The page and a half of fragmentary phrases that opens the eleventh chapter and the second part of *Ulysses* has long been a source of contention. It is clearly a discrete composition, for it is set off from what follows and it ends on the conclusive note of “Done. Begin!”, with each word placed on a line by itself. Furthermore, there is little question that the composition is an incomprehensible one (the story of the difficulties it experienced in getting past the British censor during the First World War is well known).

The essential fact about it is generally recognized—that it is a verbal imitation of an operatic overture. The subject of the contention has been a question of sound and sense: can snatches of language from a larger context communicate as snatches of music do? In this instance the snatches fail to do so. And it does not justify Joyce’s device to attack the musical convention from which it derives or to argue that the “overture” is comprehensible post facto, after the chapter proper has been read and the context of each phrase supplied from it. The “overture” makes no sense and has no unity; its structure is simply the result of the extraction of representative snatches of language throughout the chapter, with some interpolation for verbal effect. It is not even a replica of the chapter. It is simply the verbal equivalent, for the chapter, of an overture to an opera.
Joyce was not too stupid to know that his snatches of language out of context would generally lack meaning and that they would fail to produce a coherent combination. The composition does not have to be comprehensible or coherent, only purposeful, which it is. The chapter begins with the imitation of an operatic overture because it is being associated with the romantic opera *Martha*, by Friedrich von Flotow. The overture to *Martha* is made up of excerpts from the opera proper; its famous tenor aria “M’appari” is very prominent in the chapter; one of the barmaids brings up the central soprano aria, Thomas Moore’s “The Last Rose of Summer”; and Bloom is occupied a good deal of the time with a letter to his penpal, Martha Clifford. The prominence in the chapter of vocal music in general and of references to singers and the heavy concentration (with varying results) on onomatopoeia and other phonetic word play in the prose serve primarily to reinforce this specific association.

*Martha* appears to be the casting of an English Restoration comedy situation into a romantic and moralistic mold, with the result that the nastiness remains and the wit is converted to mawkish sentimentality. Lady Harriet, a British noblewoman (“maid of honor to Queen Anne”), decides to attend the Richmond Fair disguised as a peasant (Martha) for diversion from the tedium of court life. Her maid Nancy and a foppish suitor accompany her. Two young farmers at the fair, attracted by their beauty, offer to hire the women, who accept the money proffered and thereby bind themselves. At the farmers’ cottage, Lionel, the adopted brother of Plunkett, declares his love for Martha (Lady Harriet), who thereupon fans his fervor by singing “The Last Rose of Summer.” Plunkett and Nancy provide the comic subplot.

The women escape, and the next time Lionel meets the noblewoman (coincidentally, he has just sung “M’appari”) she is in her proper dress. She has him arrested for effrontery when he courts her, and he sends his ring to Queen Anne via Plunkett. He is discovered to be a noble waif, son and heir of the late Earl of Derby. Lady Harriet is now enthusiastic about him (actually, although unwavering in her duty to her class and herself, she had suffered touching
regrets), but Lionel has become mentally deranged because of her former cruelty. She goes to his farm and sings “The Last Rose of Summer” without success. Her pleas for forgiveness are also rejected. But with the aid of the now betrothed Plunkett and Nancy, Lady Harriet devises a method of therapy: she converts part of her estate into a replica of Richmond Fair, and Plunkett leads Lionel to a repetition of the original meeting between the four. Lionel is cured and wins his Martha. The finale of the opera is a chorus by the full cast of a song to the tune of “The Last Rose of Summer,” but with the words, “Behold, April returns / Around the hilltop with flowers in bloom. . . .”

The quality of the book of the opera is apparent. Some similarity to Bloom’s situation in *Ulysses* may also suggest itself. The devotion and suffering of the unrequited lover echo aspects of Bloom’s relationship with Molly; and the “return” of his Martha is for Lionel a realization of Bloom’s deep desire, expressed in his gnawing memories of his and Molly’s former relationship in the eighth chapter (Byrne’s), and in his revery over the conclusion of *Sweets of Sin* a few pages back. But these are only approximate correspondences, and much closer and more revealing ones exist.

Every word in the “overture” except the final one is designed to reflect some part of the chapter proper. That “Begin!” is more than the cue for the raising of the curtain on the “opera,” the eleventh chapter of *Ulysses*. It also functions in the general action of the novel. The chapters through the ninth are a presentation or exposition of an everyday situation, which ends with the intimation of a future development; with the eleventh chapter that unique development begins.

The discussion of the novel’s structure in the Introduction included other indications that the rising action begins with the present chapter. At this point the various narrative devices begin to dominate the respective chapters. More important, Bloom’s behavior begins to change. The example of change that was cited there is his decision, at the beginning of the chapter, to follow Boylan.
The circumstances of this decision provide an early indication that the “Martha” who figures so prominently in the chapter is not Martha Clifford but, as has been suggested, Molly. Bearing *Sweets of Sin*, Bloom thinks “To Martha I must write” and visits a stationer’s:

Wise Bloom eyed on the door a poster, a swaying mermaid smoking mid nice waves. Smoke mermaids, coolest whiff of all. Hair streaming: lovelorn. For some man. For Raoul. He eyed and saw afar on Essex bridge a gay hat riding on a jauntingcar. It is. Third time. Coincidence.


—Twopence, sir, the shopgirl dared to say. (259)

Thus the prudent Bloom, formerly anxious to avoid Boylan (in the funeral car he had intensely studied his fingernails; approaching the National Library he had rushed into the museum), at this third sight of him is so intent on taking some action that he forgets to pay for the letter paper.

Throughout the chapter his concern for Molly eclipses any thought of Martha Clifford, and there is little doubt that writing to Martha is, as he says, a “bore.” He tries to increase his enthusiasm by telling himself that it is the course prescribed by his alienation from Molly and ignoring the obvious fact of its comparative blandness, that it is “sauce for the gander”; but wife takes precedence over epistolary mistress. He reiterates the guilt-motivated desire, expressed in the eighth chapter (Byrne’s), to buy Molly “the violet silk petticoats.” This time the pandering motif is delineated by allusion to the “costliest frillies. . . . For Raoul!” of *Sweets of Sin*, in combination with thoughts of Molly’s imminent rendezvous:


He alters the line from “Matcham’s Masterstroke,” the story he read in the outhouse during the fourth chapter, in a
significant way. The two brief excerpts from the story, "Matcham often thinks of the masterstroke by which he won the laughing witch who now" and "Hand in hand," indicate that it would have more than ordinary interest for Bloom, who wants so much to "win" his own "laughing witch"; in this chapter he confesses, "Matcham often thinks [of] the laughing witch" (276). He thinks of Molly's appearance on different occasions (271, 277, 280). And, of course, he follows Boylan.

Bloom's pursuit of Boylan is what takes him to the Ormond. When having his "bite" in Davy Byrne's at two o'clock, he had decided to dine at six o'clock: "Six, six. Time will be gone then. She . . ." (172); in the passage quoted from above, he says, "Eat first. I want. Not yet. At four, she said." He does not want to eat his dinner with Molly's rendezvous in prospect. However, when Boylan enters the bar, Bloom meets Richie Goulding, Stephen's maternal uncle, outside and decides to dine with him:

Dining room. Sit tight there. See, not be seen. I think I'll join you. (261)

They enter the dining room that adjoins the bar and, pursuing his endeavor to "see, not be seen":

Aimless he chose with agitated aim, bald Pat attending, a table near the door. Be near. At four. Has he forgotten? Perhaps a trick. Not come: whet appetite. I couldn't do. (262)

His wishful thinking is soon disappointed, for Boylan leaves the Ormond; and he sadly estimates Boylan's progress while the author reports it at intervals in the chapter. He guesses Boylan's arrival at number 7 Eccles Street precisely right, for his words are followed by:

One rapped on a door, one tapped with a knock, did he knock Paul de Kock, with a loud proud knocker, with a cock carracarracarra cock. Cockcock. (278)

Of course, he was helpless to stop the affair or another like it, as he recognizes while following the usurper to his home and wife in his imagination:
Jingle jaunty. Too late. She longed to go. That’s why. Woman. As easy stop the sea. Yes: all is lost. (268)

His last remark, which is inspired by a phrase of a song (“All is lost now”) just mentioned to him by Richie Goulding, indicates a conscious realization for the first time in the book of the extent of Molly’s importance to him. This realization is immediately reinforced: Simon Dedalus, after insistent prodding by his two companions, Ben Dollard and Father Cowley, begins to sing an English version of “M’appari.” The fragmentary English verses that appear in the text are a rough approximation of the original Italian. The lover sings of his happiness “When first I saw that form endearing,” tells of the folly of his hope to win Martha, and ends with an appeal that she go to him. During the singing of this song, Bloom, listening in the dining room, thinks of his loss of Molly to Boylan and his distress at that loss in two paragraphs that exploit respectively “Love’s Old Sweet Song” and Sweets of Sin (269-70). He then has another revery of lovemaking with Molly (270).

However, as he points out, Dedalus is “Singing wrong words.” Bloom is familiar with the aria. He remarks on the coincidental identity of the name of the opera from which it comes and that of the woman to whom he is about to write; he refers to it as “Lionel’s song”; and he seems to know something about the meaning of its original verses. Furthermore, Dedalus’ free English version is “wrong” with respect to Bloom as well as with respect to Martha. For “M’appari” is a representation of Bloom’s lament for Molly. It is for this reason that he is referred to as “Henry Lionel Leopold” and “Lionelleopold,” and that the reader is told, when Dedalus concludes his version of the song:


In the original Italian, the song Bloom is singing “dumb” is especially apt. The first of its five stanzas describes the lover’s meeting with his lady, the second her effect on him,
the third his revery with respect to her, the fourth their meeting (repetition of the first), and the fifth the reality of "Lionel-leopold's" situation. Literally translated, the song reads:

She appeared to me . . full of love;
My glance fell on her
So beautiful . . that my anxious heart
Flew to her.

That angelic beauty
Wounded me . . kindled my desire;
Sculpted in my heart . . by love,
It could not be blotted out.

The thought . . to be able
To tremble with her in love
Can allay . . the torment
Which troubles me and tortures my heart.

She appeared to me . . full of love;
My glance fell on her
So beautiful . . that my anxious heart
Flew to her.

Martha, Martha, you faded away,
And my heart went with you;
You robbed me of peace,
I shall die of sadness.8

And there is no doubt that the "Martha" about whom Bloom sings silently is Molly. He has never seen Martha Clifford, so that from the very first line the song is inappropriate to her. Besides, as the chapter makes clear, his epistolary affair has practically no hold on his interest. Molly's correspondence to the soprano in the opera is fairly precise, both having abandoned their devoted lovers; and Bloom's thoughts explicate the correspondence. Echoing the burden of the first two stanzas, in which Lionel tells how he fell
in love with Martha the minute he saw her at the Richmond Fair, Bloom thinks while the song is being sung:

First night when first I saw her at Mat Dillon’s in Terenure. Yellow, black lace she wore. Musical chairs. We two the last. Fate. After her. Fate... Down she sat. All ousted looked. Lips laughing. Yellow knees.
—Charmed my eye...
Singing. Waiting she sang. I turned her music... Bosom I saw, both full, throat warbling. First I saw. She thanked me. Why did she me? Fate. (271)

Thus, the various devices used to associate the chapter with the opera Martha effect a highly functional association. Where Bloom was resigned in the sixth chapter (post office) and troubled in the eighth (Byrne’s), he is now fully, consciously, aware of his situation and of its significance. He knows that he must get Molly back or he “shall die of sadness.” Although his pursuit of Boylan at the beginning of the chapter suggests it, “M’appari” serves as the principal vehicle for representing this awareness.

Ultimately the important thing about Bloom’s awareness is whether or not he acts upon it. In following Boylan he acts, although his action is doomed to futility. He acts in another significant way in the chapter, however, a way that directly illustrates his realization of what the loss of Molly means to him.

In this case the author exploits not Martha but the Odyssey. The analogue to the present chapter is the episode during which Odysseus arranges under Circe’s direction to hear the exquisite song of the two Sirens, and yet to avoid the destruction that met all men who had enjoyed the experience. He has his crew stop their ears, tie him to the mast, and disregard any orders he might give that they change course or untie him.

Details substantiating the correspondence abound, and the strongest link is blatant: there are two barmaids who hum and sing, and flirt with the patrons of the Ormond’s bar.
Their flirtation is not invariably casual, however, so that they are more than simply representations of Homeric she-demons. For example, when Boylan enters the bar, Miss Kennedy stops reading, and she and Miss Douce compete for his favor until Miss Douce proves more adept (260). Both are jealous over him, for both wonder about the carnation he got at the florist's (261). Finally Miss Douce, after a bit of prodding from Lenehan, exposes her thigh to him and Boylan, following which "mild she smiled on Boylan" (262). To no avail. Boylan leaves for his assignation with Molly, and Miss Douce can only watch him go "pensive (why did he go so quick when I?)." Her spirits rise when George Lidwell, a solicitor, enters the bar and rapidly becomes interested in her; and Miss Kennedy, in keeping with her more decorous deportment, talks decorously with an unwed gentleman who enters the bar.

Not only are the "sirens" more than idle flirts, but with the possible exception of one incident they have nothing whatever to do with Bloom. Neither one is interested in him. In this chapter, as in many others, the Homeric parallel does not function in the terms in which it is drawn. One true siren luring Bloom away from his family and to destruction is Martha Clifford, of course: his purchase of notepaper for a letter to her and writing of the letter figure prominently in the chapter; but his rejection of this siren occurs without great effort. There are much more attractive sirens—quite appropriately, the singers of the songs he hears through most of the chapter.

Bloom observes of Dedalus, "Wore out his wife: now sings," and of Ben Dollard:

Ben Dollard's voice barreltone. . . . Croak of vast manless moonless womoonless marsh. . . . Big ships' chandler's business he did once. . . . Now in the Iveagh home. Cubicle number so and so. Number one Bass did that for him.

Ruin them. Wreck their lives. Then build them cubicles to end their days in. Hushaby. Lullaby. Die, dog. Little dog, die. (278-79)

To this the author prefixes a description of Dollard's voice as "The voice of dark age, of unlove, earth's fatigue. . . ."
And Father Cowley, the third of the good comrades, is shown worrying about his imminent eviction while he engages in genteel revelry (277). The sirens luring Bloom are the men singing in the adjoining room. Widower, bachelor, and priest, they are unwived and (Dedalus’ relationship with Stephen being what it is) sonless. The responsibilities of a husband and father, in Bloom’s case the double problem of reuniting with Molly and begetting a son to continue the familial line, are completely avoided by Dedalus, Dollard, and Cowley. Their siren song is simply the example they embody of aging male camaraderie, without the impingement of wife, family, or home, the example of a kind of life that is an easily achieved escape from his predicament.

Bloom deliberates whether to follow their example during the chapter:

Gone. They sing. Forgotten. I too. And one day she with. Leave her: get tired. Suffer then. Snivel. Big Spanishy eyes goggling at nothing. (273)

But after this deliberation, he has the thoughts about Dollard quoted above and understands the essential loneliness and lack of meaning of the sirens’ lives. Continuing to suffer over the more and more imminent consummation of Molly’s affair and to recall with admiration aspects of Molly’s beauty and personality, he makes his decision. Dollard is singing the sentimental patriotic ballad identified as one of his specialties earlier in the novel (89-90). “The Croppy Boy.” It tells of a young “croppy,” a member of the revolutionary group of 1798, most of whose leaders were betrayed before they could begin to fight. Preparing for battle, the croppy confesses harmless sins, only to find that the rectory has been occupied by the British and a “yeoman captain” has disguised himself as the priest; the boy is then executed. Hearing Dollard sing “The Croppy Boy,” Bloom thinks:

All gone. All fallen. At the siege of Ross his father, at Gorey all his brothers fell. To Wexford, we are the boys of Wexford, he would. Last of his name and race. I too, last my race. Milly young student. Well, my fault perhaps. No son. Rudy. Too late now. Or if not?
If not? If still?
  He bore no hate.
  Hate. Love. Those are names. Rudy. Soon I am old.

(280)

Having acknowledged Molly’s importance to him for the first time in the novel and having followed Boylan for the first time, Bloom now for the first time expresses the view that something may yet be done to change his situation. And, in consequence, he decides to leave immediately, before Dollard finishes, clearly rejecting the song of the sirens:

Ireland comes now. My country above the king. She listens. Who fears to speak of nineteen four? Time to be shoving. Looked enough.

The last two words refer to another siren call, by Miss Douce. No more aware that she is offering a lure to Bloom than are Dedalus, Dollard, and Cowley, she is partly aware that he has been looking at her. The lure is that of flirtation and concupiscence, a more tangible substitute for reunion with Molly than Martha Clifford’s letters and pressed flowers. And before Bloom does “shove,” Miss Douce, still partly aware that he is looking but “lost in pity for croppy,” elaborates the lure by symbolic masturbation of a beer-pull (281). Associated with the croppy boy (as he goes out, Dollard sings “Pray for him. . . . He was the croppy boy,” and the author promptly calls him “croppy bootsboy Bloom”), Bloom also is made to feel that Miss Douce’s gesture is intended for himself (and for Lidwell). But although grateful, he is undeterred:

Get out before the end. Thanks, that was heavenly. Where’s my hat. Pass by her. (282)

Having rejected the siren-songs of Martha Clifford, the three men, and Miss Douce, Bloom does not succumb to the dubious attraction of the old prostitute who approaches him after he leaves the Ormond. Apparently she is Bridie
Kelly, with whom he had his first sexual experience many years before in Hatch Street. He avoids meeting this reminder of a furtive pre-marital experience by looking in a store window while she passes, and the chapter ends with a medley composed of an approaching tram, Bloom's breaking wind, and the concluding words of the patriotic speech made by Robert Emmett, leader of an ill-planned and abortive revolt in 1803, at his trial, which Bloom apparently reads from a picture of Emmett in the store window. Bloom is associated with the young hero through Emmett's traditional (although anachronistic) association with the croppy boy. Nevertheless, his breaking wind as the prostitute passes is his final comment, not only on all the siren lures which she represents, but on the nationalistic sentimentalism that surrounds the composite Emmett-croppy as well; it is at this point that Bloom thinks of the nameless Wexford martyr, “All the same he must have been a bit of a natural not to see it was a yeoman cap.”

In the eleventh chapter Bloom has been presented with, and has rejected, various kinds of inducement for reconciling himself to the loss of Molly and a prospective son. He thereby has avoided destruction. The sirens, like the lotus-eaters, offer escape and contentment, but the sirens destroy those they succeed in tempting. Correspondingly, Bloom could crave the forgetfulness of the lotus in the fifth chapter without harm; but had he succumbed to any of the various siren-songs, his ultimate fate would be that of Martha Clifford, the prostitute, and the three old men: loneliness, barrenness, hopelessness. Even the two overt sirens, the barmaids, share this fate. Miss Douce, constantly attracting men, seems to be able to hold none, and Miss Kennedy at least is clearly destined for spinsterhood.

The chapter begins with Bloom's unique, although futile, act of following Boylan, and it ends with an equally decisive contrast with his earlier attitude and conduct—his decision that it may not be too late to do something, that he bears no hatred toward Molly for the Boylan affair, and that if something is to be done, it must be done “soon.” Unlike Odysseus, he has had to resist the call of the sirens himself, but both his understanding of his need for Molly and his resolve have proven sufficiently strong. In the next
chapter, too, he will prove himself superior to the Greek hero, and again in a Bloomian way.

Bloom begins to think and act differently, in this chapter, from the Bloom presented throughout the first part of the novel. When Boylan enters the bar, Lenehan greets him in a characteristically sycophantic manner. It is perhaps not with sarcasm, considering that Bloom is at that moment engaged in his intrepid act of following Boylan, that the author counters Lenehan’s with a tribute of his own:

Lenehan heard and knew and hailed him:
—See the conquering hero comes.
Between the car and window, warily walking, went Bloom, unconquered hero (260)

and adds to it the epithet “black wary hecat,” a reference not only to a powerful stalking animal but to a savior as well.

As he prepares to leave the Ormond, Bloom thinks, “Barney Kiernan’s I promised to meet them.” The meeting is with Martin Cunningham and Jack Power, for a visit to Mrs. Dignam’s to discuss the difficulty over her husband’s life insurance. The present chapter concerns what happens when Bloom arrives at their meeting-place some minutes before the widow’s other advisers.

An anonymous participant, who discloses a great deal about himself in the process, tells about the incident in a first-person narrative, the format of which accommodates both dialogue and his comments to his silent auditor. However, the author interrupts the narrative proper with passages in differing styles, as though it were not fully ade-
quate to the incident. In fact, there is as much of this disguised omniscient commentary as there is story. Interpolations varying in length from a few lines to four pages occur at more than two dozen separate points, after each of which the narrative resumes as though it had never been interrupted. Thus, *Ulysses* is not simply given into a nameless narrator's hands at this point; rather, his story of an incident that occurred at Barney Kiernan's public house is made part of the twelfth chapter, one device the author employs to advance the novel.

The interpolated commentary is generally satiric, employing either ironic contrast or caricature. For example, after Bloom is baited about Molly's projected concert tour with Boylan, and the narrator comments for the reader, "Blazes doing the tootle on the flute," Molly is eulogized ironically (in both style and substance) as "Pride of Calpe's rocky mount, the ravenhaired daughter of Tweedy. . . . The chaste spouse of Leopold is she . . ." (314). An example of Joyce's caricature is a report of a wedding in a burlesque of a society column. The chauvinistic talk in Kiernan's bar has turned to trees, and John Wyse Nolan warns that Ireland will soon be "as treeless as Portugal," "if something is not done to reafforest the land"; for this devotion to Ireland's arboriculture, Nolan is made the groom of "Miss Fir Conifer of Pine Valley" (321). The account begins with a list of the company (Lady Sylvester Elmshade, Miss Virginia Creeper, Mrs. Maud Mahogany, *et al.* ) and a description of the bride's dress, which gives her a strong resemblance to a tree, and it continues in a similar vein for almost a page. The pungent ridicule and robust verbosity of most of the interpolations fully justify the comparison often made to Rabelais.

The principal object of Joyce's satire is the modern Irish citizen; his blind chauvinism and the contrast between his society and the Ireland of the past are the themes. The chapter begins with the beginning of the narrator's story, which immediately suggests the correspondence to the Cyclops episode of the *Odyssey*—

I was just passing the time of day with old Troy of the D.M.P. [Dublin Municipal Police] at the corner of
Arbour hill there and be damned but a bloody sweep came along and he near drove his gear into my eye (287)

—and then leads into Joyce’s satiric attack on the degenerate state of modern Ireland. Nothing came of the incident, for before he could upbraid the sweep, the narrator says, he saw Joe Hynes approaching. After he repeats a dialogue in which he told Hynes of his endeavors to collect a bill for an unlicensed Jewish merchant who sold a large order of sugar and tea to a larcenous customer, “an old plumber named Geraghty,” the first interpolation in the chapter occurs. It is a pompously legalistic bill of sale for this transaction which provides by its incongruity an eloquent statement about the appearance and reality of commerce and a humorous conclusion to the brief account of Geraghty’s chicanery. The narrator’s account resumes with Hynes’ invitation to him to drink at Kiernan’s, and the second interpolation begins.

This interpolation lists for almost two pages the natural wealth and abundant produce of “the land of holy Michan,” St. Michan’s parish in Dublin, the locale of Kiernan’s pub and Geraghty’s house. The contrast with the way in which Geraghty provides sustenance for himself in the land of holy Michan is obvious, but the comment on the difference between past and present is also made stylistically:

A pleasant land it is in sooth . . . where sport the gunnard, the plaice, the roach, the halibut, the gibbed haddock . . . and other denizens of the aqueous kingdom too numerous to be enumerated. In the mild breezes of the west and of the east the lofty trees wave in different directions their first class foliage. . . . (288-89)

As a final note of contrast, there is a description of the “superabundance of milk” and dairy products in the region, followed by: “So we turned into Barney Kiernan’s . . .” (290).

The nameless narrator’s account reinforces the satire, in part because he indicts himself. Joyce conceived his idiom to be that of the Coombe, “a lower quarter of the city,” and he is not markedly different from the many other
Dubliners portrayed in the novel. However he is not necessarily an Irish “Everyman”: he can be considered more “typical” than either Bloom or Bloom’s fanatical antagonist in the chapter, “the citizen”; but there is no apparent concern with any universal qualities he may possess, and a great deal of concern for the development of very particular ones.

He has been described as “a simple and bibulous Dubliner.” Bibulous he undoubtedly is, but he is far from simple. He seems to know every bit of gossip that exists. As Bob Doran, still on the bender mentioned by M’Coy in the fifth chapter (72), leaves the bar, he is able to describe not only Doran’s forced marriage, the subject of “The Boarding House” in Dubliners, but also the circumstances of Doran’s visit to a brothel, including the pseudonym Doran used and his behavior there. And he reveals during the chapter intimate and embarrassing information about Bloom, Hynes, Boylan, Denis Breen, and the citizen. Furthermore, his verbal wit is often funny enough to rank with the satiric interpolations, and he has the intelligence and common sense to recognize the folly of the extreme nationalists. The following passage shows both these characteristics:

So then the citizen begins talking about the Irish language . . . and Joe chipping in because he stuck someone for a quid and Bloom putting in his old goo . . . and talking about the Gaelic league and the anti-treating league and drink, the curse of Ireland. Anti-treating is about the size of it. Gob, he’d let you pour all manner of drink down his throat . . . before you’d ever see the froth of his pint. And one night I went in . . . and there was a fellow with a Ballyhooly blue ribbon badge spiffing out of him in Irish . . . And then an old fellow starts blowing into his bagpipes and all the gougers shuffling their feet to the tune the old cow died of. And one or two sky pilots having an eye around that there was no goings on with the females, hitting below the belt. (305-6)

The passage shows as well the narrator’s outstanding trait—the pettiness and malice of his character. As he has already disclosed, Hynes did not borrow the money to provide the
generosity he is enjoying, but is spending his wages, procured earlier (on Bloom's advice) from the *Evening Telegraph* cashier (113). And Bloom would no more accept drinks than proffer them, as—again by his own account—Bloom has just shown.

In fact, even the citizen, who spends his time in bars ranting about Ireland and accepting proffered treats, does not impose more blatantly on the generosity of others than the narrator does; so he is a rank hypocrite as well. When Hynes has offered the citizen another drink, he berates the citizen for parasitism before continuing with Hynes:

> And says Joe:
> —Could you make a hole in another pint?
> —Could a swim duck? says I (307)

whose first invitation prompted: “Decent fellow Joe when he has it but sure like that he never has it.”

When to his malice are added his hypocrisy, his self-centered parasitic exploitation of others, the fact that he is a bill collector, and such evidence of his refinement as his vomiting (329), the narrator emerges as a negative character who is too sensible to be the representative Irishman, and too malicious and calculating as well. Still, he is part of the typical Irish group in the bar; and through what he tells about the group and what he reveals about himself, he provides a constant reminder of the degeneration of Joyce's Ireland.

The narrator is properly more perceptive and witty than the others, in view of his function, but he participates as fully as they do in the central conflict of the two principals, "the citizen" and Bloom.

The citizen is no more representative a citizen than is Bloom, and is not even part of Hynes' and Cunningham's group. He is, rather, a caricature. He is a former shot-putter and minor revolutionary, currently a fool and barfly. When the narrator and Hynes enter the bar, the narrator says, the citizen is “waiting for what the sky would drop in the way of drink.” The citizen begins a childish exchange:
—Stand and deliver, says he.
—That's all right, citizen, says Joe. Friends here.
—Pass, friends, says he.
Then he rubs his hand in his eye and says he:
—What's your opinion of the times? (290)

and the narrator remarks contemptuously, "Doing the rap­paree and Rory of the hill."

On the very next page, the author indicates his essential agreement with the narrator. A long description of an ancient Irish giant, parodying romantic translations of Irish sagas, ridicules the actual "hero" by representing the old man as he sees himself. And again and again his intolerance, chauvinism, and stupidity justify the satire:

What do the yellow johns of Anglia owe us for our ruined trade and our ruined hearths? And the beds of the Barrow and Shannon they won't deepen with millions of acres of marsh and bog to make us all die of con­sumption. (320-21)

The combination here of his execration of the British and his whining complaint that they fail to take certain public health measures is less intolerant, chauvinistic, and stupid than his behavior toward Bloom.

The relatively simple major action of the chapter, comprising the behavior of the citizen and the consequent behavior of Bloom and the others in the bar, is the business of the narrator; but it is only part of the business of the chapter. Certain instrumental details and certain of the interpolated commentaries combine with the action at specific points to accomplish that larger business which is crucial for the novel. The manner in which these various elements combine is shown in the following brief review.

Almost as soon as Hynes and the narrator arrive at Kiernan's, Bloom is brought up; impressed by Hynes' affluence, the narrator is told that "the prudent member gave me the wheeze," and responds, "—I saw him before I met you . . . with his cod's eye" (292). This exchange
is immediately followed by a very brief interpolation in
the idiom of the heroic age, announcing the approach of
“O’Bloom, the son of Rory” (Rory O’Connor, the last High
King of all Ireland). After a few minutes the citizen re­
marks, “—What’s that bloody freemason doing . . . prow­
ling up and down outside?” An impending execution is
brought up, and Alf Bergan shows the company some
letters from hangmen soliciting the commission for despatch­
ing the condemned criminal. But the citizen does not
participate in the conversation; when he speaks next, it is
to say, “staring out,” that Bloom has returned. And on
the next page the citizen speaks once more—to invite him
into the bar; “—So Bloom slopes in with his cod’s eye on
the dog” (298). (The citizen is not the dog Garryowen’s
owner, “grandpapa [J. J.] Giltrap,” Joyce’s aunt’s father in
real life.) As Bloom enters, Hynes begins to read aloud
one of the hangmen’s letters.

The intimations of what awaits Bloom in the bar are not
long unfulfilled. The talk moves to capital punishment and,
in the words of the narrator, “Bloom comes out with the
why and the wherefor and all the codology of the business.”
The citizen begins a tirade, and Bloom attempts to point
out to him that he was justifying capital punishment for
criminals and not the execution of national heroes by the
British. The narrator relishes the situation and discloses
some choice gossip about Bloom before telling how the
controversy comes to a head. The citizen, “glaring at
Bloom,” pronounces the Irish nationalistic slogan, “Sinn
Fein!” , repeats it adding the intensifying “amhain” (only,
alone), then blatantly refers to Bloom as a stranger and an
enemy. The first of three successively more overt affronts, it
concludes the first phrase of Bloom’s ordeal in Kiernan’s.
And it initiates the longest interpolated passage in the chap­
ter, a description of “a genuinely instructive treat”—the
execution of an Irish patriot by the British, “H. Rumbold,
Master Barber,” the author of the letter read aloud,
officiating.

As he had done in the sixth chapter (cemetery) in the
face of less aggressive anti-Semitism, Bloom attempts to
override the rebuff. He joins Hynes and the citizen, who
seems to be too devoted to Ireland as a whole to know any
man in the bar (except him) by name, in their nationalist patter. When he mentions "the wife's admirers" (Mrs. Dignam's advisers), his slip is noticed, but the issue is not broached immediately; instead, the citizen's former athletic prowess and Irish sport are dwelt on, and once more he vexes the company, by pointing out the harm in overexertion. His reward follows: Bergan tells of Boylan's clever management of the boxer Myler Keogh. Unlike Nosey Flynn, who brought up Boylan's coup in the eighth chapter (170-71), the present company is fully aware of the connection between Bloom and Boylan, and he is unable to divert the conversation either at this point or subsequently.

When the citizen contributes to the cuckold-baiting, he is both more intent and more aggressive: "Pity about [Mrs. Breen], says the citizen. Or any other woman marries a half and half"; and the narrator observes, "Begob I saw there was trouble coming." But the trouble is not imminent. Discussion of Denis Breen's attempts to arrange a libel suit leads the group, now augmented, back to anti-Semitism. A Jew who has swindled prospective emigrants, a Jew who is among his victims, and Reuben J. Dodd, the Jewish money-lender, are discussed. The account of the ruling against Dodd by the recorder (chief magistrate) of the court is followed by an interpolation, in the archaic idiom of most of the commentaries, depicting the judgment of the Green Street Court—metamorphosed into ancient clansmen—against a "malefactor." This is followed in turn by:

Those are nice things, says the citizen, coming over to Ireland filling the country with bugs. (318)

And as the narrator observes, "Bloom lets on he heard nothing." Again he has been directly rebuffed, and again he attempts to reconcile himself.

The third phase of Bloom's ordeal begins with the citizen still spewing his bigotry. The others have deftly turned again to the cuckoldry theme, but the citizen's nationalist zeal cannot be swayed. While Lenehan announces to the others that Throwaway has won the Ascot gold cup "at twenty to one. A rank outsider," and that Boylan bet and lost two pounds on the favorite, Sceptre, "for himself and a
lady friend," he rants at J. J. O'Molloy and Bloom. He brings up the caning of sailors in the British navy, Bloom suggests that "discipline" and the use of "force" are "the same everywhere," and as in the discussion of capital punishment he fails to comprehend Bloom's simple point. There is general talk of Ireland's plight; other nations are condemned, Hynes orders still another round of drinks (for everyone but Bloom, who always demurs and, at one point, denounces "the curse of Ireland"), and Bloom protests "Perpetuating national hatred among nations." John Wyse Nolan asks Bloom if he knows "what a nation means?" and "—What is your nation," and:

—Ireland, says Bloom. I was born here, Ireland.
The citizen said nothing only cleared the spit out of his gullet and, gob, he spat a Red bank oyster out of him right in the corner. (325)

Bloom does not accept this third affront. Ostensibly speaking of the enslavement of Jews in Morocco, he protests the persecution of his "race," "This very moment. This very instant." Then:

he collapses all of a sudden, twisting around all the opposite, as limp as a wet rag.
—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. (327)

And he leaves the bar to look for Cunningham at the courthouse, and to enable Lenehan to suggest that he has really gone to collect his winnings on the race.

Although from the beginning of the chapter the citizen has been hostile to Bloom, the author causes Lenehan to instigate both the greatest injustice done to Bloom by the group and the citizen's climactic act of violence. Led to
it by his anti-Semitic bias, Lenehan nevertheless has some reason for his presumption. As he explains, he had met Bantam Lyons (at "Lynam’s" betting parlor during the tenth chapter, 229-30), when Lyons was about to bet on Throwaway (as a result of Bloom’s chance remark about his newspaper during the fifth chapter, 84), and had “put him off it.” And just as Lyons had told his companions in Davy Byrne’s during the eighth chapter (176), he had told Lenehan in Lynam’s that Bloom “gave” him the tip.

The prejudice of the others in the bar is sufficient to support their acceptance, not only of Bloom’s supposed bet and deceitful pretext for leaving to collect on it, but of the large amount Lenehan suggests he won as well. The incident is essentially a trial of Bloom—an indictment is brought and, after discussion, a judgment arrived at. A half-hearted defense is made by Nolan, who says that Bloom advised the leaders of Sinn Fein regarding conspiratorial strategy. Cunningham arrives with Jack Power and the Protestant politician named Crofton and confirms Nolan’s statement. But it makes no difference. (Ironically, considering Bloom’s reason for being at Kiernan’s when Cunningham asks about him, Lenehan says he is out “defrauding widows and orphans.”) Although when Bloom returns, Cunningham hurriedly ushers Power, Crofton, and him into the carriage that is to take them to Mrs. Dignam’s, the indignant citizen follows them outside and shouts anti-Semitic insults. After bystanders join in, Bloom responds by naming great Jews of history who are all, in fact, also non-Jews, just as he is. It is his inclusion of Christ in his list that causes the citizen to return to the bar, secure the large empty biscuit tin, and hurl it as the carriage departs. The end of the chapter is a parody of the ascension of Elijah to heaven in a “chariot of fire” (II Kings 2:11), in Biblical language that becomes briefly colloquial.

The incident at Kiernan’s has three essential principals: Bloom, the citizen, and the group of men, of whom the narrator is one, who share a fundamental attitude toward
the antagonists—amused tolerance of the citizen, and amused intolerance of Bloom.

Little can be said to extenuate the culpability of the citizen. He sets himself up as Bloom’s antagonist the first time Bloom walks past Kiernan’s. He is treated with a relentless irony, not only in the interpolated commentaries, but in the account itself. For example, when he protests the Irish origin of British civilization, it is in the most uncivilized way possible. The citizen is, as has been said, a caricature; he is the ultimate development of the citizens, the others in the bar—a monster.

Thus, their basic characteristics are bibulousness, not yet reduced to full-time attendance at bars; impecuniousness, not yet reduced to disguised begging; bigotry and malice, not yet reduced to violence; chauvinism, not yet reduced to blind and humorless fanaticism; and inactivity respecting their national problem, not yet reduced to seeking a scapegoat. The portrait is an elaboration of the one sketched in the seventh (newspaper) chapter. In fact, four of the characters appear in the earlier chapter as well: Lenehan, Lambert, O’Molloy, and Hynes. Like the others, the narrator is amused at the citizen’s attack on Bloom and upset about his final violence; considers Bloom an outsider; enjoys the high-spirited fun of baiting the Jew and cuckold; and immediately accepts the judgment of Lenehan, which is convincing only because Bloom is a Jew. The only important respect in which he appears to differ from the others is in his hypocritical attitude toward the national question; and since the private attitudes of the others are not known, the reader is left to question to what extent he actually does differ from the representative citizens.

Bloom, the citizen’s scapegoat and the butt of the others, is innocent. He is in no sense pro-British; in fact, he may well have done more for the national cause in his youth than any of the others. His reasonable statements about capital punishment and military discipline are twisted by a brutal fanatic. And the amused baiting of the others is no more defensible morally than the similar incident in the funeral carriage. It is clear from that earlier incident that Cunningham, who here attempts to rescue Bloom from the citizen, is nevertheless prejudiced enough to engage in
Jew-baiting when the occasion allows. Even O'Molloy, who is more insistent than Bloom on giving the British their due, is anti-Semitic. Only Nolan is a partial exception. Of course, Bloom is not entirely blameless. His sententiousness and his precise appraisal of the various chauvinistic statements make him something of a bore. However, as the narrator reveals, his broad (and shallow) knowledge impresses the others; what annoys them is his violating the code by which they provide themselves with social conversation. While they make the national question a vehicle for sentimentality, vanity, and vituperation, he takes the political and moral welfare of Ireland seriously. He points out the debilitating effect of the nation's alcoholism on its aspirations, the injustice of condemning the English for what the Irish themselves would do if they had a navy, the evil of persecution and its evil result, hatred among nations; and supporting these specific points, he asserts that force, insult, hatred, the contemporary manifestations of historical circumstances, are "not life for men and women." He is preaching "Love. . . I mean the opposite of hatred." And his sudden exit may reflect as much disgust with those with whom he has been so frank as embarrassment at his frankness.

Bloom expresses himself poorly and is foolish in trying to talk seriously to his companions in the first place, but his thinking and his sentiments are right, and theirs are wrong. To their blind and empty chauvinism, malice, and bombast, he opposes common sense, kindness, and sincerity.

Furthermore, Bloom is not simply an innocent victim in the chapter. As he himself thinks later on, when no longer able to endure the citizen's vilification, he "departed from his customary habit to give him (metaphorically) one in the gizzard" (641). He has acted heroically, "stood up to injustice" as Nolan has advised him, and he regards his conduct as the explanation of the citizen's final violence:

People could put up with being bitten by a wolf but what properly riled them was a bite from a sheep. (642)

The similarity between this incident and that in the funeral carriage establishes beyond any doubt the significance of
Bloom's fortitude: in both cases Bloom's companions are the semi-poor, semi-professional "citizens" in whose circle he nominally belongs; in both, they bait him for amusement; both times the subjects are the same, his Jewishness and his cuckoldry; in both, Cunningham, Power, and a carriage figure prominently; in both, the anti-Semitism is related to the moneylender, Reuben J. Dodd; finally, although he baits Bloom in the sixth chapter, Cunningham acts in both chapters (in the sixth when Power condemns suicides) to extricate Bloom from an ugly situation.

Of course, Bloom's conduct in the present chapter also appears to bear out the parallel for a while. But he does finally upset it, and the significance of this upset is insisted on by the fact that the parallel exists—precisely as his following Boylan to the Ormond in the preceding chapter is made significant by its contrast to his previous behavior toward Boylan. There he was called the "unconquered Hero"; the eulogy with which he is introduced in the present chapter:

O'Bloom, the son of Rory. . . . Impervious to fear is Rory's son: he of the prudent soul (292)

has its similar element of truth.

Finally, just as was his confrontation of his "sirens," Bloom's fortitude when threatened by his "Cyclops" is more creditable than that of his Homeric analogue. For Odysseus, out of vain bravado, causes the Cyclops to hurl the mountaintop and the even greater second missile that nearly wreck his fleet, while Bloom, a timid and prudent man, causes the analogous action by defying bullying and injustice.

In the present chapter Bloom is the victim of ignorance, bigotry, and hypocrisy; and he continues to be significantly different from his former self. But its burden is not so simple as this. Three interpolated passages contribute to it a completely new dimension of meaning: the execution of the
Irish patriot, which comes at the point of the citizen’s first major attack on Bloom; the preparation for the trial of the “malefactor,” which is sandwiched between the first Jew-baiting of the group and the citizen’s second attack; and the final paragraph.

Although the first of these commentaries seems to derive from the citizen’s eulogy of Irish national martyrs, whose murder by the British he considers Bloom to be defending, it does not support the citizen in any way. In the first place the Irish spectators enjoy the execution; the passage, actually in part because of its robust humor, is perhaps the bitterest of the novel’s indictments of the Irish people for betraying their patriots. Thus it is a parody of a newspaper report—a reflection of the public viewpoint. In the second place the “genuinely instructive treat” is that because the patriot is not only betrayed and abandoned (his “bride-elect” accepts the suit of an Oxonian Englishman before his eyes), but a scapegoat as well. Thus, aside from a “quartering knife” and “various finely tempered disembowelling appliances,” the appointments of the scaffold include “two commodious milkjugs destined to receive the most precious blood of the most precious victim.”

The review of the action pointed out that Hynes reads aloud the letter of “H. Rumbold,” the English barber-hangman, just as Bloom enters the bar; the “worldrenowned headsman” officiating at the execution of the unnamed patriot has the same name. The coincidence of Bloom’s entrance and the reading of the real Rumbold’s letter; the irony of the citizen’s indignant description of Rumbold as “a barbarous bloody barbarian,” a description of himself; the placement of the interpolation directly after the citizen’s initial attack on Bloom; and the fact that it represents the Irish people as enjoying themselves at the expense of the “victim”—all these elements conjoin with the general situation in Kiernan’s to associate Bloom with the martyr-scapegoat, the citizen with “Rumbold” the executioner, and the others in the bar with “that monster audience.”

The circumstances of the interpolated execution closely resemble those of Robert Emmett’s martyrdom: Emmett was hanged and decapitated; he was to be married to a beautiful girl, and their love figured prominently in the
incident; he was an Irish patriot being subjected to a British military execution; he had been betrayed (by his defense counsel). As Bloom prepared to leave the Ormond Hotel in the preceding chapter, he was associated with the "croppy boy" of the patriotic ballad, who is popularly associated with Emmett; and at the very end of the chapter, he was associated with Emmett as well. The martyr is never named and, in conformity with the "betrayal" motif, is much less prominently treated than the spectators, the executioner, and the British army officer in charge. He is called "the hero martyr," "the hero," and the girl's "hero-boy." The terminology suggests not only the croppy and Emmett, but the "unconquered hero," "impervious to fear," as the author has taken to calling Bloom. The croppy boy–Emmett-Bloom complex reiterates that the interpolation is about the victimization of Bloom, with the citizen the agent of victimization and the others in the bar the participating bystanders.

The appellation "hero" is appropriate to Bloom because of the changes in his conduct noticeable since the beginning of the preceding chapter. There is also evidence to support that of "martyr," so insisted on in the Emmett and croppy associations and in the interpolation just discussed. Although he is not killed, Bloom does suffer, unjustly, for the sake of others—he is in Kiernan's on a charitable mission. And he conducts himself throughout in the manner already described: he attempts to turn aside blind chauvinism and xenophobia by appeals to reason and justice. Above all, he preaches "Love. . . . I mean the opposite of hatred." His concern about the suffering of animals (309) and that of Mrs. Breen (315) are instances in the present chapter of the mercy that is one of his prominent traits. And his reward for that mercy is to be despised and rejected by the very men to whom he is attempting to teach his simple doctrine.

The analogy I am drawing between Bloom's situation and that of Christ is intentional. In this twelfth chapter the association of Bloom and Christ made in the eighth chapter (Byrne's), touched on briefly at the end of the ninth chapter, the end of the first part of the novel ("step of a pard"), and in the beginning of the eleventh, the
beginning of the second part ("black wary hecat"), is developed. The distinction between the citizen and the group in the bar has been pointed out. The attitude toward Bloom of the ridiculous old crank is in itself irrelevant; he acts as a stimulant to the others, but they are the true citizens, Bloom's fellow men, and only their attitude and their actions are significant. Whether they know it or not, when they turn their thumbs down they make a judgment that is far from casual.

The fact and the nature of its importance constitute the subject of the second interpolation of the three being discussed, that depicting preparations for the trial of the nameless "malefactor," which occurs between the humorous account of a reprimand given by the chief magistrate, Sir Frederick Falkiner, to Reuben J. Dodd, and the citizen's comment on the account, "—Those are nice things . . . coming over here to Ireland filling the country with bugs," his second overt attack on Bloom. The Dodd matter was a civil, not a criminal, case, and Dodd was the plaintiff, not the defendant, so he is apparently not the "malefactor" of the commentary. The reference may be, nominally, to the Jewish swindler mentioned just before Dodd in the Jew-baiting colloquy; but again, Bloom is the actual subject.

Kiernan's public house, adjacent to the Green Street Court (its whiskey cellars actually extended beneath the courthouse), was associated with that court by Dubliners before the transfer of most legal business to the Four Courts caused the bar's decline and eventual closing about twenty years ago. It was even called "the court of appeal" because of all the legal business conducted in it. Joyce's placing of the action in a bar well-known for its association with the court, like the constant talk of trials, court judgments, and executions that appropriately goes on there during the chapter, is functional.

The judge of the interpolated passage is the actual chief magistrate of Dublin, and the court of the passage is his court ("to the solemn court of Green street there came sir Frederick the Falconer"). The interpolation is linked directly to Bloom as well as to Kiernan's. The date of the forthcoming trial is given as "the sixteenth day of the month of the oxeyed goddess [Juno]," and the time "about the
hour of five o’clock.” Furthermore, the jury is described as:

the high sinhedrim of the twelve tribes of Iar, for every tribe one man, of the tribe of Patrick and of the tribe of Hugh and of the tribe of Owen . . . there being in all twelve good men and true. (317)

The all-Irish “sinhedrim” of the commentary is an overt representation of the all-Irish group in the bar, which is also preparing to pass judgment on a man guilty of no specific crime, and which also numbers twelve jurors: O’Molloy, Nolan, Lambert, Bergan, Lenehan, Hynes, Cunningham, Crofton, Power, the narrator, the citizen, and Garryowen; Doran leaves the premises early in the chapter, and Terry Ryan, the bartender, remains outside the company; Garryowen, “of the tribe of Owen” (he has the name of a patriotic song, and at least the real Garryowen was an Irish setter), makes repeatedly clear his judgment of Bloom and is represented in one of the interpolated commentaries as parahuman (“synanthropic”) and a poet.

The associations between Kiernan’s and the Green Street Court, the correspondence of date, time, and “juries,” the parallel between the situation of the unnamed “malefactor” and that of Bloom, and the historical fact that Emmett was tried at the Green Street Court make unavoidable the conclusion that the “malefactor” about to be tried represents Bloom. The significance of this fact is crystallized in the word “sinhedrim,” under ordinary circumstances an incongruously Hebraic term to apply to a microcosm of the Irish nation. It is a pointed association of the men about to judge and condemn Bloom with the high court of ancient Judaea that condemned Christ. The correspondence extends even to the fact that Bloom is wearing mourning attire, required of a prisoner appearing before the ancient Sanhedrin. The men in the bar are a modern Sanhedrin, representatives of Christian Ireland, swearing fidelity to “him who died on rood” and condemning one who is trying to bring them light, much as the ancient judges proclaimed their faith in the Covenant of the Lord and condemned the one who tried to bring them the light of that covenant.
The association of Bloom and Christ which is the essential burden of this interpolation is suggested throughout the chapter, linked to Bloom in the mock execution, refers sented as a martyr, and mention is made of the “most precious blood” of the hero-martyr-scapegoat. All the talk of hanging and of lynched and legally hanged men during the chapter, linked to Bloom in the mock execution, refers to the modern counterpart of what was, in the time of Christ, the standard method of execution. In speaking later of his altercation with the citizen, Bloom calls himself “a sheep.” The narrator repeatedly calls him “cod’s eye,” making both a reference to the fish symbolism by which Bloom was associated with Christ in the eighth chapter and a pun. While Bergan is talking about the man he saw earlier and thought was the dead Dignam, Bloom happens to look in the door of the bar; and:

—Good Christ! says he. I could have sworn it was him. (297)

Bloom’s preaching prompts the citizen to ask, “—Are you talking about the new Jerusalem?” and to say contemptuously, “—A new apostle to the gentiles. . . . Universal love.” Later the citizen makes the announcement:

—That’s the new Messiah for Ireland! (331)

The association is definitely established, however, at the climax of the action. In the *Odyssey*, the Cyclops hurls the second and greater of two rocks at the hero when Odysseus proclaims his identity. Bloom stands in the carriage and names great Jews, the citizen challenges his including Christ, and he is more explicit:

Christ was a jew like me. (336)

The citizen’s reaction is to secure the biscuit tin, and through the unconscious irony of his speech as well as by his Cyclopean action to complete the identification of the hero:
—By Jesus . . . I'll brain that bloody jewman for using the holy name. By Jesus, I'll crucify him so I will.

The distressed narrator can only say “I'll be in for the last gospel” when the tin is hurled, but the author interpolates an account, in a parody of scientific reporting, of an earthquake that corresponds to the earthquake at the crucifixion, and a “perturbation of cyclonic character.”

The association of Bloom with Joshua of Nazareth, itinerant rabbi and prophet, the unrecognized Messiah, is not an anagogical revelation of their identity. Bloom is not crucified—not even in the citizen’s terms, since the biscuit tin misses him. The citizen is not the spokesman of the “Sanhedrin” anyway—its spokesman is the narrator; but both his personal sentiments and his account of the incident reveal that Bloom was, like Christ, despised and rejected. The non-Catholic in the bar makes the judgment of Christian Ireland complete: “—We don’t want him says Crofter [Crofton] the Orangeman or presbyterian.”

The representatives of the Irish nation are shown to be beyond salvation. They have “sinned against the light,” not by proxy like the modern Jews so accused by Mr. Deasy, but by their own acts. Blasphemy comes up obliquely in the chapter: the drunken Doran reviles Christ; the citizen invokes “the curse of a goodfornothing God”; and patriotic sentiment prompts Ned Lambert to speak obscenely of a Bible inscribed by Queen Victoria. More significant than the blasphemy is the author’s comment on the conclusion of the brief “trial” of Bloom in his absence. Cunningham attempts to end the discussion by soliciting a blessing for those who are present, Bloom’s judges:

—Well, says Martin, rapping for his glass. God bless all here is my prayer. (332)

The citizen says “Amen,” Hynes says “And I’m sure he will,” and O’Molloy expresses his agreement. But between Hynes’ statement and O’Molloy’s is interpolated a two-page burlesque of a procession of saints and clerics to Kiernan’s to bless the company. With its strong stress on both Irish and Catholic motifs, the interpolation clearly represents a
divine blessing as the men in the bar conceive it. The group of "saints and sages" approaches Kiernan's performing messianic miracles involving loaves and fishes, evil spirits, and the dead, halt, and blind. The ceremony does not conclude until the celebrant, "the reverend Father O'Flynn attended by Malachi and Patrick,"

prayed that God might bless that house as he had blessed the house of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and make the angels of His light to inhabit therein. (334)

And, of course, the angel (messenger) of "His light," who is of the blessed "house of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob," has been turned away by "that house." Ironically, the rejected bearer of God's light re-enters the "house" simultaneously with the expression of pious wishes for God's blessing by the company and the author's ironic representation of the form they conceive the blessing to take. But he multiplies no fishes, and he is neither named Father O'Flynn nor followed by a procession chanting "the introit in Epiphania Domini."

The two important interpolations discussed at length above, the execution of the martyr and the trial of the malefactor, relate to Bloom's quasi-trial and quasi-crucifixion in Kiernan's. The last of the three, the chapter's final paragraph, is the sole vehicle of Bloom's quasi-resurrection. Not only a resurrection on analogy with Christ, but an assumption as well; associating Bloom with the Old Testament figure who was thus graced by God, it closely parodies the relevant passage in II Kings. Elijah has triumphed over the priests of Baal. Accompanied by his successor Elisha, he divides the water of the Jordan and passes over:

And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

The conclusion of Joyce's parody, "And they beheld Him ben Bloom Elijah [Elijah begotten of Bloom] . . . ascend
... at an angle of forty-five degrees ... like a shot off a shovel,” cannot be considered a mockery of all that precedes it. Forty-five degrees is a steep angle, and the meaning of the final colloquial simile reinforces the assumption idea. By combining the idiom of Bloom’s Dublin with that of the Bible, Joyce is avoiding a sobriety that would be crudely sentimental and asserting that what is represented in the passage is happening in 1904, on Little Green Street, Dublin. It is this Elijah-like assumption that is the reason for the “cyclonic” counterpart to the earthquake in the interpolation that followed the hurling of the tin. Finally, there can be no doubt that the reference to Elijah is to be seriously applied to Bloom, for Bloom was associated with Elijah previously.

In the opening lines of the eighth chapter Bloom was given the handbill announcing the coming of the evangelist Dowie who, in 1901, had proclaimed that he was “Elijah the Restorer,” and Bloom promptly mistook a reference in it to Christ for his own name. He then thought and acted in such a way as to associate himself with the prophet who had wished for death and been fed by birds. Thus, although the three interpolations discussed associate Bloom with Christ and Elijah, both associations were first made early in the novel and, as in the present chapter, they were made together. In addition, Bloom’s quasi-apotheosis is firmly grounded in the action of the chapter. The “trial” and “crucifixion” of him are not two elements in an incident between a Jewish advertising salesman and a group of petty men sparked by a bigot which have been arbitrarily inflated by the author; the rejection by the men of the figure placed beside Christ and Elijah results, as directly as does their rebuff to the familiar Bloom who is an inconsequential salesman, from their misunderstanding arising out of Bloom’s unconscious tip about the horse Throwaway. Like Dowie, Bloom announced the prophet (and Messiah) by a “throwaway,” his newspaper; his “I was about to throw it away” in the fifth chapter (post office) was a prophecy in traditionally cryptic form, yet not too cryptic to be comprehended by Bantam Lyons. Furthermore, the action that grows out of the unconscious tip about a racehorse was almost blatantly linked, at the beginning of the eighth chapter, to the association of Bloom with Christ and Elijah,
by the consistent use of the uncommon word "throwaway" to refer to the handbill that was so instrumental in making that association. Finally, that action, just ended by the biscuit tin, began with a "prophecy" and has ended with a "crucifixion." The previously-established interdependence of Throwaway tip and Messiah "throwaway" is the foundation for the relationship the author draws in the present chapter between the action (linked to the first) and the interpolations (linked to the second), between the insignificant victim of a misunderstanding and the rejected counterpart of both Elijah and Christ.

With respect to Elijah as with respect to Christ, the proper word is "counterpart": Bloom is not identified as each (or either) figure but with him. The author has not portrayed a character through half a novel only to declare that he is really, unknowingly, the avatar of the traditional Messiahs of both Christians and Jews. Nevertheless, he is systematically identified with both Messiahs. And that Elijah as well as Christ is deified as the Messiah is indicated by the use throughout the concluding passage of capitalized pronouns to refer to Bloom-Elijah ("the chariot wherein He stood," "they beheld Him in the chariot").

Joyce has taken no liberties in calling Elijah as well as Christ Messiah. The Hebrew word means "the anointed one," and the title given to Jesus, the Greek word Christos, is only a translation of the Hebrew Meshiah; "Messiah" signifies an office, not a man. Rabbinical teachings hold Elijah to be the annunciator of Judgment Day, and the Second Coming as Jews traditionally conceive it will be a return of Elijah. He thus occupies a place in Judaic apocalyptic and messianic doctrine closely analogous to that of Christ in the corresponding Christian doctrine, that of the Anointed and the Deliverer. The Gospels reveal that those among whom Christ preached so regarded Elijah, and make a clear distinction themselves between Elijah and the ordinary prophets. Finally, medieval Church writers saw every detail in the Old Testament account of Elijah as prefiguring a detail in the New Testament account of Christ.

The basis on which Bloom is associated by the author with the dominant messianic figures in western civilization is made plain in the foremost work of messianic prophecy,
the Book of Isaiah. The prophet Isaiah, author of the first thirty-nine chapters, calls the Messiah the "Prince of Peace" and specifies that he shall be descended from Jesse, the father of David. The anonymous author (or authors) of the remainder of the book, called "Deutero-Isaiah," has a very different conception. For him the Messiah is the "Suffering Servant"; and as Bible commentaries point out, the slightest care in reading reveals that the Messiah is not one individual but all Israel, the Hebrew nation, and its mission is to deliver the Gentiles. The fact that family Bibles identify this Messiah with Christ in chapter headings, just as they do the Prince of Peace descended from David, is the result of the same misconception by which the lines in Deutero-Isaiah:

O Zion, that bringest good tidings  
O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings (Isaiah 40:9)

became:

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion,  
O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem

in the first part of Handel's Messiah.

Although not in the genealogical sense, Bloom is ethnically of the house of David, of course. And his conduct in the present chapter conforms to that prescribed by Isaiah in the central "Prince of Peace" passage:

But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. (11:4)

But Deutero-Isaiah describes Bloom even more closely. He represents the Lord as saying to the Hebrew people that He will make them "a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes . . . "; and his familiar personified description of the Suffering Servant:
he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not (53:2-3)

is plainly applicable to Bloom’s character and behavior and to the treatment of him. Bloom is one of those whom God has anointed, given the office of reprover with equity for the meek of the earth—Mrs. Breen and suffering cattle, as well as all persecuted victims of “hatred among nations.” He smites the earth with the rod of his mouth, although he fails thereby to open the blind eyes and make the Gentiles receive the light he embodies. The citizen’s “—That’s the new Messiah for Ireland!” is as ideal an example of the consistent dramatic irony of that character’s remarks as the chapter contains.

The representation of Bloom as literally a messianic figure is a complete innovation in the novel. The association of him with Odysseus and Shakespeare, and even with Christ and Elijah before this chapter, has been essentially functional, for the purpose of unfolding the story. However, in this chapter something has been indicated about Bloom’s actual self: here, association with Christ and with Elijah is not a narrative device but characterization. The colloquial wording at the end of the chapter, and the instrumental role of the popular evangelist Dowie, even if they add a minor ironic coloration—and they do not necessarily—can hardly outweigh in significance all the elements of a direct and unqualified association carefully laid out in the eighth, ninth, eleventh, and present chapters and, with respect to the horserace tip, as far back as the fifth chapter, the second in which Bloom appears. Furthermore, this carefully prepared disclosure about Bloom is an important element in the rest of the novel.

In presenting a serio-comic account of a messianic figure, a deliverer of the people, who is tried and rejected or destroyed by them, Joyce is actually in a tradition; and
this fact also substantiates my assertion that Bloom is presented as in some sense a bringer of light and deliverer. Synge, before Joyce, in Christy Mahon, his playboy of the western world (precisely what Christ was as Synge uses the term “playboy,” and as we normally understand “western world”), and Shaw, after Joyce, in his Joan, join with him to make the theme central to three masterpieces by modern Irish writers.

Incongruous as it may seem, then, Leopold Bloom’s character, deportment, and circumstances combine at this point in *Ulysses* to indicate that he is not only Jew-cuckold-salesman but Messiah as well. Nevertheless, he seems to be unconscious that he possesses any such power. He did so in ignorance when he provided Bantam Lyons with the tip on Throwaway; in the eighth chapter, in which the messianic association is first developed, he debated whether or not to pass on Lenehan’s tip for the race, Sceptre, which he overheard in the preceding (newspaper) chapter, and saw nothing personally significant in the Dowie “throwaway”; when he passed between Stephen and Mulligan at the end of the ninth chapter, it was the author who attributed to him the “step of a pard”; and in the present chapter, when the citizen offers him a perfect opportunity to declare himself by asking him if he is “talking about the new Jerusalem,” he answers only, “I’m talking about injustice.” The reader knows more about him than he knows about himself.

He does come to an understanding of the Throwaway affair and, to some extent, of the relationship between that and the handbill, in the last section of the novel. Reading a newspaper account of the race in the sixteenth chapter (shelter), he reveals that he was attentive not only to Lenehan’s description of it in the fourteenth chapter (hospital) but also to the one Lenehan gives the others in the present chapter while Bloom himself and O’Molloy are arguing with the citizen; thus he comments on Boylan’s bet on Sceptre “for himself and a lady friend,” disclosed by Lenehan: “Different ways of bringing off a coup. Love-making damages,” illogically (but significantly) involving himself in Throwaway’s victory. He then reveals that he understands Lyons’ behavior in the morning, and finally
that he understands the reason for the animosity of the group at the bar (632-33). In the next chapter, the seventeenth, he sees the torn scraps of two betting tickets, and his "brow" is "corrugated" by:

Reminiscences of coincidences, truth stranger than fiction, preindicative of the result of the Gold Cup flat handicap. . . . (659)

Thus, by the end of the day, he fully understands. And when he reflects on the occasions on which "previous intimations" of the race result had come to him, his list includes the initial offer of the newspaper to Lyons, Lyons' pointing him out as the originator of the tip in the eighth chapter (176), the incident at Kiernan's, and his receipt of the Christ-Elijah "throwaway"; he sees himself when he offered Lyons the newspaper as

with the light of inspiration shining in his countenance and bearing in his arms the secret of the race, graven in the language of prediction.

Impressive as Bloom's hearing, memory, and powers of deduction are, they are not awareness of a truly messianic nature. He has no such awareness in the novel. His "inspiration" has no significance for him, and the whole matter resolves into resignation regarding his failure to take advantage of his "prediction" and satisfaction at having brought "light to the gentiles" (he is unaware that Lyons was dissuaded from following his tip by Lenehan). Still, his ignorance of his special endowment is no refutation of the fact. His very name (Leopold: "bold for the people") harmonizes with it. And the Homeric correspondence confirms it at a glance.

The "crucifixion" incident corresponds to Odysseus' boastful disclosure of his true name to the Cyclops from the safety of his escaping ship and the consequently enraged Cyclops' hurling the second and far greater of two rocks, which barely misses its mark: the biscuit tin barely misses Bloom's escaping carriage (not Bloom but the sun has "blinded" the citizen) after Bloom says, "Christ was a jew
like me.” The exactness of the correspondence makes Bloom’s statement a similar revelation of identity, one element in the association of him with Christ, and an assertion of the messianic concept of Deutero-Isaiah: Christ was “like me,” of Israel, God’s Servant, bearer of light to the gentile.

The Homeric correspondence is much more precise, however, and, for that reason, more important than it appears at first glance. The incident is one of the critical points of the *Odyssey*. Because Odysseus reveals his identity, the Cyclops can appeal to his father, Poseidon, who condemns Odysseus both to his decade of wandering and to his eventual return home “in evil case, with the loss of all his company . . . and [to] find sorrows in his house.” Butcher and Lang say in the introduction to their translation that Homer “has made his whole plot turn on the injury to the Cyclops.”

The correspondence in *Ulysses* follows the original even to the element Butcher and Lang call “the punning device by which the hero escaped.” In order to ensure that the Cyclops will be unable to marshal help after he has blinded him, Odysseus gives his name as ‘Outis’ (literally, “no one”)—in English translation, “No-man.” The Cyclops then tells the Cyclopes who rally outside his cave that “Noman” is assailing him. In fact, Odysseus does not coin a pseudonym but suppresses half his name, and, at the same time, literally suppresses half his identity; for his name, ‘Odusseus,’ is composed of close puns on the words “no one” (‘Outis) and “God” (Zeus). When, because of vanity, he announces his name, reveals his full identity, he precipitates the change in his fortune.

The application of recondite Homeric scholarship to *Ulysses* has not been very fruitful. But the etymology of Odysseus’ name is familiar enough for the casual reference to the “punning device” made by Butcher and Lang; it is consistently mentioned in Greek editions of the poem; and most important, it was known (and pointed out in conversation) by Joyce himself. As in the case of Odysseus, Bloom reveals to the citizen that he is not merely the “no one,” the Mister Nobody he is perceived as, but a being in close relation to God as well. And as in the
case of Odysseus, the incident is significant for Bloom's destiny. The important difference between their cases is that Bloom's conduct, as worthy of praise as Odysseus' deserves criticism, would justify a favorable result.

Although the present chapter focusses on his ministry to the wayward about him, Bloom's apotheosis is also important for himself. In the opening paragraphs of the eighth chapter, at the point at which the Elijah-Christ association is introduced and is linked by the handbill to Bloom's horserace prophecy, his situation respecting his wife and the craving he has for a son are also brought up. The Bible elucidates the relationship between Bloom's exalted power and his personal problems. The one messianic prophet whose work conforms closely to the teachings of the Book of Isaiah, who accepts the messianic role of Elijah, and who wants the Suffering Servant to forget about the gentiles and put his own house in order so that he himself may escape destruction, bears the name, prominent in Ulysses, of Malachi.

Malachi, a prophet of "the new Jerusalem," is the only Old Testament prophet to represent Elijah, who had risen four centuries before, as the Messiah promised by the Lord. Most of his scripture is in the form of a statement by the Lord to His people. The Lord reviews the history of His favor toward Israel, condemns their sins, describes the day of His coming, promises punishment for the wicked and triumph for the righteous on that Judgment Day, exhorts a return to the Law of Moses, and promises to send Elijah to lead the people to the right. Placed last in the Authorized Version of the Old Testament, the Book of Malachi is very short, and largely either petty or conventional in its preaching. Two interesting elements, however, are: its attack on divorce, and its promise of the return of Elijah on a mission of deliverance.

The first of these begins with a discussion of the sacredness of marriage. The lines that follow are cryptic; most Bible commentators regard them as a statement that men and wives are joined ("And did not he make one?") for the purpose of having offspring ("That he might seek a godly seed"). The conclusion is unequivocal, however:
For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away. . . . (2:16)

The passage has been called “the most outspoken condemnation of divorce” (“putting away” one’s wife) in the Old Testament.  

The promise of Elijah’s return is the conclusion of the Book, and thus of the Old Testament in the Authorized Version. It reads:

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children [the Hebrew word almost always means “sons”] and the heart of the children to the fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. (4:5-6)

There is no equivocation in this combination of promise and threat which constitutes the final word of God to Israel. Bloom must reunite with his wife, and he must “turn” his “heart” to a son. And according to the prophecy of Malachi, he is potentially capable of realizing those goals, for he has the powers of Elijah within himself.

Furthermore, although rejected by the citizens in Kiernan’s, he may yet bring light to a gentile, may be the Elijah who turns the heart of an unreconciled son to his Father. When he crossed Stephen’s path at the end of the ninth chapter, there was a prefiguration of his future importance to the young man. A few pages before that incident, Mulligan announced, “The Lord has spoken to Malachi” (211). The incident itself was the first climax in the action of the novel, the end of the third chapter following the two introductory sets of three. The final incident of the present chapter is the second climax, and again it is a prefiguration of a deliverer in the person of Bloom. The third chapter after this takes place in night-town and contains the ultimate climax of the novel; the form of the ultimate climax and resolution and the role of Bloom with respect to both his own story and that of Stephen seem to have been indicated to us.
One fundamental question about the twelfth chapter of *Ulysses* has been hitherto avoided, for its answer becomes clear only when the theme and basic elements of the chapter are clear: Why is the action proper presented as a vituperative narrative in colloquial language, an anecdote by a far from admirable figure? The reason is provided by the narrator himself—the coiner of the punning designation of Bloom as "Cod's eye"—in his "I'll be in for the last gospel" when the citizen is about to "crucify" Bloom with the biscuit tin. "Gospel" is a contraction of "God spell"—story about God. One commentary on the gospels says:

the main interest of the writers is biographical, not theological. Their aim is to place before the reader a vivid picture of the historical Jesus of Nazareth "in fashion as he lived. . . ."

Another points out that they are not complete biographies, but attempts "at producing faith by describing a few significant incidents taken out of a much larger whole."¹⁶

Of course, the narrator does not, in his "vivid picture of the historical [Bloom] of [Dublin]," "aim at producing faith" or even at increasing Bloom's popularity. However, he does in fact create a "gospel." The three synoptic gospels are accounts of Jesus the man "going about doing good, teaching . . . advising, guiding, rebuking," and of his trial, crucifixion, and resurrection. These are precisely the subjects of the narrator's account of Bloom—which, it must also be noted, he considers significant enough to tell. And although he is mainly critical, in some respects he is almost "really a great admirer of Bloom," as Joyce has characterized him.¹⁷

The Gospel According to Saint Mark is generally agreed to be the first of the gospels; it is the most colloquial in idiom and vituperative enough to attack many of the apostles; and it alone of the gospels has the Aramaic word "Abba," which appears untranslated in both the Greek and English texts, a word that also appears untranslated in the Biblical parody that concludes the present chapter of *Ulysses* ("And he answered with a main cry: *Abba! Adonai!*").
Joyce not only presented the revelation of Bloom’s spiritual identity in the most appropriate form possible, he even had a model for his gospeller’s very idiom and character.

1. L. A. G. Strong mentions Martha when discussing the "overture" (Strong, p. 33).

2. The popular assertion, based on Joyce’s notes and declarations, that the "form" of the chapter is (in his phrase) a "fuga per canonem," with the "overture" the initial statement of fugal themes, has been very neatly disposed of by Harry Levin (Levin, pp. 98–99).

3. This translation is based on the text in the libretto published by the Academy of Music (New York, 186(?)).


5. Gilbert, p. 255.


9. "Let us now inquire who is this Servant? . . . The connections before and after show that it is Israel . . . idealized as they should be, as God in the beginning meant that they should be. To be such a people—such a Servant—is and always was their divinely appointed mission."—The Abingdon Bible Commentary, ed. F. C. Eiselen et al. (New York 1929), p. 656.


11. Ibid., p. xiv.

12. Padraic Colum, Stuart Gilbert, and Aldous Huxley all write that Joyce told them of it. See Colum, The Road Round Ireland (New York, 1926), p. 328; and James Joyce, pp. 372 and 786, n. 6.

13. In Handel’s Messiah, lines are drawn from Malachi rather than from the corresponding section of Isaiah. See, e.g., Malachi 3:2 and Isaiah 30:14, which have essentially the same burden and use much the same imagery.


17. See Budgen, p. 165.