

Understanding *Ulysses* — from the thirteenth episode : An Encounter between a Maiden and a Middle-aged Man

YONEMOTO Yoshitaka

James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) is generally recognized as one of the twentieth century's most important literary works. But this novel also has a reputation for being extremely difficult for non-specialist readers. Joyce himself called his work 'enormous bulk and more than enormous complexity.' It is no wonder, then, that most readers shrink before its complexity and do not attempt to read it.

In my work 『読解「ユリシーズ」』 (*Understanding Ulysses*), published by Kenkyusha in January of 1996, I presented detailed annotations of my selected portions taken from the first half of *Ulysses*. They were designed to make this formidable but fascinating novel more accessible to Japanese readers.

In the following pages, I have annotated selected portions of Chapter XIII from the second half of *Ulysses*.

The scene of Chapter XIII is a beach in a southeastern suburb of Dublin, the capital of Ireland. The time is about 8:00 p. m. Gerty MacDowell, a somewhat romantic young woman, sits on the beach near her house, sunk in thought. Leopold Bloom, the hero of *Ulysses*, has just stopped for a rest on the rocks near her. Gerty looks romantically at Bloom and he passionately at her. The encounter between the maiden and the middle-aged married man forms the substance of this chapter. The first half of the chapter is narrated from Gerty's viewpoint, using indirect discourse, and a flowery and sentimental style such as found in the cheap women's magazines of the time; the second half consists of an interior monologue, composed of

Bloom's vulgar thoughts and characteristic expressions. In my notes, I have attempted to adhere closely to the text, annotating every phrase and word chosen by the writer who is known for his "scrupulous" use of language.