

NATION, CULTURE AND GENDER:
A POSTCOLONIAL STUDY OF ULYSSES



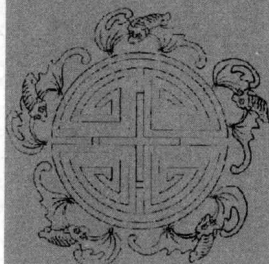
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后殖民主义视角下的《尤利西斯》研究

中国社会科学出版社

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藏书章

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内 容 提 要

作为对《尤利西斯》的后殖民主义视角下的研究，本书通过借鉴后殖民主义的理论，将乔伊斯对爱尔兰文化的现在、历史和未来的思考纳入到一个相互协调的框架之中，探察乔伊斯借助性别和家庭关系以及人际关系的书写来书写民族问题的叙事策略；本书共分为三章，分别讨论了乔伊斯对爱尔兰文化的现时困境、噩梦般的爱尔兰历史、指向文化杂糅的爱尔兰文化未来以及乔伊斯在写作这部爱尔兰民族史诗时所运用的颇具策略性的协调性别问题和民族问题的叙事策略。

本书发掘了乔伊斯掩藏在《尤利西斯》文本之下的对所谓民族纯洁性的嘲讽，分析了他对人类源自虚构的快感的洞察，研究了他对历史外壳与内核的透视，探讨了他对指向文化杂糅的民族未来的展望，诠释了他对认识文化群体之间和文化群体之内的差异和对这种差异的认同、忍耐和接受态度的强调以及对民族身份的流动多变实质的探察。对乔伊斯这些思想的发掘将会推动我国乔伊斯研究在思想内涵研究方面向纵深发展，同时又可为我们解决现今和未来不可避免的文化碰撞、文化商讨和文化杂糅等问题提供参考。

本书是第一部用后殖民主义理论的视角在过去、现在和未来的框架之内论述乔伊斯对爱尔兰文化关注的著述。它探寻了爱尔兰民族文化问题的四大根源以及它们之间的相互关系，对乔伊斯的历史观做了较全方位的研究，阐释了《尤利西斯》中

的文化杂糅未来，并探讨了乔伊斯针对某些在未来的文化杂糅中可能出现的问题所发出的警告。这些努力在一定意义上填补了国内在这些方面研究的不足。

Preface

Since its publication, James Joyce's *Ulysses* has been receiving controversial criticisms. Besides the controversy between the early attacks on *Ulysses*, which judge it as the "sardonic catafalque of the Victorian world", and the early praise as "the most important expression which the present age has found", the greatest disagreement in the critical world of Joyce is between the transcendentalist approach originating from T. S. Eliot which leads to the interpretation of *Ulysses* as "a book to which we are all indebted, and from which none of us can escape", by tracing patterns of imagery and allusion in Joyce's text and relating the discovered pattern to some universalised and universalising structure, and the empiricist approach led by Ezra Pound, which focuses on the realistic presentation of the texture of contemporary experience by finding out minutely detailed accounts of the referents in Joyce's writing. This controversy itself is sufficient to illustrate the most important feature of *Ulysses*, that is, its inclusiveness or negotiation of the most realistic and the most universal (or the most figurative). This quality in *Ulysses* once again proves the truth that any great artistic creation must be about its age but at the same time beyond its age, and must be of contemporary significance as well as permanent truth.

As a masterpiece, *Ulysses* expresses Joyce's profound concern a-

about the present difficult condition, especially the cultural dilemma, in his nation, which has been neglected or misunderstood for a long time by critics who take Joyce as apolitical and indifferent to Irish national cause. *Ulysses* is of great contemporary significance not only in its author's abhorrence of British colonisation and his repudiation of Irish nationalism, but in his penetrating insight into Irish condition, which results not only from the foreign imperial forces of British colonists and the Irish Roman Catholic Church's suffocation, but also from the national epidemics of Irish nationalists and the "gay-betrayers" of Irish national cause. But in this modern *Odyssey*, Joyce would never be content with writing about his own time. He would make his masterpiece above his own time. He not only links the present with history and tries to find something universal in this linkage about the interactions between the ideology of the authority, the centre, the mainstream, and that of the subaltern, the marginalised and "the Other" and the universality of fabrication of "the Other", "the Self" and history, but also relates the present with the future. These ideas are much ahead of his time, and will be plausible in dealing with cultural issues. His mock at the imaginary purity of national origin, his penetration into human beings' delight in fabrication, his insight into the core and the shell of history, his much ahead-of-time imagination of the national future pointing to cultural hybridity and heterogeneity, his emphasis on the recognition of differences between and within cultural groups and the generalised acquiescence, tolerance and acceptance based on that recognition of differences, and his probe into the very changeable and flowing nature of identities of both individuals and nations turn out to be permanent treasure for our present and fu-

ture society, which is inevitably always confronted with cultural clashes and moving to cultural negotiations and cultural hybridity.

Of course, *Ulysses*, as the first postcolonial novel, does not pose itself up unequivocally as a national allegory, due to the mechanisms of the colonial regimes of surveillance and the secrecy they generate. Rather, it employs the strategy of circumspection, cunning and fighting afar that Stephen Dedalus professes at the end of *A Portrait*, and that are in fact the hidden weapons of many postcolonial fictions after *Ulysses*. This makes *Ulysses* replete with what appears to Western readers a surfeit of anthropological and apolitical knowledge, especially about the vulgar and sexual and even the obscene. But under this very veil of surfeit of anthropological and apolitical narrative are interwoven the intricate clusters of analogies for Irish national issues. These analogies are mainly equivocally set up through the depiction of Stephen's personal relationship with other characters, Bloom's domestic and racial positions and Molly's sexual relationships with Bloom and her lovers. That is, Joyce blurs the boundary of race and gender and negotiates national issues and those of sex, gender and matrimony, which demands a linkage between the interpretations of the sexual, gender or matrimonial issues of the male and female characters and the discussion of the national issues of Ireland.

This book as a postcolonialist study of *Ulysses*, puts Joyce's ideas of the present, the history and the future of Irish culture into a framework of coordination and explores Joyce's deft and tactful narrative of national issues through that of gender, sexual, domestic and personal relationships, by drawing upon the postcolonialist theories, especially Loomba's ideas of the connections between colonialism and

nationalism, their common distortion of history and the function of cultural mimicry and hybridity. And accordingly, this book is divided into three chapters, dealing respectively with Joyce's ideas of the present dilemma of Irish culture, nightmarish history from which Irish artists want to wake from, the future pointing to cultural hybridity for Irish culture and Joyce's tactful negotiation of gender and racial issues in writing his Irish national allegory.

Chapter One of this book discusses Joyce's penetration into the Irish cultural dilemma. In *Ulysses*, Joyce exposes the present difficulties Irish nation is faced with, which are not only economic, political, and international but also cultural. The first force that is responsible for the present difficulties is the British colonisation, which not only puts Ireland into great poverty by its robbery and exploitation, but also suffocates Irish culture through dispossessing Irish people of their real native history and filling Irish culture into its stereotype of native backwardness. The second force that is responsible for the present difficult condition is Irish nationalism, which in fact shares the same logic with British colonialism in that both of them are based on the Xenophobic Cycloptic prejudice against "the Other" and generate practices of marginalisation, degradation and demonisation of "the Other" and glorification and beautification of "the Self", and also suffocate Irish culture with its attempt to put Irish culture under the yoke of reviving the imaginary purity of native culture.

Joyce's abhorrence of British colonialism and repudiation of Irish nationalism are the centre of hot discussions among contemporary critics, while his equal hatred of the Catholic Church and repulsion of the "gay-betrayers" often escape contemporary critics' notice. In *Ulys-*

ses, the Catholic Church plays the role of the conspirator of British colonialism in that it suffocates Irish culture with its inhumane doctrine and robs Irish people through the priests who are fat with the kidneys of grains harvested with Irish people's sweat and blood and make Ireland overpopulated with its strict doctrines against birth control. And the final that is responsible for the present difficulties is what Joyce refers to as the "gay-betrayers" among Irish people, who in *Ulysses* are constituted by two groups of people, the jackals of British colonialists and pleasure-seeking Irish people. The former are conspirators of British colonialists and only take Ireland as a pawn shop: when they need it, they keep it; when they do not need it, they sell it; the latter ruin Ireland and Irish culture with their indifference to Irish national fate and with their gambling, drinking, and brothel-going, and to Joyce's great abhorrence, with empty talk of patriotism (which in fact is only "barsponging patriotism" in Bloom's own view).

Joyce, as a great artist, is much ahead of time in that he does not hold British colonialism as the only cause of the dilemma of Ireland, but takes the foreign colonisers and native epidemics all responsible for the present troubles in Ireland, and he does not attempt to isolate one epidemic from the other in bringing about troubles to Ireland but takes them in one sense or another as accomplices in ruining Ireland. His penetration into the very nature of the colonialists' cultural exploitation, the very essence of nationalism, which shares the same Xenophobic logic as the colonisers, the very relationship between the material poverty and cultural barrenness of Ireland and Irish "native" religion, *i. e.* the Catholic Church, which adheres to its inhuman doctrine, especially its doctrine against birth control and many interven-

tions into national affairs, and the problems in Irish people's life style and national consciousness, if there is one, is what many of his contemporary writers are utterly blind to and many of his later generations haven't realised until postcolonialism reaches its climax, and, more importantly, until Joycean critics adopt postcolonialist and other cultural study perspectives in recent years.

Of course, Joycean critics are not to be blamed for the much late realisation because Joyce employs very unnoticeable and equivocal analogies in *Ulysses* to express his penetrations. Among many neglectable analogies, the most important are Stephen's situation in the Martello Tower and Bloom's domestic position. The Martello Tower is an analogical miniature of British colonised Ireland, in which Stephen, as an analogy of Irish culture, has two masters, one British and the other Italian, and there is one servant of these two masters, who demands Stephen to serve him, to be "a servant of a servant". The two masters analogised by the British Haines and the mockingly religious Irish Mulligan stand for British colonisers and the Catholic Church, and the servant demanding Stephen to serve him refers to Irish nationalists who demand Irish men of letters to be devoted to the revival of the imagined purity of Irish national culture. And the "gay-betrayers" analogised by Mulligan stand for those jackals of British colonisers and those pleasure-seeking people. Bloom's servitude in domestic life, his cuckoldness and his being persecuted in the inn also analogue Ireland's servitude to and cuckoldness and persecution by British colonialists. And under all these oppressions, Irish art (or, more generally speaking, Irish culture) becomes a cracked looking glass, losing its function of revealing reality and helping to alert people to the real-

ity. In such a dilemma, Stephen, standing for contemporary Irish culture, is searching for a father, or to be more abstract, for fatherhood, which inhabits nowhere else but history, and Bloom, standing for Irish cultural tradition, is searching for a son, or sonhood, which can be found nowhere else but in the future. This shows that Joyce, again much ahead of time, is not merely content with his exposure of the present troubles of his nation, but strives to find answers and solutions by looking back to history and looking forward to the future.

Chapter Two focuses on the discussion of Joyce's idea of history in *Ulysses*. According to postcolonialist theories, history is always the battlefield for the mainstreams to degrade "the Other" and justify the sins committed by "the Self". This idea of history has much in common with that of Giambattista Vico. Joyce's idea of history is profoundly influenced by Vico's theory of history, which takes history as something of human creation (imagination) and its causes are to be sought in human mind. So Joyce regards history as the tales often heard by other people. In *Ulysses*, Joyce's idea of history is revealed through a series of seemingly trivial but analogical or symbolic incidents. What people know about history is nothing but the shell of history, just as what Stephen teaches the students is nothing but the fabrications by historians and laymen of history on the basis of the dead relics or simply to cater for their own interests. Human beings have no way to know the core of history, or the truth of history, but can guess something true on the basis of human psychology or human language. History is only a set of "tales often heard by others" (in Stephen own words) because it is human nature to love to make and hear tales, and because the historical events are nothing but incidents which

themselves are only one of the many possibilities and become facts simply by excluding other possibilities and the imagined historical fact is nothing but one of those possibilities guessed by historians on the basis of random phenomena.

In the specific case of the opposition between British colonialists and the sharers of their interests in Ireland and Irish nationalists and average Irish people, both sides save no pain in fabricating history. The Ulster headmaster Mr. Deasy's long Dutch talk to Stephen analogises British colonialists' long fabrication of history, in which they boast of their own pride in economic power, put the blames which should be shouldered by the authorities or the mainstream on their antagonists, mainly Irish nationalists and the Catholic Church, or on the marginalised and persecuted people, mainly the Jews, and on women who are always made scapegoats to shoulder the blames for ruining a nation. The Citizen's propaganda for the glory and purity of Ireland analogises the Cycloptic nationalists' fabrication of history, in which they boast of the glories of Irish history, including Ireland's bearing great figures such as Shakespeare and O'Brien Confucius, degrade Anglo-Saxon civilisation as siphilisation, and extremely similar to British colonialists' practice, make the Jews and women as the scapegoats to shoulder the blame for the fall of Ireland and other nations.

Quite contrary to the belief of many of his contemporaries, Joyce does not think history goes towards the revelation of God's will (or the will of the authority), as Mr. Deasy, the advocator of British colonialists, hopes. In Stephen's own expression, history points to a "shout in the street", an epitome of chaos and strifes. Moreover, Joyce does not stop at merely exposing history as a series of narratives

and the chaos that result from such fabricated narratives, but instead goes further by exploring various reasons for such fabrications, among which the motivations to justify or escape the feeling of one's sin, to console one's ailing soul by self-deception, and to deceive "the Other" to secure one's own interests are the most prevalent. Stephen's change of the original version of the riddle that the fox is burying its mother is out of the motivation to escape the feeling of guilt of "killing" his mother. Various fabrications in religion and arts, nostalgia for one's past life, and the illusion in gambling and drinking are out of the motivations mentioned above. And Bloom's illusions of the platonic love for Gerty and Gerty's beautification of the same love for Bloom are out of the same motivation as that of the Citizen in his fabrication of the glory of Irish history.

Of course, Joyce's universalisation of the fabrications of history is not to advocate nihilism in history. On the contrary, he expresses his belief in some shape, or "form" of history, and he indicates his belief in many episodes of *Ulysses*. In Joyce's opinion, history is a process of the interactions and counteractions between historical heritage and the breach of heritage, yet there exists possibility to be eternal in history. For the secular Bloom, eternity can be achieved by metempsychosis, that is, one person's soul to live through another's soul; for the young artist Stephen, eternity can be obtained by keeping a balance between historic heritage and creativity, and by remaining beyond the trivial and the specific. Joyce's thought about the relationship between historical heritage and creativity is analogised by the father-and-son motif, especially in Stephen's discussion of Shakespeare, and the relationship between the trivial and the universal is

analogised by Shakespeare's "all in all" principle.

Joyce also expresses his idea in *Ulysses* that the development of history relies on the interactions among contemporaries and clashes among different cultures, the former of which are analogised by the repulsion and love between Shakespeare and his brothers, and the latter of which are analogised by the relationship between Shakespeare and his wife and their respective mistresses and lovers. All these contradictions help in spurring Shakespeare's creativity, which analogises that history develops in the interactions among various contradictions. And the role of the interactions between the historical heritage and creation is further illustrated in "Oxen of the Sun", in which literary works develop on the basis of extracting nourishment from historical heritage and getting rid of the old and the dead in the former works.

In the specific case of Irish culture, historical heritage consists of Irish native heritage and British colonial heritage, and it shapes as burdens as well as beneficial models that no future creation can escape. For a subaltern writer, it poses a great problem how to keep a balance between Irish cultural heritage and British cultural heritage, between Irish cultural heritage and creativity, and between British cultural heritage and creativity.

In *Ulysses*, besides the problem posed by heritage and creativity, there is another one closely related to Joyce's idea of history, that is, problem of love and sin. What makes history point to chaos is mainly the sins that exist in every human being. In Stephen's mind, the blood of the pirates is in all of us. But we have one thing real which may provide meaning for life and the foundation for people to solve strifes caused by the sins in human beings, mainly of greed, vanity

and selfishness. This one real thing is love, maternal love, which can overpass difference, hatred, greed, vanity and selfishness, and form the foundation of acquiescence, tolerance and acceptance. Acquiescence, tolerance and acceptance in turn are the very foundation for cultural hybridity. Moreover, the appealing charm of maternal love to Stephen analogises Joyce's love for his motherland because he knows a child without his mother's love will be tramped down like a boneless snail by the world, so will be a man without his country.

All Stephen's as well as Joyce's findings in history point to one thing: cultural hybridity must be based on the attitude of cultural acquiescence, tolerance and acceptance and on the premise of love for one's nation, which is in turn based on penetrating into the very nature of fabrication (shell) of history and admitting the possibility of the existence of truth (core) of history.

Chapter Three deals with Joyce's imagination of a future of cultural hybridity for Irish nation in *Ulysses*. Joyce's purpose in presenting the present dilemma of Irish culture and penetrating into the nightmare of history is to find some solutions to the present problems, or at least, predict the future for his nation. And *Ulysses*, as a national epic, is a piece of real art that projects the unknown past and present into the unknown future. Joyce thinks the future for Irish culture lies in cultural hybridity. In this sense, Joyce is much ahead of time and has much in common with the postcolonialists, who also take cultural hybridity as the inevitable future for the colonised nations. But this kind of future of cultural hybridity in *Ulysses* has often been neglected by Joycean critics. In *Ulysses*, Joyce expresses his imagination of such a future by employing analogies. Bloom's domestic situation

analogue the status of Irish culture, and his impotence analogue the impotence of Irish culture. Boylan is the analogue of British culture, and his strong sexual drive is the analogue of the aggressiveness and vitality in British culture. Molly is the analogue of the future of Irish culture, and her illicit relationships with many lovers analogue the future cultural hybridity of Irish culture with other cultures. The inevitability and reasonability of Irish culture's hybridity with other cultures can be analogically justified by Molly's justification of her relationship with Boylan: it serves Bloom right for her to have sexual relationship with Boylan simply because Bloom is impotent. But to hybridise with foreign cultures does not mean to abandon native culture. Instead, it is extremely important to keep to what is good and vital in native culture in the process of cultural hybridity, and this is analogised by Molly's determination to restore the ideal relationship with Bloom and merely take Boylan as a useful substitute for Bloom or only a sexual toy for her.

Joyce's idea of Irish culture's future is not merely confined to an obscurely imagined hybridity. Besides imagining the future of cultural hybridity, he foresees many potential problems in that future and indicates solutions to these problems in *Ulysses*. First, cultural hybridity can not be confined to the hybridity between two cultures, or between the colonised and the colonisers. Instead, it is necessary for native culture to hybrid with various cultures, and this is analogised by Molly's having various lovers, who are of various nationalities, social statuses and ages. Second, in the process of cultural hybridity, it is crucial to give up the sense of binary oppositions such as ancient/modern, backward/advanced, low/high and barbarian/civilised, and