A Guide to James Joyce's *Ulysses* and the Events of Bloomsday (16 June 1904)

episode	time	locale	persons	organ	art	symbol	technic
Part I 1. Telemachus	8-8:45 AM	Martello tower, Sandycove	Stephen, Mulligan, Haines	none	theology	heir	narrative (young)
2. Nestor	9:45-10: 30 AM	the school, Dalkey	Stephen, Mr Deasy	none	history	horse	catechism (personal)
3. Proteus	11-11:45 AM	Sandymount Strand	Stephen	none	philology	tide	monologue (male)
Part II 4. Calypso	8-8:45 AM	Bloom's house	Bloom, Molly	kidney	economics	nymph	narrative (mature)
5. Lotos-Eaters	9:45-10: 30	Westland Row	Bloom	genitals	botany, chemistry	Eucharist	narcissism
6. Hades	11-Noon	carriage & cemetery	Bloom, mourners	heart	religion	caretaker	incubism
7. Aeolus	Noon-1 PM	Newspaper office	Bloom, Stephen, talkers	lungs	rhetoric	editor	enthymemic
8. Lestrygonians	1-2 PM	streets, Davy Byrne's	Bloom	esophagus	architecture	constables	peristaltic
9. Scylla & Charybdis	1:45-3 PM	Library	Stephen, Mulligan, talkers	brain	literature	Stratford, London	dialectic
10. Wandering Rocks	2:55-4 PM	streets	everybody	blood	mechanics	citizens	labyrinth
11. Sirens	3:38-4:3 0 PM	Ormond Bar	Bloom, Mr. Dedalus, drinkers	ear	music	barmaids	*Fuga per canone*
12. Cyclops	4:45-5:4 5 PM	Barney Kiernan's pub	Bloom, 'Citizen', drinkers	muscle	politics	Fenian	gigantism
13. Nausicaa	8-9 PM	Sandymount Strand	Gerty, Bloom	eye, nose	painting	virgin	tumescence, detumescence
14. Oxen of the Sun	10-11 PM	hospital	Bloom, Stephen, medicals	womb	medicine	mothers	embryonic development
15. Circe	11:15 PM-12:4 0 AM	Nighttown	Bloom, Stephen, whores, et al.	locomotor apparatus	magic	whore	hallucination

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Part III 16. Eumaeus	12:40-1 AM	cabman's shelter	Bloom, Stephen	nerves	navigation	sailors	narrative (old)
17. Ithaca	1:00-1:4 5 AM	Bloom's house	Bloom, Stephen, Molly	skeleton	science	comets	catechism (impersonal)
18. Penelope	1:45-2:2 0 AM	the bed	Molly	flesh	none	earth	monologue (female)

This information is derived from a variety of sources, including a precise calculation of the episodes' times made by Clive Hart, with minor corrections by Hugh Kenner. But the last four columns, along with the titles of the episodes, were produced by Joyce himself and given to a man named Stuart Gilbert, who was writing a book about *Ulysses*. At the time Joyce would not allow Gilbert to reveal that the schema was the author's own, but eventually this came to light. The Gilbert schema differs slightly from one that Joyce made in 1921 (a year before the book was published) for an Italian friend named Carlo Linati.

Help for the Reader of *Ulysses*

• Try to read this when you're fresh and rested. It is difficult at any time, but almost impossible when you're tired or distracted.

• In the passages that are predominantly interior monologues, there are occasional brief passages of authorial narration. These can be very useful to the reader trying to get her bearings. Though they often come in the middle of paragraphs, they usually begin with a third-person pronoun ('He,' 'They'), which helps you to identify the change immediately.

• *Ulysses* has been banned in many countries for obscenity. It is indeed obscene, especially in the 'Circe' section, and intentionally so. But it is not pornographic. Pornography attempts to arouse and titillate; it has but one purpose. Obscenity, on the other hand, tends to disgust the reader, though it does not necessarily try to do so, and even if it does try to disgust, there are many possible reasons for seeking that end. The possible reasons for *Ulysses's* obscenity will be a major topic of our conversation.

• Don't try to understand everything. During much of the book you are being exposed to the inner lives of people very different from you and from one another. Each has his or her own distinctive mental furniture, his or her distinctive way of negotiating the rooms in which that furniture is distributed. You cannot be expected to know them as they know and speak to themselves. What Joyce wants from you is not a recognition of every reference, every allusion, but rather a general and increasingly confident awareness of what these people are like. You will never achieve this if you allow yourself to be stopped in your tracks by what you don't immediately understand. Just keep pushing through.

• Nevertheless, pay attention. You are likely to note repetitions of certain phrases and ideas. Some have obvious relevance, like Stephen's frequent meditations on Hamlet; some have less obvious import, but still call attention to themselves in familiarly literary ways, like Bloom's musings on "met him pike hoses"; and still others seem pointless. These last are the most distinctively Joycean, and often the most fun to meditate on. Why, for instance, are we several times reminded that Bloom carries a potato in his pocket? The more closely you pay attention, the more rewarding you will find the experience of reading this book; conversely, the less attention you pay the more you will wonder why in the world I am assigning it to you.

• *Ulysses* is filled with references to Irish history, only a couple of which can be mentioned here. The book notes several times the presence of two monumental statues in Dublin. The first is of Lord Nelson, the great British admiral, who lost an eye and an arm in defeating Napoleon's navy at the Battle of Trafalgar (he is known to Stephen Dedalus as 'the onehandled adulterer'). Many Irish had hoped for the English to be defeated by those predominantly Catholic countries France and Spain, since English laws explicitly made Roman Catholics (and hence the great majority of Irish people) second-class citizens. So in many ways the statue of Nelson, erected of course by the English rulers, is profoundly offensive. Not so the other great statue, that of Daniel O'Connell, whose Catholic Association pushed for reform of those anti-Catholic laws and eventually saw passed a Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829. That's why

O'Connell is called 'The Liberator.' But the most important figure of all is Charles Stewart Parnell, whose passionate oratory and brilliant political leadership (he was a Member of Parliament) had led Ireland to the verge of independence when, in 1886, he was revealed to be carrying on an affair with a married woman. This lost him the support of the Catholic Church in Ireland (which had never wholly trusted the Protestant Parnell) and ruined his career. More important, it delayed the advent of Home Rule in Ireland for another thirty-plus years. Many Irish, including Joyce, became extremely bitter towards the Church for its role in bringing Parnell down.

• I am sorry to have to report that an adequate understanding of *Ulysses* is simply not possible for the person who has not already read Homer's *Odyssey*. (*Hamlet* is almost as important.) There is no substitute for knowing the Homeric tales on which many of Bloom's and Stephen's adventures are based. For instance, the reader who does not know that Odysseus put out the Cyclops's eye with a burning stick will not understand why Bloom's encounter with the Citizen is dotted with references to Bloom's lit cigar.

• That last example illustrates Joyce's humor as well, and the reader of *Ulysses* needs to remember always that, for all its seriousness and complications, it is a fundamentally comic novel, and Joyce one of the greatest comic geniuses in English literature (rivaled only, in my view, by Shakespeare, Chaucer, and Dickens). Many of the complexities of the book come from Joyce's desire to have fun with his own literary inheritance. One chapter imitates the language of romance novels, another the rhetorical style of a stereotypical Irish storyteller, yet another the catechisms of the Roman Catholic Church. Indeed, one chapter recapitulates the entire history of English prose style, from Anglo-Saxon to the present—an astonishing *tour de force*, to be sure, but also just plain *fun*.

Considerations

• And the messenger from that place then also reported that the spokesman said the following: 'Even for the man who comes forward last, if he chooses intelligently and lives earnestly, a life to content him is laid up, not a bad one. Let the one who begins not be careless about his choice. Let not the one who is last be disheartened.'

He said that when the spokesman had said this the man who had drawn the first lot came forward and immediately chose the greatest tyranny, and, due to folly and gluttony, chose without having considered everything adequately; and it escaped his notice that eating his own children and other evils were fated to be a part of that life. When he considered it at his leisure, he beat his breast and lamented the choice, not having abided by the spokesman's forewarning. . . . And by chance Odysseus' soul drew the last lot of all and went to choose; from memory of its former labors it had recovered from love of honor; it went around for a long time looking for the life of an private man who minds his own business; and with effort it found one lying somewhere, neglected by the others. It said when it saw this life that it would have done the same even if it had drawn the first lot, and was delighted to choose it. [Plato, *Republic*, Book X]

• In realism you are drawn to facts on which the world is based: that sudden reality which smashes romanticism into a pulp. What makes most people's lives unhappy is some disappointed romanticism, some unrealizable or misconceived ideal. In fact you may say that idealism is the ruin of man, and if we lived down to fact, as primitive man had to do, we would be better off. That is what we were made for. Nature is quite unromantic. It is we who put romance into her, which is a false attitude, an egotism, absurd like all egotisms. In *Ulysses* I tried to keep close to fact. [Joyce to Arthur Power]

• I am sure however that the whole structure of heroism is, and always was, a damned lie and that there cannot be any substitute for individual passion as the motive power of everything. [Joyce to his brother, 1905]

• Jesus was a bachelor and never lived with a woman. Surely living with a woman is one of the most difficult things a man has to do, and he never did it. [Joyce to Frank Budgen]

• The thought of *Ulysses* is very simple, it is only the method which is difficult. [Joyce to Budgen]

• A complete man, a good man. [Joyce to Budgen on Leopold Bloom]