CHAPTER THREE

The Frygian Path

Ibsen has united with his strong, ample, imaginative faculty a preoccupation with things present to him. Perhaps in time even the professional critics . . . will make union a truism of professional criticism.

James Joyce

Archetypal criticism, both as literary theory and critical practice, is associated with Northrop Frye with a persistence that is least dependent on Frye’s consent or lack of it. Even though the landscape of current critical theories has changed drastically since Frye’s *Anatomy of Criticism* first established itself as a landmark, there is no doubt that his theories of myth and archetype have had a considerable impact on the criticism of *Ulysses*. Frye himself has been the target of a love or hate campaign launched by fellow critics belonging to the same persuasion, so much so that the validity of his theory, its ideological bases, and its philosophy have been alternately appreciated or criticized, and a loud noise made about both. The Frye camp thus has two opposing parties, the loyalists (or apologists) and the critics. Any serious enquiry into the myth criticism of *Ulysses* that seeks to examine the application of Frye’s theory to the novel, has to chart a careful route between the battle lines drawn by these two militant groups--a task this chapter hopes to accomplish.

To understand why Frye’s version of literary criticism elicits such strong reactions, a brief critical assessment of his theory (which has become a commonplace anyway) may prove useful, keeping in mind the specific purposes of this study. Frye’s
output is prodigious, and his comments are spread over the voluminous body of writings that comprise his oeuvre, but the more significant of his remarks and contradictory statements which can be gathered from these may prove sufficient for the particular orientation of this discussion. As the scope of this chapter necessarily precludes a comprehensive treatment of Frye's critical position, only the application of Frye's theory of the quest-myth and the myth of the ideal social order to *Ulysses* will be analyzed in detail.

Frye's ambitious scheme for the entire body of literary criticism is to make it into a science—a "systematic and organized study" (*FOI* 7) like that of the natural sciences. This proposition rests of necessity on the *a priori* assumption that the total body of literature is an "order of words" (*MS* 16) or as he stresses, an "autonomous literary universe" (*FOI* 38). In other words, literature is perceived as a closed system, wherein the details of the interaction of the parts of a whole can be analyzed. The implication is that the results would be as definitive as in any scientific experiment or mathematical equation. Literary criticism would, then, according to Frye, become genuinely educative rather than remain a pot pourri of value judgments and verbose commentaries which lack any direction. Discrete literary works should, therefore, declares Frye, be studied not in isolation, but as intricately related parts of a whole related to each other, as well as to the history of literary tradition of which they are a part. He argues that this mammoth enterprise can be successfully executed by literary critics, based as it is on the assumption of the "total coherence" (*FOI* 9) of the body of literature as a whole.

Frye's assumption of total coherence of the body of literature as a whole makes it convenient for him to advocate his by now famous attempt at a "theory of criticism
whose principles apply to the whole of literature" (AC 14). Frye seems to believe that he has revolutionized literary theory with his proposal of an all-encompassing, comprehensive critical theory that accounts for “every valid type of critical procedure” (AC 14). He supplements this with his view of literature as a “self-contained literary universe” (AC’ 118), of which the natural corollary is that literary criticism is, therefore, a “potentially scientific discipline” (SM 101).

What renders Frye’s theory so problematic right at the beginning is the fact that he proposes that the entire body of literature be perceived as a closed system wherein, one must, he says, “isolate that aspect of the fiction which is conventional, and held in common with all other works of the same category” (FOI 34)(emphasis mine). These are the “formal laws” or conventions that bind the discrete literary works which comprise Frye’s literary universe, urging him to classify literature as “total form” (AC’ 118). Quite obviously, Frye does not take into account the thematic content of these works. Instead, he absolutizes and abstractifies the formal aspects of fiction from their actual context of empirical reality, and presents a decontextualized version of literary theory which sees literature in terms of categories.

As a result, the external phenomena of reality have no role to play in Frye’s theory of literary criticism. But if literature were merely a “total body of verbal creation” (FOI 38), then it is a life-denying concept where the dynamics of the interplay of the various natural and social forces are completely obliterated. Frye, however, believes that “one of the main uses of myth criticism is to enable us to understand the corresponding place that a work of literature has in the context of literature as a whole” (FOI 37). This brings us to the same cul de sac—that for Frye, both context and content refer to the
purely literary realm and not to the realm of any external referent. Thus, when Frye says that the "structural principles of literature" (AC 134) are isolated in myth, he is implying that the structural principles as such are more important in his scheme of things than what they are used to convey. By overlooking life's contextuality, the sheer irrationality and one-dimensional aspect of Frye's so-called 'scientific' theory stands exposed. One wonders at his announcement of having discovered a comprehensive system, when he himself can be held accountable for his gross neglect of the comprehensiveness of Life itself.

Crucial to Frye's literary theory is his concept of myth on which his fame or notoriety, as the case may be, rests. Espousing his theory of the "structural analysis of the literary work" (FOI 9), Frye advances the idea of myth as the structuring principle of literature, thereby valorizing myth as the basic structure of literature as a whole. As structure is the "first and most indispensable of critical conceptions" (MS 16), the central principle of myth criticism, says Frye, rests on the notion that "myth is a structural element in literature" (FOI 1), and he posits the Bible as the primary structure of the entire "literary experience" (MS 16) of literature. His theory of structural analysis is thus facilitated by his belief that it is the archetypal quality of literature which enables systematic study of the same (FOI 12).

These generalizations are backed up with the specific assertion that the quest-myth embodies the quintessential structure (FOI 18) of the plot, and is the pattern or literary shape taken by all the literary works produced in the world. Frye incorporates the organic cycle of nature with its diurnal and seasonal rhythms into his theory, and makes it the fundamental basis for the structure of myth. He then argues for the similarity of
pattern among the different literary works, claiming that all have a “single pattern of significance”—the chief ingredient with which “myth constructs a central narrative” *(FOI* 15). The regularity of the birth-growth-rebirth pattern is the pattern of the quest-myth in literature. With this, Frye emphasizes the concept of cyclicity and recurrence which is central to his theory, and uses it to buttress his view that all fiction and poetry are recycled versions of the original quest-myth, and have recourse to the same literary conventions like metaphors and similes, which are merely used in different contexts down the ages. Therefore, the “quest-myth” says Frye, is “the central myth of literature” *(FOI* 18) and “all literary genres are derived from the quest-myth” *(FOI* 17).

Frye, as the founder of the school of pattern-finding as it were, seems to be propose the concept of the Original Structure or Pattern analogous to the concept of the Original Sin. The quest-myth, he says, is the basic, unifying pattern or structure underlying the whole of literature, providing the “reverberating significance” *(FOI* 37) that unites literary works through common conventions and genres. Isolating the cyclic pattern found in the natural and organic cycles of life from its context in life, Frye claims that the essential element of the mythic structure is its recurrence, and gives it a significant place in his theory. But he has obviously overlooked the fact that his theory is rooted in the natural cycle of seasons, the organic cycle, and the diurnal pattern visible in life. One would think that all these phenomena belonged exclusively to the domain of external reality though Frye, who borrows this pagan pattern liberally for his purposes, does not seem to remember this. He practises a high-handed reductionism by abstracting even the basic pattern from the natural cycle, thereby reducing literature to a “sequential” *(CR* 27) arrangement of words. And despite this, Frye still claims that “Literary shape”
(FOI 36) does not come from life but from literary tradition, adding that literature should be literature like and not life like (EI 91)! But it seems only reasonable to expect that to be truly literature-like fiction has to first be life-like. In Frye’s scheme of things, however, literature is denied any other life outside its pure literariness. In that case, analyzing a literary work as the product of a writer’s interaction with the concrete world of life around would be not only irrelevant but also ‘unscientific,’ according to Frye.

Frye’s contends that the “essential principles of storytelling” (FOI 27) that myths and fairy tales have displayed, are duplicated even in modernist fiction, and so he rejects the notion of the originality of the imagination as non-existent. He claims that the artist who is original is merely “derivative at a deeper level” (FOI 47) and so, every other poem is an “imitation of other poems” (AC 96) because every artist relies on the framework of the plot and all its attendant details like the conventions, symbols, archetypes and genres that are commonly found in a single work of art relating it to other works of art by the same author as well as those of others within the common literary tradition. In this way, Frye’s theory eliminates the boundaries between the good and the not so good art, between “the scholarly and the popular” (FOI .51), between the masterpiece and the mediocre, since all of them without exception are knit together by the basic structure called mythos (narrative) or plot.

Frye’s closed system, therefore, in order to survive as a system, discourages the value judgment of literary works (AC 20). The implication is clear enough—if the entire body of literature is to be ‘scientifically’ considered, then all literary products, irrespective of their pedigree, would have to be included under the purview of a ‘comprehensive’ literary criticism. Frye himself, however, makes a distinction between
the “mediocre” and the “masterpiece” (*FOI* 12-13), contradicting his own claim that “systematic criticism” is not directly concerned with value judgments (*AC* 20). He also admits that the “direct value judgment of informed good taste” deserves attention (*AC* 27), allowing us to draw the inference that he rates a professional critic’s commentary higher than a popular review, thereby passing a value judgment himself. Moreover, as he rates the theory of archetypal criticism as one of the best among all his other theories (*AC* 134) one wonders if it is so because he has advocated this as a ‘professional’ critic. So Frye’s argument that every literary work is an integral part of the literary tradition does not carry any weight. A literary work which is envisioned with imaginative depth and executed well is definitely ‘better’ art. A great writer’s vision arises directly from life, and refracted by his own unique experience, is translated into art through the process of assimilation that it undergoes.

Since Frye believes that literature forms a “total schematic order” (*SM* 118) interconnected by archetypes, it is important to understand what he means by the latter, and the role they play in his theoretical framework. At the outset, Frye, to make his position tenable, declares that the “principle of recurrence or repetition” (*EI* 49) is an essential ingredient of any work of art. Since myth is the basic recurrent structure underlying literature as a whole, myth itself becomes the archetype (*FOI* 14). Frye’s definition of the archetype exemplifies this point. “An archetype,” he says, “is a typical or recurring image” (*AC* 99) which highlights the universal aspect of literature by connecting different literary works together so that our “literary experience is unified and integrated” (*AC* 99). He also says that archetypes are “associative clusters” which are “complex variables” (*AC* 102), so archetypal criticism studies combinations of recurrent
literary devices and conventions, myths and metaphors, including principles, values, ethics and vision. So the basic "formulaic unit" (SS 36) of the myth is the archetype which, "rigidly conventionalized" as it is, is paradoxically, the "cornerstone of the creative imagination" (SS 36), according to Frye.

Frye merely makes room for further contradictions when he claims that archetypes are "complex variables" (AC 102)—a qualification that carries with it the connotation that they could take on the unique colouring and accent conferred on them by any writer. But how is it possible for the "rigidly conventionalized" archetype to be simultaneously unique and conventional? For Frye the 'creative' imagination is conventionalized and there is nothing that is completely new in literature, merely a "newer way of assembling old things" (AC 132). But while advocating the universal element in literature, Frye does not seem to realize that it takes the particular to express the universal and that it is more pathbreaking for the genuinely creative imagination to put common symbols to uncommon use. While both Bachelard and Jung insist on the uniqueness (MS 45) of the archetypes, Frye chooses to emphasize their conventionality by denying the existence of the very notion of originality. The fact that an image need not be clichéd and that its life can be renewed through its expression of concrete and unique experiences is a fact completely ignored by Frye.

In this scheme of the self-contained literary universe that Frye actively encourages archetypal criticism to consider, it follows quite naturally that he should discourage the critic from investigating the origin or source of the archetypes with equal vigour. He emphasizes that the critical principles should arise from literature itself (AC 6-7), thus circumventing any determinism that can arise from the close
interrelationship between the disciplines of anthropology, psychology, and literary criticism. The archetypes are important “however they got there” (AC 109), and looking for origins outside literature would go against the basic tenet of archetypal criticism, which sees literature as a mere verbal creation having no relationship with external reality.

As part of this critical agenda, he designates the findings of Frazer and Jung in anthropology and analytical psychology respectively, as the findings of literary critics and not of scientists (Denham 88, 123). Both The Golden Bough and Psychology of the Unconscious are seen by him as works of literary criticism that express the “grammar of the human imagination” (Denham 25) and what they have in common is the concept of the quest-myth—the subject-matter of Frye’s own Anatomy of Criticism. By thus asserting that the research of Frazer and Jung was the work of literary theorists like himself, Frye succeeds in satisfying the condition of his own theory, which states that literary shape or pattern should emerge from literature itself. But the question of the archetypes originating from a context outside literature is neatly dismissed, and their rich significance completely swept aside. For the chief contradiction that is so clearly perceptible in Frye’s dismissal of the scientific contributions of Frazer and Jung, is the fact that in his determination to make his own system scientific, he thinks it right to reject their contributions as non-scientific. Frye certainly seems to have a penchant for borrowing ideas from sources he pretends to reject.

In sum, what Frye seems to propose is a completely scientific and comprehensive theory that analyzes the entire autonomous body of literature and subjects it to a rigorous critical scrutiny. The quest-myth is the archetypal pattern visible in every literary work
and the unifying structural principle of the entire literary output of the world. The question that poses itself in response to this conclusion is: If literature is such a closed system after all, then what is Frye’s position regarding Reality? Is his system closed to Reality? While the Cold War debate between the notion of language representing the Real, and language being the Real rages on even today, our immediate concern is Frye’s theory, and its relationship with the Real.

Frye has always insisted that literary works exist in a contextual relationship to the literary tradition of which they are a part adding, despite his own reservations, that the framework for the criticism of literature arises from literature itself (AC’6). Designating literature as a “verbal replica of external phenomena” (AC’353), as he does, it follows that language “expresses” it. But Frye’s focus is obviously on the “means,” i.e., the replica (form) rather than on what it expresses, i.e., the external phenomena (content). Frye apparently discounts the idea of the lived reality of the writer or the “felt” history of the times he wrote in. This confers an ahistorical dimension on literary criticism which, however, asserts Frye with unerring frequency, is both ‘comprehensive’ and ‘scientific.’ While Frye does give importance to metahistory (Denham 33), he does so solely for the sake of pattern-finding as such, and so, his grasp of historical principles is not holistic, especially in view of the fact that the only aspect of history he is prepared to consider is literary history. The concept of history as linear, progressive and diachronic is completely missing from Frye’s theory, and even if present, does not receive sufficient emphasis or attention.

Because Frye is so concerned about locating patterns, he is naturally more comfortable with the notion of metahistory whose informing principles he feels, are
similar to those of poetry and myth (Denham 33). Thus Frye prefers the cyclic element in history with its pattern of recurrence to the linear, more progressive notion of history. The emphasis is, therefore, more on the historical patterns that are visible than on the historical context on which a study of history is founded. No doubt, discovering patterns plays a role in the process of understanding phenomena in a larger context but not if it is only for the sake of their discovery. Here we have Frye the metacritic discovering patterns in literature just like the metahistorians who see patterns in history. The only history that matters to Frye is literary history within the context of which every literary work is supposed to be located. The dichotomy between the diachronic and the synchronic views of history in Frye’s scheme is clearly visible in his categorical rejection of the notions of “change, process, and time” (Schroeter 550) in favour of the stasis of cyclicity. It is thus more than obvious that the general pattern of this literary history is more important to Frye than the details of single works.

Frye, however, seems to be playing a strange game of paradox through his insistence that his theory of archetypal criticism has a social and realistic aspect. Having expended all his energy disclaiming any relationship with reality, Frye spends some amount trying to restore the balance. Archetypal criticism, Frye goes on to add, is “primarily concerned with literature as a social fact and as a mode of communication” (AC’ 99). But if literary criticism is interested only in studying formal causes, as Frye has claimed, it is doubtful that it can study literature as a social document as well. Moreover, what literature ‘communicates’ according to archetypal criticism are literary devices, principles, conventions and genres which are recurring archetypes or patterns, not any significant content.
To understand this more clearly, we will now briefly touch upon Frye’s concept of utopia—the “free human society” which is the “central myth of art” (*FOI* 18). Frye seems to refer to a consumerist Eden as the teleological end of all artistic productivity, when he states that the goal of the artistic imagination is the creation of an “innocent world of fulfilled desires” (*FOI* 18). He further adds that the dialectic of myth depends on the chasm between reality and the ideal, i.e., between the myth of the “social contract” as a given or received notion and the “myth of an ideal social contract” or utopia (*SM* 36) both of which, claims Frye, are “social conceptions” (*SM* 36). According to Frye, the myth of the “social contract” tries to “explain the nature of the conditioning we accept by being born,” (*SM* 36). Utopia on the other hand, is the myth of an “ideal social contract.” The chasm between the two is bridged by imagination, which produces out of the society we have to live in a vision of the society we desire to live in (*EI* 140). This duality in man’s vision comprising both his fears and his hopes forms the “mythical structure” (*St.S* 18) in every age, argues Frye.

The most obvious loophole in Frye’s argument about utopia is the fact that he proposes to bridge the gap between reality and the ideal through the artistic imagination which, he has taken great pains to explain, is the conventionalized imagination. In fact, Frye’s theory is an attempt at a scientific explanation of this backed by the so-called concrete evidence he has managed to put together. However, it is only the artistic imagination that is truly visionary that can produce the ideal vision of a civilization’s future. Frye, on the other hand, ‘propagandizes’ for the conventionalized imagination, rejecting outright the notion of the original imagination. In the face of this unresolved contradiction in his theory it seems difficult to visualize how his concept of utopia can be
a logical possibility without taking the visionary and the original aspect of the artist’s imagination into consideration.

These contradictions are further heightened by Frye’s defense of his theory which in its tone and justification proves to be the biggest contradiction of all. For, after having devised an elaborate monolithic ‘structure’ of a literary theory consisting of tables, cycles, sets, which, he claims, comprises a scientific approach to literature, he decides to play it safe by calling his inductive approach a “mere hunch” (FOI 20). He adds that the tables are “elementary” and “grossly oversimplified” (FOI 20) but lest anybody should take him seriously he quickly declares that it is not a mere “hallucination” (SM 118) of his. He agrees that “myth is equal to many things besides literary structure and the world of words is not so self-contained and autonomous after all” (FOI 38) but sadly, he does not explore this any further. He further confesses that his theory is a “model only, coloured by my preferences, and limited by my ignorance” (SM 118-19). Humility is endless, as someone must have said.

But it is unfortunate that critics have paid little heed to this as they impute not only the origins of a reader-response criticism but also structuralism to his concept of the structure.² His ‘hallucination’ has certainly produced a mirage-like effect while he indulges in a speculative criticism that projects something which is not, and does not project what is. His admission that he has not found the “perfect major premise” (AC’ 29) further worsens his case. For in the event of a faulty major premise, all minor premises become logically invalid and, therefore, unscientific. And when he concludes that there are “extremely complicated philosophical problems” and that he is “incompetent” (AC’ 350) to solve them, Frye does not seem to have any personal assurance that he is
proposing a comprehensive, foolproof literary theory that would rescue literature from the trap of misinterpretations it had fallen into.

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To test the validity of Frye’s claims, let us analyze his demonstration of the application of his theory to Joyce’s *Ulysses*. Frye himself inaugurates the critical procedure by saying: “Let us try our formulas on him” (*AC* 313). Myth which, according to him, is used by writers as a “ready-made framework, hoary with antiquity,” (*FOI* 31) is used by Joyce as one would use “design in contemporary painting” (*FOI* 31). Frye highlights the formalistic aspects of the novel and argues that the key is supplied by the title of the book, which hints at the mythical shape (*FOI* 37) of the Greek epic (in this case). He hails Joyce as a “learned, recondite writer,” who is “explicitly mythopoeic” and in whose work the “complexities are designed to reveal and not to disguise the myth” (*AC* 117) (emphasis mine). Despite his obviously complimentary tone, one gets the impression that Frye views Joyce’s literary achievement as nothing more than an expert use of the structure of the Greek myth which was easily available to him as part of the literary tradition to which he was exposed.

Even if one took these remarks at face value, it would hardly escape the attention of a reader of *Ulysses*, that Joyce’s choice of the Homeric myth is certainly not one of merely providing a parallel structure of “reverberating significance” which is “hoary with antiquity” (*FOI* 31). That would have been an insignificant exercise totally removed from what Joyce was actually aiming to do. Frye seems to miss the point that Joyce does not conform to any conventional structure but rather deviates from it, subverting the design that Frye presumed he was emulating. This idea has been emphasized admirably
by Almeida, and is a fitting reply to Frye's argument that a writer is being the most conventional when he is being the most unconventional. Joyce certainly does not follow Frye's tailor-made pattern for all literature.

But Frye has something more to say besides praising the organizational care (AC' 313) that Joyce has lavished on *Ulysses*. He takes the deductive line of approach and subjects the novel to a structural analysis from a larger perspective. He begins with the primary assumption that all fiction, from the point of view of form, is bound together by the "four chief strands" of novel, confession, anatomy, and romance (AC' 312). "When we examine fiction from the point of view of form," he says, "we can see four chief strands binding it together, novel, confession, anatomy, and romance. The six possible combinations of these forms all exist, and we have shown how the novel has combined with each of the other three" (AC' 312). Almost all the novels comprising the literary tradition are, according to Frye, combinations of more than one strand, who goes on to add that *Ulysses* as the "complete prose epic" (AC' 314) is a unified piece of work comprising all four forms. He also adds that the organizational principles used by Joyce being unfamiliar to prose fiction, his novel appears to be shapeless when in reality it is not (AC' 313).

Frye then proceeds to interpret the novel in the light of his 'formulas' and accordingly, divides it into categories to facilitate the kind of structural analysis that he is advocating. These categories being the novel, the romance, the confession and the anatomy, everything that he has to say about the novel is subsumed under these four categories. Frye refers to the first category when he identifies the realistic nature of the city of Dublin through its "sights and sounds and smells . . . the rotundity of the
character-drawing, and the naturalness of the dialogue" (AC 313). The category of romance refers to the heroic quest of the Odyssey which Joyce parodies. The category of confession refers to the revelation of the characters and situations through the "searching use" (AC 313) of the stream-of-consciousness technique, while the last category refers to the tendency of the novel to be "encyclopaedic and exhaustive both in technique and subject matter" (AC 313).

All the four conventional forms comprise the genre of the prose epic to which Ulysses belongs, says Frye. He bestows further 'organizational care' on his own design, by proposing that the novel be seen as a unified entity comprising the different combinations of the four forms which form "an intricate scheme of parallel contrasts" (AC 314) in the novel. To mention a few examples, Frye designates "Cyclops" and "Circe" as a combination of novel and romance, "Nausicaa" and "Penelope" as a combination of romance and confession, "Proteus" and "Lotus Eaters" as a combination of confession and anatomy, "Sirens" and parts of "Circe" as a combination of romance and anatomy and "Ithaca" as a combination of novel-anatomy (AC 314). Frye gives no additional explanation for interpreting the episodes in this manner, and concludes his analysis with Molly, who as Penelope, adequately represents the cyclicity of nature (AC 323) and life, where the "drowsy spinning of the earth, absorbed in its own cyclical movement, constantly affirming but never forming, is what Marion sinks into, taking the whole book with her" (FOI 261). This cyclicity, says Frye, is characteristic of the "ironic myth" of the modern age (St.S 53).

The overriding flaw in Frye's analysis is this: though he admits that in Ulysses, the "mythical elements ... revolve around a realistic centre" (SM 57), his perception of
the different episodes is that of separate categories of combinations, and not as natural outgrowths from a common “realistic centre.” Frye does not seem to realize that the highest common factor uniting all these episodes is the “realistic centre” signified by the presence of Irish history as it is reproduced in the novel. Even if we analyzed only the episodes Frye has referred to, we will have to acknowledge the common thread of Irish history that runs through all of them, despite their varied themes and techniques of presentation.

For instance, “Proteus” contains references to Arthur Griffith and the Sinn Fein movement—“Of Ireland, the Dalcassians, of hopes, conspiracies, of Arthur Griffith now” (U 43) when Kevin Egan shares confidences with Stephen in Paris. Joyce’s preference for Griffith’s non-violent style of politics is well known. The theme is picked up in “Lotus-Eaters” where on seeing a recruiting poster for soldiers Bloom thinks of Griffith, who in his role of a journalist, exposes the condition of the army belonging to the imperial power—the English army “rotten with venereal disease” (U 73). Then again in “Cyclops,” Bloom is alleged to have contributed ideas to Griffith’s paper to protest against the British economic policies like “swindling the taxes off of the Government” (U 335). Even Molly, who has no obvious head for politics, has observed his recent closeness with the “Sinner Fein lately or whatever they call themselves” (U 748) and has been told that Griffith was “very intelligent” (U 748). Frye’s classificatory style has obviously missed out this fine and minute networking of the Irish political scene which strings these episodes together.

Joyce continues his exposition of Irish history through the events of a single day—the ‘concrete particular’ whose details provide us with an idea of the “concrete universal”
(FOI 257) of Irish history underlying it. One of the most prominent facts of the history of Ireland was the condition of the landless peasants. Joyce hated Yeats’s celebration of the “‘spirituality’ of the Irish peasantry” (Watson, III R 158), his romanticizing of the peasant (and the past) and conferring on the latter something of a Noble Savage image. Instead, along with his firm conviction that the “death chant” for Ireland had been sung (qtd. in Watson, III R 158) he realistically exposes the unpalatable realities of the peasants’ role in history by presenting the harsh record of their suffering and misery. In “Sirens,” the “Green starving faces” of the peasants, in contrast to the obvious opulence on the face of landlordism “in castle chambers” (U 282), evokes a very real condition in Irish economic history.

The theme is developed further in “Circe,” in the picture of the Irish evicted tenants crying for Bloom’s blood (U 496). In his penetrating analysis of the Irish question, Marx mentions that the Protestant Penal Laws, and the Irish Parliament were all used by the English as a “means for robbing the Irish of their land” (317). He adds that the “bankruptcy of the remaining small landowners further contributed to the eviction of the small peasants” (318). Ulysses contains a clear reference to this condition in “Cyclops” when the citizen says: “Ay, they drove out the peasants in hordes. Twenty thousand of them died in the coffinships” (U 330)--a reference to the resulting emigration to America. The recorded facts of Irish history, of “Religion, Land, and local Lordship” which were the “trio of Irish wrongs” (Curtis 203), find their way into the novel as Joyce uses them relentlessly to expose the vain bombast of the Irish nationalists.

A further and final addition to the “realistic centre” which Frye mentions but does not elaborate is another related theme uniting “Cyclops,” “Nausicaa,” and “Ithaca.” In an
form the genre of the prose epic to which the novel allegedly belongs. But Frye’s structural analysis does not reveal anything that most critical readings of *Ulysses* have not already said and said it better. The “realistic centre” that he identifies in the novel is thus lost in the maze of tables and labels that he proposes to relate *Ulysses* with the literary tradition it is a part of. While Frye seems to admire Joyce for portraying the “concrete universal” (*FOI* 257) in narrating the story of Man through the story of man, he forgets that it is through the expression of the ‘concrete particular,’ which forms the “realistic centre” of the novel, that Joyce is successful in expressing the concrete universal.

The foregoing analysis is just a brief illustration of the impossibility of interpreting *Ulysses* by merely categorizing it according to the conventional genres of literature. All the eighteen episodes in the novel are criss-crossed with details of the larger movements of Irish history and interwoven with the ordinary details making up the lives of the Blooms and Stephen. So the “realistic centre” of Irish history is the heart of the story with the motifs and minor themes connected with it constituting the veins carrying life-blood to the rest of the organism. Frye’s analysis denies the novel this dimension and hence renders it ‘heartless.’ As a result, his interpretation seems a lifeless arrangement of episodes organized into convenient slots provided by a “literary tradition” which itself is dead if it admits literary works precisely because they bear no relationship to reality, “the main region and haunt” of Joyce’s novel.

Frye also examines the more particular instance of the quest-myth as projected in the novel. He identifies the structure of the quest in Stephen’s search for his father which is fulfilled in his meeting with Bloom, “a new kind of father” (*FOI* 261). Clearly, the meeting with Bloom as a representative of Everyman, “the man of earth and common
humanity” is essential, (even if distasteful) claims Frye, for the intellectual Stephen with his head in the clouds. This Icarus-like fall to the earth is important for Stephen but the novel ends with a more traditional representation of the earth in the figure of Molly as the Mother Earth (FIOI 261). Despite her narcissism, Molly plays both mother and lover to Bloom and possibly Stephen, says Frye, and embodying as she does the “cyclical movement” (FIOI 261) of the earth, leaves a lasting, final impression at the end of the novel. From this Frye takes an inductive leap as it were, to make the much larger concluding point that most epic fictions contain two main elements: “the quest of the hero and the shape of the hero’s world” (FIOI 261), adding that in the ironic vision the quest is seen as a “perpetually recurring cycle” (FIOI 262) where the action has to be continually repeated. Frye also implies that Stephen’s quest is paralleled by the reader’s own descent into the world of the novel (SS 186), reading which he realizes that he has to reread it and thus repeat the quest for meaning.

In effect, Frye is seemingly interested in proving that he has borne in mind the archetypal shape of literature as a whole, and has employed the structural analysis to grasp the larger pattern of the quest-myth informing all literature. Frye’s argument regarding Stephen’s quest is merely the repetition of a tune already popularized by Jungians. Frye is interested in the meeting of the two men only as a mystical instance of the concrete particular (Stephen) meeting the concrete universal (Bloom), the enterprise reminiscent of Frye’s theory of the basic universal structure which, he claims, predominates every literary work. He equates the quest with that of Jung’s hero in search of his libido or creativity, and Frazer’s in search of social fertility (Denham 125) but in all the cases, the structure of the quest remains the same, making it an ordained cycle that
is endlessly repeatable. Normally, the romantic quest ends happily enough, but in Frye's “ironic vision” (FOI 262), as in Ulysses, the shape of the hero's world is cyclic. But as this cyclicity in the novel is represented by Molly who as Mother Earth is also the great lover, one would think that Stephen would have concluded a romantic quest, and not a tragic one as Frye’s analysis implies. And as the process of reading the novel—the reader’s quest—is also not spared the cyclicity of Frye’s structure the question that poses itself is: Does rereading Ulysses make it a tragic quest for the reader? One should hope not, specially when one is rereading one of the most genuinely comic books ever written!

* * *

A detailed analysis of the general ‘pattern’ of the myth criticism of Ulysses shows that critics have been diligent in applying their own versions of Frye’s theory to the novel. In the process they have duplicated not only his ideas but also his contradictions, his “violations of logic and order” as Wimsatt says (qtd. in Mugerauer 135), his complete disregard for history, his valorization of the structure of the quest-myth, his inordinate partiality for its cyclic pattern, his complete exclusion of any external referent outside the body of literature, and various other lapses which will become obvious once we commence with our analysis. A closer look at the myth criticism of Ulysses in the light of Frye’s theory as well as practice will, therefore, reveal the fact that their inherent contradictions are retained in the analyses of later critics, spawning further irrationality.

Even as late as in 1990, Frye expresses the essence of his critical program in Words with Power through his unshakeable conviction that the “study [of] literature as a historical or ideological phenomenon, and its works as documents illustrating something
outside literature” was completely unscientific as this approach left out the “central structural principles that literature derives from myth, the principles that give literature its communicating power across the centuries through all ideological changes” (qtd. in Hart 61). Frye’s reputation as a critical mandarin seems to rise or fall by this very notion of structure for he is either criticized heavily for the same or applauded heartily for revolutionizing the critical studies of literary works. Criticism of Frye has mostly centred around the issue of his inclusion or exclusion of external reality from his theory. While his admirers believe that Frye’s humanistic critical theory never lost sight of the social dimension, his critics see him as a formalist who does not have much use for history or any external referent. Notwithstanding his own claims regarding the social dimension of his theory, his critics generally feel that it occupies a very peripheral position in the body of his entire theory.

Neither Frye nor his followers believed in the external referent of Irish history as Joyce experienced it and allowed it to shape the novel. For many critics the only historical dimension present in *Ulysses* was Joyce’s deliberate experimentation with language and style, in keeping with the modernist trends in most art forms in general. It was commonly believed that the reality of language had begun to supersede the reality it was traditionally supposed to represent. It is worth noting that the “new critical” tenet of textual autonomy does not seem to have been accepted by Frye wholeheartedly when he says that literature is a “verbal replica of external phenomena.” But language in which literature is embodied, “expresses” this “verbal” phenomena. The critics who came after Frye, however, believed that the autonomous world of words did not need any ‘imposition’ of meaning from outside and could form a complete unit of meaning within
The reader of *Ulysses* could, therefore, derive meaning from the novel itself without necessarily possessing a knowledge of the socio-economic factors and historical forces informing the writer's epoch as well as the creation of the novel.

Much of the significant criticism of *Ulysses* is, therefore, a reflection of the debate between the two main opposing trends which analyze the novel either as the product of a traditional humanistic and empiricist perspective or, more recently, as the product of a reader-response criticism where the emphasis is more on the meaning creation by the reader whose horizons for reading include a knowledge of the "special place of *Ulysses* in literary and cultural history" (Litz 228). As the more traditional critical readings of *Ulysses* indicate, the novel was valued for its correspondence to external reality in its characterization, its psychologically true to life stream-of-consciousness technique, and its setting in the city of Dublin. But later it was equally energetically recommended for its anti-naturalistic stand, its linguistic virtuosity, and multiple styles. In this two-pronged critique of the novel, both its realistic as well as its fictive nature play a part, a fact stressed upon by Frye and corroborated by well-known critics like Goldberg, Litz, and Schwarz. In the ultimate analysis, *Ulysses* is, by and large, seen to be amenable to both linear and spatial readings according to reader-response criticism, the onus shifting from the initial narratorial view-point in the early episodes to the reader's participation in the later ones. The inference is that the reader and not the narrator produces the meaning in the novel. Critical interpretations of *Ulysses* have dealt with this in considerable detail, with most critics subscribing to both points of view.

To begin with, Frye's theory of the quest-myth is a favourite theme of critics who have the slightest affiliation with the archetypal school of thought. Frye himself believes
that the quest-myth holds good as much for Stephen as for the reader of Ulysses who, says Frye, is finally responsible for the functioning of literature (SS 186) through the act of reading. Thus we infer that Stephen's quest for creativity has its parallel in the reader's search for the ultimate meaning of the text, which is a never-ending one. In Frye, this is symbolized by the metaphor of cyclicity with its implication of an eternal return to beginnings. Cyclicity suggests endlessness or eternity, no doubt. But as it also implies "repetition," where the endlessness of the interpretation of Ulysses depends on the reader's grasp of the novel, his inputs and creativity. Critics like French claim that Stephen's quest for identity, (which however, is unsuccessful) is merely a symbolic affirmation of the reader's continuous "journey . . . of exploration" (4), and that the reader is therefore, the real "Ulysses of the title" (3). The reader keeps returning to the reading of Ulysses, thereby participating in the eternal quest of discovering meanings embedded deep in the text.

There is, however, a serious contradiction underlying the quest-myth, and its correlation with the reader's quest. If it is true as Goldberg suggests that "in the patterns of myths . . . lie the permanent configurations of the human mind" (CT 201), one expects to find in these patterns the repetition and recurrence characteristic of myth, thus realizing that "nothing is ever 'new' " (Goldman 118). But the irony is that while Frye privileges the reader's search for the ultimate structure, he also refers to the different perspectives of readers separated historically in time (and space which Frye, however, does not mention) (CR 65). This naturally produces ever new readings of the same book, but Frye does not resolve this paradox. The irony is further heightened by the fact that while Frye sees literature as a self-contained literary universe, we observe that this so-called self-
contained world depends for its survival largely on the varied interpretations the reader brings to it each time he re-reads the novel. Thus Frye's emphasis on the reader's role affirms that the life of the world of *Ulysses* needs vital input from outside and it is the reader who supplies it and makes it live.

A common perception of critics, including Eliade is that *Ulysses* is "saturated with nostalgia for the myth of eternal repetition" (qtd. in Goldman 119). In the novel, says Goldberg, this idea is represented by Stephen's ruminations (*CT* 159) on the origin of life, through the image of the strandentwining cable of all flesh in "Proteus," when he imagines the death of that very life "hushed in ruddy wool" contained in the midwives' bag (*U* 38). His thoughts highlight the eternal pattern of the organic cycle. Goldberg believes that the imagery of the navelcord in *Ulysses*, represents Stephen's acknowledgement of the "permanent patterns of change," as well as, the "common bond of continuity" (*CT* 159) that it is a sign of. He further adds that within this larger and more general cyclic pattern of organic life is contained Stephen's (as well as Bloom's) pattern of his own personal nightmarish history (*CT* 168-69). However, the idea of history which has been introduced by Goldberg is not only a solipsistic version of history as a personal nightmare for Stephen (which Goldberg also acknowledges), but it has also been further mythicized by Goldberg's reliance on patterns to explain it. The notion of history as linear and progressive is completely denied, but Goldberg sees nothing amiss in adding that Stephen's "preoccupation with history is . . . not merely pretentious irrelevance" (*CT* 170), when it is obvious that Stephen has absolutely no larger perspective on history, and cannot see deeper than the apparent patterns that Goldberg himself sees.
Linked with this representation of the quest-myth in *Ulysses* is another ‘myth’ that needs exploding—the general opinion of most critics that Joyce is merely retelling the old Homeric myth, and by providing a scaffolding, conforming to the basic structure or pattern of the epic. Frye himself has suggested that it is the conventionalized imagination which contributes to the literary tradition and says that it is the tradition of epic writers to be “unusually conscious of tradition.” Goldberg claims that the action in *Ulysses* moves towards the “objective universality of myth” (*CT* 206). Hermione de Almeida also admits the Joyce’s “mythic method . . . had the much larger purpose of allowing for echoing or retelling” (27). He also supports Frye by saying that *Ulysses* falls in line with the “picaresque mode” (41), and finds a place for it within the literary tradition. He explains its conformity with literary tradition by stressing that *Ulysses* was a “parody of specific literary genres” (49).

But paradoxically enough, the redeeming feature of his book is that it also illustrates quite admirably Joyce’s plan of subverting the literary tradition itself by attempting to critique it (48). In Almeida’s words, the “primary intent behind . . . [his] use of Homeric plot and tradition must therefore be to show up, by indirection, the parallels that are not there, and the sentiments and conditions that have changed so radically since the tradition’s inception” (20). This is a realistic evaluation of Joyce’s aim because it is so palpable in a novel where the daily routine of a single day is magnified to epic proportions in order to ruthlessly expose and reveal. Though Almeida, like Frye, admits that Joyce was being the most traditional when he was being revolutionary (28), he does not discount the value of Joyce’s departure from tradition, but
says that he "affirm[s] the old myths in their previous forms . . . [to] explicitly, criticize them" (28) an important qualification not found in Frye's analysis of the same novel.

Almeida's thesis, however, loses some of its analytical rigour because of one major contradiction in his argument. He arrives at the important conclusion that Ulysses manages to "reflect truthfully . . . tell truly of societal hypocrisy . . . speaking with paracletic vigour of the Dubliners' . . . rote-behaviour, their empty rules, their vapid politics" (92). But he takes away from it with his statement that Joyce wished to make of Ulysses "an entire self-supporting world" and that the book was "about the writing process" (162). While it is true that linguistic subtlety and experimentation are remarkable achievements of the novel, Almeida is not correct in valuing this more than its realistic content. For Joyce's departure from the accepted literary tradition makes use of the stark reality of Dublin to "emphasize change, difference" (20) and expose the "failings of tradition" (20) -- a feat Almeida himself credits him with performing before rejecting it in the final count. Such a contradiction confuses rather than clarifies, and makes one wonder if Almeida prefers to be ambiguous so as to avoid making up his mind. Like Frye, he acknowledges a "realistic centre" which he prefers to damn with a faint nod.

The application of Frye's myth of the social contract which includes both the idea of society as it is, and as it is envisioned to be, also plays quite a significant role in the criticism of Ulysses, but those critical interpretations which negate the importance of the "felt" history of Ireland, do not do full justice to the novel from this point of view. The very notion of the mythic structure as eternal, unchanging, and permanent suggests the Frygian concept of utopia which, as the end-product of dream fulfilment, implies an ideal
society that exhibits these very qualities. It is when the "felt" history collides with the utopian reality that there are problems. This is specially exemplified in the writings of Deane and Watson, which present an interesting instance of the application of Frye's concept of utopia, and its collision with the "felt" history of Ireland as it is represented in Ulysses.

We will first examine Deane's views on what, according to him, is Joyce's complex and ambivalent relationship with Irish history. The crux of Deane's thought is as follows. He claims that Joyce, finding the world of historical facts finite and unpleasant, exploits the immense possibilities offered by language, and through the aesthetic freedom afforded by the imagination, attempts to recreate Ireland through the act of writing. He does this, says Deane, not by glorifying nationalism like Yeats does, but by exposing its rhetoric and rebelling against Church, Nation and State. Let us see how far Deane succeeds in making his point.

Deane claims that Joyce's "very real disaffection with politics, Irish or international, enhanced his sense of isolation and was translated into his creed of artistic freedom. Since history could not yield a politics, it was compelled to yield an aesthetic. In this process, disaffection became disdain, political reality dissolved into fiction, fiction realised itself purely in terms of its own medium, language. As a consequence, the finite nature of historical fact was supplanted by the infinite, or near infinite possibilities of language. Language was cast into a form which would extend the range of possible signification to an ultimate degree of openness, thereby setting itself against the closed world of limited and limiting historical fact" (168). Clearly, Deane believes that Joyce's disillusionment with politics in general made him suspect its authenticity, as a result of
which, history or political reality ceased to mean anything to him in concrete terms. Instead, Joyce sees history as an element which, being no longer factual in his eyes, is reduced to fiction. Through the latter he fulfils his aesthetic ambitions by exploring the innumerable possibilities of meaning which language, that is severed from external reality, affords. In other words, Joyce rejects historical reality by rejecting historical fact. He substitutes this with the “near infinite possibilities” of meaning which could be derived from it by focussing on the linguistic representation of this historical reality.

Through the medium of art, Joyce, suggests Deane, is able to overcome the restrictions imposed on the real world and its existence in time and space. From this we are supposed to infer that as the representation of reality in *Ulysses* did not conform to the socio-political and economic scenario as it existed in 1904, the reader could find himself reading a text that yields any number of meanings and, like Joyce, succeed in soaring far above the space-time world of Joyce’s Ireland.

Deane supplements his view with an example and says: “Parnell’s downfall and death is a brute fact that Joyce found it more difficult to counter. He took it from the world of history and re-established it in the world of fiction by unfettering it from actual circumstances and making of it a maieutic image . . .” (169). Deane does not explain “maieutic,” which the *Chambers’s Twentieth Century Dictionary* clarifies as referring to “helping birth, specially of thoughts” or the “Socratic art” (640). In the context of Deane’s essay it means that Joyce acknowledges the historical reality of Parnell’s short-lived career, but emphasizes it not as a historical fact, but as a “maieutic image” that Joyce recreates in his novel by detaching the fact from its roots in the events of the time. One presumes that this would mean that Parnell as represented in the novel, does not
correspond to his three dimensional existence in Irish history. In the novel, he is an image which generates other images like treachery, which led to his downfall. Deane, therefore, suggests that Joyce could not bear to face this unpalatable reality of Irish history except by freezing it in art. He claims that Joyce merely reproduces the image of the actual personality and so *Ulysses* contains no reference to the historical figure of Parnell who dominated the course of events in Irish history.

The logical outcome of Deane's reasoning is his next assertion that "fiction, to perform its necessary function, must have broken its traditional affiliations with history. Plot and theme, those elements which produce the story, are to be subdued, even abolished, and replaced by language... The last six sections of *Ulysses* upset many of the expectations raised by the preceding twelve because they abort the story element in order to redeem the status of language" (169). The function of fiction is to counter history, according to Deane, who upholds that the relationship between fiction and history, which is generally established through the elements of plot and theme, is completely eliminated from the novel. So the plotless and themeless novel, so as to speak, will be dominated only by language which is what the last six episodes of *Ulysses* are all about. As long as plot and theme dominate the story, language has to take a subordinate position. Deane suggests that Joyce rectifies this by severing the relationship of story with external reality through his abolition of plot and theme, and by allowing language to occupy a preeminent position in the novel.

Deane claims that like Joyce, Yeats too attempts to counter the "calamitous" (169) history of Ireland but while both "repudiate the more pronounced forms of political nationalism" (171), Yeats believed in creating "images of enduring heroism" (171).
However, Deane’s perception of Joyce confers a romanticism on him as well when he says: “His conception of history is dominated by the idea of the noble spirit debased by ignoble domination and demeaning circumstance” (172). The result of such romantic idealism, implies Deane, is that Joyce refuses service to Church, Nation, State, and offers all his services to Art. So underneath the unpalatable realities of Irish history like Parnell’s downfall, lies Joyce’s idealistic notion of a country which had once enjoyed a glorious past before it had degenerated to the present. That is why, says Deane, while Joyce’s “service is to Art, Art is itself in service to the Soul of Ireland. This soul is still uncreated. It is the function of true art to create it…” (172). Joyce’s writings, according to Deane, are intimately related to the creation of spiritual reality, and as much as they do it, his art rings true. In other words, the plotless and themeless _Ulysses_ as Art recreates the noble spirit or the soul of Ireland after rejecting historical reality and its finite nature.

So far Irish history has been “shadowed by betrayal” (172), resulting in a “debased version of that spiritual reality” (172). On Joyce falls the mantle of immortalizing his country in his art and thereby conferring on it a superior version of that spiritual reality. According to Deane, Joyce is sure that the “absence of Ireland would be overcome in his art; there it would achieve presence” (172-73). The uncreated Soul of Ireland would thus be inscribed in his art and a spiritual reality untarnished by the unpleasant facts of betrayal would come into being. But how will this come about? Deane has the answer: “An act of writing which will replace all earlier acts; which will replace all politics; which will make the ignoble, noble; which will make history into culture by making it the material of consciousness…” (173). Joyce’s writing will, assures Deane, ‘baptize’ the ignoble facts of Irish history and render them noble through
the novelty of a writing unsurpassed by any so far. The painful realities of history would be overcome by dissociating them from external events; they will form the static and painless world of consciousness inhabiting the world of art. Joyce’s service to Art would ensure service to Ireland: “A culture which had never known the idea of totality was to have it embodied in art” (173). The concept of totality for a fractured culture automatically enables Deane to propose that this would have to be circumscribed within an overall structure and he concludes, therefore, that for Joyce the “supreme action was writing” (173). And that is how both Yeats and Joyce, says Deane, could go “beyond nationalism into a universalism for which history, myth and legend supplied the imagery merely” (173). Deane equates history with myth and legend and suggests that Irish history in Ulysses is represented as imagery which, along with myth and legend, (both of which have no necessary relationship with historical facts), is made, not to serve the cause of a narrow-minded nationalism, but the more universal concept of writing.

So right from Dubliners to Finnegans Wake, including the “interior monologues and parodies of Ulysses,” claims Deane, “the plots . . . are so designed that their interconnections are aggressively verbal, insisting on the linkages of words rather than on the illusion of events. Joyce dismantles the agreed relation between author and reader whereby fiction was allowed autonomy as story. Instead, he insists upon the dependence of the story and of the very idea of fiction upon language. Given that, he can make language constitutive of reality, not merely regulative of it” (173). Joyce’s use of words, then, is more real than the illusory nature of the concrete events they represent goes Deane’s argument. The verbal expression of the communication becomes more important than the content which is being communicated and this is how author and
reader enter a new relationship which is different from the traditional use of plot and
story for communicating the author's vision. As all the elements of fictional
representation--plot, theme, and story--are abolished, nothing is left in *Ulysses* but
language which, in its self-referentiality now becomes reality itself. It now takes over the
autonomy which the fictional devices used to represent reality, once had. *Ulysses* is thus
stripped of all the superficial approximations to external reality and the actual reality of
its language stands exposed as it is.

Deane admits that though Joyce repudiated both the pro-Union and anti-Union
factions of the Irish intelligentsia (174), he was conscious that his country was
"politically vibrant" (175) "recognised the importance of Arthur Griffith's Sinn Fein
movement," and important events like Parnell's role in Irish history, "absorbed a good
deal of his attention" (174). From this it follows that in reality, Joyce was intensely
interested in the historical facts, which were situated in the context of the unfolding
events of the Irish history, even though, says Deane, he tries to evade them in his art. As
he must create the spiritual reality which did not exist, he does so, not by joining "a
movement, a party, a combination or a sect," but through "the act of writing [which]
became an act of rebellion; rebellion was the act of writing" (175). Joyce's act of writing
*Ulysses* would thus create Ireland's spiritual reality.

But the paradox is that the Irish experience has to be embodied in English, the
coloniser's language, and to do so, Joyce must accept the formal and linguistic challenges
in order to become "a rebel against all that preceded him" (175). His rebellion takes
three forms: inversion against the Roman imperium, parody against the British imperium,
and exile to overcome the Irish imperium (175-76). These specific forms, says Deane,
"were strategies of displacement, not radical amputations. The Church, the English literary tradition and Ireland all remained as forces in his imagination. They operate under the aegis of irony but the irony depended on their presence" (176). Irony is Joyce's strategy of displacement by which the three forces in his imagination take form in the actual act of writing. These concrete historical forces, then, are not removed completely from his writing; instead, they are present in the novel through Joyce's ironical treatment of the same. In effect, Deane suggests that Joyce's imaginative recreation of the spiritual reality of Ireland perforce includes these historical forces which were already present in his imagination. Joycean irony then, by implication, conveys the historical reality which energises these three forces. Deane, however, perceives the former without acknowledging the latter.

Consequent to Joyce's disloyalty to these forces is his loyalty towards himself which manifests itself in an act of writing where Stephen and Bloom, likewise, are not concerned with historical reality, says Deane: "Historical relationships are determined by the fidelity shown towards them . . . Stephen and Bloom, however, try to avoid sequence and to replace it with simultaneity. For them, history is not a record of facts but the material of their consciousness . . . Their history is always the present. The interior monologue . . . is appropriate to them. For in it, the kaleidoscope of past and present can be constantly shaken to form transient patterns which are not essentially historical but psychological." The interior monologue forms a "universe of associative patterns which, in their unofficial way, might be more real or universal or simply more interesting. . . ." (177). The world of objective historical facts with its particular meaning is not as interesting as the world of consciousness which forms various patterns of meaning
through association, not between facts, but between thoughts which flit from past to present. These thoughts form continually shifting patterns through the different associations between words, without maintaining any necessary conformity with history. As Stephen and Bloom are seen as characters who do not actively interact with the historical referent in the novel, Joyce, says Deane, substitutes historical relationships with psychological relationships. Not confined to any single restrictive meaning, these thought patterns of Stephen and Bloom are projected as more interesting by Deane. They throw “unofficial” light on official reports and rise above the particulars of factuality, and through their fictional status, confer a universality on Joyce's Art.

Deane supplies evidence from the text which advances his idea that official versions of history are merely boring, leading nowhere. For instance, he admits that there are “many historical parallels in Ulysses ...” like the parallel between the Jews and the Irish in Ulysses, but says that they “become a source of frustration if taken straightforwardly” (179). He does not analyze this parallel at all and merely says that “it is impossible to specify for it any particular function other than the sheer function of being there as a possible but not as a necessary system or ordering” (180). The parallel is seen as nothing but a formal device, which functions as a possible structural principle which shapes the art work, but because it is not strictly necessary, either its presence or absence, would not make much of a difference. Deane says so as much when he declares that: “... the discovery that the knowledge is useful only to a limited and formal degree, never in a substantial, historical sense, leaves the reader in the curious position of realising that the kind of research which these books demand is itself parodied by the way in which its discoveries are shown to lead nowhere” (180). Whatever historical
dimension the parallel between the Irish and the Jews may have, it is not allowed to filter into the novel as such. As the parallel is seen to perform only a formalistic function, its contribution is limited to the level of language and form, not sense. All the research work underlying the book is, therefore, deemed insubstantial and unhistorical as a reading of the book reveals it to be finally nonsense.

Deane believes that it is not right to expect Joyce to conform to the historical realities of the present, as critics like Lukacs, by accusing him of passivity, have done. According to him, Joyce challenges the very assumption “that his fiction stood over against a reality by which it could be tested. Instead, his fiction was creating a reality which otherwise would have no existence and in which the external reality, used so often as a criterion in so-called realistic fiction would be only one ingredient among others” (181). This is once again a reference to the creation of the spiritual reality of Ireland which, according to Deane’s logic, had no use for external reality except as one formal element among other systems of ordering. The fictional reality which is created, dismisses external reality as a mere “ingredient,” and instead, attempts to find itself in Joyce’s art.

As Joyce is supposed to have discovered the power of words that was exploited by Irish nationalism to win over converts to its cause, Deane concludes that Joyce had, therefore, “discovered the fictive nature of politics. His work is, in consequence, an examination of the nature of the fictive—how it is created, how words operate within and without patterns of formal symmetry, how history can be magnified or reduced to archetype...” (181). Deane suggests that it was solely fictional recreation that now absorbed Joyce’s attention. Irish politics had revealed to him the dichotomy between
reality as it existed and as it was recreated through the power of rhetoric. His form of rebellion against nationalism took the form of an exposition of its method through his Art, which became a veritable demonstration of what nationalism represented. As a result, Joyce apparently abandons any confrontation with the external reality of Irish history and its existential nature. He shows through his writing, how history becomes part of the archetypal universal structure of words, which his writing represents. So the Irish-Jew parallel in this case, would be hinting at the archetypal nature of the quest theme which established the relationship between the two races, one belonging to the Hebraic past, and the other embodying the same in the present context of Ireland. Looked at it this way, the parallel does not have anything to do with the actual role it performs in the novel, within the specific context of the dynamics of the socio-historical forces operating in Ireland at that time.

Deane finally sums up by claiming that Joyce’s fiction, “investigated the activity of structuration itself as it was revealed through the exploration of language . . . [which] is itself that structuring activity” (181). If the activity of structuration is the activity of meaning creation, the analysis of the language comprising this activity reveals that language is self-referential. The possibility of multiple meaning creation in language and its structuring or ordering activity are equated, and so it is quite natural, says Deane, that language should be “both arbitrary and systematic” (182). As Joyce “belonged to a culture in which there was no congruence between established structures and political or social rhetoric,” (181) it is obvious that Joyce’s use of language should expose the same. Instead of confining language to a single meaning based on external reality, the author severs it from the latter so that language can yield more than one meaning, and orders it
to render language both arbitrary and systematic. Deane, however, does not demonstrate how this can be done.

And so the outcome of Joyce's writing was that, "Ireland as an entity, cultural or political, was incorporated in all its mutations within Joyce's work as a model of the world and, more importantly, as a model of the fictive. In revealing the essentially fictive nature of political imagining, Joyce did not repudiate Irish nationalism. Instead, he understood it as a potent example of a rhetoric which imagined as true, structures that did not and were never to exist outside language" (183). Joyce, says Deane, learnt the lesson as to how "the imagination is brought to bear upon the reality which it creates" (183). Ireland is thus denied any identity as a geo-physical entity having a specific historical relationship with England and is, instead, understood as a model created from Joyce's imagination. So Joyce does not repudiate Irish nationalism as general critical opinion has often believed; he comprehends the fact that apart from the language of the nationalists nothing about nationalism is real, specially not the structures or institutions that they represent. Political reality by itself does not exist--the only reality that exists is language. This finds its most complete illustration in Art which, in Joyce, is conveyed through his writing where he gives autonomy and free rein to his imagination to create a reality which does not have an *a priori* existence.

Deane's argument invites criticism because it contains many contradictions impossible to ignore. One of the most problematic issues in his essay is the fact that he does not substantiate his verdict on the novel with suitable illustrations from the text. His remarks, therefore, appear to be superimposed on a text which does not warrant the kind of reading he suggests. To begin with, there is nothing in the novel to suggest that Joyce
found the world of historical facts "limiting" in any way. Instead, Joyce's interpretation and use of Irish history in *Ulysses* novel reveals the limitations of Irish nationalism as it was being advocated. While it is true that language can only afford to represent external reality, it is equally true that if language has to communicate any meaning, it has to refer to an external reality which exists outside the text. In that case, Deane's assumption that language yields innumerable or "near infinite" meanings is wrong because the presence of this external reality and the author's chosen mode of expressing it, circumscribes the meaning that can be inferred from its representation in language. It is possible that one may arrive at more than one interpretation from this representation, but the meaning itself is regulated by the author's choice of words or ideas within the particularities of the given context. *Ulysses* itself reveals that though Joyce may have been upset about Parnell's untimely death, he does not flinch from exposing the double standards of a society which was directly responsible for it. One would be labouring the point home if one were to analyze the number of times Parnell and the manner of his death are referred to in the novel—a continuation of a theme begun in *The Portrait*. The "brute fact" of Parnell's role in history, including his ultimate downfall is a reality that Joyce begins with, not dismisses as bitter memory. Both Stephen and Bloom have a relationship with him in their consciousness, a clear proof that he was present in Joyce's consciousness as well, a fact which shall be illustrated shortly.

Deane claims that fiction does not have any intrinsic relationship with plot and theme, which in turn, have nothing to do with Irish history in *Ulysses*. He forgets that the reading of *Ulysses* can be a meaningful experience only if the novel represented Irish history; otherwise, mere linguistic virtuosity cannot hold one's attention in the novel.
Both plot and theme advance the historical content in the novel and contrary to Deane's suggestion, the last six episodes continue to throw light on the theme of the earlier twelve episodes. I shall demonstrate this very briefly by examining a few of the thematic threads linking the last six episodes with the preceding twelve. Needless to say, Deane does not furnish a single instance from any of these six episodes to prove his point. I would like to suggest that if Joyce raised any expectations in the earlier sections, he does so in order to refer to them in some form or the other in the later ones as well. No doubt his manner of presentation changes from episode to episode, but Joyce's commitment to the representation of Irish history remains clear throughout. We shall now look at some instances from "Nausicaa" to "Penelope," to see how the plot carries the thematic content right through to the end.

"Nausicaa," the first of the last six sections, finds Bloom resting by the seaside on a rock, close to where Gerty MacDowell is also seated. He is trying to recover from the violent encounter with the citizen at Barney Kiernan's. Significantly enough, the parish church dedicated to Our Lady as Star of the Sea, the Virgin Mary, is also situated on the beach. The men are having a temperance retreat there. The coincidence is not accidental--Joyce clearly indicates a mock parallel between Bloom's adoration of Gerty as she begins to show off her physical charms in an exhibitionistic act, and the men's adoration of the Virgin Mary as the "Refuge of sinners" and the "Comfortress of the afflicted" (U 358). In Bloom's voyeuristic admiration of Gerty, Joyce parodies the Catholic Church and its institutionalization of the worship of the Virgin. We may recall that in "Lotus Eaters" Bloom had entered the All Hallows Church and mocked at the communion service saying "Then feel all like one family party . . . . Blind faith. Safe in
the arms of kingdom come. Lulls all pain” (*U* 81). While Joyce attempts a different kind of parodic inversion here by comparing the worldly wise Gerty with the Virgin and their respective devotees, the obvious aim of declaring such religious practices of the Church as bogus is sustained. In the “Oxen of the Sun,” Joyce once again caricatures the Church in another completely different context. The bawdy conversation of the medicos soon centres around the topic of the foot-and-mouth disease among the cattle (*U* 398) and from there leads to papal bulls. Joyce introduces the complex idea of the papal bull of Hadrian IV (Nicholas Brakespear) which gave the country into Henry II’s hands (Blamires 144). It is not difficult to see that the bull(y) symbolizes the Church of Ireland, which has been allowed to have its own way, this dear “father of the faithful” (*U* 400) who shows his “mystery” and bellows in “bull’s language” (*U* 400) so that his followers run after him.

In “Circe,” the conflict between vassal and Empire is highlighted by the citizen who pronounces a curse on the “English dogs” who hanged the “Irish leaders” (*U* 593), and the Croppy Boy’s patriotic effusions. Joyce’s lack of sympathy with either extremist position is revealed in his characterisation of old Gummy Granny, who in her role as a representative of Ireland, is unsuccessful in motivating Stephen to violence because he sees through her revolutionary posing. The earliest delineation of this character takes place in the first episode itself in the figure of the poor, old milkwoman who is a symbol of the present status of Ireland. Bloom also hates violence, as he has demonstrated in his exchange with the citizen in “Cyclops.” All these references add up to Joyce’s estrangement with the nationalist enterprise with its emphasis on a blind hatred of the imperial power without eradicating its own national evils. “Eumaeus” picks up the theme of “Cyclops” where Skin-the-Goat a la the citizen of “Cyclops” itemises his own reasons
which made Ireland "the richest country bar none on the face of God's earth" (*U* 16: 640). Joyce punctures this nationalist posturing easily enough when one of the characters admits that it is the Irish catholic peasant who is the "backbone of our empire" (*U* 641), a reference both to the brutal reality regarding the Irish peasantry, and the nationalists' glorification of the same. The same episode contains references to Parnell, the fallen hero, whose death finds mention in "Hades," the sixth episode in the novel. The fact that Parnell's death is still the topic of conversation among Irishmen proves how deeply his memory was embedded in the average Irishman's psyche. So how could Deane possibly think that Joyce detached the fact from "actual circumstances?" In "Eumaeus," he is remembered once again as the events and possible reasons for his death are recapitulated. Twenty odd years later they still believed: "Dead he wasn't. Simply absconded somewhere" (*U* 649). Parnell's reality was exactly what Joyce used to oppose the nationalists who tried to appropriate the former for their own use by preaching violence instead of acceding to his parliamentary means of achieving freedom for Ireland.

The theme of the key is sounded in the first episode of the novel when Buck Mulligan takes back the key to the tower from Stephen who, rendered homeless, calls him "Usurper" (*U* 23). The same theme receives a different sort of emphasis in "Ithaca," when Bloom and Stephen arrive at the former's house and Bloom finds himself keyless. The idea that both the Jew and the Irishman have to cope with their respective houses of bondage is reiterated here. Their conversation soon features topics such as Moses of Egypt where the recurring theme of the "rejected race" (*U* 687) repeats the Moses-Parnell parallel of the "Aeolus" episode and the common points of the races' "dispersal, persecution, survival and revival" (*U* 688) are discussed. Joyce's message is not likely to
be misunderstood: these superficial parallels are part of the rhetorical equipment of the nationalists and cannot salvage Ireland from the present position she is in. Finally, we have in “Penelope,” Molly’s irritation over Bloom’s interest in Arthur Griffith’s Sinn Fein movement (U 748) about which she does not understand anything. The mere hint of such evidence goes to prove the historical reality contained in the novel, and it is surprising that Deane ignores this evidence and proposes that the last six sections are dominated by language, and so do not carry forward the theme or plot of the earlier twelve. As we have just seen, Joyce’s use of innovative techniques in these final sections does not preclude the abolition of content in any way.

Deane’s next point is that though Joyce repudiates nationalism in a more decided way than Yeats, he is equally romantic in his aspirations for the future of his country. Deane, however, does not realize that it is Joyce’s realistic apprehension of the historical reality around him that makes him parody the sentimental outpourings of the young, idealistic Yeats. For instance, Yeats’ commitment to reinstate Ireland to her former dignity (Watson, II LR 90), and reestablishing her “Celtic ethos” (Watson, II LR 94) is well known. His commitment to lost causes is clearly expressed in the following lines: “It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the spiritual history of the world has been the history of conquered races. Those learned in the traditions of many lands, understand that it is almost always some defeated or perhaps dwindling tribe hidden among the hills or in the forests, that is most famous for the understanding of charms and the reading of dreams, and the seeing of visions. And has not our Christianity come to us from defeated and captive Judea” (qtd. in Watson, II LR 90-91)? It is exactly this romantic sentiment that Joyce parodies in a headline entitled: “LOST CAUSES / NOBLE MARQUESS
MENTIONED" (U 133) in “Aeolus.” According to the professor, the Irish, loyal only to lost causes know only to serve the successful (the English) and he cites his own example as one who speaks the English tongue--the language of the conqueror. This is the ground reality that Joyce takes into account. Unlike Yeats, who believed that Ireland owed its “spiritual superiority” to the “romantic phenomenon” of the Irish peasantry (Watson, HILR 98), Joyce hated the latter and their rural ways and did not think they contributed anything to Ireland except gross poverty. He does not glorify them in Ulysses--he parodies Yeats’ and the others’ glorification of the same as we have just seen in “Eumaeus” (A more detailed discussion of this point is offered in the following section of this chapter.).

Deane claims that Joyce creates the “spiritual reality” of Ireland but does not solve the paradox of how can Joyce do so after allegedly rejecting the historical reality which is the starting premise? For Joyce was realistic enough to realize that he would have to build the foundation on every “demeaning circumstance” that Irish history was marred with. Only then would any purgation result, so to speak, and the “spiritual reality,” if any, would be created. That is why he refuses service to Church, Nation, and State but confronts these opposing forces that prevent the birth of this “spiritual reality.” Joyce had no false notions about the country’s former glory, and parodies the same through his treatment of the ordinary, the trivial. Joyce, the artist’s, service to Art is, in actuality, a realistic apprehension of the possibilities available to him under the circumstances. It clearly seems to have escaped Deane’s notice that the totality of a culture can be embodied only by incorporating historical reality including the “brute fact[s].” In any case, one is not convinced that Joyce was interested in creating spiritual
reality which, when given the circumstances in Ireland as he depicts them, could never hope to be. On the other hand, one of the ways in which Joyce addresses this is to expose the myths surrounding the creation of this spiritual reality, particularly the myth of nationalism. Contrary to Deane's allegation, history does not merely supply the imagery—it supplies the very stuff its myths are made up of. Moreover, even if history in *Ulysses* is made of the "material of consciousness," (of Stephen and Bloom) what exactly is this "material" made up of? Isn't it made up of the consciousness of history and historical facts which they are concerned with in their thoughts and their conversation, as we have just the seen in the earlier examples?

We shall briefly examine some examples from "Cyclops" to see how the admixture of the mythic structure and Irish history, the ambience of fantasy and parody are steeped in reality and its criticism for one who can read Joyce. Joyce shows the blatant misuse of historical facts by these nationalists and the episode is, besides being many other things, an open critique of the nationalist enterprise. The caricature of the citizen makes it obvious that the target of Joyce's scathing attack is the Irish Nationalist and Nationalism. Joyce's citizen is not only a mocking echo of the citizen of the French Revolution but all that he represents is a grotesque parody of the revolutionary ideals espoused by the Revolution. Joyce exposes the bogus ideals of the nationalist ideology as represented by the citizen with the strong streak of anti-secularism and anti-semitism in his character. To belittle his overpowering fanaticism and fundamentalism, Joyce introduces an interlude where he is presented in over-blown, magnified proportions—a "figure seated on a large boulder at the foot of a round tower . . . broadshouldered deepchested stronglimbed . . ." (*U* 296). The element of fantasy is further heightened by
the images of Irish and other motley heroes and heroines of yesteryears whose engravings decorate the seastones dangling from his girdle. Joyce makes satiric mention of "The Man that Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo," "The Woman Who Didn't" "the Bold Soldier Boy" (U 297) who also make up this 'elite' company. The crueness of the entire nationalist enterprise is brought home through the representation of the citizen's dog, the "savage animal of the canine tribe" (U 297) who, by symbolizing the brute force of nationalism, provides a fitting appendix to the primitive setting. Joycean irony reaches its acme when we realize that it is this breed of nationalists which is calling for a "new Ireland" (U 305).

Later in the episode, the citizen launches on a diatribe against strangers (U 324), and his accusing finger points clearly at Bloom the Jew, whom he targets increasingly for individual attack. But Joyce does not allow him to get away with it. He reveals the ironic fact that Bloom the "stranger" is supposed to have contributed ideas to Griffith for the Sinn Fein, (U 335) the premier political outfit of the Irish revolutionaries fighting for independence from the British. But as the citizen can only express hatred for Bloom and others of his ilk, Joyce's reply is another interpolation of fantasy and myth, where the citizen's handkerchief metamorphosizes into an "intricately embroidered ancient Irish facecloth" (U 331), with scenes of the legendary beauty of Ireland inscribed on it. Ireland prides herself on her lovely lakes, hills and castles, but the juxtaposition of breweries, banks and jails alongside, hammers home Joyce's disgust with the hypocrisy of a nation which takes empty pride in a glorious past that never really existed, while practising a bigoted parochialism that endeavours to keep out "strangers" who were perceived as a threat to her pristine state. Ironically, it is a stranger who has to teach
them the essential lesson of love as the answer to hatred (U 333). Even that lesson goes in vain when in another sharp delivery of a bitter truth Joyce presents a vignette showing the entire clergy comprising “saints” like Martin Cunningham, Alf Bergan, Bloom, Molly and others descending en masse on Barney Kiernan’s, the pub, to be blessed by members of the Catholic establishment (U 339-40). It is obvious that both the superficial expressions of religiosity, and the rampant alcoholism of the nation are being attacked by Joyce; the implication is that in the long run all nationalist fervour reaches a dead end, literally and figuratively.

Deane also asserts that the interconnections between the plots in Joyce’s writings are merely verbal, and that the language used in the novel is constitutive of reality. So *Ulysses* is a composition in language which is self-referential. If the aim of language is self-referentiality, how can language communicate? And if communication is not the aim of language, Deane’s own attempts at communication are difficult to understand. For though Joyce respects the relationship between himself and the reader, the same certainly cannot be said of Deane, who establishes no ‘meaningful’ relationship with his readers, what with his communicative skills misfiring all round. The plot in *Ulysses* revolves around Irish history and the reader derives no meaning from *Ulysses* if he is not equipped with any knowledge about the latter.

Deane complicates the issue further with his contradictory positions on Joyce’s relationship with history. He acknowledges Joyce’s interest in Ireland’s history but does not credit the artist with the visionary experience which incorporates the historical reality of his times in his work. But how could Joyce be involved in life and uninvolved in art? Deane himself admits that in spite of rebelling against Church, Nation and State, Joyce’s
irony in the novel indicates that these forces inhabited his imagination. If Deane acknowledges the presence of Joycean irony he must perforce acknowledge the historical forces which are the targets of his irony. In that case, the pressure emanating from the historical forces of Church, Nation and State would have to be present in the novel as historical facts informing plot and theme, and not as part of a mere structuring principle or the material of consciousness. This clearly contradicts Deane's own view that *Ulysses* is dominated mainly by language, for Joyce's irony is present in the last six sections, automatically indicating the presence of these forces in the novel. Therefore, it follows that these historical forces operate in concrete terms in the novel, and are opposed by Joyce in equally concrete terms in his art through irony. Deane seems too confused to have realized this.

It is also ironical, though not surprising, that Deane should find the psychological world of transient patterns more real and interesting than the concrete world of historical facts which Joyce actually presents. It is difficult to understand how Deane can ignore the concreteness of historical 'facts' and propose in their stead, a world of "transient patterns" as psychologically true and historically valid simply because it existed in the consciousness of the two protagonists. This psychologized version of history and the "universe of associative patterns" is valorized by him over and above the world of historical facts which, according to Deane, is less real, less universal and less interesting in comparison. Deane sidelines the factual world of history, equates it with myth and legend, and finally supplants it with the transient associative patterns comprising the consciousnesses of Bloom and Stephen. This structure of thought patterns is presumably a symbol of some mystical universal pattern or model (an expression of the collective
unconscious perhaps?) which, as Deane would have it, is both autonomous, and completely devoid of any relationship with Reality. So where is the fidelity to Irish history in this 'historical' relationship?

One wonders if it is Deane, and not Joyce, who finds reality in *Ulysses* too unbearable to digest and takes refuge in such evasive tactics of unrestrained mysticism. *Ulysses* is not a dream or a fantasy that has no relation with reality. Rather, the psychological world of its characters is founded on external reality making the former interesting, real and universal because it forms more enduring patterns through its correspondence with Irish history. If Deane had got his Joyce right he would have remembered that Joyce’s method is not kaleidoscopic representation; Joyce is more interested in improving the reflection through the “cracked lookingglass.” Deane, of course, is more interested in the superimposition of ideas backed by his own determinism.

And so we have Deane the metahistorian (who has no interest in history), in a role reminiscent of Frye, offering us history through the “‘unofficial’” versions that occupy the thoughts of these two characters in the novel. But the characterization of Stephen and Bloom is fundamentally rooted in the historical forces of their time, and Joyce actively consolidates the relationships thus established between them and the political, social and religious institutions of the country. We see it in the manner in which both Bloom and Stephen actively oppose the authoritarianism of the Catholic Church and its posturing and reject the nationalist propaganda as a hoax. Stephen’s refusal to kneel down and pray is symbolic of his refusal as an artist to bow down to the autocracy of the Church—a position he maintains throughout the novel. Bloom enters the All Hallows Church in
“Lotus Eaters” only to pass sarcastic innuendoes at the institution and its practices like communion and its hypnotic effect on its blind followers. And both Bloom and Stephen are avidly anti-nationalist in their conviction that the only answer to the puritanical patriotism of the nationalists is non-violence and love. Stephen readily lends money to his friends despite his own impoverished state and Bloom’s numerous gestures of practical help and kindness clearly show that such ordinary, concrete acts have more significance than the empty talk of the nationalists. To relegate all this evidence to the consciousnesses of Stephen and Bloom is hardly correct on Deane’s part.

Deane admits the presence of historical parallels in the novel, as well as Joyce’s interest in the socio-political undercurrents of his time but claims that the knowledge of historical facts is useful only in a “limited and formal degree” and “never in a substantial, historical sense.” A first-hand analysis of this historical parallel in the novel will show us how far Deane is right.

The Moses-Parnell parallel in the “Aeolus” episode is an illustration of Joycean irony which targets Irish rhetoric in a tongue-in-cheek manner. The pressgang, in its myopic fashion, makes no effort at self-criticism and, instead, is ready to applaud any exhibition of high-sounding oratory which exalts heroes of the past, like John F. Taylor’s deliberately sentimental rendition of the story of Moses and his heroic refusal to give in to the Egyptian priest’s blandishments. The comparison between the Irish-British relationship with that of the Jewish-Egyptian one, and the common story of their oppression and inferiority before their foreign masters, adds an ironically mythic dimension to the story. It is no coincidence that the speech of “courteous haughtiness” is made at the “college historical society” (U 141), where the implicit reference to Parnell-
as-Moses who is ultimately betrayed by his own men and is unable to see a free Ireland in his lifetime, serves as an expression of Joyce's condemnation of the self-delusion of Irish politics. By showing forth the mismatch of Israel's glorious vision and Ireland's unbecoming one, Joyce ruthlessly deflates the flashy nationalist rhetoric of the Irish press, exposing its falsehood. The comparison with the uncompromising Moses notwithstanding, the attitude of the pressgang reveals Joyce's conviction that in the face of British arrogance, Ireland had degenerated into passive servility where present-day nationalism only pretended to emulate the rebellion of Parnell and other stalwarts.

Joyce's sharp critique takes the form of the Parable of the Plums narrated by Stephen. It is about two crones who attempt to view the city from Nelson's Pillar. The connotation of the "prophetic vision" (U 144) of the Promised Land connects all these 'eloquent' bouts of oratory including Stephen's. His protagonists are two midwives who finally climb the Pillar to see the 'Promised Land' comprising the roofs of various churches, but being too tired to identify anything they end up looking at the statue of Nelson the "onehanded adulterer" (U 148)—a symbol of British imperialism. This ribald joke is Stephen's "prophetic vision" for his country, and is duly appreciated by the so-called guardians of the press. The applause accorded to Stephen's cheap talk is representative of the value system of the nationalists who have played their own petty games for the nationalist cause in the arena of Irish politics. Joyce could never get over the fact that Ireland had ultimately betrayed herself into British hands. While this example clearly shows how Joyce incorporates the external referent of Irish history into the novel, Deane's comments give the impression that the analogy was only a formal principle which formed a part of the entire fictional construct. While Deane overlooks
such examples found in the text, it is significant that he himself supplies no evidence to prove his point.

Joyce’s work, he says, is a denial of the presence of any external referent which, though forming the core of all realistic fiction is, in his novel, “only one ingredient among others” (181). But Deane does not realize that in Joyce, the “patterns” never make any sense except in the most “substantial” and concrete sense. Realism is the core of Joyce’s fiction, not a mere “ingredient,” so much so that the livingness of history cannot be reduced to mere archetype in his novel. Also, the archetypes in *Ulysses* have an existential life of their own, and their roots in the events of Irish history cannot be glossed over. Joyce decodes the rhetoric of the nationalists as part of his strategy to expose them. He does not subscribe to their brand of nationalism, but uses Irish history to counter their evasion of it. Deane probably means that Joyce was attempting to decode their rhetoric as fiction and prove that it was merely a formal construction of words of which history was only a formal component. Deane does not attribute any existential or empirical quality to the archetype when he talks of history itself becoming an archetype, i.e., part of the larger structure of fiction.

To expose the dichotomy between the established structures of institutions like Church and Nation and their political rhetoric, Joyce decided, says Deane, to explore language which itself being a “structuring activity” was, however, “both arbitrary and systematic.” But how can a structuring activity which is itself both arbitrary and systematic set out to express the dichotomy in anything when it itself suffers from the same? Deane has obviously overlooked this point. Moreover, in order to expose the politics underlying the rhetoric, Joyce projects his vision based on the “demeaning” facts
of Irish history and shows how far off the mark it was. Deane claims that Joyce recreates a fictive model of Ireland based on language; instead, Joyce recreates the real world of Ireland in fictional terms. Deane distorts the imaginative faculty itself when he asserts that it recreates Ireland on the basis of language and not on the basis of the concrete reality of history. But Joyce confronts the historical facts, thereby exposing the contradiction between reality and its projection by vested interests. By thus revealing the fictive nature of the Irish political imagination, Joyce does not finally reject Irish nationalism, says Deane. Instead, by incorporating Ireland into his work as a model of the fictive nature of Irish politics (and not of Irish history) Joyce, according to Deane, exposed the fictive nature of the Irish political rhetoric by analyzing the nature of language itself. Deane continues with his reasoning saying that Ireland is thus ‘historically’ ‘incorporated . . . within Joyce’s work as a model of the world and, more importantly, as a model of the fictive.’ One seriously wonders if Deane is presenting a mocking caricature of Joyce’s contribution to the cause of Irish nationalism without realizing it. Does this mean that Deane is positing Joyce as the Nationalist par excellence? If so, Deane should know that Joyce is anything but that. He categorically rejects the Irish expressions of nationalism and uses the weapon of language to represent Ireland in his work as a model of the concrete and real world outside.

In conclusion it may be said that Deane’s views are vague and arbitrary, and he sees Joyce through the spectacles of Derrida. He suggests that Joyce the artist rebelled against Irish politics by using his artistic freedom as a licence to reveal its fraudulent nature; he has obviously missed the fact that Joyce succeeds in doing so only by exposing the historical facts underlying Irish politics. For Joyce, the nightmarish history of his
country yielded a politics of betrayal he was only too well aware of, and he did not, therefore, feel compelled to helplessly accept any aesthetic comfort from it through his writing. But Deane seems to harbour the impression that Joyce could not bear the unpalatable and brutal realities of Irish politics and so took refuge in art. If this was so, how is it that *Ulysses* is nothing but an honest record of these unpalatable realities? For it is common knowledge that Joyce did not keep in tune with his contemporaries like Yeats who had a romantic tendency to mythologize Ireland and Irish history. If, as Deane says, Yeats called for “decontamination,” (170) Joyce believed in confrontation with the contaminated. While it is a commonplace that Joyce refused service to the three institutions, it is strange that Deane should expect Joyce to create the “soul” of Ireland without confronting the very institutions which had corrupted this soul. But all the textual evidence in support of this is ignored by Deane.

Deane’s analysis, therefore, contains many contradictory strands of argument which need to be examined. He seems to be saying that Joyce used the politics of aesthetics to counteract the politics of Irish history. The most obvious criticism that one can level against Deane is his confused oscillation between his acknowledgement of the reality of Irish history and its presence in the novel, and his rejection of the same despite the presence of obvious textual evidence. Deane makes a few claims that are not supported by the arguments he puts forth regarding history and language. For it is supremely ironical that despite all the evidence that he himself unearths from the novel, he dismisses Joyce’s preoccupation with the historical referent and its fidelity of representation in the novel. Instead, he substitutes it with his own ‘interpretation’ of what Joyce was actually trying to do. Deane summarily rejects objective historical facts as
having any value whatsoever and reduces even the historical dimension of plot and theme to pattern or formal order. Strangely enough, this dehistoricized version of reality is applauded as Joyce's special contribution to the cause of Irish nationalism. But the question is: Is reality ever dehistoricized in Joyce?

Finally, the only legitimate history acknowledged by Deane is nothing but the solipsistic tale of two consciousnesses. In Deane's formalistic interpretation of history, the subjective world of consciousness which represents authentic history, exemplifies how history is "magnified or reduced to archetype." This archetypal pattern contains no reference whatsoever to Irish reality except as a formal, ordering element. And that is the final straw in a confused essay replete with contradictions. For if Joyce "did not repudiate nationalism" as Deane claims, he definitely understood his rejection better and proves it so in the novel through his treatment of specific historical facts. Ironically enough, Deane merely highlights the ditches and loopholes in his own argument by his careless treatment of Joyce's concern with the voice of history.

In many ways, Watson represents the other side of the coin, and though he repeats some of Deane's ideas, he takes into account the concept of utopia which we find missing in Deane's analysis and which is important for our analysis of a critical application of Frye's theory to the novel. In his well-argued essay, Watson, like Deane, makes the assertion that Joyce's intention in *Ulysses* was to demystify the romantic notion of a glorious Irish past and future (utopia) by denouncing the vulgar politics that was being practised in the name of nationalism. He thus sees the politics of *Ulysses* as a "characteristically massive attempt to deconstruct the mythology of Romantic Ireland" ("POU" 41). Joyce is represented as wishing to demolish the utopian visions of the Irish
nationalists. But Watson makes his position clear right in the beginning when he outlines his agenda by introducing his analysis as one which would "grapple more fully with literature seen as a social and historical product" ("POU" 40). In contrast to Deane, Watson categorically claims that the historical facts of the period between 1914 and 1922 (the time taken by Joyce to write Ulysses) were firmly rooted in Joyce's consciousness who, he argues, looks back at 1904 with the saturated knowledge of the later historical events like the Sinn Fein triumph, the Black and Tan atrocities and so on (41).

Watson's argument is that Joyce countered the "exclusivist notion of Irishness" ("POU" 43) and the "notion of racial stereotypes and racial purity" ("POU" 45), chiefly through his characterization of Bloom who is deliberately introduced to us as a Jew. So it is through Joyce's ironical characterization of Bloom that we get an idea of both the historical present in Ireland, as well as the Ireland her rabid nationalists hoped she would become. But unlike Deane, Watson does not think that Joyce proposes a vague, universal mythic structure in the novel. Based on all the textual and non-textual evidence he has gathered about Joyce's interest in the historical events of his country (including the fall of Parnell), he suggests a much more "concrete universal" as it were. He says, "Bloom is the chief means by which Joyce measures the inadequacies of the chosen Hibernian people" ("POU" 45), and leaves it to us to infer the Jew's privileged status as the eternal wanderer, a representative of a truly international people who symbolize so adequately their victimization on the basis of racial difference.

Joyce's suggestion of an ideal order or utopia is, therefore, asserts Watson, an indication that he is willing to face the historical realities confronting him. Unlike Deane,
Watson does not psychologize the historical material found in *Ulysses* as something peculiar to the consciousness of Stephen and Bloom. Rather, he understands Irish history as “a dismal record of oppression, [and] abortive rebellions” and treachery (“POU” 51), to counteract which, the Irish nationalists revived the myths and legends of the past. But Joyce, says Watson, finds this anti-realistic and instead, offers a “powerful critique of this unholy alliance of romanticism, nationalism, and aestheticized history” (“POU” 52).

Through his acknowledgement of the “felt history” of the country, Joyce debunks the mystique of nationalism, exposing its uglier side of parochialism, hypocrisy and falsification of history. This point is brought home very powerfully in “Cyclops,” where the citizen recreates an artificial picture of medieval Ireland in a vain attempt to create a nostalgia for a glorious past, which the rhetoric of the nationalists tried to establish as part of their political and psychological manoeuvering of the masses. While Deane merely refers to this as Joyce’s exposure of the fictive nature of politics, Watson’s analysis shows Joyce confronting and grappling with a sense of history which was very real to him.

Like Deane, Watson also identifies the open-endedness of Joyce’s linguistic style, his “distaste for narrative closures” (“POU” 54) as well as, his rejection of teleological narrative. But for him, all this evidence only points to the fact that Joyce had no illusions regarding a utopian future for Ireland. Thus, unlike Deane, Watson does not propose any mythic structure or universal pattern as an easy academic solution to the Irish problem. The fact is that there is no solution and it is for that very reason that Joyce parodies the very institution of martyrdom, and treats the carryover “cult of the blood-sacrifice” with mockery (“POU” 46). Watson quotes instances of Joyce’s ridicule of the nationalist
bombast in “Sirens,” where the instance of Bloom passing wind, (U 291) is seen as a fitting comment on a fervent nationalistic enterprise which had romanticized and mythicized Emmet (and other heroes) without any real understanding of the value of the heroism and sacrifice displayed by these genuinely patriotic heroes. Similarly, we have another example in “Cyclops,” in the sardonic picture of the execution of the patriot where Joyce’s reproduction of Rumbold, the hero martyr’s death satirizes the sentimental nature of nationalist effusions which in reality are merely empty talk (U 308). The highly melodramatic version of the patriot’s death (which produces no tears on our part) is the Joycean method of lashing out at the exhibitionary tactics of the nationalist forces of his time, and their patronizing attitude which they tried to impose on Ireland. These are all instances of Joyce’s intense emotional and intellectual participation in the events of his time, the textual evidence for which is clearly available to us.

Obviously Joyce cannot suggest, even remotely, the notion of utopia for his country. If he did, he would be no different from the nationalist leaders he was trying to denounce. We tend to agree with Watson when he says that Joyce’s contribution to the cause of historical development of his country was the presentation of the situation not in glorified and mystifying terms but just as it was, so that the Irish question could be seen in the context of world history and Irish nationalism as part of the question and not its answer. In artistic terms, Joyce was attempting to polish up and repair the “cracked lookingglass of a servant” (U 16).

This brief survey of the two main trends in the criticism of Ulysses reveals that Frye’s theoretical concepts have found a ready and uncritical acceptance among critics like Goldberg, Almeida and Deane, whose practice of literary criticism retains the same
adherence to illogically derived formulations. Like Deane’s analysis, most of the critical ‘analyses’ we have looked at so far, are merely slight variations on Eliot’s argument that the mythical method was Joyce’s chief contribution to the literary world. The resulting emphasis on form is neatly dovetailed into Frye’s concept of myth as a structural principle, which his sympathizers decided to subject *Ulysses* to.

Critics like Watson, however, provide an enlightening critique of the same movement from within the camp. For that matter, there is a significant body of criticism of *Ulysses* which has as its cornerstone the realistic content of the novel. These critics believe that Joyce’s active relationship with life around as it was lived was the dynamic shaping spirit behind the novel. By proposing that the reality of Irish history plays a vital part in the composition of the novel, these analyses avoid carrying the trademark of Frye’s thinking. Instead, they offer an alternative to Frygian constructions, reconstructions, or deconstructions. A brief sampling of this criticism forms a backdrop to my own analysis of the novel which hopes to identify and highlight the textual evidence for the presence of Irish history in the novel which has been overlooked by the critics so far.

* * *

The conviction underlying much of this criticism is the “fundamental” realization, backed by textual evidence, that “Joyce was a native of Dublin, Ireland” (Garvin 3). This critical point is backed with the minute details which Joyce has incorporated in the novel, and even includes the newspaper of 16 June 1904 in “Eumaeus,” whose back copy when traced, did in fact contain the article on artificial light and the growth of plants mentioned in the novel (Kenner 218). The novel is also interlaced with the larger, more well-known
details of Irish history like details of the famine of 1845-47, accounts of the troubled personal history of Parnell, the conflict-ridden public history of political outfits like the Sinn Fein, the evils of nationalism as a policy, and the imperialism of Church and State. Little wonder that critics like Litz claim that the book is supersaturated with details of the "felt life" of Ireland (Litz 227)--a fact that conflicts with those readings of the novel that insist on details of form, style and technique at the expense of its realistic content. On the whole, this coterie of critics agrees that though Dublin occupies a real place and time, the world of *Ulysses* is still a product of the imagination and therefore, fictive (Goldberg, *Joyce* 71). But it is only by acknowledging the extra-textual reality of Irish history, and its vital presence in the novel do they confer an authenticity to the enterprise of the criticism of *Ulysses*.

Those who recognize the mythic element (and who is there who does not?) in the novel agree that the "employment of myth becomes a way of affirming the dense specificity of Dublin, the autonomy of this naturalistic world" (Watson, *III.R* 240). Besides this, and despite its universal element, Dublin does represent a particular historical context within the much larger historical context of the world. The quest-myth, then, as the supposedly structuring principle of all literature is embodied most obviously in Stephen’s quest in the novel. By now, using both the Frazerian and Jungian concepts from anthropology and analytical psychology respectively, it has become a commonplace to see Stephen as a quester in search of creativity (which we have already analyzed). Our application of these concepts has enabled us to see the quest-myth affirming the "dense specificity" of the city. But does Frye’s analysis do the same? Dismissing Jung’s theory of the collective unconscious as an "unnecessary hypothesis" (*AC’* 112) Frye claims that
the archetypes are important "however they got there" (AC 109). After liberally using the superstructure of Jungian archetypes, it is opportunistic of him to dismiss the Jungian substructure of the collective unconscious. Such a procedure invites the charge of eclecticism characteristic of a gifted amateur. But the others fare worse and see Stephen's "quest" in such general terms that they lose its specificity here, and in Dublin.

While talking in terms of his ascent or descent into symbolic worlds within the birth-death-rebirth scheme of the quest, neither Frye nor the other critics see the quest as a change that has taken place in Joyce from the vantage point of which he looks at Stephen, the younger Joyce. Stephen's conflicts, as they are reproduced in the book are real, because they were real for Joyce once. His situation was a felt and lived reality for him, and inscribed as it was in his memory, is transmuted into art. But it is imperative that we realize the fact that despite its fictionalizing, the process had occurred in Joyce, not in Stephen, the younger self. As this point has been made in the earlier chapters, suffice it to say here that criticism of the novel must negotiate this fact of the mature self confronting the immature.

The other element in the quest-myth is the reader's quest for meaning. What Frye initiated tentatively has become a hallmark of the reader-response criticism, where the onus is on the reader to perceive the structure and thereby, the meaning of the literary work. Frye's implication seems to be that if the reader grasped the mechanics involved in the systemic framework of the book, he would grasp the meaning. In other words, one is given to understand that if the reader grasps the mythic "framework," his "structural" analysis would reveal the "impersonal" (mythic) structure of the novel. However, since the structural analysis itself is based on a certain notion of the structure of myth, the
reader would find what he has begun with and what he has been directed to find. This is a circular procedure of the same value as a game of patience.

Thus it was enough that the ‘Frygian’ reader knew that *Ulysses* as a prose epic represented the genre of parody, and made use of all the conventions within it such as metaphors, similes, and allusions, including irony. If this were analyzed within the context of the individual writer’s canon as well as the context of the general literary tradition to which it belonged, then the final meaning of the work in terms of its literary shape would become clear. The ‘ideal’, i.e., Frygian reader might bring to his reading his own mind-set, but the final outcome of his structural analysis would be the recognition of the impersonal structure which predominates this verbal universe. Though Frye has apparently nothing to do with the ‘author is dead’ movement, the current trend in reader response criticism, where meaning is supposedly derived from the permutations and combinations of phonemes as the basic units of language, would seem to have derived its inspiration from him.

Frye makes no reference to the historical details that fill the book, lend it significance and inform the so-called basic quest-myth or pattern. The reader’s quest, however, is incomplete if he does not engage with these extra-textual realities in the text. We may recall that various critics have acknowledged this fact, and Luckas’ criticism notwithstanding, much has been written on the humanistic, empiricist and historical dimensions of the novel. The reader’s quest must, therefore, include a quest into those details of Irish history which are woven into the story and form the realistic background of the novel. So he cannot be content with discovering archetypes “however they got there,” but should realize that the so-called autonomous text depends on the external
factors of reality that go into its making. This involves the reader’s journey to origins ‘however far they may be,’ so that his quest (self-chosen as it is) may bear fruit.

The notion of utopia in relation to *Ulysses* has been widely discussed in literary circles, chiefly because it is explicitly illustrated in the novel through the mock characterization of Bloom as the utopian reformer with numerous tall plans under his “high grade ha” (*U* 56). However, if we approach this concept from the point of a detailed understanding of Frye’s theory, it is not so simple. Frye’s myth of the social contract presents the social aspect in two ways—it presents society as it is, as well as the way it ought to be or is generally envisioned to be. But most critics (except Watson to some extent) do not take into account the former aspect, with the result that many of them have much to say about the utopian element in Bloom’s social vision without first relating it to the realities in the present day society of Dublin. Most criticism of *Ulysses* concentrates on the obvious reference in “Circe” where Bloom is projected as the founder of the new Bloomusalem and in which capacity his “social schemes throughout the day are delivered in utopian fantasy in his answer to the political question of Home Rule” (Manganiello 110). As the “world’s greatest reformer” (*U* 481), he continues to meditate on his plans in “Ithaca” as well, imagining himself to be initiating a new socialist regime of benefit to all unlike the capitalist tyranny (*U* 716). His vision is analyzed as the “vision of a classless, humanitarian, pacifist and co-operative society, devoid of all forms of hatred and sentimentality” (Manganiello 113) and most criticism stops at that.

*Ulysses* contains other references to utopia as well. Joyce continues to mock the nationalist hysteria of founding an ideal Ireland through the ‘return to Erin’ program. In “Cyclops,” the citizen bemoans the loss of the Irish pearls to the English swine.
England's monopoly had been total and brutal in every sphere and Marx says that Ireland's "wheat and meat were sent to England" and through the "repeal of the Corn Laws Ireland lost her monopoly position on the English market" (318). An impoverished land would naturally look back nostalgically on an era of peace and prosperity and want to recapture the same vision for the future. But Joyce does not nurture such illusions. The citizen's enthusiasm for the past is his own and not shared by Joyce in any manner. The utopian vision of the past, based as it is on falsehood, cannot hold any guarantee for the future. And so Joyce continues to be cynical of visions of a remote and distant future, when the present realities cry out another story. For the supreme irony is that the citizen urging a revolution a la French style fails to be tolerant of Bloom the Jew (I/343).

So what ideal society could Ireland hope to achieve, burdened as it was with such parochial ideas of national purity?

Given the complicated reality that was his starting point, Joyce's vision of utopia is, therefore, not defined by a mere characterization of Bloom the socialist and the citizen's nostalgic speeches. To begin with, let us apply Frye's theory of social contract to this reality in contrast to Watson, who does not explicitly do so. While there are many strands in the history of Ireland which have found their way into the novel, we shall select the theme of the Great Irish Famine of 1845-47--"the first major social catastrophe to be plotted and recorded" (Dodd 100)--for our purpose. Irish history contains a record of this calamity which was popularly described as "an inevitable denouement of Irish history, a rural tragedy that was, historically, an end and a beginning" (Fallis 16). The famine was a watershed event in the history of Ireland, and contained within it the seed of the death of any utopian dream the Irishman may have cherished. As a result of the
failure of the potato crop, the famine claimed many lives, and the situation becoming aggravated when, "Typhus, dysentery, and scurvy killed thousands of the hungry" (Fallis 15).

In their study of the Irish question and the problems of the Irish people, Marx and Engels have made a significant observation with reference to this. Their study has clearly revealed that there was "an absolute increase in the number of lame, blind, deaf and dumb, and insane" in Irish society after the famine since the exhaustion of the soil resulted in the physical deterioration of the people (Marx and Engels 318). None of the usual studies of Irish history offer this information which is crucial to our understanding of the novel, specially in view of the fact that they do find a place in the book. In "Sirens," we see the young blind stripling (who has already been helped by Bloom to cross the road in the earlier part of the book) mentioned along with the deaf waiter, Pat who serves in Ormond Hall. Their juxtaposition is conscious and artistically handled in the novel through the sound produced by the blind boy’s cane--“tap” which in reverse reads as “Pat.” Further, Joyce emphasizes this when he refers to Pat’s lip-reading--“He seehears lipspeech” (U 283), the seeing a reference to Pat who is not blind, and the hearing a reference to the blind stripling who can hear. It is noteworthy that Joyce did not ignore these ground realities of his times. These two Irishmen provide the background against which one can assess the average Irishman’s “vision” and “eloquence.” The physically sighted are blind. The “eloquent” only yap--the silence of the dumb is more eloquent than the rhetoric of the patriots.

It is this idea of the unnatural depletion of humans on account of the famine which is used in the concept of Joyce’s utopia. As the famine and the resulting
emigration had made Ireland lose the majority of its population,—and Marx says, "Over 1,100,000 people have been replaced by 9,600,000 sheep" (318)—we shall see what Joyce imagines will be the future of Ireland. Most criticism of the novel neglects to take into consideration what I would call Joyce’s satiric version of the utopian future of his country against the background of the famine, "the single greatest social disaster of nineteenth-century Europe" when "a million people perished while another 1.2 million emigrated." (Dodd 100).

Right in the very first episode Mulligan shares with Stephen his idea that they could collectively hellenise the island (U/7). Stephen knows that Mulligan is not thinking of the cultural or spiritual crisis in the country. Instead, Mulligan’s plans soon get crystallized in Stephen’s thoughts: "To ourselves... new paganism... omphalos" (U/7). The plan is revealed in greater detail in the ‘vision’ that Mulligan elaborates in the “Oxen of the Sun" episode where he regales his audience of medics, Stephen and Bloom with lurid details of his decadent imagination (U/402). Mulligan’s aim of hellenising the island constitutes a “national” project called Omphalos (U/402) where he is Fertiliser and Incubator, initiating a revolution in sexual reproduction on a mass scale. According to Mulligan, the aim of this personal ‘altruistic’ venture was to embark on the “noblest task” (U/402) of procreation through the egalitarian approach of providing sexual pleasure to the “poorest kitchen wench” as well as to the “opulent lady of fashion” (U/402). This was Mulligan, the doctor’s prescription for ‘solving’ the population problem of a country whose sexual mores were frustrating, controlled as they were by the Church. The portrayal of Mulligan’s devious plans may be seen as yet another example of Joyce’s exposition of the hypocritical base of the institution of nationalism.
Ulysses have mentioned the role played by Mulligan's grandiose utopian project of creating a new society as a cure for the population crisis in the present social set-up caused by the post-famine dearth of the Irish people. For Joyce achieves something even more significant through his description of the fertility farm; it serves to heighten not only the problems of a depopulated Ireland but also the depraved morals of a country brought to such a pass by the repressive regime of the Church. In effect, what Joyce evokes through this tour de force is the concept of "dystopia" which Frye calls the "nightmare of the future" (MC 42-43) rather than utopia. For we experience nothing but revulsion when Mulligan makes known his sinister plans. This, I would like to suggest, is a direct counterattack on Bloom's mystical, utopian daydreams regarding the future which, so far, for most critics, was the only notable instance of Joyce's direct use of the concept of utopia.

Our 'quest' has revealed that Frye's analysis offers us a well-tabulated scheme with its phases, modes, diagrams and cycles that attempt to "account for everything" (Litz 229). As it perceives Ulysses as a closed system of words, it merely emphasizes Joyce's conventionalized imagination, stereotypes him, and categorizes even his originality in order to make the novel 'fit' Frye's overall pattern for literature. This is both unfair to the novel, as well as to the artist's vision. Frye's attempt to make "scientific" a lived experience is erroneous to begin with. For the breadth of Joyce's vision, his imaginative depth, as well as his intelligent use of traditional material cannot be circumscribed within the parameters of Frye's so-called systematic framework. Joyce wanted to fox not only the literary world, but the very critics (like Frye) who thought they
had got him (Ellmann, *JJ* 535, 716). It is a little difficult to imagine even Joyce writing according to a prescription that belonged to the future.

In conclusion, it must be stressed that Joyce is not, like Frye, a metacritic who sees patterns wherever he looked. Instead, he offers a critique of Dublin proper. No doubt, he believes in the notion of history being cyclic, but cyclicity and recurrence find a new meaning in his novel. For his work is an attempt to understand the ugly realities of the history of Ireland, and in this context he uses associations of themes, motifs and patterns which keep appearing throughout the narrative. But the special strength of the novel lies in the fact that the interconnecting patterns, when perceived spatially, touch new levels of meaning each time they appear in a new context in the novel. There is no monolithic structure that governs the story, controlling its meaning. *Ulysses* conforms to no model of Frye's--it remains a unique model of itself.

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Notes


3 See Hermione de Almeida for an interesting and lively discussion on this topic.

4 Denham quotes Frye to make the point that the hero in Jungian psychology is the individual libido and social fertility in Frazerian research. See Denham 125.

For a detailed explication of this idea, see Attridge and Ferrer 1-13.

See S.L. Goldberg's *Joyce, Daniel R. Schwarz, Reading Joyce's "Ulysses"* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 1987) and Litz for detailed summaries of this.

This point is clearly brought out by Attridge and Ferrer 1-13; Schwarz, as well as Litz. Attridge and Ferrer acknowledge the contributions of "transcendentalist, empiricist, and humanist" readings of Joyce (7) despite attempting a post-structuralist interpretation. Schwarz claims that though the novel is informed by a continuing dialectic between the humanistic and deconstructionist modes of reading it tends to emphasize the former more (4). Litz avoids either of the "pure" extremes and stresses the fact that both a linear and spatial reading of the novel is necessary (225). Karen Lawrence also makes a similar point in her book, *The Odyssey of Style in "Ulysses"* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982) representing the general critical opinion that the more narrative aspects of the earlier episodes soon give way to stylistic experimentation of technique which apparently alter the relatively more unified presentation in the first few episodes.


See Marx and Engels 317-19.