

**Ketevan Jmukhadze**

*Ivane Javakishvili Tbilisi State University*

*Tbilisi, Georgia*

### **Framing the Center: Bed as a Liminal Space in James Joyce's *Ulysses***

James Joyce represents the artistic space of *Ulysses* as a two-layered, historic and mythopoeic, chronotope. Dublin depicted scrupulously in the novel serves as an archetypal model, the city situated at the center of the world. The symbolism of the center, according to Mircea Eliade, is equivalent to transcending the temporality of the secular world and entering a sacred time-space. If the reader zooms in the Joycean urban borderland, another local and "autonomous center" will be visible.

The paper discusses the bedroom of Leopold Bloom and the bed itself as a single spatio-temporal dimension. In *Ulysses* the bedroom becomes a liminal space, while Bloom lying in the bed embodies the candidate of initiation awaiting rebirth. "The childman weary, the manchild in the womb" - this is how Joyce describes his wandering character who returns home and lies like an embryo in the dark night, as if he has returned to the maternal womb. The foetal condition of Leopold Bloom symbolizes his parodic transition from the profane to the precosmic mode of being. Thus, the bed represents the threshold reconfiguring spatial and temporal indicators.

The bed with its four corners is discussed as an image of the quaternary pattern of modeling the universe. Thus, it attains the universal symbolic quality. In "Ithaca" Bloom is referred to as "a square round egg". Quite interestingly, according to the cosmogony myths of multiple cultures, the very first element of creation, where the gods came into being from, is the cosmic egg ("the world egg"). Bloom, Joycean Sindbad, lying in his "sin bed" resembles the parodic god creator, who is expected to establish the New Hibernia of the future, Bloomusalem.