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MODERN NOVELISTS

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For William, Charlotte and Arthur

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List of Abbreviations

Below is a list of Joyce's works in standard editions with their usual abbreviations. Page numbers used in the text are references to these editions. Where necessary in *Ulysses* episode and line numbers as well as page references are given. For the benefit of readers unfamiliar with the book I have also on occasion used numbers of episodes in brackets. For *Finnegans Wake* page and line numbers are used throughout.

<i>D</i>	<i>Dubliners</i> , ed. Robert Scholes (London: Cape, 1969).
<i>E</i>	<i>Exiles</i> (London: Cape, 1952).
<i>FW</i>	<i>Finnegans Wake</i> (London: Faber, 1939).
<i>GJ</i>	<i>Giacomo Joyce</i> , ed. Richard Ellmann (London: Faber, 1968).
<i>JJA</i>	<i>The James Joyce Archive</i> , ed. Michael Groden <i>et al.</i> (New York: Garland, 1978).
<i>LI</i>	<i>The Letters of James Joyce</i> , vol. I, ed. Stuart Gilbert (London: Faber, 1957).
<i>LII/III</i>	<i>The Letters of James Joyce</i> , vols II and III, ed. Richard Ellmann (London: Faber, 1966).
<i>P</i>	<i>A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man</i> , ed. Chester Anderson (London: Cape, 1968).
<i>SH</i>	<i>Stephen Hero</i> , ed. Theodore Spencer (London: Cape, 1956).
<i>SL</i>	<i>Selected Letters of James Joyce</i> , ed. Richard Ellmann (London: Faber, 1975).
<i>U</i>	<i>Ulysses</i> (London: Penguin, 1986).

General Editor's Preface

The death of the novel has often been announced, and part of the secret of its obstinate vitality must be its capacity for growth, adaptation, self-renewal and self-transformation: like some vigorous organism in a speeded-up Darwinian ecosystem, it adapts itself quickly to a changing world. War and revolution, economic crisis and social change, radically new ideologies such as Marxism and Freudianism, have made this century unprecedented in human history in the speed and extent of change, but the novel has shown an extraordinary capacity to find new forms and techniques and to accommodate new ideas and conceptions of human nature and human experience, and even to take up new positions on the nature of fiction itself.

In the generations immediately preceding and following 1914, the novel underwent a radical redefinition of its nature and possibilities. The present series of monographs is devoted to the novelists who created the modern novel and to those who, in their turn, either continued and extended, or reacted against and rejected, the traditions established during that period of intense exploration and experiment. It includes a number of those who lived and wrote in the nineteenth century but whose innovative contribution to the art of fiction makes it impossible to ignore them in any account of the origins of the modern novel; it also includes the so-called 'modernists' and those who in the mid- and late twentieth century have emerged as outstanding practitioners of this genre. The scope is, inevitably, international; not only, in the migratory and exile-haunted world of our century, do writers refuse to heed national frontiers – 'English' literature lays claim to Conrad the Pole, Henry James the American, and Joyce the Irishman – but geniuses such as Flaubert, Dostoevsky and Kafka have had an influence on the fiction of many nations.

Each volume in the series is intended to provide an introduction to the fiction of the writer concerned, both for those approaching him or her for the first time and for those who are already familiar with some parts of the achievement in question and now wish to place it in the context of the total *oeuvre*. Although essential information relating to

the writer's life and times is given, usually in an opening chapter, the approach is primarily critical and the emphasis is not upon 'background' or generalisations but upon close examination of important texts. Where an author is notably prolific, major texts have been made to convey, more summarily, a sense of the nature and quality of the author's work as a whole. Those who want to read further will find suggestions in the select bibliography included in each volume. Many novelists are, of course, not only novelists but also poets, essayists, biographers, dramatists, travel writers and so forth; many have practised shorter forms of fiction; and many have written letters or kept diaries that constitute a significant part of their literary output. A brief study cannot hope to deal with all these in detail, but where the shorter fiction and the non-fictional writings, public and private, have an important relationship to the novels, some space has been devoted to them.

NORMAN PAGE

Chronology

- 1882 2 February: birth of Joyce (Rathgar, Dublin).
1886 Defeat of Gladstone's First Home Rule Bill.
1888 Joyce to Clongowes Wood College.
1890 Death of Newman.
1891 Death of Parnell.
1893 Joyce to Belvedere College.
1895 Wilde's trial and imprisonment.
1897 Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.
1899 Joyce to University College, Dublin. Second Boer War.
1900 'Ibsen's New Drama'. Founding of British Labour Party.
1901 'The Day of the Rabblement'. Queen Victoria died.
1902 'James Clarence Mangan'. J's first Paris trip and reviews.
Balfour's Education Act.
1903 Mary Jane Joyce (J's mother) died.
1904 Elopement with Nora to Pola (Austro-Hungary). Opening
of Abbey Theatre in Dublin.
1905 Moved to Trieste. 27 July: Giorgio born.
1906 Brief residence in Rome. Samuel Beckett born.
1907 Moved back to Trieste. 26 July: Lucia born. *Chamber
Music* published. 'Playboy' riots.
1909 August and October–December trips to Dublin. Letters to
Nora written.
1910 H. G. Wells's *The History of Mr Polly*.
1911 Further educational and social reform in Britain.
1912 Charlie Chaplin's first film.
1914 Archduke shot in Sarajevo. First World War breaks out.
Home Rule passed but shelved. *A Portrait* serialised in
The Egoist. *Dubliners* published by Grant Richards. *Gia-
como Joyce* written.
1915 J moved to Zurich. 16 June: work on *Ulysses* resumed.
Exiles composed.
1916 *A Portrait* published in America. Easter Rising in Dublin.

- 1917 *A Portrait* published in Britain. Yeats's *Wild Swans at Coole*.
- 1918 *Ulysses* serialisation begins in *Little Review*. Conclusion of First World War. Partial franchise for women in the UK. Irish rebel Con Markiewicz elected first British woman MP. *Exiles* published.
- 1920 J moved to Paris. *Ulysses* serialisation halted.
- 1921 Irish Free State (excluding six counties) founded (December).
- 1922 *Ulysses* published in Paris (February).
- 1923 'Rory O'Connor' sketch begun (March). Brendan Behan born.
- 1924 First section of *Work in Progress* ('Mamalujo') published in *Transatlantic Review*, 1.
- 1925 G. B. Shaw awarded Nobel Prize. Yeats's *A Vision*. Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin*.
- 1926 Wall Street Crash. Baird demonstrated television picture.
- 1927 Book I of *Wake (Work in Progress)* serialised in *transition* (April–November). Cinema 'Talkies'. *Pomes Penyeach* published.
- 1928 Book III of *Wake in transition* (March–November). Full suffrage for women in the UK. Norma Jean Mortensen (Marilyn Monroe) born.
- 1929 *Our Examination* essays published.
- 1930 Hitler dissolved Reichstag.
- 1931 Joyce's residence in Kensington and marriage.
- 1932 De Valera's Fianna Fail took office in Ireland. Hitler became German Chancellor. Lucia diagnosed 'hebe- phrenic'.
- 1933 Leavis attacked *Work in Progress* in *Scrutiny*.
- 1934 Hitler became Führer.
- 1936 *Ulysses* published. Abdication of Edward VIII.
- 1937 New Irish constitution established.
- 1938 Beckett's *Murphy* published. *Anschluss* of Austria.
- 1939 J moved to Zurich. Outbreak of Second World War. *Finnegans Wake* published. Behan arrested. Seamus Heaney born. W. B. Yeats died.
- 1941 13 January: J died in Zurich aged 59.

Introduction

This is a book addressed to ordinary readers of fiction who may wish to begin reading Joyce, and to students and teachers who are working on Joyce's texts as a part of their study of literature. I make no apology for adding another one to the pile of critical syntheses about Joyce. The more specialist criticism that appears, the more we need such syntheses to digest, assimilate and communicate it. New readers bring new issues and new perspectives into whose terms the importance of well-known literary texts needs to be repeatedly retranslated.

In what follows I have tried to keep these readers in mind and make my critical account of Joyce's work as straightforward, broadly based, informative and accessible as it can be without being compromised or inaccurate, and without resorting to such extremes of reductiveness and common-sensicality as would disable any reader from gaining access to the highly developed and intellectually exciting world of specialist Joyce criticism and theory.

Joyce may well be the most studied, the most taught, the most read-about and the most debated of all the writers of this century. His work was challenging and modern from the very beginning, helping to shake the foundations of Victorian and Edwardian respectability and inaugurate what we understand as modernity in consciousness. Though initially neglected, condemned and abused, his works made him an idol of the radical and the avant-garde. Now that his achievements are almost universally acknowledged, they still remain problematic and unsettling, and his legacy is more often appropriated than understood. Since Yeats recognised the force of Joyce's talent at the start of the century, generations of writers have themselves had to come to terms with its power. Such writers include major contemporaries like Eliot, Lawrence and Woolf, whose greatest works can be seen to have been in part responses to their reading of Joyce. Irish writers from Beckett and O'Brien to Donleavy and Banville have all had to stand in Joyce's shadow or else to attempt to forge independent traditions to try to evade it. British writers, whether George Orwell, Dylan Thomas, Iris Murdoch, B. S. Johnson, Anthony Burgess, Martin Amis or Salman

Rushdie, have all somehow had to negotiate, whether to shun or else to embrace exultantly, the Joycean example.

Post-modern writers of fiction on the American continent (whether North Americans such as Nin and Miller in the 1930s or South Americans like Borges or Marquez), the most inventive and interesting of English language writers from the Commonwealth, and such Europeans as the writers of the French *nouveau roman* have often claimed Joyce as a principal inspiration. Contemporary poets and dramatists in America, Britain and Ireland have had Joyce no less on their minds.

Generations of literary and linguistic theorists have been forced to encounter the Joycean example and many of them have made that example central to their work. The modern study of Joyce's work enjoys the rewards of being and having been at the state of the art in computerised textual editing, in literary biography, in the international co-operations and discussions represented by increasing numbers of academic conferences, in translating, in the advances in theoretical approaches to literature that include feminism, cultural materialism, structuralism, Lacanian and other psychoanalysis and deconstruction. Such prominent theorists as Jacques Lacan, Julia Kristeva and Jacques Derrida all participated in a single Joyce conference in Frankfurt in 1984.

No single introductory (or any other) book could hope to reflect, still less contain, the whole of this still-burgeoning activity. Any approach must be partial in countless acknowledged and unacknowledged ways, just as any critical discourse, however transparently 'introductory', must betray a certain configuration of allegiances and assumptions. The present study uses many of the familiar tools of criticism: attentive reading, explication of structural pattern and detail, historical and literary contextualisation, genetic comparison, respect of stated authorial intentions, summary of interpretative possibilities and so on. Throughout, my arguments have been informed, sometimes explicitly, sometimes tacitly, by the discoveries of what I take to be the best and most up-to-date Joyce criticism. The reading I provide is also not unaffected by the recent upsurge of anti-intentionalist psychoanalytic, sociological, philosophical and linguistic theories of literature. The mixture is, I hope, not an untypical one and may serve to introduce the reader to some of the kinds of discussion they might expect to find in academic study of these texts.

I have restricted myself to a largely sequential treatment of Joyce's major novelistic works, all but neglecting his poems, including the prose-poem *Giacomo Joyce*, most of his critical writings and his play *Exiles*, which I would encourage any interested reader to explore. To some specialists, some of what follows may seem to plough over old furrows. I have for the most part, however, given new formulations of many established perceptions and not infrequently, I hope, arrived at new insights and positions.

Although it would not be in the least bit appropriate to make any elaborate declaration, definition or defence of critical stance in such a book as this, I would describe my orientation as broadly post-culturalist in its assumptions, in that it depends upon many of the assumptions about cultural context implicit in my previous work on Joyce and sexuality merged with an intensified consciousness of the hermeneutic problems said to be characteristic of the post-modern age. These assumptions are neither anti-textual, anti-historical, anti-liberal nor anti-humanistic but are nevertheless fractured and run through with a whole variety of perceptions – post-Marxist, post-formalistic, post-Barthesian, post-feministic, post-colonial, post-deconstructive and so on – that were taken to be antithetical to liberal humanism at least as it became ossified as the acceptable complacency of the human sciences in the 1950s and 1960s.

Thanks in great part to Joyce himself, literary studies have come quite a long way since the practices that drove Stephen Dedalus (himself, after all, one of the newer students of this newish discipline) to despair: 'nominal definitions, essential definitions and examples or dates of birth or death, chief works, a favourable and an unfavourable criticism side by side' (*P*, 181). A more acute sense of the historical and contextual implications of interpretation is now available to us. The chronology with which the present work begins is designed not to reduce but to enable further exploration of, for instance, the problematic delays and odd overlapping order of the publication of Joyce's major works; the booms and slumps of his compositional energies; the possible relations of his works to a variety of adducible interpretational contexts: to crises in his life, to the struggle for Irish independence, to social and technological change in Britain and on the European and world stage.

A central Joyce paradox is that the radical openness to interpretation that characterises Joyce's writings has itself caused those writings to be

almost swamped with a wide range of conflicting and mutually reinforcing or debilitating rereadings that have distorted some of the urgencies and radicalisms of their initial impact. An obvious example is the way in which Joyce's lifelong Faustian and secularist struggle against the Catholic Church of his education and upbringing has become obscured by generations of interpretations that salvage biblical and liturgical resonances or patristic intellectual structures from his *oeuvre*. To subsequent generations of more secular or non-Catholic readers, Joyce may seem so deeply immersed in his Catholicism that his anger and apostasy might be ignored.

A further problem may result from the very fact of Joyce's acceptance as one of the greatest of modern writers and the apparently inevitable dilution that such acceptance entails. I have hoped to keep Joyce's radicalism, his 'offensiveness' before me where appropriate. If this means that my own reading may occasionally seem to be offensive to some others, the responsibility may not all be laid at Joyce's door. Such offences may be tolerated if not excused by the recognition that, when it comes to critical readings of Joyce, this is not the only one.

The places where my intellectual debts begin and end may be lost without trace in the countless valued contacts with other workers in the field that I have enjoyed over several years and in the generations of brilliant reading, rereading and research by an ever-increasing community of Joyce scholars that I have been privileged to encounter whether in print or in the flesh. By no means all of this can be acknowledged in detail. As a poor substitute I have made short parenthetical references in the text as an acknowledgement of debt and as an indication of possible directions for further reading. Fuller references to a selection of relevant works are appended to each chapter, though I have avoided duplicating references to works cited in more than one chapter. Each of these books and articles itself contains more substantial bibliographical information which the interested reader will, no doubt, be hungry to explore.

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