

# Freemasonry in *Ulysses*

Zurich Workshop 2001: Performative Joyce

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01. Joyce asked Frank Budgen in his letter dated Nov. 6, 1921 to send him “any little handbook of Brit. Freemasonry”(LI,177). Later Budgen informed Ulrich Schneider that he was not sure whether he sent such a book, but was inclined to think he did not (Schneider 311).
02. As Joyce said clearly in Frank Budgen’s book *James Joyce and the Making of “Ulysses” and Other Writings* (1934), his complete man in literature is Ulysses (Odysseus), because “Ulysses is son to Laertes, but he is father to Telemachus, husband to Penelope, lover to Calypso, companion in arms of Greek warriors around Troy and King of Ithaca” and Joyce saw him “from all sides, and therefore he is all-round in the sense of your sculptor’s figure. But he is a complete man as well—a good man. At any rate, that is what I intend that he shall be”(17-18).
- 03.
- 08.958. Nosey Flynn made swift passes in the air with juggling fingers. He  
08.959. winked.  
08.960. --*He's in the craft*, he said.  
08.961. --Do you tell me so? Davy Byrne said.  
08.962. --Very much so, Nosey Flynn said. *Ancient free and accepted order*. He's  
08.963. an excellent brother. Light, life and love, by God. *They give him a leg up*. I  
08.964. was told that by a - well, I won't say who.  
08.965. --Is that a fact?  
08.966. --O, it's a fine order, Nosey Flynn said. They stick to you when you're  
08.967. down. I know a fellow was trying to get into it. *But they're as close as damn*  
08.968. *it*. By God they did right to keep the women out of it.  
08.969. Davy Byrne smiledyawndnoded all in one:  
08.970. --iiiiichaaaaaach!  
08.971. --*There was one woman*, Nosey Flynn said, *hid herself in a clock to find*  
08.972. *out what they do be doing. But be damned but they smelt her out and swore*  
08.973. *her in on the spot a master mason. That was one of the saint Legers of*  
08.974. *Doneraile*. (Italics mine.)
04. Bloom watches Sir Frederick Falkiner, going into the Freemason Hall (headquarters) in 17-18 Molesworth Street (U 8.1151). Falkiner was the chief judicial officer of Dublin 1904(1831-1908), the notoriously anti-Semitic judge, who makes several appearances in the novel, most notably in the Circe episode where he stands in judgment of Bloom and sentences him to death (U 15.1158-80).
05. Bloom was almost arrested in 1893 or 1894 for attempting to sell tickets for “The Royal and Privileged Hungarian Lottery” and was apparently rescued by members of his Masonic Lodge:
- 1)
- 08.184: Windy night that was I went to fetch her there was that lodge meeting  
08.185: on about *those lottery tickets* after Goodwin's concert in the supperroom or  
08.186: oakroom of the Mansion house. He and I behind.
- 2)
- 12.770: Then he starts all confused mucking it up about mortgagor under the  
12.771: act like the lord chancellor giving it out on the bench and for the benefit of  
12.772: the wife and that a trust is created but on the other hand that Dignam owed  
12.773: Bridgeman the money and if now the wife or the widow contested the  
12.774: mortgagee's right till he near had the head of me addled with his mortgagor  
12.775: under the act. He was bloody safe he wasn't run in himself under the act  
12.776: that time as a rogue and vagabond only he had a friend in court. Selling  
12.777: bazaar tickets or what do you call it *royal Hungarian privileged lottery*.  
12.778: True as you're there. O, commend me to an israelite! *Royal and privileged*  
12.779: *Hungarian robbery*. (Italics mine.)

- 18.1224: Helys and Mr Cuffes and Drimmies either hes going to be run into prison  
 18.1225: over *his old lottery tickets* that was to be all our salvations or he goes and  
 18.1226: gives impudence well have him coming home with the sack soon out of the  
 18.1227: Freeman too like the rest on account of *those Sinner Fein or the freemasons*  
 (Italics mine.)

06.

15.449: BLOOM

- 15.450: (squire of dames, in dinner jacket with wateredsilk facings, *blue masonic*  
 15.451: *badge* in his buttonhole, black bow and mother-of-pearl studs, a prismatic  
 15.452: champagne glass tilted in his hand) Ladies and gentlemen, I give you  
 15.453: Ireland, home and beauty.

- 15.499: (Richie Goulding, three ladies' hats pinned on his head, appears  
 15.500: weighted to one side by the black legal bag of Collis and Ward on  
 15.501: which *a skull and crossbones* are painted in white *limewash*. He  
 15.502: opens it and shows it full of polonies, kippered herrings, Findon  
 15.503: haddies and tightpacked pills.) (Italics mine.)

07.

15.757. BLOOM

- 15.758. (scared, hats himself, steps back, then, plucking at his heart and lifting his  
 15.759. right forearm on the square, *he gives the sign and dueguard of fellowcraft*)  
 15.760. No, no, *worshipful master, light of love*. Mistaken identity. The Lyons mail.  
 15.761. Lesurques and Dubosc. You remember the Childs fratricide case. We  
 15.762. medical men. By striking him dead with a hatchet. I am wrongfully  
 15.763. accused. Better one guilty escape than ninety-nine wrongfully condemned.

15.764. MARTHA

- 15.765. (sobbing behind her veil) Breach of promise. My real name is Peggy  
 15.766. Griffin. He wrote to me that he was miserable. I'll tell my brother, the  
 15.767. Bective rugger fullback, on you, heartless flirt.

15.768. BLOOM

- 15.769. (behind his hand) She's drunk. The woman is inebriated. (*he murmurs*  
 15.770. *vaguely the pass of Ephraim*) *Shitbroleeth*. (Italics mine.)

08.

15.2720. BLOOM

- 15.2721. (In Svengali's fur overcoat, with folded arms and Napoleonic forelock,  
 15.2722. frowns in ventriloquial exorcism with piercing eagle glance towards the  
 15.2723. door. Then rigid with left foot advanced he makes a swift pass with  
 15.2724. impelling fingers and *gives the sign of past master*, drawing his right arm  
 15.2725. downwards from his left shoulder.) Go, go, go, I conjure you, whoever you  
 15.2726. are! (Italics mine.)

09.

15.2850. BLOOM

- 15.2851. (her eyes upturned in the sign of admiration, closing, yaps) Truffles!

- 15.2852. (With a piercing epileptic cry she sinks on all fours, grunting,  
 15.2853. snuffling, rooting at his feet: then lies, shamming dead, with eyes  
 15.2854. shut tight, trembling eyelids, *bowed upon the ground in the attitude*  
 15.2855. *of most excellent master*.) (Italics mine.)

15.2856. BELLO

- 15.2857. (with bobbed hair, purple gills, fit moustache rings round his shaven  
 15.2858. mouth, in mountaineer's puttees, green silverbuttoned coat, sport skirt and  
 15.2859. alpine hat with moorcock's feather, his hands stuck deep in his breeches  
 15.2860. pockets, places his heel on her neck and grinds it in) Footstool! Feel my  
 15.2861. entire weight. Bow, bonds slave, before the throne of your despot's glorious  
 15.2862. heels so glistening in their proud erectness.

15.2863. BLOOM  
15.2864. (enthralled, bleats) *I promise never to disobey.* (Italics mine.)

10.

15.4241. STEPHEN  
15.4242. Nothung!  
15.4243. (He lifts his ashplant high with both hands and smashes the  
15.4244. chandelier. Time's livid final flame leaps and, in the following  
15.4245. darkness, ruin of all space, shattered glass and toppling *masonry*.)

15.4296. BLOOM

15.4297. O, I know. Bulldog on the premises. But he's a Trinity student. Patrons of  
15.4298. your establishment. Gentlemen that pay the rent. (*he makes a masonic*  
15.4299. *sign*) Know what I mean? Nephew of the vicechancellor. You don't want a  
15.4300. scandal. (Italics mine.)

11. As the Circe episode closes, Stephen is lying unconscious in the street outside the brothel. He has been knocked down by the two English soldiers, who imagine he has insulted the name of King Edward VII, ex-grand master of the Grand Lodge of England. Stephen murmurs Yeats's "Who Goes with Fergus." Bloom feels obscurely some sense of his transsubstantial paternity, and a vaguely religious mood possesses him:

15.4948. BLOOM

15.4949. (communes with the night) Face reminds me of his poor mother. In the  
15.4950. shady wood. The deep white breast. Ferguson, I think I caught. A girl.  
15.4951. Some girl. Best thing could happen him. (he murmurs) *..swear that I will*  
15.4952. *always hail, ever conceal, never reveal, any part or parts, art or arts ..(he*  
15.4953. *murmurs) ..in the rough sands of the sea ..a cabletow's length from the*  
15.4954. *shore.... where the tide ebbs.... and flows .....*

15.4955. (Silent, thoughtful, alert he stands on guard, his fingers at his lips *in*  
15.4956. *the attitude of secret master.* Against the dark wall a figure appears  
15.4957. slowly, a fairy boy of eleven, a changeling, kidnapped, dressed in an  
15.4958. Eton suit with glass shoes and a little bronze helmet, holding a book  
15.4959. in his hand. He reads from right to left inaudibly, smiling, kissing  
15.4960. the page.)

15.4961. BLOOM

15.4962. (wonderstruck, calls inaudibly) Rudy!

15.4963. RUDY

15.4964. (gazes, unseeing, into Bloom's eyes and goes on reading, kissing, smiling  
15.4965. He has a delicate mauve face. On his suit he has diamond and ruby  
15.4966. buttons. In his free left hand he holds a slim ivory cane with a violet  
15.4967. bowknot. *A white lambkin* peeps out of his waistcoat pocket.) (Italics mine.)

12. Bloom's Jewishness and Freemasonry may derive from the attacks on Ernesto Nathan and his electrical campaign by the Church around the time when Joyce stayed in Rome between 1906-7. In Rome, Joyce lived in a creative, triangular tension between socialism, Catholicism and Judaism(Nadel 212). After leaving Rome, Joyce must have followed Nathan's electrical campaign from Trieste(cf. *U* 5.203-5: "I hear the voice of Nathan...). Indeed, the very day the Roman municipal election was held on 10 November 1907, Joyce told Stanislaus that he was going to expand his story 'Ulysses' into a short book(JJ 265). By that time, 'Ulysses' was decided to be a story of the Jewish Dubliner, Alfred H. Hunter(JJ 230). Bloom's speech as the Lord Mayor of Dublin in the Circe episode(*U* 15.1354-) overlaps Nathan's speech because both are Jewish Freemasons.

13. As Marilyn Reizbaum says in *James Joyce's Judaic Other*, Deasy's reference to "never letting them in" should perhaps be read as a metaphor for Jewish exclusion from Irish society (itself a persecutory act). This was historical true: in 1871 the Jewish population in all of Ireland was 285, in 1881, 453. But by the year 1904, the estimate was 3,371, most of them residing in Dublin(2,200)(38).

14. Freemasonry was established in Ireland in June 1725. The number of the Irish Freemasons was about 28,000 in 1920 to 43,000 in 1925; in Dublin alone there were 59 Freemason lodges in 1920, and in 1925 there were 70(Coyle 47&65).
15. On January 12, 1904, a boycott against the Jews of Limerick was incited by Father John Creagh, who in a sermon condemned the Jews as usurers and invoked the myth of ritual murder—the blood libel. It is referred in *Ulysses* several times: Bloom thinks of the superstition that Jews kill Christian children in order to use their blood to make *matzoth*, the ritual unleavened bread eaten on Passover (*U* 6.770-72); Stephen sings the ballad of Harry Hughes, in which a Jewish girl cuts off the head of a Christian boy(*U* 17.810-28). Arthur Griffith, leader of Sinn Fein and editor of the *United Irishman*, supported Father John Creagh for action against the Jews of Limerick in January 1904. Griffith publicized his anti-Semitism in his articles on the Boer Wars, in which he aligned the Jews with the "Imperialist English" (the *United Irishman*, July 15, 1899). Griffith also insisted that "the Three Evil Influences of the century were the Pirate, the Freemason and the Jew" (the *United Irishman*, September 23, 1899).
16. We could say that Bloom's religion is Freemasonry, the only "religion" to permit and support all of his other identities as Jew, Protestant, Catholic, Irish, Hungarian, businessman, lover, cuckold, father and son as well as Odysseus as a Jewish Freemason.

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