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HOMER'S ULYSSES AND JOYCE'S LEOPOLD BLOOM AS ARCHETYPAL PERSONALITIES

Considerable universalization of the characters in literary works is accomplished through a number of devices. One of the ways of revealing the common traits of various protagonists is an approach through personality types. Such an analysis leads to some archetypal patterns which indicate universal features, show mythological sources and finally prove the continuity of recurring types. The present paper is an attempt to discern some joint attributes of the main protagonists of *The Odyssey*, *Ulysses* and other myths, by means of referring to certain personality types and, if possible, of tracing the mythological roots and semblances.

It is necessary to realize that the figures to be analysed, namely Ulysses and Leopold Bloom share one crucial regularity. They incarnate not just one, but several archetypes, hence a dilation and overlapping of the personality types must be taken into account. The cause of this multiplicity of archetypes referring to the individual characters may be explained by the fact that both *The Odyssey* and *Ulysses* are not early, simple forms of myth, but are products of comparatively late periods.[1] Therefore, they both include ready-to-use motifs coming from earlier myth forms.

Satisfactory examples of the overlapping of personality types can beprovided on analysing Homer's Ulysses. His most obvious representation is the one referred to by the Bard himself throughout *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. Ulysses embodies the figure of the all-conquering hero. His shortest characterization is offered at the very beginning of the epos:

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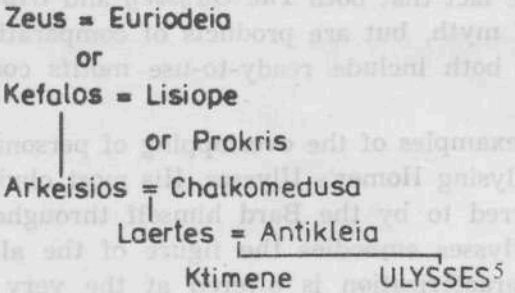
[1] The scope of this paper does not allow a sufficient formal proof that both analysed works are forms of myth. Yet this assumption can be discerned in many critical works. Cf. eg. W. Y. Tindall, *James Joyce: His Way Interpreting the Modern World*, New York 1950, p. 104.

The man for wisdom's various arts renown'd
Long exercised in woes, oh Muse! resound
(*The Odyssey*, Book I, p. 1)

Yet, Ulysses is also the epitome of a father, a husband, a son, a lover, a king, a warrior and a master. For Pitagoras' disciples he was a symbol of a human being returning to the divine abodes.[2] Later on, in medieval times, he was thought to be an incarnation of a schemer. For Shakespeare Ulysses was a Machiavellian politician, for Pascoli—an anarchist, for d'Annunzio—a strong man of Nietzsche.[3] All these interpretations are generally valid because the elements of various personality types (derived from many earlier myths) have been mingled masterly into the character of that hero.

In the most general understanding, however, Ulysses epitomizes the archetype of the all-conquering-hero and thus should represent heroic myths. The protagonists of these myths were endowed with unusual wit and strength due to their demi-divine origin; they were begotten by a god and a woman (Gilgamesh). Heroes loved wars and adventurous voyages. They took great pains to help mankind (Prometheus) or their beloved polis (Neleus). At first they differed as far as their descent was concerned. Some of them had been independent deities and demons (Dioskurs, Helen) before new religious notions deprived them of their honorable abodes, others seemed to have a strict historical origin (Minos, Theseus), and still others appeared to be products of sheer poetic imagination. The last group includes eponymous heroes after who races, tribes and particular city—states were named.[4]

Ulysses, although begotten by the mortals, is a legitimate representative of heroic myths. Firstly, his genealogy leads straight to the major deities:



[2] Cf. J. Parandowski, *Homer*, [in:] Homer, *Odyseja*, translated by J. Parandowski, Warszawa 1981, p. 30.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 30 — 32.

[4] Cf. J. Parandowski, *Mitologia*, Warszawa 1975.

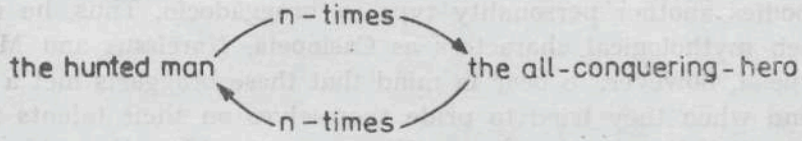
[5] According to Homer, *Odyseja*, translated by L. Siemieński, Wrocław 1981, the insertion.

In addition Pallas takes a loving care of the hero thus ennobling him. The goddess reveals a maternal feeling towards Ulysses in her first speech in the epos:

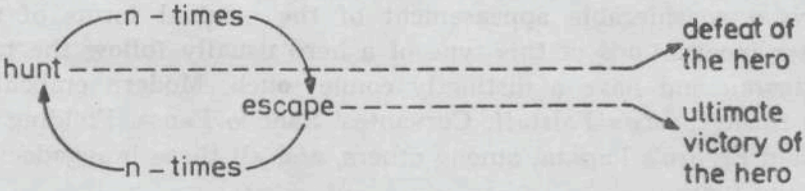
> But grief and rage alternate wound my breast
> For brave Ulysses, still by fate oppress'd
> (*The Odyssey*, Book I, p. 2)

Finally, Ulysses is compared to a lion several times and this, according to mythological rules, is symbolic of the acceptance of the protagonist into the ranks of mythological heroes.[6]

Heroic myths often comprise the motifs of an early theme, namely the one of a man persecuted by a god because of the protagonist's guilt (Adam and Eve). Ulysses, like Heracles and Samson, incarnates the archetype of a hunted man. Ulysses is hunted by Neptune and the hunt gives rise to the hero's clever escapes. The pattern is used repeatedly and proves that in the heroic myth of this type the archetypes of the all-conquering-hero and the hunted man are closely connected and dependent on each other:



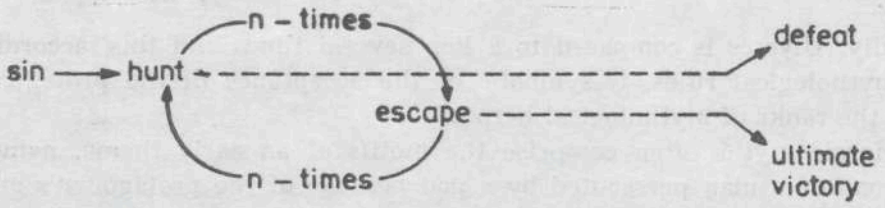
This simple device has been used effectively in other myths, too. The greatest Greek hero—Heracles—is persecuted by Hera who is jealous of his mother Alcmene and therefore takes revenge on her son. Thus, Heracles has to overcome all dangers and like Ulysses enters the heroic circle of the hunted man and the all-conquering man. Since a myth is a narrative unity, the round must be broken at some point and therefore the protagonist is finally either defeated (Heracles) or ultimately victorious (Ulysses):



It is characteristic of this type of myth to have heroes persecuted for either slight or unavoidable offences. Ulysses had to blind Polyphemus in order to save his and his friends' lives. As it sometimes happens the offences are only imaginary. For instance, it was hardly Heracles'

[6] Cf. the myth of Heracles where the importance of the symbol of a lion for heroes is perhaps most conspicuous.

fault that Hera hated his mother. Therefore, the protagonists of such myths frequently incarnate the archetype of "a man more sinned against than sinning". It is an alleged sin that starts the repetitions of the rounds. Accordingly, the structure of this type of heroic myth is as follows:



The heroic myth of the type presented above does not vanish in modern times. Hamlet, "a man more sinned against than sinning" proper, realizes a new version of this old myth, being perhaps closer to the variant of Heracles, since he is finally defeated.

However, it is not sufficient to indicate only the above archetypal traits in the analysis of Ulysses. It is necessary to mention at least that he embodies another personality type—a braggadocio. Thus, he resembles such mythological characters as Casiopeia, Narcissus and Marsias. It is crucial, however, to bear in mind that these braggarts met a disastrous end when they tried to pride themselves on their talents in the presence of jealous gods, whereas Ulysses prides himself on his heroic deeds with no noticeable harm. Besides, he is also an extreme shuffler. Still Pallas smiles at his evident lies and is not in the least inclined to punish the braggadocio:

> Oh, still the same Ulysses!" she rejoin'd,
> In useful craft successfully refined!
> Artful in speech, in action, and in mindi!"
> (*The Odyssey*, Book XIII, p. 192)

This change of attitude towards the braggart is significant because it shows a considerable appeasement of the original forms of myth.[7] The later incarnations of this type of a hero usually follow the tone of *The Odyssey* and have a distinctly comic touch. Modern embodiments include Shakespeare's Falstaff, Cervantes' Sancho Pansa, Fielding's Partridge and Fredro's Papkin, among others, and all these braggadocios are irresistibly funny.

Finally, one more archetype should be taken into consideration in discussing Ulysses' figure. The hero appears to be a very attractive male and various females: nymphs, princesses and goddesses, fall in love with

[7] Marsias was skinned alive by Apollo, since he dared compete with the god, whereas Niobe lost her fourteen beloved children because she had bragged she was more praiseworthy than Latona.

him. Ulysses, although a loving and hankering husband, does not miss any opportunity to betray Penelope. He seems a competent lover and consequently "breaks the hearts" of Calypso, Crice and possibly Nausicaa. These erotic adventures place the hero among many other mythological womanizers. The following chart reveals Ulysses' extramarital affairs:

ULYSSES AS WOMANIZER

	CALYPSO	CIRCE
THE FEELING EVOKED BY ULYSSES	"Ulysses!" with a sigh she thus began [...] Thus wilt thou leave me? Are we thus to part? (p. 74)	"Let mutual joys our mutual trust combine, And love, and love-born confidence be thine" (p. 144)
THE AFFAIR	"To the close grot the lonely pair remove, And slept delighted with the gifts of love" (pp. 74—75)	"The goddess swore: then seized my hand and led To the sweet transports of the genial bed" (p. 144)

The later epitomes of this archetype are most frequently found in Spanish literature.[8] Don Juan and Casanova have become names denoting the notion of a womanizer. Yet, other cultures provide their individual instances too. Jasha Mazur (*The Magician of Lublin*) or Will Thompson (*God's Little Acre*) are Jewish and American counterparts for this personality pattern. Zeus—the chief God of the Olympus—was the first Greek womanizer. His victims were numerous and included Leda, Danae and Europe. It is a very common mythological theme that a god possesses a mortal woman (Christ's conception is also a variant of this motif), but for a man to possess goddesses is a rare reversal of the archetype. Such a reversal appears in Celtic beliefs in the myth of Riannon and Pwyll.[9] In *The Odyssey* this device was probably thought to be comic, since the stress is put on the constant and incurable womanizing—in higher, heavenly spheres—of a man who wants only to return to his wife.

Similarily ambiguous and multiarchetypal is the figure of Leopold Bloom. Again, the thorough analysis of all the possible interpretations is beyond the scope of this paper, hence only some of the incarnations will be briefly considered. It has already become a critical commonplace that on the most manifest level Bloom realizes the archetype of a father

[8] Cf. del Rio, *Historia literatury hiszpańskiej*, Warszawa 1970, vol. 1, p. 366.
[9] Cf. J. Gąssowski, *Mitologia Celtów*, Warszawa 1978, p. 96.

or even God the Father. The latter suggestion has been put forward by W. Y. Tindall who has noticed that—according to Freud—God is a projection of an image of the father.[10] This idea seems to be valid even if we assume that Bloom provides only a caricature of one. When Stephen summons God the Father in exultation, Bloom approaches unawares and is thus endowed with this role:

> STEPHEN: (Extending his arms) It was here. Street of harlots. In Serpentine Avenue [...] Where is the red carpet spread?
> BLOOM: (Approaching Stephen) Look ...
> STEPHEN: No, I flew. My foes beneath me. And ever shall be. World without end (He cries) P a t e r! Free!
> BLOOM: I say, look ...
>
> (*Ulysses*, p. 510)

The justification of this act follows immediately. Bloom had to be given this role of God/Father because Stephen's real parent, when summoned, is only able to play the fool, drawing his unbecoming show to a close with a beagle's call:

> Bulbul Burblblbrurblbl! Hai, boy!
>
> (*Ulysses*, p. 511)

However, despite this elevation, Bloom is hardly a heroic figure. The fundamental difference between the personalities of Ulysses and Bloom consists in the fact that the former, as a hero, is an exceptional man, whereas the latter is everyman, an average Irish citizen. Joyce's character is a father, a son, a husband, a cuckold and a friend. At times he is infantile and perverse, at times comparatively mature and bitterly experienced. Obviously, he is far from being perfect, but were he perfect, he would not stand for an everyman. Yet, it is worth noticing that Bloom's humanity is astonishing. According to Tindall, reiterating Joyce's words, "not even Jesus [...] approaches the humanity of Bloom. Jesus was a bachelor, and as Joyce said himself, living with a woman is the hardest thing a man can do." [11] The fact that everyman is capable of being humane is one of the rare instances of optimism in the general message of *Ulysses*.

For all the absurdity of Bloom's behavior throughout *Ulysses*, the protagonist still embodies the archetype of a wise man. First of all, it is a strict mythological rule that God/Father is Jung's "wise man"—the incarnation of masculine logos. In the same way Ulysses, as Telemachus' father was the epitome of the same personality archeype.[12]

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[10] W. Y. Tindall, *James Joyce: His Way of Interpreting the Modern World*, New York 1950, p. 75.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 30.

[12] In Ulysses' case, however, wisdom was also justified by his being a hero and the all-conquering man.

Secondly, although Bloom's mind is usually limited, practical and factual, still his crawly imagination ventures into poetry, politics, admiration of art and knowledge of classical culture:

> — Metempsychosis, he said, frowning. It's Greek: from the Greek. That means the transmigration of souls.
>
> *(Ulysses,* p. 66)

Bloom also expresses his moral and political views, revealing himself as a utopian sage, a prophet of the new world:

> BLOOM: I tand for the reform of municipial morale and the plain ten commandments. New world for old. Union of all, jew, moslem and gentile [...] Tuberculosis, lunacy, war and mendicancy must now cease
>
> *(Ulysses,* p. 462)

One could expect that wisdom leads directly to power and such would be the case in a traditional mythology. Bloom's situation, however, is entirely different. Bloom embodies the archetypal figure of a weak man devoid of power and consequently infertile:

> there remained a period of 10 years, 5 months, and 18 days during which the carnal intercourse had been incomplete, without ejaculation of semen within the natural female organ
>
> *(Ulysses,* p. 657)

Due to infertility Bloom ceases to be a strong man. He is afraid of a citizen who throws a cigar at him, he tolerates Blazes Boylan—Molly's lover, and is terrified by the phantoms of his parents. Obviously, he represents one of the most traditional personality types, that of a hunted man. At times Bloom is set dogs on, which refers to an actual hunt:

> And he shouting to the bloody dog:
> — After him, [i.e. Bloom — Z.B.] Carry! After him, boy!
>
> *(Ulysses,* p. 343)

However weak and infertile, the hero of *Ulysses* is a womanizer. Bloom's affairs with Martha and Gerty present him as a pervert. He is ready to accept sexual enjoyment outside wedlock, yet unable to carry it out because of his weakness. Therefore, he only stares at women, is aroused by fecal matter, masturbates and finally kisses his wife's buttocks. C. Hart notices:

> Bloom's version of original sin is his tendency to perversion of a specifically anal kind, a tendency that he explicitly raises to the level of a sinful religion.[13]

Bloom's sinful sexuality is most evident in the hallucinations in the

[13] C. Hart, *The Sexual Perversions of Leopold Bloom,* [in:] *Ulysses: Cinquante ans apres: temoignages franco-anglais sur le chef- d'oeuvre de James Joyce,* ed. by L. Bennerot, Paris 1974, p. 134.

Circe episode. The hero is accused of a number of sins, including fetishism, voyeurism, transvestism and female impersonation.[14]

Bloom as a perverted womanizer, an infertile male, a wise man, everyman, a hunted miser and finally as God the Father is still the same personality. But he often ceases to be the same person. Z. Bieńkowski noticed that Bloom transformed himself into: an Oxford student, a Turk, a slave of the beloved woman, a mason, Napoleon, a sailor, an anarchist, a prophet, Jesus Christ, Moses Mendelssohn, Saint Martin, a doctor, a sionist, lord Byron, lord Beaconsfield, Moses, Wat Tyler, Rip Van Winkle, Kossuth, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Henry Irving, Rotschild, Robinson Crusoe, Sherlock Holmes, Pasteur, a pregnant woman, a cuckold, a prostitute, Saint Peter, pater familias, an iconoclast and finally a hermafrodite.[15] These are only select transformations during one episode (Circe) and in most of these hasty impersonations Bloom represents a different archetype. The multiplication of Bloom's identities proves undoubtedly that his position is precarious, just like the position of Ulysses throughout *The Odyssey*.

The very fact that both protagonists are hunted contributes largely to the essentially tragic vision of humanity in both epies. This pessimistic appeal is perhaps less evident in *The Odyssey*, since this myth apparently reaches a fortunate conclusion, yet, the eternal chase and lack of stability (heroic rounds, womanizing, sinning) haunt in both works. This atmosphere arouses a feeling of discomfort through its assertion that even the strongest personalities are inevitably exposed to a succession of dangers.

Thus, both Ulysses and Bloom are constantly on the move. They will never find rest, they will never achieve peace of mind. Ulysses will travel again, Bloom will continue his spiritual journey. Such is always the verdict of sages if personalities similar to Homer's and Joyce's protagonists happen to find their way into mythologies, rites and literature. Archetypal profiles are products of many centuries of narratives and countless generations of story-tellers. Setting old Greek hero and modern Irish mediocrity on the move—as prey—is a decent contribution to, what Frye would call, the tragic mode of existence.

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[14] Cf. M. French, *The Book as World: James Joyce's Ulysses*, Cambridge, Mass., London 1976, pp. 196 — 203 and A. Kępiński, *Z psychopatologii życia seksualnego*, Warszawa 1982, pp. 45 — 49.

[15] Cf. Z. Bieńkowski, *Nad Ulissesem*, [in:] *W skali wyobraźni*, Warszawa 1983, p. 101.

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ODYSEUSZ HOMERA I LEOPOLD BLOOM JOYCE'A JAKO OSOBOWOŚCI ARCHETYPOWE

STRESZCZENIE

Artykuł stanowi próbę mitograficznej analizy osobowości Odyseusza z *Odysei* Homera i Leopolda Blooma z *Ulissesa* Joyce'a. Analiza dotyczy jedynie najbardziej charakterystycznych motywów, jako że obie postaci cechuje wieloznaczność i wielowarstwowość archetypowego wizerunku.

Wykazano, że Odyseusz, jako reprezentant mitu bohaterskiego, realizuje motyw prześladowanego i pokonującego trudności herosa oraz przedstawiono specyficzną kolistą strukturę tego typu mitu. Inne archetypy uwzględnione w artykule to komiczna realizacja modelu fanfarona dowodząca późnego powstania *Odysei* oraz przedstawienie bohatera jako kobieciarza w rzadko spotykanej mitologicznej relacji:

człowiek—boginie. Druga część artykułu poświęcona jest postaci Leopolda Blooma, która w odróżnieniu od postaci Odyseusza nie wywodzi się z mitu bohaterskiego, a raczej zdaje się uosabiać archetyp Boga/Ojca/Mędrca. Odwrotnie jednak niż w tradycyjnej mitologii Bloom nie posiada mocy — jest człowiekiem słabym i ściganym.

Wspólną cechą obu analizowanych postaci jest nieustanne poczucie zagrożenia i nieuchronności ucieczki (podróży) poszukiwania, co pozostaje w zgodzie z tragiczną wizją egzystencji w klasycznym modelu Frye'a.

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