

Reconsideration of Water Imagery in *Ulysses*

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This paper is based upon the reconsideration of my former paper concerning water imagery in *Ulysses* which was printed in *Studies in English Literature, No.1 & 3*, published by The English Literary Society of Baiko Jo Gakuin College. For the present paper I have referred to new sources of reference.

Trigant Burrow, who is the founder of Phylopathology, explains the preconscious experience of human beings in his book.

When we say that a glove retains the impression of the hand from which it has been removed, we are not ascribing to the glove the faculty of memory. Similarly, we may observe in the child, during the early months of life, traces of a tendency which doubtless leads back to the prenatal experience.¹⁾

According to his theory, the instinctive action of an infant is derived from the experience in the mother's womb through nine months, and he denominates it "the infant's preconscious experience." This is proved when we look at a mother rocking a baby to sleep. No wonder she is instinctively trying to call back that passive preconscious experience of her baby who was, in her womb, rocking from side to side with her movement.

Following this, he gives some comments which gave me a great suggestion to my research on *Ulysses* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.

Material gathered from literature, dreams, myths, and folk customs affords overwhelming evidence that the significance of water sympto-

matically or psychologically is connected with the early physiological phase of the infant's preconscious experience as it rested in its amniotic medium within the uterine capsule.²⁾

Any man, whether he is normal or not, is fond of water which awakens his nostalgia for his mother's womb. Burrow calls this "the nest instinct." Then, what is the preconscious mode which gives rise to this instinct? The embryo is held and protected in the amniotic fluid. This water and the naval chord bind it up closely with the mother either in the mental or in the physical function. Burrow comments on this matter more clearly.

There seems indicated the possibility of an organic connection between the influence of water on man's behaviour and the water-medium occupied by the organism in the early months of its existence. I believe that the further refining of our observations will indicate a similar association between other instinctive behavioral attitudes and the nest instinct.³⁾

Now, I would like to turn my attention to *Ulysses*. The scene is the Episode V. The time is ten o'clock in the morning. Mr. Bloom is wandering towards a Turkish bath. Then he indulges in daydreaming.

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.⁴⁾

His longing for being tenderly held in a womb of warmth shows "the nest instinct" proper to mankind. What urges him to escape from this reality to his nest? The real union between him and his wife Molly has been closed since the death of their son Rudy. Molly falls in love with one after another, and now Boylan is her twenty-fifth lover. Bloom has a daughter named Milly who was born four years earlier than Rudy. But there is a hint that she is not his real child. Thus, he is exiled from his

wife, his home, and moreover, he is a Jew who is doomed to make a wandering journey. His escape from reality is realized in his self-effacing dream. He is drawn into that preconscious experience in the mother's womb where he was tenderly held by the water. The term "the self-effacing dream" occurred to my mind when I read the following Burrow's words. In the chapter on Homesickness, he comments on the spiritual world where the subject and the object are united together—the Buddha-mind.

In Buddhism, the Buddha-mind is conceived as the void which is "neither holy nor unholy, neither cause nor effect, neither good nor evil, neither form nor characteristic, neither the root nor the attachment of feelings, and neither the Buddha nor sentient beings." In order to attain the Buddha-mind, some zen masters urge *wu-nien* or absence of thought, since the mind is not to be in any way attached to or influenced by objects. The state of nirvana has similar properties.....

Among the mystical school of Buddhists, the "realm of Matrix Repository" is one of the two great aspects of Buddha. The Matrix Repository has the significance of "to hold and to cover,—like keeping a child in the mother's womb. This realm is Buddha's Law-Body of Principle, the realm of absolute equality, of the dharmas, of form, of the horizontal cross-section of the universe, of Cause, of Great Compassion, and of sentient beings."⁵)

Any man is destined to be conscious of himself opposed to the objects, immediately after he is born and separated from his mother, drifting about perpetually at the mercy of the waves in the Sea of Matter. Mr. Bloom's dream shows his strong nostalgia for the realm of absolute equality where the subject and the object are united together, the world suggesting "the Matrix Repository" as it is called among the believers in this esoteric Buddhism. I think his longing for the Oriental countries comes forth from his familiarity with this Oriental mysticism.

Mr. Bloom's daydream implies another symbol. He is longing for a woman's ability of bearing a child. His wish to get another son after the death of Rudy cannot be realized actually on account of his estrangement from Molly. Now I would like to quote some comments on the symbol of a dream from Sigmund Freud.

Birth is regularly expressed by some connection with water: we are plunging into or emerging from water, that is to say, we give birth or are being born. Now let us not forget that this symbol has a two-fold reference to the actual facts of evolution. Not only are all land mammals, from which the human race itself has sprung, descended from creatures inhabiting the water...this is the more remote of the two considerations...but also every single mammal, every human being, has passed the first phase of existence in water...that is to say, as an embryo in the amniotic fluid of the mother's womb...and thus, at birth, emerged from water.⁶⁾

This theory proves that Mr. Bloom's dream of being reclined in a womb of warmth(water) symbolizes his longing for bearing a child, and this ought to be derived from "the nest instinct."

This longing or envy for a woman's ability is innate, not only in Mr. Bloom, but in every man. The story of the old myths is the best proof of this. We can notice that Bloom's dream implies the Narcissus story in the Greek myths.

One day a maiden who had in vain endeavoured to attract Narcissus uttered a prayer that he might some time or other feel what it was to love and meet no return of affection. The avenging goddess heard and granted the prayer.

There was a clear fountain,...Hither came one day the youth, fatigued with hunting, heated and thirsty. He stooped down to drink, and saw his own image in the water; he thought it was some beautiful water-spirit living in the fountain...He fell in love with himself. He brought his lips near to take a kiss; he plunged his arms in to embrace the beloved object. It fled at the touch, but returned again after a moment and renewed the fascination...As he saw it depart, he exclaimed, "Stay, I entreat you! Let me at least gaze upon you, if I may not touch you." With this, and much more of the same kind, he cherished the flame that consumed him, so that by degrees he lost his color, his vigour, and the beauty which formerly had so charmed the nymph Echo. She kept near him, however, and when he exclaimed, "Alas! Alas!" she answered him with the same words. He pined away and died; and when his shade passed the Stygian river, it leaned over the boat to catch a look of itself in the waters. The nymphs mourned for him, especially the water-nymphs; and when they smote their breasts Echo smote hers also. They prepared a funeral pile and would have burned the body, but it was nowhere to be found; but in its place a flower, purple within, and surrounded with white leaves, which bears the name and preserves the

memory of Narcissus.⁷⁾

“This is my body...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.”⁸⁾ Mr. Bloom is in the ecstasy of his body which seems to imply his feminization symbolized in the Narcissus story: “He fell in love with himself.” In the Episode IX, Buck Mulligan tries to present a masque. The title is “Everyman His Own Wife.”⁹⁾ He seems to be making fun of the strange longing of Mr. Bloom, and also of Stephen Dedalus, on whom I will try to comment later.

In the Episode IV, Mr. Bloom, looking up at a picture titled “the Bathe of the Nymph,” pictures himself his wife Molly disguised as a Nymph in a sari of Oriental style. This image of Molly symbolizes the nymph Echo who does not appear before Narcissus. “The languid floating flower” seems to imply “the flower” of Narcissus and the breakdown of his dream.

In the Episode XV, Mulligan calls Mr. Bloom “bisexually abnormal...”¹⁰⁾ Dr. Dixon diagnoses him “a finished example of the new womanly man...”¹¹⁾ He says also “He is about to have a baby.”¹²⁾ Bloom exclaims, “O, I so want to be a mother.”¹³⁾ His hand is “firm full masculine feminine passive active hand...”¹⁴⁾

In the Episode VI, following the daydream, Mr. Bloom’s consciousness moves to the World of Death from the World of Life realized in his dream, telling “The Irishman’s house is his coffin.”¹⁵⁾ The image of death was already symbolized by “the languid floating flower” or the breakdown of Mr. Bloom’s dream. Water image recurring throughout *Ulysses* motivates the heroes to be attracted by the World of Death in some cases.

At the funeral scene of Dignam, Mr. Bloom, looking at the coffin shouldered by the mutes, says to himself, “So much dead weight. Felt heavier myself stepping out of that bath.”¹⁶⁾ This shows how he has changed his longing unconsciously from life to death.

Several ways of dying occur to him.

Earth, fire, water. Drowning they say is the pleasantest. See your whole life in a flash. But being back to life no.¹⁷⁾

Mr. Bloom's idea of drowning is indirectly related to Stephen's which I will refer to later.

In the Episode XVII, the hero's recollections or ideas of water recurring in the previous episodes are collectively shown.

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

Its universality: its democratic equality and constancy to its nature in seeking its own level:...

the noxiousness of its effluvia in lacustrine marshes, pestilential fens, faded flowerwater, stagnant pools in the waning moon.¹⁸⁾

The attributes of water which Mr. Bloom admires show both extremes. His generosity holds both equally. The universality or democratic equality of water is symbolized by the World of Life in the mother's womb, and "the noxiousness of its effluvia" is reflected in Mr. Bloom's languid floating flower and his departure for the World of Death.

Now I will bring another hero Stephen into focus. Stephen Dedalus once released himself from those nets which were nationality, language, religion and home. With triumphant exaltation he started for the World of Art. However, after getting a wire telling him of his mother's serious condition, he is again held back from flight.

In the first scene of *Ulysses*, his friend Mulligan reproaches Stephen for not having prayed for his mother on her deathbed in spite of her entreaty. Mulligan suddenly exclaims looking at the sea, "Our great sweet mother."¹⁹⁾ He has quoted from Swinburne's poem.

I will go back to the great sweet mother,
Mother and lover of men, the sea.
I will go down to her, I and none other,
Close with her, kiss her and mix her with me;
Cling to her, strive with her, hold her fast.
O fair white mother, in days long past
Born without sister, born without brother,
Set free my soul as thy soul is free.

I shall sleep, and move with the moving ships,
change as the winds change, veer in the tide;
My lips will feast on the foams of thy lips,

I shall rise with thy rising, with thee subside.²⁰⁾

This poem remarkably shows “the nest instinct” derived from the preconscious experience in the amniotic fluid. Motivated by “the nest instinct,” Mulligan and the poet, of course, must have been led to that world of absolute equality where they were rocking side by side with the movement of their mother.

However, Stephen’s “nest instinct” awakened by Mulligan’s exclamation leads him to the World of Death. The Sea of Dublin, which was once the scene of his rebirth as an artist in *A Portrait*, reminds him of the green sluggish bile which his mother had torn up from her rotting liver by fits of loud groaning vomiting, and the beautiful girl, who moved him to produce his art, has been replaced by his mother’s ghost in the grave-clothes giving off an odour of wax and reproaching him. He is troubled by his mother’s ghost when he looks at the sea or water. That is the reason why he keeps away from water and fears drowning.

—Is this the day for your monthly wash, Kinch?
Then he said to Haines:
—The unclean bard makes a point of washing once a month.
—All Ireland is washed by the gulfstream, Stephen said as he let honey trickle over a slice of the loaf.²¹⁾

She is drowning. Agenbite. Save her. Agenbite. All against us.
She will drown me with her, eyes and hair. Lank coils of seaweed hair
around me, my heart, my soul. Salt green death.

We.
Agenbite of inwit. Inwit’s agenbite.
Misery! Misery!²²⁾

Now, I would like to quote Stephen’s internal-monologues derived from “the nest instinct.” In the Episode III, Stephen is walking along Sandy-mount strand.

His lips lipped and mouthed fleshless lips of air: mouth to her womb.
Oomb, allwombing tomb.²³⁾

From my point of view, "allwombing tomb" is the tomb, which holds all sentient beings, and puts them to sleep peacefully and eternally. Hesperides or "Saihô-jôdo" called by Buddhists is the allwombing tomb which is said to exist in the sea of the west where the sun sets.

In another internal-monologue——

The man that was drowned nine days ago off Maiden's rock. They are waiting for him now. The truth, spit it out. I would want to. I would try. I am not a strong swimmer. Water cold soft. When I put my face into it in the basin at Clongoes.

Can't see! Who's behind me? Out quickly, quickly! Do you see the tide flowing quickly in on all sides, sheeting the lows of sands quickly, shell-cocoacoloured? If I had land under my feet. I want his life still to be his, mine to be mine. A drowning man. His human eyes scream to me out of horror of his death. I...With him together down... I could not save her. Waters: bitter death: lost.²⁴⁾

I divide this monologue into four parts. The first is that he does not have a courage to rescue the drowned. The second is about the image of himself sinking into the sea with the drowning man. The third is about the pangs of conscience of not having saved his mother. And the last is "Waters: bitter death: lost."

First, I would like to pay attention to the second part. "The drowning man," who should be another man than he, seems to overlap the image of himself. He once flew past those nets by soaring high in the sky over Dublin City, as Icarus respecting his father of Art Daedalus, but he fell into the sea and was drowned. While he has been living an idle life again in Dublin, his zeal for producing Art has died and he returns to the early stage of seeking Love which he himself found the most worth living. This is Stephen's regression.

Immediately after this scene, he thinks again of the drowned, and says to himself, "Full fathom five thy father lies."²⁵⁾ This means the death of Daedalus whom he respected as his father of Art, and his loss of aspiration for Art. The bathing scene of the beautiful girl was the first place where he found what was worth living. But this scene in *Ulysses*, implies that he has overcome his Oedipus complex towards Daedalus resulting

from his undermining the love scene, and his regression.

Thus, his regression is this. In *the Portrait*, his stage of development showed "Love for Irene, Emma Clery, and other girls → *Religious Belief* (the worship of the Goddess of Beauty or Daedalus) → *Art*."

In *Ulysses*, his regression occurs like "*Art* → *Religious Belief* (through his giving up the worship of Daedalus) → *Love*."

I would like to refer to Freud again.

In the myths of the birth of heroes, a comparative study of which has been made by O. Rank...the earliest is that of King Sargon of Akkad, about 2800 B.C....exposure in water and rescue from it play a major part. Rank perceived that this symbolizes birth in a manner analogous to that employed in dreams. When anyone in his dream rescues somebody from the water, he makes that person into his mother, or at any rate a *mother*; and in mythology, whoever rescues a child from water confesses herself to be its real mother. There is a well-known joke in which an intelligent Jewish boy, when asked who was the mother of Moses, answers immediately: "The Princess." He is told: "No, she only took him out of the water." "That's what *she* said," he replies, showing that he had hit upon the right interpretation of the myth.²⁶⁾

This analysis seems to afford a clue to Stephen's incessant desire. In his internal-monologue, Stephen pictures himself saving the drowning man, and this man overlaps the image of himself. He seems to plunge into the water to save himself. This implies his desire to identify himself with his mother or to become a supernatural being who can beget himself.

This longing for the woman's ability of pregnancy, which the two heroes in *Ulysses* share, is depicted symbolically or ironically throughout *Ulysses*. One of the most remarkable descriptions on this is the parody of the controversies over the trinitarianism or the Immaculate Conception which often recurs in Stephen's or other men's mind and dialogues. In the Episode I, several controversies over trinitarianism occur to Stephen.

—I read a theological interpretation of it somewhere, he said bemused. The Father and the Son idea. The Son striving to be atoned with the Father.²⁷⁾

—the subtle African heresiarch Sabellius who held that the Father was Himself His own Son.²⁸⁾

Sabellius opposed the trinitarianism which asserts the union of the three different divine persons in one Godhead, and held that henotheism which asserts the trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) is the one Being (Christ) named differently, and the manifestation of one God. Therefore, he held that the Father was Himself His own Son. In the Episode IX, at Dublin's National Library, this assertion of Sabellius occurs again to Stephen who is talking about fatherhood.

He Who Himself begot, middler the Holy Ghost, and Himself sent
Himself, Agenbuyer, between Himself and others,...²⁹⁾

—Sabellius, the African, subtlest heresiarch of all the beasts of the field, held that the Father was Himself His own Son.³⁰⁾

—glorified man, an androgynous angel, being a wife unto himself.³¹⁾

This assertion seems to be connected with his desire to become a supernatural being who can beget himself. This assumption is proved by his effort in his dream to become Christ which is already presented in *A Portrait*.

March 20. Long talk with Cranly on the subject of my revolt... Tried to imagine his mother: cannot...Very young or very old? Hardly the first. If so, Cranly would not have spoken as he did. Old then. Probably, and neglected. Hence Cranly's despair of soul: the child of exhausted loins.

March 21, morning...The exhausted loins are those of Elizabeth and Zacchary. Then he is the precursor. Item: he eats chiefly belly bacon and dried figs. Read locusts and wild honey. Also, when thinking of him, saw always a stern severed head or death mask as if outlined on a grey curtain or veronica. Decollation they call it in the gold. Puzzled for the moment by Saint John at the Latin gate. What do I see? A decollated precursor trying to pick the lock.³²⁾

Stephen likens his friend Cranly to John the Baptist, and calls him the precursor. In the Episode XV of *Ulysses*, the ghost of his mother groans toward him (Christ).

The Mother

(*In the agony of her deathrattle.*) Have mercy on Stephen, Lord, for my sake! Inexpressible was my anguish when expiring with love, grief and agony on Mount Calvary.³³⁾

In the Episode XVII, Stephen's mother is named Mary.

...his mother Mary, wife of Simon Dedalus...³⁴⁾

This dream of becoming a Being like Christ who can beget himself is pursued, in spite of hopelessness, so that he can clear way a great obstacle in his way when he tries to turn his profession from Religion to Art. The obstacle is the recurrent image of his mother, who, on the one hand, has been pressing him for a belief in Catholicism, and on the other, has been his dear object for his next instinct. Pursuing the dream of becoming a Being who can beget himself, he tries to cut off the ties of blood with his mother and father.

This is reflected in the character of his Art. He tries to create an Art which is free from any bonds.

The instant of inspiration seemed now to be reflected from all sides at once from a multitude of cloudy circumstances of what had happened or what might have happened. The instant flashed forth like a point of light and now from cloud on cloud of vague circumstance confused form was veiling softly its afterglow. O! In the virgin womb of the imagination *the word was made flesh*. Gabriel the seraph had come to the virgin's chamber.³⁵⁾ (The italics are mine.)

I think the italics come from the New Testament.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

And *the Word became flesh* and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.³⁶⁾ (The italics are mine.)

This accord between the phrase in the Bible and *A Portrait* seems to suggest that Stephen(Christ) is trying to create a new soaring impalpable and imperishable Art (Word) just as the male God presented the Word and

gave it a life in the beginning instead of begetting a flesh.

I have referred to Mr. Bloom's longing for begetting a child himself. He as well as Stephen is ironically depicted through the parodies of the Immaculate Conception. In the Episode I, after listening to Stephen's words on the Father and the Son idea, Mulligan begins to chant in a quiet happy foolish voice:

*—I'm the queerest young fellow that ever you heard.
My mother's a jew, my father's a bird.
With Joseph the joiner I cannot agree,
So here's to disciples and Calvary.*³⁷⁾

Stephen, who desires to identify himself with Christ and muses on the Son striving to be atoned with the Father, is held up to mockery. In the Episode III, he says, "My father's a bird."³⁸⁾ This implies his desire to become Christ and to cut off the ties of blood with his father, because "a bird" represents "a dove" and the symbol of the Holy Ghost.

And John bore witness, "I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven, and it remained on him."³⁹⁾

In the Episode III, wandering on Dublin Beach, Stephen turns towards the Pigeonhouse. In that moment, the word Pigeon suggests "a dove," and a dialogue of Mulligan's mockery hits him.

*—Que vous a mis dans cette fichue position?
—C'est le pigeon, Joseph.*⁴⁰⁾

This dialogue is conceived from the words of Léo Taxil who was a Jesuit.

*...M. Léo Taxil nous a dit que qui l'avait mise dans cette fichue position c'était le sacré pigeon, ventre de Dieu!*⁴¹⁾

Léo Taxil seems to be mocking the assertion of the Immaculate Conception. He blames the Virgin Mary for her pregnancy, because it proves that she is unfaithful to her husband, and it is unreasonable to bear God

her Creator. This mockery appears not to be directly related to Mr. Bloom's longing or his position, but symbolically makes it more meaningful. He plays the part of Joseph in modern times, and it is caused by Molly's unfaithfulness. As I have mentioned before, there is a suggestion that Milly is not his real child. Like Joseph, Mr. Bloom might not be the father.

15 June 1889. A querulous newborn female infant crying to cause and lessen congestion. A child renamed Padney Socks she shook with shocks her moneybox: counted his three free money-penny buttons one, ...two dark, she had blond ancestry...a hallucination, lieutenant Mulvey, British navy.⁴²⁾

Let me return to Stephen's internal-monologue (Quotation 24). In the second part of this monologue, he pictures himself drowned. This implies, his failure of self-begetting—the creation of himself without the co-operation of his parents, and the collapse of his Art. The third part—"I could not save her"—seems to hold a profound meaning. We notice here that he has plunged into the water to rescue, not only himself, but his mother. Here is his ambivalence. He is disappointed by the death of his mother, who has been the object of his nest instinct, in spite of the obstacle to his progress in his Art. Therefore, the last part—"Waters: bitter death: lost."—has two meanings.

One means his failure in creating his Art (like Icarus) and self-begetting, and the other the loss of his love—mother.

Another psychoanalyst comments on the rescue phantasy.

Since the thought of the sexual relations of the parents is, both on account of jealousy and on account of the repression of incestuous cravings, one that is usually extremely distasteful to the child, the latter often likes to imagine that the loved parent enters into such relations unwillingly and under compulsion. Such a belief can arise most easily in a boy's mind as regards his mother: it then in its turn gives rise to the idea of rescuing the mother from the unwelcome and tyrannical attentions of the father; a phantasy which has found expression in the many stories and legends (of which that of Andromeda and that of St. George are perhaps the most widely known examples) in which a distressed and beautiful maiden is delivered by a young

knight or hero from the clutches of a tyrant, giant or monster.⁴³⁾

Stephen's Oedipus complex can be noticed throughout the Episodes of *Ulysses*. However, I think, we must trace it back to *A Portrait*, because the mother complex should be remarkable in one's boyhood. The infant in *A Portrait*, likes his mother better than his father.

When you wet the bed first it is warm then it gets cold. His mother put on the oilsheet. That had the queer smell. His mother had a nicer smell than his father.⁴⁴⁾

As the psychoanalyst says, a boy looks upon his father as a giant or a monster in his dream or phantasy. Such fierce animals as a lion or an eagle often take place of the father's image. I have heard that, when a boy habitually has a dream of an eagle eating him, it is sure to imply his obsessive fear of his father caused by his Oedipus complex. The last scene of the infant's hazy recollection in *A Portrait* shows the sign of his Oedipus complex symbolically.

When they were grown up he was going to marry Eileen.
He hid under the table. His mother said:
—O, Stephen will apologize.
Dante said:
—O, if not, the eagles will come and pull out his eyes.—

Pull out his eyes,
Apologize,
Apologize,
Pull out his eyes.
Apologize,
Pull out his eyes,
Pull out his eyes,
Apologize.⁴⁵⁾

Stephen is doomed to follow the same fate as Oedipus who unknowingly killed his father and married his mother and who atoned these crimes by a voluntary act of self-punishment: pulling out his eyes. Thus, the eagles appearing here represent Stephen's fathers: his real father Mr. Simon Dedalus, the Jesuit fathers who are the opponents to his Art holding the

mother image, and the Father God who resents his desire to become Christ and his profane exclamation of joy for the Goddess of beauty, the water-bathing girl.

I think I should explain the meaning of the above-mentioned phrases—"his Art holding the mother image" and "the Goddess of beauty." I have already stated that Stephen's mother has the image of the Virgin Mary. All the girls who have any contact with Stephen also hold the image of the Virgin Mary. Let me compare Eileen with the water-bathing girl.

And she did not like him to play with Eileen because Eileen was a protestant and when she was young she knew children that used to play with protestants and the protestants used to make fun of the litany of the Blessed Virgin. Tower of Ivory, they used to say, House of Gold! How could a woman be a tower of ivory or a house of gold?.....

Eileen had *long white* hands. One evening when playing tig she had put her hands over his eyes: *long* and *white* and *thin* and *cold* and *soft*. That was *ivory*: a *cold white* thing. That was the meaning of 'Tower of Ivory.'⁴⁶⁾ (The italics are mine.)

A girl stood before him in midstream, alone and still, gazing out to sea. She seemed like one whom magic had changed into the likeness of a strange and beautiful seabird. Her *long slender* bare legs were delicate as a crane's and pure save where an emerald trail of seaweed had fashioned itself as a sign upon the flesh. Her thighs, fuller and *soft*-hued as *ivory*, were bared almost to the hips, where the *white* fringes of her drawers were like feathering of *soft white* down..... Her bosom was as a bird's, *soft* and *slight*, *slight* and *soft* as the breast of some dark-plumaged dove. But her *long* fair hair was girlish: and girlish, and touched with the wonder of mortal beauty, her face.⁴⁷⁾ (the italics are mine.)

We can notice in the two descriptions the repetition of the same words, especially the same adjectives, like "long," "white," "thin," "slight," "cold," "soft" and "ivory" which represent the image of the Virgin Mary. We also notice that the meeting with these girls (Eileen, Emma Clery and the water-bathing girl) stirs Stephen to create his Art. Thus, Stephen's love with girls develops into his creation of Art which bears the image of Virgin Mary. This represents Stephen's desire for identification of himself with a Christlike Artist, the Creator, who is free from any bonds: home, religion, the ties of parent and child and so forth. However, in *Ulysses*,

Stephen is tortured by his ambivalence for his mother: his affection for her and his antagonism to her. In the first scene of *A Portrait*, the infant's *cold* water suggests his heartening affection for his mother. But in *Ulysses*, the *cold* and *soft* water (Quotation 24) suggests his agony of his mother complex.

In the Episode XVII, Stephen is depicted in contrast to Mr. Bloom, the water lover.

What reason did Stephen give for declining Bloom's offer? That he was hydrophobe, hating partial contact by immersion or total by submersion in cold water (his last bath having taken place in the month of October of the preceding year), disliking the aqueous substances of glass and crystal, distrusting aquacities of thought and language.⁴⁸⁾

The passage "disliking the aqueous substance of glass and crystal" suggests a scene in Episode XV. Stephen is now in a brothel. His mother, emaciated, rises stark through the floor in leper grey with a wreath of faded orange blossoms and a torn bridal veil.

The Mother

(In the agony of her deathrattle.) Have mercy on Stephen, Lord, for my sake! Inexpressible was my anguish when expiring with love, grief and agony on Mount Calvary.

Stephen

Nothing!

*(He lifts his ashplant high with both hands and smashes the chandelier. There's livid final flame leaps and, in the following darkness, ruin of all space, shattered glass and toppling masonry.)*⁴⁹⁾

I remember having read a comment on this scene in a book. It says that the torn bridal veil, the chandelier smashed by the ashplant suggests Stephen's accomplishment of his sex urge toward his mother. I disagree with this idea. I think Stephen's action implies his effort to wipe out his obsessive Oedipus complex suggested by watery substance like "the aqueous substance of glass and crystal."

I would like to add more comments on the significance of Mr. Bloom's and Stephen's approach toward water. As I have mentioned, Mr. Bloom's

phantasy of returning to the womb clothes itself as an idea of being in an enclosed, dark, solitary or inaccessible place, safe from outside dangers or disturbances. The idea of life within the mother's womb is in this way closely associated with the desire for cessation of toil and striving, so it is connected with such cessation as the complete stoppage of all vital activities at death. As a matter of fact, the unconscious identification of the state after death with the state before birth seems to be one of frequent and widespread occurrence, the idea of the mysterious intra-uterine life before birth furnishing, through this identification, one of the causes of belief in a continuance of life after death,—life of a kind, however, in which, as in the life before birth, all our desires and needs are fulfilled without the necessity for toilsome and unpleasant effort. The influence of this identification can be traced not only in our general attitude toward death, but also in many of the details as regards the beliefs and ceremonies connected with the dead.

We place our dead in coffins and bury them in graves or vaults in churches (all of which are womb symbols) or under the earth (itself among the most frequent of mother symbols); or that in many places the dead have been placed on small island's caves, mountain tops, or other secluded spots, or deposited (like King Arthur) in boats and pushed out to sea.⁵⁰⁾

In this last practice, we are reminded of the conception that at death we pass away by the same road that we traversed when we entered into life at birth, for the sea is a mother symbol and the idea of water is closely connected with that of birth. A similar identification is caused by the belief that the dead pass across a lake or river on the way to their new home like Narcissus. This idea of birth and rebirth is symbolically presented in *Ulysses*. As I have quoted, Mr. Bloom, at the funeral scene immediately following the scene of the bath, says to himself, "So much dead weight. Felt heavier myself stepping out of that bath." This shows the change of his longing from life to death, but it suggests the rebirth as a mother who can beget a son. Stephen refers to "allwombing tomb." This, as I have stated, means a tomb which holds all sentient beings and puts them to sleep peacefully for ever. It seems to be the idea produced

by man's unconscious desire to be reborn in mother's womb or Matrix Repository ("taizô-kai") and sleep dreaming a peaceful dream in it, when he is dying or wants to die. The Hesperides of "Saihô-jôdo" (the blissful Buddha land in the West; the Western Pure Land; Paradise) or "Tokoyo-no-Kuni" (the land of eternity; Heaven; the land of the dead; Hades) or "Tokoyami-no-Kuni" (the land of perpetual darkness) was all wombing tomb which was said to exist deep in the sea of the west where the sun sets. It is clear that people wished to be awakened and return to this world from "Tokoyo-no-Kuni."

As I have stressed, one of the main reasons why Stephen has a horror of immersion in water is that it arouses his sexual feeling towards his mother. The psychoanalyst says that the womb and birth phantasies have sexual significance.

The phantasies of entering or emerging from the womb or of being carried in it may thus come to take on a directly sexual character, in the same way as any other of the numerous activities or processes associated with erotic feeling. It is probable too that in men and boys, the process of passing to or from the womb through the vagina is treated, on the principle of totum pro parte, as a substitute for the more directly sexual act appropriate to later life—the individual having enjoyed, on the occasion of his birth, the privilege of being in that place, whence his incestuous desires impel him to return. In this sense then, the womb and birth phantasies express the incestuous tendencies in a milder and less objectionable form.⁵¹⁾

As a striking example of this, he shows Sir J.M. Barrie's "Mary Rose." A grown up son, on returning after many years to the home of his childhood, is earnestly warned and entreated by the house-keeper in charge of the (now empty) house not to enter his former nursery (womb symbol), a small room which is approached by a short passage (vagina symbol). He eventually overcomes his fears and boldly enters the forbidden apartment with a lighted candle (phallic symbol) in his hand. At that moment the ghost of his mother appears! This may be applied to the case of Stephen, though he tries to efface his sexual urge.

When I read *The Odyssey*, by Homer, I noticed another interesting point associated with the difference between Mr. Bloom and Stephen

in approaching water or bathing. Odysseus likes bathing as does Mr. Bloom. The scene in which Odysseus uses the bath can be seen in almost all the episodes. The time devoted to the use of the bath is usually some time in the evening, and the Greek's approach towards the bath in this age seems to have a religious significance. These are the attitudes of people in the Orient, especially in Japan, rather than those in the West at the present time.

The Japanese approach the bath in an entirely different spirit from the people in the West. I hear that, in the West, after nearly two hundred years of opposition from the various churches, the bath was reduced, to its mere hygienic or medical function, that is, the removal of the surface dirt of the body when its effluvia become offensive to the nostrils of others; and it was used as a cure for certain affections. I have noticed that bathrooms in the West are designed on the assumption that we enter them with our clothes on and keep them on, taking them off only for the brief time necessary for immersing ourselves in a tilted or metal coffin in which we simmer for a few minutes in a brew of our own dirt. In Japan, however, the ultimate origins of the bath are religious. The bath is a domestic aspect of ancient purificatory rites called "yuami" or "misogi" which were, from the earliest times, an essential element of the "Shinto" cult. According to the cult, actual personal dirt was considered disrespectful towards the gods. A purified body is the passport to come into harmony with God or gods, and when man feels this harmony, however indirectly and remote from his consciousness, he is happy, at peace with himself and with others. Therefore, the Japanese bathroom is an inviting, welcoming place, in which it would be bad taste to hurry, or to hide oneself, or in any way to inhibit restful relaxation. We wash ourselves outside the bath, using a bucket or basin to pour warm water over our shoulders and our head. When we are perfectly clean, we enter the bath to warm ourselves, relax, meditate. These ways are quite different from those in the West at the present time. However, Odysseus used the bath in the same way as we Japanese do. Maidens pour warm water over his body, and he seems to use the bath to have the feeling that he is in harmony with gods.

We Japanese are shocked that people in the West have bath and lavatory

in the same room which points to their purely material, hygienic, medical attitude towards the bath. In Japan, the bath originated with ritual purification, hence it is a positive, pleasurable act, an essential ingredient in the rest and refreshment which a man takes after the toil of the day, a function as important and vital as sleep or meals. So, in Japan, the bath is called "o-furo" (honorable bath). Another difference is that people in the West apply no fixed time of the day to the use of the bath. They generally take it in a hurry, in the morning or in the evening, and plenty of people only take it every so often.

When they say someone is having a bath there is generally an implied apology in the statement. In Japan, the time between five and seven in the evening is sacred to the bath. We Japanese go home, take our bath in comfort, change into our ample oriental robes, and then we have our evening meal. This applies universally to rich and poor alike.

Japan has many traditional popular customs connected with the bath. A typical example is that the bath is regarded as a sacred place by parents who hope for their children's development of strength or mental power. On the Boy's Festival celebrated annually on May 5, a long pole is erected outside houses blessed with male children, and to this there are attached one or more huge carps made of brightly coloured paper ("Koinobori") which swell in the wind and seem to be vigorously swimming against the invisible current; the carp is a universally recognized symbol of strength, energy, will-power and long life. Inside the house, special sweets called "Chimaki" are eaten to the accompaniment of "sake," to which "shōbu", a medical herb, is added; and leaves of "shōbu," which is a kind of Florentine iris, are added to the bath, because of the strengthening and purificatory virtues traditionally attributed to them. Similarly on December 23, on the occasion of "tōji," the winter solstice, every good housewife prepares a bath with "yuzu," the juice of a small, scented orange which is said to bring fortune, purify mind and body, and be beneficial to health in various ways. Odysseus purifies his body putting olive-oil over his body before he dines with gods or hosts. Mr. Bloom uses some lemon-scented soap in the bath before he attends the ritual—the funeral. He imagines a corpse washed and shampooed in the episode of funeral. He always carries soap

in his hip pocket as if it were his mascot which brings fortune or has a religious significance. Mr. Bloom's wish to keep the body clean seems to imply his religious relief which has something sensual—characteristic of religion in the Orient in contrast to the spiritual attributes of religion in the West.

The fact that Stephen hates total cleaning and immersion in water implies his unbelief in Christianity as well as his fear of his mother's image called forth by water. On the contrary, Mr. Bloom openly admires the strength and organization of Catholics.

A Clean Jew, he is a nice contrast to the dirty Christian he will make his son. (Stephen rarely washes and never bathes: after all, 'All Ireland is washed by the Gulf Stream'.) Bloom buys some lemon-scented soap.⁵²)

Through the dream or the stream of consciousness concerning water, we could notice the peculiar mental complications of each of the two heroes in *Ulysses*, and, on the other hand, we could perceive the longing common to them: the longing for having the ability of pregnancy connected with the nest instinct. Therefore, the two heroes are not the separated beings, but the manifestation of the two features pertaining to one mind (Joyce), and the fundamental suffering desire or longing common to all men actuated by their instinct. Joyce finely objectified his own concerns by underlying the traditional myths. As long as the composition of the myths or the legends is deeply rooted in the fundamental desire or choice by every human being which remains unchanged registering the stream of the times, and every feeling or thought hidden in those myths or legends exists fixedly in the unconscious region of every man, it is natural that the feelings of Mr. Bloom or Stephen should have the universal function—the feelings having the contradiction of ambivalence between the instinct of death which endeavours to keep the state of oneself at present or in the past and the instinct of life which tries to transcend one's present state aiming at one's ideal.

In *Ulysses*, there is nothing of what we call a plot, for Joyce made it his purpose to develop the universal spiritual conflicts of human being,

using his peculiar method called "epiphany." According to Joyce, every trivial thing could be the object. From the trivial stream of consciousness which flows in Mr. Bloom's or Stephen's mind, several features of spiritual conflicts of human being—the universal conflicts hidden or symbolized in the myths or the legends—come out like developed films.

Notes

- 1) Trigant Burrow: *Preconscious Foundations of Human Experience*, Basic Books, Inc., New York, p.81.
- 2) *Ibid.*, p.81.
- 3) *Ibid.*, p.86.
- 4) James Joyce: *Ulysses*, The Modern Library, New York, p. 85.
- 5) Burrow: p.39.
- 6) Sigmund Freud: *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, Garden City Publishing Co., Inc., Garden City, New York, p.143.
- 7) Thomas Bulfinch: *The Age of Fable*, The Herriage Press, New York, pp. 102-3.
- 8) *Ulysses*, p. 85.
- 9) *Ibid.*, p.214.
- 10) *Ibid.*, p.483.
- 11) *Ibid.*, p.483.
- 12) *Ibid.*, p.484.
- 13) *Ibid.*, p.484.
- 14) *Ibid.*, p.658.
- 15) *Ibid.*, p.108.
- 16) *Ibid.*, p.100
- 17) *Ibid.*, p.113
- 18) *Ibid.*, pp. 655-6.
- 19) *Ibid.*, p.7.
- 20) Algernon Charles Swinburne: *The Triumph of Time*.
- 21) *Ulysses*, p.17.
- 22) *Ibid.*, p.240.
- 23) *Ibid.*, p.48.
- 24) *Ibid.*, p.46.
- 25) *Ibid.*, p.50.
- 26) Freud: pp. 143-4.
- 27) *Ulysses*, p.20.
- 28) *Ibid.*, p.22.
- 29) *Ibid.*, p.195.
- 30) *Ibid.*, p.205.
- 31) *Ibid.*, p.210.
- 32) James Joyce: *A Portrait of The Artist As A Young Man*, Penguin Books,

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- p.248.
- 33) *Ulysses*, p.567.
 - 34) *Ibid.*, p.654.
 - 35) *A Portrait*, p.217.
 - 36) *New Testament, John 1:1-14.*
 - 37) *Ulysses*, p.20.
 - 38) *Ibid.*, p.42.
 - 39) *New Testament, John 1:32.*
 - 40) *Ulysses*, p.42.
 - 41) *Ibid.*, p.385.
 - 42) *Ibid.*, p.677.
 - 43) J.C. Flügel: *The Psychoanalytic Study of The Family*, Hogarth Press, London, pp. 108-9.
 - 44) *A Portrait*, p.7.
 - 45) *Ibid.*, p.8.
 - 46) *Ibid.*, pp. 35-6.
 - 47) *Ibid.*, p.171.
 - 48) *Ulysses*, p. 657.
 - 49) *Ibid.*, pp. 567-8.
 - 50) Flügel: p.69.
 - 51) *Ibid.*, p.73.
 - 52) Anthony Burgess: *Re Joyce*, Ballantine Books, New York, 1966, p.142.