of man, he had a great intellectual understanding of life through philosophy. His Jesuit education exposed him to the inner workings of Aristotle, Plato, Augustine, Aquinas, Hume, Berkeley— not to mention the great names of literature: Dante, Vergil, Homer, Cicero, Caesar, Shakespeare Ibsen, Hauptmann, etc. H. G. Wells, after having read *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, commented that Joyce was a living example of the value of a Catholic education. Joyce preserved the products of a Catholic education for the "amazement of prosperity." Joyce himself regarded his education by the "mirthless" Jesuits somewhat contemptuously, but he never lost sight of what they had taught him: the ability and discipline to organize into form a great number of details.

Because Joyce's thought is colored by philosophical ideas, it is necessary to look at a few of the figures who influenced his writing. Some brief comments about the major figures who help shape *Ulysses* follow.
Aristotle was Joyce's philosophical idol. Joyce agreed with Aristotle's concept that the essence of a thing is in the thing itself. This philosophical concept supported Joyce's idea of the good man, the goodness being an inseparable quality of the man himself. Joyce plays with Aristotle in the first half of Ulysses, introducing themes of change and substance, reality and certainty. Joyce liked Aristotle's simple yet complex way of understanding the world; for Joyce, in his books complexly states simple themes. Aristotle's certainty is contrasted to the Celtic philosophers' uncertainty in the latter half of the book. This contrast helps set the tone of the night time episodes in much the same way the night can be contrasted to day to reveal the night's mysterious qualities.

From Thomas Aquinas, Joyce borrowed much of his ethical theory. The idea that morality lay between extremes fascinated Joyce. This eventually led him to seek out the common man for his hero. The life of Leopold Bloom suggests a man of such a moral nature. In the life of a man who was a mean between extremes, poverty and wealth, ignorance and scholasticism etc., one can see the fundamental principles of art and morality demonstrated in the most practical, everyday way. Joyce made this assumption, that in the common man artistic and moral attributes are as much as part of him as his heartbeat. Joyce has Stephen imply this when Stephen speaks of Shakespeare; a most human person, who is a mean: "He acts and is acted on."21 One can see where Joyce conceived of this idea. If art and morality are to be all-pervasive elements in life, if they are to flow from life itself, then qualities of both must exist within every man who lives. In Ulysses, part of Joyce's conception was to show how these elements do exist in a very
subtle yet intense way in his common man, Leopold Bloom. Lenehan recognizes the artistic pervasiveness in life when he notices that: "There is a touch of the old artist about Bloom."

Berkeley and Hume intrigued Joyce because they supported his belief in the value of the present moment. Their method of skepticism made Joyce acutely aware of the present temporal world. They have not allowed for Platonic idealisms in their philosophies. What matters is what is at hand. This idea contributes to Joyce's conception of the human spirit as flowering in present experience. For Joyce, the Mass of the Catholic Church or the causes of political nationalism ask men to believe in something which does not exist at hand. One cannot be certain of their justification. During the Mass the communicant has faith in the presence of Christ in the eucharist; during a time of political upheaval, citizens believe in and shed their blood for the cause. These are examples of people who look outside themselves for the substance of the event. The communicant looks to the host, the citizen to the cause. What Joyce advocates is that the real presence of Christ and the real political battles take place within each man. Look for the substance of these events there. Joyce remained well balanced philosophically. Never allowing himself to become one-sided, Joyce tempered his skepticism with Aristotle's and Aquinas' systematic, concrete approaches to reality.

What Joyce's passionate faith and philosophical backgrounds boil down to is his conviction of substantiation. Substantiation means that any artistic or philosophical claims made about life in general must be substantiated in day-to-day life. Events which occur during the day support the artistic or philosophical points of view which
are true. If they cannot be supported by everyday events then they are not legitimate explanations for reality. They exist, like the world of forms, in the imagination. The very substance of Aristotle, Aquinas, Berkeley or Christ is implicit in living. Art, philosophy, spirituality is inseparable from breakfast, walking, urinating, bathing, drinking, conversing. If one examines Ulysses closely, he will see how life is developed as an organic synthesis of all ideas, art, imaginations and human actions. With each chapter, Ulysses develops into a body, each chapter developing simultaneously artistic and philosophic ideas and also a function of the body. For example, the "Lotus Eaters" episode develops the art of chemistry and botany; the symbol is the eucharist; the organ, the genitals. The book shows the interconnection between life and art. It is Joyce's way of describing his belief in substantiation. The concept of substantiation is very important in understanding how God is present in the work. This difficult concept is explained in greater detail later. Joyce hints at the seed of this belief in Stephen Hero:

The simplest epical form is seen emerging out of lyrical literature when the artist prolongs and broods upon himself as the creator of an epical event and this form progresses till the center of emotional gravity is equidistant from the artist himself and others. The narration is no longer purely personal. The personality of the artist passes into the narration itself, flowing round and round the persons and action like a vital sea. . . . The dramatic form is reached when the vitality which has flowed and eddied round each person fills every person with such vital force that he or she assumes a proper and intangible esthetic life.
This "intangible esthetic life" is not overtly spiritual (trans-substantiation) or beauty (subsubstantiation), but it is substantive. The best in life and living exist in being as fully human as possible. One must assert the basic qualities of human beings: compassion, creativity, procreativity, humor, reason, etc.--all of which are found in the organic substantive synthesis of Ulysses.

Joyce celebrates life in his literature. He said "literature must express the holy spirit of joy." Joyce was a man who had a zest for life. His brother said that "He lives on the excitement of events." While in Dublin he would go out on the town, dance, drink and make speeches. He was a man familiar with city living. Later in life he occasionally let his formality down and frivolity loose and performed his "spider-dance"--a kind of loose-jointed jig--for the delight of his audience. In his life as in his books he celebrates life in all its forms from gross to holy. He reveled in the wonderfully sexual and beheld with silent awe beauty on the strand. In no sense is Joyce a nihilistic writer, nor does he want to limit life to the purely physical as some critics have claimed. Joyce sees all aspects of being human merging into a single unified expression of joy. All happiness, sorrow, death, birth, food, sex, laughter, curses make up the joyfelt expression of humanity. The only condition for this expression is that it be allowed to happen freely, non-dogmatically.
FOOTNOTES, CHAPTER ONE


3 Ellmann, p. 430.

4 Ellmann, p. 390.


6 Budgen, p. 18.

7 See Dubliners by James Joyce.

8 Ellmann, p. 111.

9 Ellmann, p. 296.

10 Burgess, p. 27.


12 Budgen, p. 317.

13 Budgen, p. 152.

14 Ellmann, p. 159.

15 Ellmann, p. 175.

16 Ellmann, p. 134.


18 Ellmann, p. 111.

19 Portrait, p. 247.

20 Ellmann, p. 235.


23 Ellmann, p. 10.

CHAPTER TWO
THE CHARACTER OF LEOPOLD BLOOM

The characteristics of James Joyce help to support the concern of this thesis. Joyce's concern in Ulysses is to portray a free and whole human being, someone who is good. Goodness is an innate quality in his fully human life. Like his artistic or philosophical natures, his spiritual nature must be innate also. It must be substantive. The concern of this thesis deals with substantive presence. God is present in Ulysses in a substantive way. The only method one has of observing his presence is through the thought and actions of characters. This section of the thesis will explore in detail some of the qualities of Leopold Bloom in which the substantive presence of God might exist. The next section will then explicitly treat the God concept.

This section develops two points of Bloom's character: his commonness (important in Joyce's concept of art and morality) and his innate goodness (important in understanding the characteristics of God). Specifically it will explore Bloom's common everyday actions, his reactions against inhibiting forces, and his compassion toward life.

What is unique about this character, Mr. Bloom, who resides in Dublin, Ireland?

"A writer," Joyce remarked, "should never write about the extraordinary. That is for the journalist." Leopold Bloom is one of the most interesting characters in literature. An atheist Jew in an Irish,
Roman Catholic city, Bloom seems to be anything but a common man. But that is what he is--a complacent husband, a father of one, a middle class canvasser. He owns a modest house at #7 Eccles Street. He wakes in the morning, eats breakfast, goes to work and meets with his friends. He is both social as well as private. His intelligence is somewhat above average, but he is not very discriminating. He is of medium height, weight, and build. All in all, Bloom is the run of the mill Dubliner. Vladimir Nabokov remarked that Joyce had intended to portray an ordinary person. But, Mr. Nabokov (author of Lolita) took issue with Bloom's sexuality. He says that Bloom is not common in this regard: "If not on the verge of insanity, at least he is a good clinical example of extreme preoccupation and perversity with all kinds of complications." Joyce would answer that Nabokov does not understand the nature of the Irish character. Everyone in Dublin is a bit eccentric from Mr. Breen, to Buck Mulligan, to Simon Dedalus, to J. J. O'Molloy to the H. E. L. Y. S. men, to Blaze Boylan to Cusheel Boyle O'Connor Fizmaurice Tisdall Farrell. In Dublin everyone has their quirks. Bloom is just one of the crowd. Bloom has also seen death and sorrow, joy and happiness. Like most common people he has experienced a little of everything.

Leopold Bloom is a good man. He proves this over and over again in the book. He is compassionate, kind and respectful. Bloom is innately good. When one considers Bloom's entire day, he would be hard pressed to point out a moment where Bloom wishes ill toward anyone. To the contrary, Bloom regards his entire world with compassion. As John Wyse Nolan quotes elegantly: "I'll say there is much kindness in the jew." (Ulysses, p. 246)
Often in *Ulysses* Bloom is misunderstood. This is especially true when he wants to explain a "phenomenon" to his audience. Bloom is constantly explaining aspects of life. First thing in the morning Molly asks him to explain the word "metempsychosis" in a book she is reading (*Ulysses*, p. 64). Later in the day Bloom explains other soul stirring phenomena. Bloom is vulnerable when he attempts to explain life. He says himself that he is often "made the scapegoat of" (*Ulysses*, p. 457) for the malice of others.

No point more clearly demonstrates the intensity of Bloom's goodness than his pacifism. In the "Cyclops" episode of *Ulysses*, Bloom faces the nationalistic vehemence of the one-eyed Citizen. The Citizen fiercely proclaims Irish predominance over the values of other European cultures. He is the common, but not so typical, bigot. In a discussion on Europeanizing stagnant aspects of Irish culture, Bloom helps defend J. J. O'Molloy's counterpoint with "moderation and botheration." The Citizen bursts out against European civilization:

---Their syphilisation, you mean, says the Citizen. To hell with them! The curse of a goodfornought God light sideways on the bloody thicklugged sons of whores' get! No music and no art and no literature worthy of the name. Any civilization they stole from us. Tonguetied son's of bastard's ghost (*Ulysses*, p. 325).

The Citizen is a bit extreme. When Bloom talks about injustice, the injustice the jews feel, "robbed, says he, plundered. Insulted. Persecuted. Taking what belongs to us by right. At this very moment, says he, putting up his fist, sold by auction off in Morocco like slaves or cattles," he is livid. But unlike the Citizen, he realizes something profound about life that transcends arguments on culture or history:
--But it's no use, says he. Force, hatred, history, all that. That's not life for men and women, insult and hatred. And everybody knows that it's the very opposite of that that is really life.
--What? says Alf.
--Love, says Bloom. I mean the opposite of hatred. (Ulysses, p. 333)

This demonstrates Bloom's orientation toward life. He acts compassionately and fights injustice with passive resistance. Bloom resents violence or intolerance in any shape or form. As Richard Ellmann says, "Bloom has been shown throughout as a decent man who, in his pacific way, combats narrowmindedness the product of fear and cruelty..." In this dark and unfeeling world, Bloom acts in a fully human fashion. His passive resistance consists mainly of communication. As long as men communicate, exchange ideas, no matter if their exchange is heated, the logic of good will prevails. This statement on Bloom at the end of the long novel suggests Bloom's faith in good will:

Why did the absence of light disturb him less than the presence of noise?
Because of the surety of the sense of touch in his firm full masculine feminine passive active hand.
What quality did it (his hand) possess but with what counteracting influence?
The operative surgical quality but that he was reluctant to shed human blood even when the ends justified the means, preferring in their natural order, heliotherapy, psychophysicatherapeutics, osteopathic surgery. (Ulysses, p. 675)

Bloom's solution to violence is to treat the whole man--cure violence by making men whole physically and mentally in the natural order of things. Whole men realize life is love. Bloom questions any actions which threaten this healing toward wholeness. For
example, frightening children:

Babes in the wood. Frightening them with masks too. Throwing them up in the air to catch them. I'll murder you. Is it only half fun? Or children playing battle. Whole earnest. How can people point guns at each other? Sometimes they go off. Poor kids. Only trouble wildfire and nettlerash. *(Ulysses, p. 379)*

The journey to wholeness must begin as children. To build a good society, "All must work, have to, together." *(Ulysses, p. 644).* In the capacity of healing society of its violence and hatred, Leopold Bloom challenges all to an active pacifism.

Bloom's goodness can be defined further when contrasted to institutions or forces which limit the freedom of the human spirit. Secular power and spiritual institutions cannot corrupt Bloom's innate goodness. They try to subvert his goodness by supplanting it with other reasons for being good: the desire for power, the fear of death or hell, the joys of heaven. For Bloom, these reasons for being good drain the vitality of the human spirit; they supplant the special quality of being human, that of wholeness, with imperfect ideals which do not in themselves stand as strong for being good. As it has been stated before, just the person, his being, is reason enough to be good and joyfilled. Leopold's last name, Bloom, suggests the flowering of humanity. It is the powers of this world and of the next which seek of keep Bloom from blooming. If Bloom is to succeed in his battle for humanity, these powers must be shown to fail.5

Bloom's atheism and race show his freedom from dogmatic beliefs. He is an atheistic Jew of Hungarian origins in a Roman Catholic, Irish society. Even though he is seemingly separate from all, he technically belongs to all. He has been baptized into the protestant church three
times and into the Catholic once. And Bloom is an Irishman. He lives in Ireland. Ireland is his nation. Bloom defines a nation as "the same people living in the same place." (Ulysses, p. 331) Nationality for Bloom does not depend on patriotism. He avoids such dogmatic nationalistic outbursts as the Citizen is prone to. Bloom is very much like Ulysses. He is all men and yet no man, just as Ulysses represented the best in all men yet was no man (Ulysses translated in Greek to mean "no one"). This quality of belonging and not belonging. Bloom puts him in a special position to observe Irish church and politics.

If the integrity of the human person is the most important aspect of life, then his wholeness must not be compromised. That which threatens wholeness is to be avoided. When the word "blood" is mentioned, Bloom feels wholeness in danger. The forces which want to keep him from Blooming want blood. The traditional God of the Catholics demands blood: "God wants blood victims. Birth, hymen, martyr, war, foundation of a building, sacrifice, kidney, burnt offering, druids altars." (Ulysses, p. 151) Also political institutions want the blood of young men to fight for their causes. This is an indication that these causes harm the whole human life. Religious institutions and political bodies rank low in Bloom's mind on the ladder of human development. They rank alongside cannibals: "He finds a surprising union in what would seem two quite different persuasions, that of the missionary and that of the cannibal: they both share a relish for Blood." The citizen also relishes blood; for him the word "bloody" is always on his tongue.

Bloom also reacts to another view of life. This view is typified by Stephen's friend Buck Mulligan. Buck lives a life which is less than human, a mere beastly existence. He mocks all serious ideas.
Man is only body. Life is only physical. For Buck love has no meaning. Buck shows this in the "oxen of the sun" episode. In this chapter Bloom is overflowing with a compassionate and loving concern for Mrs. Purefoy. He acknowledges the grace of this moment: the birth of new human life. Buck, however, takes love out of the sex act. By his rude jests he degrades women and sterilizes the act of coition by divorcing it from love. When he enters the hospital he discloses to the medical students present his fantastic scheme for getting rich: He shall begin a National Fertilizing Farm on Lamby Island. It will be named "Omphalos" (Greek for navel), "with an obelisk hewn and erect after the fashion of Egypt and (he will) offer his dutiful yeoman services for the fecundation of any female of what grade of life soever who should there direct with the desire of fulfilling the function of her nature."(Ulysses, p. 402) Bloom rejects this view of humanity. For Bloom love and the creation of life are inseparable. Man is not a beast.

This section has summed up the main characteristics of Bloom's character which will be used in exploring the substantive presence of God. The points may be recounted simply: He is a common man, a naturally good man, and a man who rebels with passive resistance against any forces which seek to keep him from blooming into his full, whole humanity. These qualities will be related to the concept of God in Ulysses. Bloom demonstrates the goodness and characteristics of God. Examining the particulars of Bloom, one can develop the general qualities of God.
FOOTNOTES, CHAPTER TWO

1 Ellmann, p. 470.


3 Nabokov, p. 286.

4 Liffey, p. 4.

5 Liffey, p. 61.

6 Liffey, p. 75.
CHAPTER THREE
THE GOD CONCEPT

This next section develops the concept of God in Ulysses. It shows through a series of quotes the presence and characteristics of a God presence. Five major aspects of His character will be brought out: He is a being of goodness, love and wholeness; He exists as life itself; He remains apart from institutions which paralyze creativity and life; He plays the substantive role of goodness in life—existing in the character of Leopold Bloom; and finally he is the mystery in life which calls men to freedom, unity and wholeness.

A first look at God in Ulysses reveals Him to be a merciful Supreme Being, who is the creator of life and beauty. Two quotes identify this. Firstly, Bloom, upon hearing that Mrs. Purefoy's birth is successful after three days of labor, says that the birth "after an ordeal of such duress now testifies once more to the mercy as well as to the bounty of the Supreme Being." (Ulysses, p. 408) Here, God is shown as the merciful being who allows life to come bountifully into the world. Secondly, Molly Bloom speaks of God at the end of the book. This is the final mention of God in the book. Here, God is seen as the creator of life which is good, whole and beautiful:

as for them saying there's no God I wouldn't give a snap of my fingers for all their learning why don't they go and create something I often ask him atheist or whatever they call themselves go and wash the cobbles off themselves first then go howling for the priest and they
dying and why why because theyre afraid of hell on account of their bad conscience ah yes I know them well who was the first person in the universe before there was anybody that made it all who ah that they dont know neither do I so they you are you might as well stop the sun from rising tomorrow the sun shines for you he said the day we were lying among the rhododendrons on Howthhead in the gray tweed suit and his straw hat the day I got him to propose to me yes first I gave him a bit of seedcake out of my mouth and it was leap year like now yes 16 years ago my God after that long kiss I near lost my breath yes he said I was a flower of the mountain yes so we are flowers all a womans body yes that was the one true thing he said in his life and the sun shines for you today yes . . . (Ulysses, p. 782)

God is an intrinsic part of life. To prove God did not exist one would have to stop the sun from shining. The God concept in Ulysses might be more accessible if one follows this syllogism: God is Love (I Jn 4:8); Love is Life (Bloom, Ulysses, p. 333); Therefore God is Life. Molly represents full-bodied life. The sun shines for her and beneath this sun she blooms. She is a flower of the meadow. One is reminded of the "flowers of the field" of which Christ spoke. Molly allows life to unfold and she does not worry about it. Everything has been provided for. The God of Life has not forsaken them.

Because God is Life, he is the being within every living creature. Moreover, God is love. He is the source of all compassion. God is both life and love. These three concepts (God, life and love) are inseparable. To speak about one is to necessarily speak about the other two. This statement is the key to understanding God in Ulysses. This is Joyce's point of view: one cannot talk of God logically, because philosophically, Hume's skepticism has made it unreasonable. But one may talk about and describe the other two (life and love) because from one's experience of the natural world he knows of them.

From the experience of life and love, one may know God. Bloom demonstrates
how God-like qualities exist within a person who respects life, lives it fully and shows compassion. Bloom does not need a religious institution or a political body to show him God or goodness. Both exist in him because he lives and lives as fully as he can. A body-soul, God-man dichotomy does not exist in Ulysses. Bloom relates to God through living his daily life. Bloom is an example of what was mentioned earlier as substantiation. God exists not apart from but within all living things. But because humans love, God is present in a special way in them. God does not exist in institutions, or buildings or paperwork. He is in Bloom.

This idea of a God who is life can be contrasted to religious institutions which stifle the life giving spirit. It has already been mentioned how the traditional Catholic God demands blood for a sacrifice. This theme of stifled life is also developed in the sexual realm of the book. The Catholic God not only demands blood but also a man's potential to create new life, thus robbing a man of his chance to participate with God in the ongoing act of creation. For Bloom, the creative aspect of life is important. Bloom's respect for creativity is seen in the "Oxen of the Sun" episode where Bloom shows much respect for the creative procreation of life. A question is raised by the book: Can those who do not participate sexually in life most accurately reflect the presence of a God who is and who created life? It is implied here that sexually men most resemble God in that men are to create life through love. (Remember sex is sterile for Bloom if divorced from love.) In Bloom's mind priests have cut themselves off from this fundamental and holy part of life. A religious institution has literally checked the life-giving spirit. Bloom is not interested
in a life of faith. Bloom is concerned about the spirit in the flesh. Alluding to an incarnate life of the spirit, Bloom parodies the mass and says: "This is my body." (Ulysses, p. 86) The spirit of God is incarnate in Bloom. Priests are eunuchs. They are not able to make the connection which leads to new life. As Zoe, the whore, says:

Zoe: There was a priest down here two nights ago to do his bit of business with his coat buttoned up. You needn't try to hide, I says to him I know you've a Roman collar. . . .

Lynch: I hope you gave the good father a penance. . . .

Zoe: He couldn't get a connection. Only, you know, sensation. A dry rush. (Ulysses, pp. 519-520)

Bloom resists the antilife, non-creative aspects of the Church. He substantively judges it. Objectively, he admires it as a business institution. Between indulgences, the collection and sales of holy artifacts the Church nets a good profit. "Ceppi's virgins bright of their oils. Nannetti's father hawed those things, wheeling at doors as I. Religion pays." (Ulysses, p. 260) Prayers and advertisements have something in common:


He comments on the organization of it all: "Wonderful organization, certainly, goes like clockwork." (Ulysses, pp. 82-83. But Bloom cannot be persuaded that it helps the human spirit.

Bloom's objection to the church is that it tranquilizes people. It removes the challenge of seeking God in life and replaces it with a ritual. God is related to in a rigid manner. The essence of life, living each day in a new way and finding God therein, is formalized into a duty. With this in mind, it is to be expected that Bloom would
enter the Church in the "Lotus Eaters" episode of the book. The Lotus Eaters, according to the myth, ate the flowers of the lotus and were drugged into a passive almost comatose state of existence from which they did not want to return. This was not for Ulysses. As Tennyson well puts it in his poem "Ulysses": "How dull it is to pause, to make an end." Religion in this chapter is a narcotic; it tranquilizes the conscience.2 In the "Circe" episode, where the themes of the book are exaggerated, Father Coffey is "holding sleepily a staff of twisted poppies," (Ulysses, p. 473) From poppies opium is extracted. On a sermon for raising money to help convert China's millions to Catholicism, Bloom says this: "Save China's millions. Wonder how they explain it to the heathen Chinese. Prefer an ounce of opium." (Ulysses, p. 80)

During communion, Bloom senses this paralysis most strongly.

Like to see them sitting round in a ring with bulblips, entranced, listening. Still life. Lap it up like milk, I suppose. ... Something going on: some sodality. Pity so empty. Nice discreet place to be with some girl. ... Women knelt in bunches with crimson halters round their necks, head bowed. A batch knelt at the altar rails. The priest went along by them, murmuring, holding the thing in his hands. He stopped at each, took out a communion, shook a drop or two (are they in water?) off it and put in neatly into her mouth. Her hat and head sank. Then the next one: a small old woman. The priest bent down to put it into her mouth murmuring all the time. Latin. The next one. Shut your eyes and open your mouth. What? Corpus. Body. Corpse. Good idea that Latin. Stupefies them first. Hospice for the dying. They don't seem to chew it; only swallow it down. Rum idea: eating bits of corpse why cannibals cotton on to it.

He stood aside watching their blind masks pass down the aisle, one by one, and seek their places. (Ulysses, p. 80)
Bloom has described the communicants blind acceptance of the ritual. Eyes shut, mouths open, it seems to Bloom that no real communion between man and God is taking place.

Look at them. Now I bet it makes them feel happy. Lollipop. It does. Yes, bread of angels it's called. There's a big idea behind it, kind of kingdom of God within you feel. First communicants. Hoky-poky penny a lump. Then you feel all like one family party, same in the theatre, all in the same swim. (Ulysses, p. 81)

Bloom's way of communing is not in how he feels, but in the way he lives. Bloom lightly mocks the ritual, because he is a true communicant: his heart is open to the presence of God as goodness in others. He treats all with the same consideration and compassion as if they were members of his family.

Confession is another aspect of the Church which is drug like. Stanislaus Joyce thought that confession was just another way of ridding people of their responsibility to reform. To him all confession meant was a way to relieve pent-up guilt so that one could begin freshly again in the same rut. It was a way to rid the conscience of the responsibility that comes with humanity, that is, to amend one's actions and to deal maturely with mistakes. In the confession box that responsibility was taken away. Bloom says:

Confession. Everyone wants to. Then I will tell you all. Penance. Punish me, please. Great weapon in their hands. More than doctor or solicitor. Women dying to. And I schschschschs. And did you chachachachacha? And why did you? Look down at her ring to find an excuse. (Marriage was another form of imprisonment for Joyce.) Whispering gallery walls have ears. Husbands learn to his surprise. God's little joke. Then out she comes. Repentance skin deep. Lovely shame. Pray at the altar. Hail Mary and Holy Mary. Flowers, incense, candles melting. Hid her blushes. . . . Old fellow asleep near that confession box. Hence, those snores. Blind faith. Safe in the
arms of the kingdom come. Lulls all pain. Wake this same time next year. (Ulysses, pp. 81-82)

Confession is another narcotic for those who want to escape living.

Another aspect of Bloom's relationship with God needs to be mentioned. Many times in the novel Bloom mocks traditional religiosity. This should not be taken as a denial of God or goodness. He does not deny either. What his mockery serves to point out are the inconsistencies in the accepted stereotype of God. This sort of mockery begins the book. Buck Mulligan sacrilegiously parodies the Mass while he has his morning shave. Even though it is a parody, there is a hint that something important is going to take place. Joyce wants the reader to go below the surface elements of the book and recognize that an authentic "rite of solemn meaning" is about to begin. Joyce here is acting as the artist-priest incarnating life and God into art. It is natural for him to choose the mystery of the Mass to begin his book. In the same sense of the Mass at the book's beginning the reader must get beneath the surface of Bloom's character to see what is truly going on.

Now comes the critical part of the thesis: Can God be proven to be a substantive Being in Ulysses? His presence is implied in the thoughts and actions of others. Joyce, as Richard Ellmann says, is "determined that his book, unlike some of the works of his master, Tolstoy, should not be didactic. What claims he has to make for various possibilities in experience he puts forward with the utmost delicacy. That we are all members of the one body, and of the one spirit, remains implicit rather than explicit. This message he will give us only obliquely and in Greek, in Dublin Greek. Substantiation is a spiritual pervasiveness intrinsic in the passing thoughts and physical actions of the characters. The example of
fatherhood demonstrates what is meant by pervasiveness. Fatherhood is not only the procreative relationship between offspring and parent. It means also a passing down of life, life inherited from one who has lived. Life is more than physical relationships. As Bloom says life is love. Fatherhood is the transmitting of physical life, but also of compassionate awareness. A father may be anyone who has brought another, who was without knowledge, into a compassionate awareness and maturity of life. This example is vague enough, but it serves to show how fatherhood is not only a relationship between one parent and one child, but it exists anywhere where there is an object for another's paternal needs. Fatherhood is a substantive quality of life. As Stephen says:

Fatherhood in the sense of the conscious begetting is unknown to man. It is a mystical estate, an apostolic succession, from only beqetten to only begotten. (Ulysses, p. 206)

Likewise, God's presence in Ulysses is not just found in the character of the church or priest. His presence goes beyond stereotyped roles. His is a mystical estate, but it is a mysticism which permeates and has its fulfillment in everyday life.

There are hints in the novel that substantiation is taking place. First of all, the body plays a leading role. Spirit and body are one. God and body are one.

Mark me now. In woman's womb word is made flesh but in the spirit of the maker all flesh that passes becomes the word that shall not pass away. This is post creation. (Ulysses, p. 391)

Or, in woman's womb God is made flesh and in the spirit of the maker (the spirit of life) all flesh that lives is the spirit which shall not pass away. Life, God, and the body are one. Molly comments in
Bloom's explanation of the word "metempsychosis," the transmigration of souls: "He can never explain a thing simply a way a body can understand." (Ulysses, p. 754). Here Molly hints that concepts such as metempsychosis are unintelligible because they cannot be substantiated in a physical way, they cannot be explained to "a body." Furthermore, if God is life, existing in all things living, then he must be everywhere in Dublin. Stephen says: "The lord of all things as they are whom the most Roman of Catholics call dio bora, hangman god, is doubtless all in all in all of us." (Ulysses, p. 213) Stephen points out how God is "all in all in all" of Dublin. He says early in the novel: "God: noise in the street: very peripatetic." (Ulysses, p. 186) This alludes to the nature of the Holy Spirit who goes whence ever he will. What is more important is that it shows God's innateness in life. Rather than having an esoteric ethereal nature, he is noise in the street. Stephen expounds on this some more, reacting to Mr. Deasy:

--The ways of the Creator are not our ways, Mr. Deasy said. All history moves toward one great goal, the manifestation of God.

Stephen jerked his thumb towards the window saying:

--That is God.
Hooray! Ay! Whrrwhee!

--What? Mr. Deasy asked.

--A shout in the street, Stephen answered, shrugging his shoulders. (Ulysses, p. 34)

This presence of God is not merely pantheistic. It participates in man and nature. During the "Oxen of the Sun" chapter, God's will is felt through nature. Stephen describes the voice of God as:

"Jupiter tonans" or Jupiter the Thunderer. When the medical students
mock the life of which God is the Lord and Giver, God's voice is
heard as a warning:

A black crack of noise in the street here, alack, 
bawled, back. Loud on left Thor thundered: in anger 
awful the hammerhurler. Came now the storm that hist 
his heart. (Ulysses, p. 394)

He thunders through the damp night air. Both Stephen and Bloom hear 
the "voice in the street" and remain aware of the solemnity of the hour 
of birth. The God of Ulysses is an omnipresent God.

When God is seen separate from life, that is, in a world apart 
from the present moment, a relationship exists between man and God 
like the one between Bloom and Gerty MacDowell. In the "Nausicaa" 
episode Bloom and Gerty maintain a perverted relationship. Their 
relationship is paralleled by the men worshiping Mary in the Star of 
the Sea church. The relationship between Bloom and Gerty is falsely 
idealized in Gerty's imagination. Their relationship expresses a 
form of perverted, imperfect love. Joyce refers to their idealizations 
as the "projected mirage." ^5 Richard Ellmann explains this:

There are in fact two mirages, the shared erotic 
fantasy of Bloom and Gerty, and the shared spiritual 
fantasy of the men's retreat at the Star of the Sea 
Church. Gerty observes Bloom "literally worshipping 
at her shrine" and the men are worshipping literally 
at Mary's shrine. Both Gerty and the men seek to 
receive an imaged body, communion being as illusional 
as masturbation." ^6

The imagined bodies, one being communion, the body of Christ and the 
other Bloom's body, cannot be received in an idealized form. They 
can only be present in reality. They can only be known when touched. 
Furthermore, relationships must not exist in the ideal, because the 
ideal may be prone to be flawed, thus the dreams are destroyed. Such 
is the case with Gerty. She is described ideally:
Gerty MacDowell... was in truth as fair a specimen of winsome Irish girlhood as one could wish to see. She was pronounced beautiful by all who knew her... Her figure was slight and graceful. ... The waxen pallor of her face was almost spiritual in its ivorylike purity. ... There was an innate refinement, a languid queenly hauter about Gerty. ... She looked so lonely in her sweet girlish shyness that of a surety God's fair land of Ireland did not hold her equal. (Ulysses, pp. 348-349)

From this idyllic description one might suppose Gerty is the most perfect girl in the world! But Bloom recognizes the reality:

She walked with a certain quiet of dignity characteristic of her but with care and very slowly because Gerty MacDowell was. ...

Tight boots? No. She's lame! 0!

Mr. Bloom watched her as she limped away. Poor girl! That's why she left on the shelf and the others did a sprint. Thought something was wrong by the cut of her jib. Jilted beauty. (Ulysses, p. 368)

Bloom, being in touch with the present moment, breaks the idealized, narcissistic romanticism.

If the presence of God is idealized, as it is between the men in the church and the Virgin Mary, then the possibility exists that the spell might be broken and the ideal crippled. With a substantive God one is always in touch with the reality of God in each living man, woman and child. One worships by respecting the life in others.

Like the "anti-blooming" forces in the work which require man's blood, the concept of substantiation revolves round a blood image. In the last chapter of the work, "Penelope," Molly Bloom ties together the loose ends of the novel in her long monologue. She joins in herself the Aristotelian, Thomistic, and skeptical philosophies by being a soulful, good, experienced human being. She reveals the artistic element of a common person by her fluent speech and its
unique manner of presentation. But most importantly, she unifies
the blood of God with the blood of life, thus substantiating God in
human life. In the middle of her speech, Molly menstruates. Her
blood represents the blood of life because it is a sign that she
is fertile—the potentiality exists for the creation of life within
her womb. Richard Ellmann expresses the unity between Molly's and
God's blood:

But Joyce is establishing a secret parallel and
opposition: the body of God and the body of woman
share blood in common. In allowing Molly to menstruate
at the end Joyce consecrates the blood in the chamber-
pot rather than the blood in the chalices mentioned by
Mulligan at the beginning of the book. For this blood
is substance, not more or less than substance. The
great human potentiality is substantiation, not trans-
substantiation, or subsubstantiation. It is this
quality which the artist has too, in that he produces
living human characters, not ethereal or less than
human ones. It is human blood, not divine. Menstrua-
tion is Promethean. (Ulysses, p. 171)

Just as fire was stolen by Prometheus, so is life, incarnate in
blood, given to humans as a gift from above. Bloom also recognizes
this substantive relationship between life, blood and God. In a
conversation with Stephen concerning why people have passionate tempera-
ments, Bloom uses Molly as an example. Molly lives a full-bodied,
passionate life. Bloom comments on this "Spanish type:"

--It's in the blood, Mr. Bloom acceded at once.
All are washed in the blood of the sun. (Ulysses, p. 637)
The blood of the sun represents the blood of life or the blood of
Christ. All are baptized into life when washed in the light of the
sun. God is all-pervasive, innately connected to life as blood is
innately connected with human life.
The mystery to which God calls men is to a whole human life, lived with compassion and the awareness of other's freedom. If men live this way then they most fully participate with God. Part of this whole life is celebrating life and love. This next section of this thesis shows how God is a God of life and love.

God cannot be limited. He is all life, everything He cannot be categorized or minimized and yet remain God. Stephen seems to recognize this:

--You're not a believer, are you? Haines asked. I mean, a believer in the narrow sense of the word. Creation from nothing and miracles and a personal God.
--There's only one sense of the word, it seems to me, Stephen said. (Ulysses, p. 19)

God is everything living, both nature and man. Seeking God in the Platonic world of forms is a lonely search. Searching for true life or love in Platonic abstractions is frustrating. Stephen ponders his shadow, then a woman whom he likes but has not yet met:

His shadow lay over the rocks as he bent, ending. Why not endless till the farthest star? Darkly they are there behind this light, darkness shining in the brightness, delta of Cassiopeia, worlds. Me sits there with his augur's rod of ash, in borrowed sandals, by day besides a livid sea, unbeheld, in violet night walking beneath a reign of uncouth stars. I throw this ended shadow from me, manshape ineluctable, call it back. Endless would it be mine, form of my form? . . . She trusts me, her hand gentle, the long lashed eyes. Now where the blue hell am I bringing her beyond the veil? Into the ineluctable modality of the ineluctable visuality. She, she, she. What she? . . . Touch me. Soft eyes. Soft soft soft hand. I am lonely here. 0, touch me soon, now. What is the word known to all men? I am quiet here alone. Sad too. Touch, touch me. (Ulysses, pp. 48-49)
In answer to Stephen's platonic loneliness the present reality of the waves of the sea call to him. Notice the last image of the flowers unfurling—a blooming of life represented by the waves.

Listen—a fourworded wavespeech: seeso, hrss, rsseeiss, oos. Vehement breath of waters amid seasnakes, rearing horses, rocks. In cups of rocks it slops: flop, slop, slap: bounded in barrels. And spent, its speech ceases. It flows purling, widely flowing, floating, foampool, flower unfurling. (Ulysses, p. 49)

Bloom echoes the water-life theme later. Notice the series of images: the water, the body and the flower:

Always passing, the stream of life, which in the stream of life we trace is dearer than them all.

Enjoy a bath now: clean trough of water, cool enamel, the gentle tepid stream. This is my body.

He foresaw his pale body reclined in it at full, naked, in a womb of warmth, oiled by scented melting soap, softly laved. He saw his trunk and limbs riprippled over and sustained, buoyed lightly upward, lemon yellow: his navel, bud of flesh: and saw the dark tangled curls of his bush floating, floating hair of the stream around the limp father of thousands, a languid floating flower. (Ulysses, p. 86)

Later on the moisture theme is continued during the birth of Mrs. Purefoy's baby. Before, water was bathed in, now it is breathed. Its connection with life, God and creation (sexuality) become clear.

Substantive unity between God and man is stated:

The air without is impregnated with raindew moisture, life essence celestial, glistening on Dublin stone there under star shiny coelum. God's air, the Allfather's air, scintillant circumambient cessile air. Breathe it deep into thee. By heaven, Theodore Purefoy, thou hast done a doughty deed and no botch! Thou art, I row, the remarkablest progenitor barring none in this chaffering all including most farraginous chronicle. Astounding! In her lay a Godframed God given preformed possibility which thou hast fructified with thy modicum of man's work. Cleave to her! Serve! Toil on, labor like a very bandog and let scholarship and all that thusiasts go hang. (Ulysses, p. 423)
Love is also important in God's relationship to man. Through love men learn to live life, thus participating with God. The images continue. The breathing image again is used to describe the vitality which accompanied Bloom and Molly when they first fell in love. Joyce also uses the bird image--an image only reserved for special occasions which merited a full and free expression of life. God, love and creation (sex) are joined again:

It soared, a bird, it held its flight, a swift pure cry, soar silver orb it leaped serene, speeding sustained, to come, don't spin it out too long long breath he breath long life, soaring high, high resplendent, a flame, crowned, high in the effulgence symbolistic, high, of the ethereal bosom, high, of the high vast irradiation everywhere all soaring all around about the all, the endlessnessnessness. . . . (Ulysses, p. 276)

Bloom through living life fully has reached the endlessness of the ethereal which Stephen yearned for while contemplating his shadow. God is found in living.

The significance of the Ulyssian theme becomes clear. It describes life fully. Bloom recognizes this: "Life, love, voyage round your own little world" (Ulysses, p. 377) This love of Bloom's is active and freeing. Bloom's love can be contrasted with the lack of love in Blaze Boylan. Blaze hunts for flesh. At four in the afternoon he has had an affair with Molly. Molly found him adequate but cold. She cannot love him. Blaze is the typical macho man, "who because of his lack of feeling, turns supple woman into feelingless objects.
Womanizing is like gormandizing. While love animates its object, mere fleshiness petrifies it. Bloom on the other hand wants love and life in the full. His love animates:

Plenty to see and feel yet. Feel live warm beings near you. Let them (the dead) sleep in their maggoty beds. They are not going to get me this inning. Warm beds: warm full-blooded life. (Ulysses, p. 115)

Stephen echoes the theme: "I don't want to die. Damn death. Long live life!" (Ulysses, p. 591)

This is the end of the long section of this thesis. Ulysses is not a spiritless book. Its spirituality is cunningly hid or blatantly obvious depending on one's point of view. It exists substantively. The main points of this section are: God in Ulysses is a Being of goodness and wholeness; He is not found in forces which inhibit a full life and which demand blood; Bloom is the agent for the discovery of these harmful forces which want to replace a creative spirit for empty rituals or causes; finally, God is shown to be an intrinsic element in human life: He is life and goodness. He is the wholeness of all things and His spirit is man's desire for a full compassionate life.
FOOTNOTES, CHAPTER THREE

1 Budgen, p. 84.

2 Liffey, p. 214.

3 Budgen, p. 33.

4 Liffey, p. 176.

5 Liffey, p. 127.

6 Liffey, pp. 127-128.

7 Joyce continues this paragraph sarcastically chiding Mr. Purefoy for his irresponsibility of having too large a family and not being able to support them. For Joyce, the quality of life is as important as creating life!

8 Liffey, p. 81.
CHAPTER FOUR
THE CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD IN ULYSSES

This next section of this thesis demonstrates how the substantive relationship of God to human life expresses itself in the book. The characteristics, that is, the effects of the relationship, will be developed in detail; and, of course, because he is substantively in tune with life, Leopold Bloom will demonstrate these qualities. Hopefully many misconceptions about Ulysses will be removed.

The first misconception which is important to clarify is that fate is the main theme of the book. Vladimir Nabokov in his book Lectures on Literature says this:

What are the main themes of the book?
1) The hopeless past
2) The ridiculous and tragic present
3) The pathetic future
This is the main theme: Bloom and Fate

Fate certainly received major emphasis in the classical Greek tradition and also played a major role in Ulysses' adventures. But fate is used differently in Ulysses. What is developed here is that fate is a necessary consequence of freedom. The main theme of the book is Bloom's fight against anti-blooming forces. The ultimate objective is a flowering of life in its fullest. One aspect of this full life is to allow for free choice on the part of others. Never denying to others what one claims for himself. This freedom resembles the traditional view of free will. God allows man freedom to do as he pleases.
God hopes that, because of his goodness and love, man will choose his ways. This same view is projected substantially in *Ulysses* by the acts and attitudes of Mr. Bloom. Bloom allows others the freedom to choose and do what they want to, and he accepts the outcome of their choices. First, the fatalistic elements of the work will be identified, then the concept of moral freedom will be developed to explain the fatalistic elements. Allowing others the freedom to think, act, and live necessarily demands that one accept the fate of what happens.

Nabokov says that the characters in *Ulysses* live parts in a careful composition, in a kind of "slow dance of fate." Frank Budgen mentions Bloom's pessimism. "And in spite of his unperturbed, complacent air, is there a character in literature more pessimistic than Bloom? He seems to have an innate knowledge of the second law of thermodynamics. His universe is running down." For example:

Gasballs spinning about, crossing each other, passing. Some old ding dong always. Gas, then solid, then world, then cold, then dead shall drifting around, frozen rock like that pineapple rock. (*Ulysses*, p. 167)

Fate seems to be prevalent in life. Bloom is chained to fate as Clytemnestra is chained to hers:

But when the chains of fate bound her fast and she must needs be mastered.

One thing Bloom is bound to is time. The past has slipped away.

This expresses the "lost past" theme of Nabokov:

I was happier then. Or was I? Or am I now? Twenty-eight I was. She twenty-three. When we left Lombard Street West something changed. Could never like it again after Rudy (Bloom's only son died at birth when they lived on Lombard Street). Can't bring back time. Like holding water in your hand. (*Ulysses*, p. 168)
Time also steals beauty. Molly comments about Milly's beauty: "a pity it won't stay that way I was too but there's no use going to the fair with the thing." (Ulysses, p. 768) While contemplating the Jewish race and the Promised Land, Bloom comments on the effect time has had on it:

The oldest people. Wandered far away over all the earth, captivity to captivity, multiplying, dying, being born everywhere. I lay there now. Now it could bear no more. Dead: an old woman's: the grey sunken cunt of the world.
Desolation.
Grey horror seared his flesh. (Ulysses, p. 61)
Bloom indeed is pessimistic sometimes.
Fate seems to be cyclic: Life, death, birth life:

His smile faded as he walked, a heavy cloud hiding the sun slowly, shadowing Trinity's surly front. Trams passed one another, ingoing, outgoing, clanging. Useless words. Things go on the same: day after day: squads of police marching out, back: trams in, out. Those two loomies marching about. Dignans carted off. Mina Purefoy swollen belly on a bed groaning to have a child tugged out of her. One born every second somewhere. Other dying every second. (Ulysses, p. 164)

One cannot escape from life or death. "A life fate awaits him. . . ." (Ulysses, p. 196)

In a fatalistic world there is very little free will. Man is caught in life and it is ultimately cruel to him. As Bloom says: "Instinct rules the world in life and death." (Ulysses, p. 516) Part of this world order is the food chain: predator hunting for survival. Death is at its heart. "Sounds a bit silly till you come to look into it well. Justice it means but it's everybody eating everybody else. That's what life is after all." (Ulysses, p.122) Bloom feels this world order at work in the afternoon:
No one is anything.  
This is the very worst hour of the day. Vitality.  
Dull, gloomy: hate this hour. Feel as if I had  
been eaten and spewed. (Ulysses, p. 164)

Fate makes its presence felt in relationships between men and  
women. The obvious example is the clandestine meeting between Molly  
and Blaze Boylan. Destiny arranged the time: four o'clock. Bloom  
feels:

A soft qualm of regret, flowed down his backbone,  
increasing. Will happen, yes. Prevent. Useless:  
can't move. (Ulysses, p. 67)

Bloom explains their attraction as magnetic:

Back of everything is magnetism. Earth for instance  
pulling this and being pulled. . . Magnetic needle  
tells you what's going on in the sun, the stars. Little  
piece of steel iron. When you hold out the fork. Come.  
Come. Tip. Woman and man that is. Fork and steel.  
Molly, he. (Ulysses, p. 374)

Just as Boylan and Molly are fated to meet, so also Bloom and Molly  
were first drawn together by fate:

Full voice of perfume of what perfume does your lilac  
trees. Bosom I saw, both full, throat warbling. First  
I saw. She thanked me. Why did she me? Fate. Spanishy  
eyes. Under a peartree alone patio this hour in old  
Madrid one side in shadow Dolores she dolores. At me.  
Luring. Ah, alluring. (Ulysses, p. 275)

The final aspect of fate lies in death. Stephen says:

(choking with fright, remorse and horror) They said  
I killed your mother. He offend your memory. Cancer  
did it, not I. Destiny. (Ulysses, p. 580)

This is said about Bloom and his dead son, Rudy, while Bloom listens  
to the labor screams of Mrs. Purefoy:

He (Bloom) still had pity of the terror causing  
shrieking of shrill women in their labor and he was  
minded of his good Lady Marion that had borne him an  
only manchild which on his eleventh day on live had  
died and no man could save so dark is destiny. (Ulysses, p. 390)
These are most of the fatalistic themes in the book: entropy, the lost past, fading beauty, cyclic life, cruel life, destined love and death. But if one looks critically, all these elements do not deal with fate. "Fate" is used as a catchall word to describe the necessary conditions and consequences of life. It is not fate in the Greek sense of the word: that inscrutable, powerful force which defied men's wills and controlled the course of their lives.

If one looks at the first four characteristics on the list above, one may see that they are necessary conditions for life. They help define it. Entropy, for example, describes change. Change is a part of life. Entropy exists as a destructive force, creativity as a positive force. The next three items on the list: the lost past, fading beauty and cyclic life describe the passing of time. Closely related to change, time is a necessary condition for being. Life is temporal, so of course the past is irrecoverable, beauty fades and people die. Death, in the fourth and seventh item, is natural enough. It is necessarily a condition for life. To live, one must die. Destiny did not take Stephen's mother or Bloom's son. It happened because of cancer or a baby's illness. The word "fate" helps reconcile oneself with a sad but true condition for life. The fifth item, cruel life, everyone eating everyone else, presents a sour look at the food chain. Of course everyone does not eat everyone else, this is only an analogy for the grumpy way Bloom was feeling. And instinct, instinct may rule the world, but judging by Bloom's thoughts and actions his instinct is different than pure animal instinct: eat or be eaten. For Bloom to be compassionate and loving is instinct. It comes natural for him because he is human. It is as instinctual as eating and intercoursing.
So, where does the concept of moral freedom come in to help explain things? The sixth point, destined love, can, in part, be explained by the concept of moral freedom. One can see how Bloom believes it is fate which draws people together like magnets attracting steel. Maybe there is something mysterious in life which draws people together. This thesis presents no argument against that. But what it does argue is a subtle point in the case of Molly's and Boylan's relationship. The subtle point demonstrates the profound use of freedom in Ulysses.

At four o'clock in the afternoon Blaze Boylan meets Molly Bloom at Mrs. Bloom's house. They rehearse material for an upcoming concert, then go to bed together. They may have been drawn together by magnetism, but Bloom seems to think that it was fate that they must sleep together. Bloom fails to stop their meeting. He could have returned home at 3:45 and stayed home. Does Bloom believe in fate so strongly that he will not violate it? But why not go home at 3:45 p.m. and call his return fate?

There must be a less ambiguous explanation for Bloom's actions. This following argument accounts for Bloom's actions. If God is a substantive part of Bloom's life, then, in the measure that Bloom participates in this God presence, the characteristics of God to allow for men's free choice and the consequences of their actions will also be a characteristic of Bloom. In Bloom's very nature—to allow others their freedom to do what they want—there God is found and the explanation of his refusal to act. In the whole of Ulysses, Bloom never violates another's freedom. In this case, he does not violate Molly's freedom to see whomever she wants. Bloom's conviction for this freedom
even goes beyond the rights he has through the marriage bond. Joyce believed marriage should be avoided because it infringes on man's free, creative spirit. It was another bondage, like nationalism. One might argue, saying: "Why the hell doesn't Bloom stand on his own and fight back somehow?" Bloom does, but in his pacifistic way. Just as God stands on the strength of his character, hoping His ways of acting and loving will prevail over man, so does Bloom stand on the strength of his character to prevail over Boylan and win freely Molly's love. In the end, Bloom does prevail!! At the close of the novel, Molly bloodlessly slays her lovers for Bloom by always returning to him in her thoughts. Bloom's strength of character is enough to win the day! Boylan is vanquished.

But the day is not without its sufferings. Just as Christ suffered by allowing the people to reject Him and crucify Him on the cross—a fate which he redeemed passively, so Bloom suffers by allowing others to choose against him. Bloom worries all day about Boylan and Molly:


Before the National Library Bloom spies Boylan:

The flutter of his breath came forth in short sighs. Quick . . . No. didn't see me . . . My heart! (Ulysses, p. 183)

Bloom suffers further in the "Cyclops" episode by allowing for the hostile opinions of the nationalist. In the "Oxen of the Sun" episode, he is conscious of some "impudent mocks" which he, however, "had borne with being the fruits of that age upon which it is commonly charged
that it knows not pity." (Ulysses, p. 407) Bloom's greatest suffering occurs in the "Circe" episode where he is extolled by the crowd then immediately betrayed by them:

Alexander J. Dowie: (violently) Fellow Christians and anti Bloomites, the man called Bloom is from the roots of hell, a disgrace to Christian men. A fiendish libertine from his earliest years this stinking goat of mendes gave precocious sighs of infantile debauchery recalling the cities of the plain, with a dissolute grandam. This vile hypocrite, bronzed with infamy is the white bull mentioned in the Apocalypse. . . . The mob! Lynch him! Roast him! He's as bad as Parnell was. Mr. Fox! (Mother Grogan throws her boot at him. . . .) (Ulysses, p. 492)

This denouncement is a significant reversal from the preceding pages where he was hailed as "Leopold, Lord Mayor of Dublin," (Ulysses, p. 478) "the world's greatest reformer," (Ulysses, p. 481) "the most serene and potent and very puissant ruler of this realm, God save Leopold the First!" and "He's a man like Ireland wants. (Ulysses, pp. 482 and 484) But later in the "Circe" episode, Blom is made to suffer even more at the hands of the Circe: Bella Cohan. Bloom, who has been shown to be the defender of womanhood throughout the book, is tortured as a woman:

Bello: (Bella has changed from a woman to a man) quenches his cigar angrily on Bloom's ear. (Bloom has changed sex from a man to a woman.) Where's that Goddamned cursed ashtray?

Bloom: Ask for that every ten minutes. Beg, pray for it as you have never prayed before. (He throws a leg astride and, pressing with horseman's knees, calls in a hard voice.) Gee up! A cockhorse to Banbury cross. I'll ride him in the Elipse stakes. (He bends sideways and squeezes his mount's testicles roughly, shouting) Ho! off we pop! I'll nurse you in proper fashion. (Ulysses, p. 534)
What these examples show is that most of the suffering which Bloom endures comes from allowing for other's freedom. A quote from the "Oxen of the Sun" sums this up:

It was now for more than the middle span of our allotted years that he had passed through the thousands vicissitudes of existence and, being of a wary ascendency and self a man of rare forecast, he had enjoined his heart to repress all notions of a rising choler and, by intercepting them with the readiest precaution, fostered within his breast that plenitude of sufferance which base minds jeer at, rash judges scorn and all find tolerable and but tolerable. (Ulysses, p. 407)

The moral freedom, which is a substantive characteristic of God, is not without its price. One must sometimes suffer and this suffering is very God-like as Christ proved on his way to the cross.

Because the God of Ulysses is a substantive presence, He exists in daily events. A full participation, with moderation, in the secular world is the only way to come to know what this life, this God is about. One must participate in order to understand. This participation is not necessarily first hand. It can come through anything which contains life: via nature, art or people. As one is in relationship to these he is participating with life and God. Being in relationship obviously connotates more than a knowledge of life: it means a sharing in the qualities (the essences) which give character to the life of nature, art or people. This must sound nebulous and insubstantially abstract, that is why Bloom exists as a model of someone who participates fully (as he is able) in the qualities which give life and God their character. Leopold is in relationship to life. The proceeding presents a detailed analysis of the secular ways Bloom emphasizes living.

For Bloom the soul does not exist outside of the person. He is so imbued with this concept that he never distinguishes between body
and soul. As Molly says: "he says your soul you have no soul inside only grey matter because he doesn't know what it is to have one." (Ulysses, pp. 741-742) And Bloom says to Stephen:

—You, as a good Catholic, he observed, talking of body and soul, believe in the soul. Or do you mean the intelligence, the brain power as such, as distinct from any outside object, the table, let us say, that cup? I believe in that myself because it has been explained by competent men as the convolutions of the grey matter. (Ulysses, p. 633)

For Bloom the only thing that counts is what can be proven, seen, like the grey matter of the brain. A man's life is what he does, that is, what he can be seen to do. Bloom would rather see a man's trade on his tombstone than the date he died. "More interestingly if they told you what they were. So and so, wheelwright." (Ulysses, p. 113) Because of this attitude, one can conclude that if God is going to exist for Bloom he better not exist somewhere above. But, he better show His face and what He can do right now!

This secular emphasis penetrates Ulysses to its very core in the sexual and food allusions. Man must eat and procreate to continue life. The substantive God exists both in the daily bread and in the loving act of creation. Frank Budgen comments that "Bloom's moral staying power is rooted in his body's regularity." Bloom, through the course of the book, does not eat or drink overly much in order to maintain the regularity of his body. His physical moderation parallels the moderation and temperance of his thoughts. He is always full of common sense. How men participate in life can be seen in the way they eat. Bloom, a man of moderation, eats civilly and with moderation, savoring the flavor; men who are beastly and inhuman in their thoughts eat like animals; and men, like Stephen,
who spend much of their life in abstract thought eat very little.
The food allusions are quite important. In fact, one introduces
the famous character of Mr. Leopold Bloom:

Mr. Leopold Bloom ate with relish the inner
organs of beast and fowls. He liked thick giblet
soup, nutty gizzards, a stuffed roast heart, liver
slices fried with crust crumbs, fried hencod's
roes. Most of all he liked grilled mutton kidneys
which gave to his palate a fine tang of faintly
scented urine. (Ulysses, p. 55)

Bloom appreciates food, even for reasons which seem to border on
the grotesque. Compare his appreciation with the men eating at
Burton's lunch house:

His heart a stir he pushed in the door of the
Burton restaurant. Stink gripped his trembling
breath: pungent meat juice, slop of greens, see
the animals feed.

Men, men, men.

Perched on high stools by the bar, hats
shoved back, at the tables calling for more bread
no charge, smiling, wolfing gobfuls of sloppy
food, their eyes bulging, wiping wetted moustaches.
A pallid suetfaced young man polished his tumbler
knife fork and spoon with his napkin. New set of
microbes. A man with an infants saucestained
napkin tucked round him shovelled gurgling soup
down his gullet. A man spitting back on his
plate: half masticated gristle: no teeth to chew-
chewchew it. Chump chop from the grill. Bolting
to get it over. Sad booster's eyes. Bitten off
more than he can chew. Am I like that? See our-
selves as others see us. Hungryman is an angry
man. Working tooth and jaw. Don't! O! Above!
... Smells of men. His gorge rose. Spaten
sawdust, sweetish warm cigarette smoke, reek of
plug, spilt beer, men's beery piss, the stale
ferment. ... Scoffing up stew gravy with
sopping siblets of bread. Lick it off the plates
man! Get out of this ... That fellow ramming
a knieful of cabbage down as if his life depended
on it. ... Tear it limb from limb. Second
nature to him. ... Out. I hate dirty eaters.
(Ulysses, pp. 169-170)
Stephen, the man of theory, eats barely anything at all, and because of that ends up after more than a few beers amazingly drunk and ill.

The food allusions tell the reader who is leading a full life: are they beastly eating like pigs, or are they pretending to be more than men by eating almost nothing and only drinking "this mazer . . . this mead which is indeed parcel of my body but my soul's bodiment" (Ulysses, p. 391), or are they like Leopold, a moderate, who savors and enjoys the tastes of food.

Sex is used as another allusion for the presence of a substantive God. It is shown in many complex ways. What will be examined here are two uses: one, in the "Nausicaa" episode where Bloom masturbates; and two, where it is used as a means to participate in the presence of a creative God.

At once in the scene between Gerty and Bloom there strikes a note of perversion. Here a middle aged man masturbates before a 16-year-old girl and she enjoys every minute of it. But as it has been mentioned before, this is an outward sign of the perverted relationship which exists when anyone, the men in the church, or Gerty, who cast themselves toward an unsubstantiated ideal. The men in the church idolize Mary without recognizing the sacredness of womanhood in this life. Gerty idolizes that "dark figure," Bloom, without knowing a thing about him. The sickenly sweet, picture perfect ideals sometimes prove not to be so, as in Gerty's case. What is important in this discussion is to place Bloom's act in some context where it will make sense. It seems out of character
for Bloom, whom the reader believes to be a good man.

Looking at the event closely, it is obvious that neither party feels any regret because of the incident. Both seemed almost enthralled by the intensity that was communicated in their glances. Gerty forgives him his naughtiness: "But there was an infinite store of mercy in those eyes, for him too a word of pardon even though he had erred and sinned and wandered" (Ulysses, p. 367). She shall even dream of him: "Was it goodbye? No. She had to go but they would meet again, there, and she would dream of that till then, tomorrow, of her dream of yester eve." (Ulysses, p. 367). Finally, as she is ready to go:

Their souls met in a last lingering glance and the eyes that reached her heart, full of a strange shining, hung enraptured on her sweet forgiving smile, a smile that verged on tears and then they parted. (Ulysses, p. 367)

All in all, it has not produced any great psychological damage to the two. But this is not as important as what Bloom's masturbation has brought about. Before the incident the style was flowery and sugary sweet. It was very narcissistic--Gerty was always idealizing herself in her own mind and projecting herself as a queenly virgin in the mind of Bloom. In essence, she was practicing romantic self deception. Bloom's act brings Gerty and he back to reality. For the skeptic philosopher David Hume returning to nature was one's only way to retain one's identity amid the unreality of philosophic abstraction. In Bloom's case, his return to his natural desire assures him of not getting carried away into that unreal, sappy world of Gerty. Bloom substantively remains in tune with life. He counteracts the extreme idealizations with an extreme act in turn,
thus restoring a balanced frame of mind. Richard Ellmann thinks that Bloom's masturbation is a way of joining the ideal and the real, "and while simplistic or vulgar, it is not negligible. It brings Bloom back to goodwill and away from indifference. He leaves behind Narcissus drowned in the pool." Undoubtedly, this is a controversial section of the book. What has been pointed out here is that Bloom's masturbation, though on first glance perverted, is mutually consented to. Moreover, it delivers Bloom from narcissism to reality and wholeness.

The second discussion of sex is less ambiguous, thus its presentation more straightforward. It concerns sex as a means by which to participate in the substantive presence of God through the joy and love of creating. The obvious place where this theme is demonstrated is in the "Oxen of the Sun" episode. Here, the medical students are laughing at and making all sorts of profane jokes about the act of sexual intercourse. Meanwhile, a mother labors with a child conceived in love. The medical students, by their language, commit a "crime against fecundity by sterilizing the act of coition." Language was sacred to Joyce as he proclaims by Finnegans Wake. Joyce took literally the words of John: "In the beginning was the Word: the Word was with God and the Word was God. . . . Through him all things came to be, not one thing had its being but through him" (John 1:1,3). In the students' case, they destroyed beingness by their words. They disassociated sex from love. Richard Ellmann expresses the point clearly when he says that "This is the ultimate method of sterilizing the act of coition, by disengaging it altogether from love." The students deny life to the unborn. They deny the continuation of life.
The students are, in effect, rejecting something sacred to all humans: the ability to participate in the ongoing act of creation begun by God. Bloom, as it has been shown, has compassion for all those women birthing children. His loving concern counterbalances the ribaldry of the riotous medical students.

If one looks at how Molly speaks of sex, one sees how it is identified with a full life. She feels insulted that she was made "like that with a big hole in the middle" of her, because men only get pleasure out of it, while the women get pregnant. They have to burden: "if someone gave them a touch of it themselves theyd know what I went through with Milly nobody would believe cutting her teeth too." (Ulysses, p. 742) In Molly's mind the sexual act is not divorced from love and children. It is meaningless unless accompanied by love. The case of Blaze Boylan demonstrates how sterile sex is without love. She had sex with him in the afternoon but no love. Bloom on the other hand has not made love to Molly in eleven years, yet his devotion binds her to him. As she puts it: "Poldy has more spunk in him yes." (Ulysses, p. 742) God becomes present in life through loving acts. Love animates life.

Both the food and sexual themes in Ulysses reveal the way in which men may participate fully in the presence of God: through moderation and love. The key is to stay in touch with one's humanity before all else. Bloom is a standard example of someone who, to the best of his ability, lives life fully. His love and acts of good will show the presence of God.
Up to this point God has been shown to exist substantively as a part of the person. Characteristics which reveal the presence of God are fate (in the sense of the fate which stems from free choice), and the emphasis given to secular topics, i.e., eating and sex, because the only way to know God is to participate in the physical events of life. An example of the fate theme is Molly's rendezvous with Boylan. The secular emphasis is seen in the attention given to how people eat and how they treat the topic of sexuality. Another aspect of Ulysses which clearly suggests the presence of a substantive Being of goodness is in Bloom's compassion and good will. Here God is the innate goodness in Bloom's character. Examining Bloom's actions and thoughts reveals this.

Bloom is a humanitarian. He wants to clothe the poor child: "Good Lord, that poor child's dress is in flitters. Underfed she looks too." (Ulysses, p. 152). Frank Budgen says of Bloom that "he was and felt himself to be the father of all his race." He has compassion for the birthing pangs of Mrs. Purefoy: "Poor Mrs. Purefoy! Methodist husband. Method in his madness." (Ulysses, p. 161) And at the birth of her baby, he is the compassionate man amid the rude jests of the youths:

And Sir Leopold that was the goodliest guest that ever sat in scholars' hall and that was the meekest man and the kindest that ever laid husbandly hand under her and that was the very truest knight of the world one that ever did minion service to lady gentle pledged him courtely in the cup. Woman's woe with wonder pondering. . . . But, said he, or it be long too she will bring forth by God His bounty and have joy of her childling for she hath waited marvellously long. (Ulysses, p. 388)
Bloom is not only kind toward children and babies but to all women and men. One is reminded of the quote from James: "Pure, unspoilt religion, in the eyes of God our Father is this: coming to the help of orphans and widows when they need it, and keeping oneself uncontaminated by the world." (Jm 1:27) Bloom helps orphans and widows when he helps Dilly Dedalus and dead Paddy Dignam's family. He remains uncontaminated from the forces, beastliness, and platonism, which would deprive him of his humanity and Godlikeness. A few more examples: at those who rudefully joke at women Bloom thinks:

Those who create themselves wits at the cost of feminine delicacy (a habit of mind he never did hold with) to them he would concede neither to bear the name nor to herit the tradition of proper breeding: while for such that having lost all forebearance, can lose no more, there remained the sharp antidote of experience to cause their insolency to beat a precipitate and inglorious retreat. (Ulysses, p. 407)

Because of Bloom's full experience of life, he knows what compassion is, whereas, the young insurgents, because of their limited experience, do not. Before the mockery of the Citizen and Co., Bloom defends Mrs. Breen who is married to the crazy "half and half Mr. Breen": "And Bloom explained he meant, on account of it being cruel for the wife having to go round after the old stuttering fool." (Ulysses, p. 321) Later his compassion and kindness endear him to Molly: "still I like that about him polite to old women like that and waiters and beggars too hes not proud out of nothing." (Ulysses, p. 738) Bloom's gentleness is also seen in his befriending of Stephen, whom he protects in the "Circe" episode and watches after later until Stephen is sobered up. The theme of Bloom's goodness is exaggerated and dominates the "Circe" episode. Bloom is transformed from Moses to
the Lord Mayor of Dublin to the defender of the masses. The people want to immortalize his words, make a shrine of his house and name a boulevard after him. (Ulysses, p. 479)

Along with Bloom's compassion come his acts of good will. He performs many kind deeds, from bringing Molly her breakfast in bed, to visiting the poor widow of Paddy Dignam, to helping a blind boy cross the street. Many of Bloom's acts are linked to the paternal themes of the book. Richard Ellmann notices: "Paternity is a more powerful motif in the book than sexual love." Bloom swears by the seat of his fatherhood to uphold his good faith:

William, Archbishop of Armagh: (In purple stock and shovel hat) Will you to your power cause law and mercy to be executed in all your judgments in Ireland and territories thereunto belonging?

Bloom: (Placing his right hand on his testicles, swears) So may the Creator deal with me. All this I promise to do. (Ulysses, p. 482)

Bloom, the "father of thousands," and the "father of all his race" paternally gives good counsel to young Stephen:

En route, to his taciturn and, not to put too fine a point on it, not yet perfectly sober companion, Mr. Bloom, who at all events, was in complete possession of his faculties, never more so, in fact disgustingly sober, spoke a word of caution re the dangers of nighttown, women of ill fame and swell mobsmen... (Ulysses, p. 614)

It was the last wish of Bloom's father, Virag, that Leopold be good to his old dog Athos. Bloom faithfully followed through on that request.

By these examples, one may conclude that both in thought and action, Bloom is a good man. Furthermore, his attitude testifies to a substantive presence of goodness. Through his intense experience
of everyday life, he participates in the goodness of living. His thoughts and actions show a certain purity of mind: both his intentions and actions are one. His purity of mind is not the purity of an ascetic, whose mind seeks to free itself from any nongodly thought. Instead, Bloom's mind reflects the purity which contemplates the improvement of life and which realizes this vision in daily action.

Bloom is frustrated by not achieving good:

Why would a recurrent frustration—the more depress him?

Because at the critical turning point of human existence he desired to amend many social conditions, the product of inequality and avarice and international animosity. (Ulysses, p. 696)

Even nature recognizes Bloom's goodness. The gulls are his friends because they have been "trained by kindness" (Ulysses, p. 453) And near the end of the novel, Bloom forgives his enemies—the Citizen and Boylan.

Because of Bloom's innate goodness and full participation in the events of his long day, one has a hint that there is a definite essence of goodness which is prevalent in Bloom's life. This is the substantive presence of God. Bloom's emphasis on the secular aspect of life confirms that to know God one must not seek the ideal but participate in the physical. The inherent goodness of creation and the mysteries of life exist there.

Probably the most important characteristic of a substantive God in Ulysses is testified to by the intensity with which Bloom lives life. He is always thinking, feeling and commenting upon it. He participates in the exchange of ideas which spark original thoughts. He interacts socially and shows that one can live in Dublin and not
be pacified or anesthetized by its traditions and ignorance. One has only to confront Bloom with any character from The Dubliners to see how much more alive and free Bloom is. Bloom is an emancipated being among the slaves of a harsh Irish existence. This freedom of spirit, desire for life, is the presence of God, who is Life. Bloom belongs to no church or party or club, but he is intimately bound to all people by his celebration of his humanity. Just as most organizations seek a betterment of life, Bloom has his own way of acquiring his good ends. "The content of Bloom's Utopia is the content of all Utopias worthwhile--the general good and unity of the whole human race."

Bloom's way is to proclaim and act upon the sanctity of human life--intimately connected in the image of the Maker. As Richard Ellmann says:

By god Joyce does not intend Christianity; although Bloom has been generously baptized into the the Protestant Church and the Catholic Church, he is obviously not Christian. Nor is he concerned with the conception of a personal god, the divine part of Bloom is simply his humanity--his assumption of a bond between himself and other created beings. What Gabriel Conroy has to learn so painfully at the end of "The Dead" that we all--dead and living--belong to the same community, is accepted by Bloom from the start and painlessly.

Now the point has come where the two questions raised at the beginning of this thesis might be answered. First of all, if Bloom is Joyce's complete character where does his spirituality lay? As it has been shown Bloom's spirituality is substantive, that is, it exists in his very being. God as Life and Love is an innate part of Bloom. The final statement is this: Bloom's spirituality lies in his compassionate participation in life. The second question: what are some of the characteristics which define this relationship?
Basically, there are four major characteristics of this relationship. The first is that it is a freeing relationship. Because this presence of God allows for the freedom of man to choose his fate, Bloom likewise allows for the freedom of those around him. This moral freedom helps explain some of the fatalistic elements of the work. Fate is a consequence of freedom. Sometimes this freedom has its price and one must suffer for another's choice. Bloom's strength of character usually redeems bad choices, like Molly's for Boylan. The second characteristic is Bloom's firm grounding in the secular world as opposed to a flight into the ideal. Because of the Celtic philosophers, especially David Hume, it has become illogical to speak about that which is not of this world. If one is going to describe the substantive presence of God he must point to the experience at hand and demonstrate how certain qualities are God-like. It follows that if God is innately in life, indeed life itself, then a fuller participation in the qualities which define human life is a fuller participation in God. Bloom by his compassionate participation in everyday living partakes of God's goodness. Bloom possesses the fundamental goodness of God just by being. Sharing in the qualities of human life to become more whole is a strong theme in the book. Molly reaffirms this with her "Yes" to life at the end of the novel. The third characteristic is this: if God in Ulysses is a God of goodness and love then kindness and compassion will be a sign of his presence. In the course of his day, Bloom approaches situations and people with kindness and compassion. At one point he goes as far to shout that life is love. The fourth and final characteristic is
closely related to the above. God who creates all life by his beingness and love exists as the vital human spirit within Bloom and *Ulysses*. The spirit calls Bloom to wholeness. Its freedom is characterized by the freedom of Bloom from inhuman forces which strive to keep him from blooming into the flower of his humanhood. *Ulysses* is a masterpiece. Within its covers there is something, let it be called spirit, which shall lastingly display the human element of life.

What has been seen so far is that Joyce has a great but deceiving way of making his point. He recognizes the presence of God in human existence but outwardly he leads one to believe the opposite. Joyce in *Ulysses* has freed God as he has freed Bloom from dogmatic restraints. He has placed God in his rightful place as the very core of existence. He is such a substantial part of *Ulysses* that his presence is indistinguishable from human goodness. He is the source of being, goodness and love. Bloom is one of his children--an atheistic son!
FOOTNOTES, CHAPTER FOUR

1 Nabokov, p. 288.
2 Nabokov, p. 288.
3 Budgen, p. 277.
5 Budgen, p. 78.
6 Liffey, p. 133.
7 Budgen, p. 215.
8 Liffey, p. 135.
9 Budgen, p. 226.
10 Liffey, p. 131.
11 Budgen, p. 278.
12 Ellmann, p. 372.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The body of this thesis is now complete. What remains is to draw a conclusion, present a few arguments against the points of this thesis, show where Joyce is surprisingly bound to his Catholicity in Ulysses, and finally praise him for his passionate concern for humanity and for his literature which affirms the human spirit.

This conclusion centers round three main points: 1) Criticism of Joyce's substantive view of God, 2) Joyce as a Catholic writer, and 3) Joyce's affirmation of the human spirit. Seven points of criticism will be addressed. The first criticism is legitimate enough: "It is fine for Joyce as an artist to conceive of Bloom's relationship to God in a substantive manner, but is such a relationship conceivable in reality? After all, Bloom is a self proclaimed atheistic Jew. How can he know of God?" This argument stresses that unless a man acknowledge his relationship with the divine it does not exist. Furthermore, it brings up the point that a substantive presence of God in reality is inconceivable--a life such as Bloom's is merely--and literally, a fiction.

The first part may be answered that man need not acknowledge a Creator in order to be in relationship to him. Even traditional Christians believe that God will always be present even if the hearts and minds of unbelievers deny him. Furthermore, Bloom by his thoughts
and actions respects the humanity of other individuals. He also recognizes the divine mercy of a "Supreme Being" at the labor of Mrs. Purefoy. Bloom through his love and goodness is in relationship to God. The second part of the argument may be answered as follows: logically and according to some metaphysicians if God is Being and Creator then all life and creation is part of God. God is beingness, creation is of Him. Therefore, He is an essential element in whatever He creates. If He creates man, He is a part of man. He is substantively in man. Moreover, if one grants that characters of literature live by their own right in literary art, then Bloom has being--thus, he participates in the beingness of God. In life there are certain individuals, who, attesting to no religious beliefs, are very "holy" or good people. Bloom is very much like them. Frank Budgen has a prejudiced but insightful view into this whole matter of belief:

It seems to me self-evident that there is more merit in the goodness and humanity of the godless unbeliever than in the righteousness of the godfearing. The one is following his own good instincts and the other is obeying the crack of the whip or is hoping for an eternal reward. Belief in any case is a positive force. Take away from it one object and it will attach itself to another. Bloom's disbelief in the existence of God and individual mortality is no hindrance to his appearing the most reasonable and human of all the Dubliners in Ulysses. And this is quite logical, because his power of belief is concentrated, without any theological distraction, on the existence of his own person and of the social world in which he lives.

This brings up an interesting comparison between Christ and Bloom. Christ wanted to bring life and life to the full to people. Bloom wants the same: "warm fullbodied life." Christ wanted to amend and heal the social world he was in. Bloom wants the same for "dear dirty Dublin." Christ asked for courage from his followers.
Bloom seems to possess this selfless courage already when he stands up to the Citizen, the Irish Church, and any other inhumane force. Death does not even scare him. The men in the coach in the "Hades" chapter are afraid of dying, but not Bloom. He makes fun of it: imagining Dignam's coffin bursting open on the street--the grey face of Dignam asking "What's up now?" (Ulysses, p. 98) Like the faithful Christian, Bloom is courageous.

The second criticism of Bloom's spirituality is this: "Where is his prayer? Is not prayer an important if not necessary component in any God-man relationship?" As it has been mentioned before one does not have to acknowledge God to be in relationship with Him. Joyce writes about an extreme to reveal a point. Letting Bloom be God-filled without having him recognize it is Joyce's way of assuring that no hypocrisy will spring up between Bloom's convictions and actions. Nevertheless, if one took the liberty of loosely interpreting prayer, then Bloom prays every time he recognizes the goodness of life in his thoughts and words. His prayer is one of thanksgiving. It is intimately connected to the events of his day. Whenever he is concerned for the least of his brothers Bloom actively prays.

The third criticism may be phrased as follows: "What is the motivation for doing good in a substantive relationship with a Creator? For centuries the promise of salvation and heaven or the threat of hell have spurred Christians to holiness. What spurs Bloom to goodness?" Bloom does not need to be spurred. Bloom's goodness is an innate quality. If the kingdom of heaven exists within each man, then Bloom already owns his hamlet. Men are saved by the kingdom of the heart. Bloom, as it has been shown, already possesses this kingdom of the
heart. His motivation for doing good is the goodness of himself. His reasons to love, love.

The fourth criticism is: "Where is the standard by which to judge one's spiritual progress? Who shall serve as the standard of goodness?" In Ulysses Joyce does not deny any spiritual models. Christ serves as the perfect model of a God-filled life. Bloom serves as a model also, a 20th century model--imperfect and ambiguous. But nevertheless, he is a good man with good intentions and actions. The correlatives exist for a good life; Joyce has not denied any. He has redefined, in the context of 2000 years of thought since Christ's death, the relationship between God and Man. Leopold Bloom is Joyce's interpretation of a holy man. If one understands Bloom then one can see how he is a good model to emulate in some ways.

The fifth criticism is this: "How does Joyce deal with the problem of evil? Certainly evil exists. How does he deal with it?" Joyce, because he sought in his art to eliminate the Zoroastrian dualism of good and evil, body and soul, did not recognize a force of evil as such. Evil in Ulysses may be explained in two ways. First, the natural conditions of life and nature account for death and natural disasters. It is a condition of life that man die; a condition of nature that storms storm, earthquakes happen and predators hunt. There is no reason to believe evil causes death or disasters, hence no reason to fear or be bitter. Joyce in his own lifetime went blind, lost a son and had a daughter who went insane. Joyce did not blame these events on evil. He was sad and regretted his "fate," but he did not blame a natural course of events. Evil may also be explained as ignorance. Ignorance comprises the large part of
misfortune in life. Men are ignorant of what it means to be human, so sometimes they act like beasts, inhumanely. Bloom is contrasted to malevolent ignorance of the Citizen in the "Cyclops" episode. Bloom deals with the Citizen's anger and prejudice intelligently. He tries to show the Citizen where his logic has failed: life is not bantering about politics or history, it is love. The Citizen, however, does not take Bloom kindly and kicks Bloom out of the drinking establishment. As long as men choose to live in ignorance there will be sorrow. It is sad, but not evil, to have such men in the world.

The sixth criticism is that Joyce has equivocated the spirit of God with the spirit of man. "Is not the Spirit of God different from the spirit of the world, the spirit of man?" God's spirit may be different from the spirit of the world (whatever that means. It is supposed here that it means greed, exploitation, oppression, etc. Joyce labeled this as"beastliness.") But the spirit of God may be the same as the spirit of man. It is said that man is created in the image of God. It is said also that God desires man's happiness and wholeness, men desire the same for themselves. They want to be happy and whole. Joyce does not see God's spirit and man's as mutually exclusive, indeed they appear to be the same. What Joyce rebels against (and what God does too in Ulysses) is the spirit of beastliness where men act less than human through ignorance and by becoming extremist. Joyce does not equivocate the spirit of man and God, he only points out a neglected point of their fundamental unity.

The last criticism, though many more exist, is this: "Has not Joyce thrown out the baby with the bath water in Ulysses: confusing the true spirit of the Catholic Church with the character of the
Irish priest?

Joyce in his early development as an artist and later in maturity identified the character of the Irish priest with the Catholic Church. He detested the hypocrisy, stupidity and indifference of the Irish priest. With their influences they helped toparalyze a great nation. They condemned Parnell and taught the members of their parishes to bear with their sufferings, even though there was no reason to do so. They did not allow the people to stand up for their human rights or to feel the wholeness of life: to enjoy sexuality or food. Furthermore, they paralyzed people's consciousness by forgiving them their sins (that is, temporarily taking away their guilt) when they should reprimand and encourage communicants to a real change of heart. The criticism leveled here is that the character of the Irish priest is not the true spirit of the Church. The priest corrupted the spirit of the Church. Unfortunately, the Roman Catholic Church has been plagued by bad representatives throughout the ages. In Joyce's condemnation of the priests, he neglected to see that the church is not its priest but its people—the spirit of the people living in communion with the presence of God. Church is a community of persons with the same faith. This need of community is recognized by Bloom when he says "We all must work together, have to." (Ulysses, p. 644) Bloom looks for community in Dublin. He seeks others who have a strong belief in humanity, like Martin Cunningham, Stephen and Molly. One wonders, if Vatican I would have been completed before the first World War, and its revisions for the Church put into action, if the world would not have a different kind of writer in James Joyce.
These are the seven points of criticism: 1) Bloom's substantive relationship with God is inconceivable. 2) There is no prayer in this relationship. 3) There is no motivation for doing good. 4) No one serves as a model for a good relationship with God. 5) The problem of evil is not dealt with. 6) Joyce equivocates the spirit of God and the spirit of man. 7) Joyce has thrown out the baby with the bath water: the spirit of church with the character of the Irish priest. Hopefully these criticisms and their rebuttals have tied some of the loose ends.

For sixteen years Joyce was educated by Catholic fathers. Though he denounced Catholicism when he was 16, he could never escape its early influence on his development as an artist and person. There are certain characteristics which demonstrate the Catholic influence. These characteristics help resolve the spirituality in Ulysses. They place Ulysses in the broad context of Joyce's own spirituality and art. These are the four points of the discussion: Joyce's priestly love of mysteries, his use of symbolism and allusions, the interaction of life and death and his contribution toward a meaningful tradition.

Joyce had a priestly love for mysteries. He found that the priest and the artist have in common the ability to transmute the "lowly accidents" of life into "godly essences." He said once:

"Don't you think there is a certain resemblance between the mystery of the Mass and what I am trying to do? I mean I am trying to give people some kind of intellectual pleasure or spiritual enjoyment by converting the bread of everyday life into something that has a permanent artistic life of its own ... for their mental, moral and spiritual uplift."
Anthony Burgess has some good insights into the mystery of the mass in Ulysses:

> Behind the "accidents" of a mock-epic lies a substance qualitatively different: in a sense, a sacrament is being administered. This very Catholic desire for the certitude of an organic system—and that seems one of the motivations for writing Ulysses—is cognate with a priestly love of mysteries.

Mr. Burgen comments on the beginning of the novel which begins with a mock Mass by none other than Monsignor Buck Mulligan:

> But the blasphemy belongs to the character Buck: the liturgical tone belongs to the book. Here Joyce seems to say a rite of solemn meaning, however comic the surface, is about to begin. And both of his major works (Ulysses and Finnegans Wake) are rituals: there is a hidden substance, a cunning planting of occult symbols, there is more than meets the eye.

Bloom's entire day is a ritual from morning to night. Joyce describes it as follows:

> The preparation of breakfast (burnt offering): intestinal congestion and premeditative defecation (holies of holies): the bath (rite of John): the funeral (rite of Samuel): the advertisement of Alexander Keyes (Urim and Thummin): the unsubstantial lunch (rite of Melchizedek): the visit to museum and national library (holy place): the book hunt along Bedford row, Merchant's Arch, Wellington Quay (Simchath Torah): the music in the Ormond Hotel (Shira Shirim): the altercation with a truculent troglodyte in Bernard Kiernan's premises (holocaust): a blank period of time including a cardrive, a visit to a house of mourning, a leavetaking (wilderness): the eroticism produced by feminine exhibitionism (rite of Onan): the prolonged delivery of Mrs. Mina Purefoy (Leave offering): the visit to the disorderly home of Mrs. Bella Cohen, 82 Tyrone Street, lower, and subsequent brawl and chance medly in Beaver Street (Armageddon): nocturnal perambulation to and from cabman's shelter, Butte Bridge (atonement).

Bloom's day is not without its secret meanings. This description of his day hints at the "sanctity" of Bloom's life. The "rite of solemn
meaning" is common everyday experiences charged with the presence of God. Art reveals this. It contextualizes this spirit in an organic system of printed word. As Stephen says:

So that gesture, not music, not odours, would be a universal language, the gift of tongues rendering visible not the lay sense but the first entelechy, the structural rhythm." (Ulysses, p. 432)

The second point, Joyce's use of symbolism and allusion, has much to do with the first point. Just as man uses symbols for the symbolic yet real reenactment of the presence of Christ at the Last Supper, so Joyce uses symbolism and allusions for the symbolic yet real enactment of life. The mass at the beginning of Ulysses is an example of this. The mass is used symbolically to hint at the intention of the book to transform the "lowly accidents" into the "godly essences" of art. This demonstrates how Joyce demands that the reader transcend the surface action of the book in order to embrace its substantive meaning. Just as the mass goer must transcend the symbolism and traditions of the mass to understand and see the reality of Christ's presence, so must the reader of Ulysses penetrate its metaphors. As Bloom says in the wild "Circe" episode: "You call this a festivity. I call it a sacrament." (Ulysses, p. 489)

The third point concerns the interaction of life and death. In the Catholic Church the supernaturality of the dead play an important role in human existence. The living pray for the dead, and the dead, especially the saints, intercede and help the living. There is interaction between living and dead, life and afterlife. Though this relationship between living and dead is not exclusively Catholic, Joyce in Ulysses presents a similar living-deceased relationship.
At the birth of Mrs. Purefoy's baby the narrator says:

She had fought the good fight and now she was very very happy. Those who have passed on, who have gone before, are happy too as they gaze down and smile upon the touching scene. (Ulysses, p. 420)

In the "Proteus" episode Stephen imagines a visit with his dead uncle. Later on in the "Circe" chapter many dead figures appear and influence the action: Bloom's dead father, Virag, appears as well as Shakespeare and Parnell. Stephen's mother makes an appearance and pleads with him to change his ways. Frightened, Stephen smashes a lamp with his cane and flees the scene. At the end of the chapter Bloom spots Rudy, his dead son, who is now a "fairy boy of eleven, a changeling, kidnapped, dressed in an Eton suit. . . ." (Ulysses, p. 609) In Joyce's famous short story "The Dead," the dead Michael Furey significantly alters Gabriel's conception of life:

His soul had approached that region where dwell the vast host of dead. He was conscious of, but could not apprehend their wayward and flickering existence.6

This interaction of life and death hints at Joyce's Catholicity.

The last point which needs to be mentioned is Joyce's recognition that tradition and ritual are meaningless unless interjected with personal and life giving meaning. For Joyce the Catholic Church had lost its meaning in the rubric of ritual. No longer was it life giving--the people existed for the ritual, rather than the ritual for the people. No longer were people free to think, explore and live challenging lives. In Ulysses Joyce demonstrates how a ritual, Bloom's day, can have meaning when associated with the life giving events of each day (e.g. eating, birthing, bathing, etc.). Thus, the ritual serves to celebrate life and not vice-versa. The ritual
possesses its full potential and significance when related to everyday life, as Bloom relates ritually to his day. In *Ulysses* Joyce joins life and ritual to celebrate what is meaningful in life: humanity and love.

The final part of this conclusion examines Joyce's lifelong conviction that "Literature is the affirmation of the human spirit." His message asks men and women to become more human by being more loving, caring and free. Bloom possesses in great measure these three qualities. A character which has only been looked at briefly but who epitomizes Joyce's ideas is Molly Bloom. In the *Odyssey* the herb moly saved Ulysses from the power of the Circe to change men into beasts. Molly in *Ulysses* saves Bloom from becoming onesided or beastly. She keeps him in touch with his humanity. She is like a life preserver that keep Bloom afloat during the rough parts of the day. Bloom constantly refers to Molly as his only true love. She is also his standard for womanhood. Molly sincerely loves Bloom. Not physically, but in her heart she sweeps away her other lovers for the integrity of Bloom. Molly is the symbol (and literally so) of all fleshy womanhood. She possesses the love, concern and freedom which Joyce desires for all individuals. She freely does what she wants to. She cares about the people in her life. And she firmly loves Bloom, but more so, the whole experience of life. She seems to have no firm spiritual convictions, yet like Bloom, she is a woman of good intent:

I dont care what anybody says itd be much better for the world to be governed by the women in it you wouldnt see women going and killing one another and slaughtering when do you ever see women rolling around drunk like they do or gambling every penny they have and losing it on horses yes because a woman whatever she does knows when to stop. . . . (*Ulysses*, p. 778)
She seems to be in the physical sense, because of passionate nature and opulent flesh, that concept of nature which Hume described as calling men back to reality after speculative thought. Nature dispels the clouds of incertitude and cures one of the "philosophical melancholy and delirium either by relaxing this bent of mind, or by some avocations and lively impression" of the senses. Nature makes his speculations "so cold, strained and ridiculous, that I cannot find in my heart to enter them any further. . . . 'Tis happy, therefore, that nature breaks the force of all sceptical arguments in time. . . ." The warm "fullbodied" nature of Molly is used at the end of *Ulysses* to simmer the boiling pot of ideas that has been on the stove for 783 pages. A blossoming flower, she opens to Bloom and affirms life:

I was a flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusian girls used or shall I wear a red yes and how he kissed me under the Moorish wall and I thought as well as him as another and then I asked him with my 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 perfumed yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes. (Ulysses, p. 783)

Molly is an example of a free human spirit full of love and concern.

Joyce after struggling seven years with *Ulysses* finally completed the manuscript in March of 1922. Within its pages he packed all the themes and ideas teeming in his brain. All the ideas supported his belief that literature should express the "holy spirit of joy." Richard Ellmann explains:

Bloom dissents tacitly from Stephen's view on the eternal affirmation of the spirit of man in literature. While the loftiness of Stephen's statement is mocked, that literature embodies the eternal affirmation of the spirit of man is not a cotchet of Stephen but a principle
of Joyce, maintained by all his books. It is no accident that the whole of Ulysses should end in a mighty "Yes."

Once Ulysses is understood through patient effort, this spirit of joy can be seen to be celebrated in every page, in sorrow and melancholy, and happiness and mirth. Joyce has presented an uplifting interpretation of what it means to be human. He, like Milton, has justified the ways of God to man. In Ulysses, Joyce has shown the unity which exists between Creator and created. The two are inseparable. The goodness, love and beingness of God is the goodness, love and beingness of man. A mature vision has been presented. Goodness is not sugary sweet or superficial, it is the great kindness of Leopold Bloom to his fellow man. Love is not possessive or uncommitted, but freeing and lasting as Bloom demonstrates in his relationship with Molly. Existence is not limited by rules, or painfully endured. For Bloom life is an open highway, overflowing with simple good things.

God has been shown to exist substantively in human existence. He does not exist "out there somewhere" but is within all. All life partakes of this mystery. In Ulysses the way to realize God is to claim one's freedom as an individual and act naturally out of love and concern. The message of this statement is lost in its generality, but realized in the particular detail of Mr. Leopold Bloom's day.
FOOTNOTES, CHAPTER FIVE

1 Budgen, p. 278.
2 Budgen, p. 56.
3 Ellmann, p. 169.
4 Burgess, p. 32.
5 Burgess, p. 33.
7 Ellmann, p. 101.
8 Liffey, p. 96.
9 Ellmann, p. 96.
10 Ellmann, p. 10.
11 Ellmann, p. 383.
SELECNED BIBLIOGRAPHY


