The final episode of Ulysses—often called "**Penelope**"—is one of the most radical and celebrated **stylistic experiments in modern literature**. It consists of the interior monologue of Molly Bloom, and its style departs sharply from conventional narrative prose in ways that are both technically innovative and psychologically revealing.

JAMES JOYCE 'S ULYSSES

The plot

Ulysses tells the story of a day in the life of advertising salesman Leopold Bloom. During this day three main characters wake up, have various encounters in Dublin, and go to sleep eighteen hours later. The central character, Leopold Bloom is Joyce's common man. During his wanderings he meets the indigent writer Stephen Dedalus (he is considered Joyce alter ego). Stephen becomes momentarily Bloom's adopted son: the alienated common man rescues the alienated artist and takes him home.
At home there is Molly, the Bloom's wife, a voluptuous singer who is planning an afternoon of adultery with her music director.

The relation to Odyssey

Ulysses is related to Homer's great epic the Odyssey. Joyce used the Odyssey as a framework for his novel, arranging its characters and events around Homer's heroic model, with:

- Bloom as Ulysses;
- Stephen as his son Telemachus;
- Molly as the faithful Penelope.

Ulysses is arranged into three parts, imitating the three parts of Odyssey.

The setting

The setting is Dublin, in the streets that J. Joyce knew, in the house that he knew and in the pub he had gone so often. He made the very air of Dublin, the atmosphere, the feeling and the place. Consequently, Dublin becomes itself a character in his novel.

The mythical method

J. Joyce's method is a new form of prose based on the "*mythical method*". This allowed the novelist **to make a parallel with the Odyssey**. J. Joyce wanted to write a "*modern epic prose*" and he achieved a new form of realism.

The representation of human nature

Stephen Dedalus, Mr Bloom and Mrs Bloom represent different aspects of human nature:

- Stephen is pure intellect;
- Mrs Bloom represents sensual nature and fecundity;
- Mr. Bloom is everybody, the whole of mankind.

J. Joyce's prose Joyce combined several methods to present a variety of matters (**stream of consciousness technique, the cinematic technique**, **flashbacks**, **suspension of speech**, etc.,) creating the so-called "*collage technique*", quite similar to the techniques used by the Cubist artist who depicted a scene from all perspectives. J.Joyce used **the interior monologue** and **two levels of narration**:

- one **external to the character's mind**;
- the other **internal with the character's thoughts flowing freely without any interruption coming from the external world**.

The language is rich in images, contrasts, paradoxes, symbols etc. He use also the slang, nicknames, foreign words, literary quotations and allusions to other texts.