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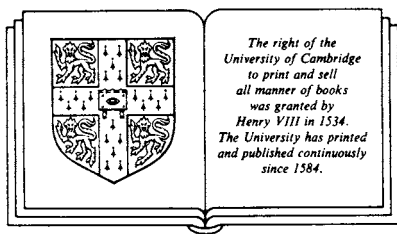
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Preface and acknowledgements

This book contains several features which have not been usual in introductory critical studies of Joyce. For example, I believe that understanding of his achievement should be firmly based on his two major works, *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, even though they present features which are unexpected, and even forbidding, to admirers of his early writings. For this reason my opening chapter, 'Joyce and the Grotesque', refers much more to *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* than to their predecessors.

Joyce's rich and complex books set many traps for the unwary. His work is a standing rebuke to the parochialism of much modern writing, and it is possible for students of the English and American novel, for example, to come to him with quite inappropriate assumptions. In some of the following chapters my reading of the Joycean text is prefaced with a more historical and/or theoretical discussion of ways of approaching it. Moreover, I have avoided referring to *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* as 'novels', believing this to be largely unhelpful – though admittedly it is hard to settle on any satisfactory alternative. Whether or not Joyce is a novelist he is, I believe, one of the greatest masters of modern prose.

It would be impossible to list the debts to teachers, students, friends, and colleagues which have been incurred during the gestation and writing of this book. Among those to whom I am most grateful are Richard Brown, David Gervais, and Bonnie Kime Scott for their penetrating comments on earlier drafts; to the University of Reading Research Board for financial assistance; to Berni and Shari Benstock, James Hurt, and Giorgio Melchiori for the many hospitable occasions on which they shared with me their knowledge of *Finnegans Wake*; to my wife, above all for stimulating my interest in Joyce's Scandiknavery; and to Christopher Rolfe and Colin MacCabe. But there have been many, many others.

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The primal debt, however, is to my father, who first encouraged me to read *A Portrait of the Artist* at the age of fifteen (when Stephen's experiences at boarding school could be contrasted with my own). The handful of Faber & Faber pamphlets that my father bought as a young man lies on my desk as I write. This book is dedicated to his memory.

Reading, England
January 1984

References to Joyce's works

References in the text and notes are to page numbers in the following editions, except that in the case of *CM*, reference is to the poems as numbered, and in the case of *FW*, to page and line.

Abbreviations

- CM* *Chamber Music*, London (Jonathan Cape) 1971.
CW *The Critical Writings of James Joyce*, ed. Ellsworth Mason and Richard Ellmann, New York (Viking Press) 1964.
D *Dubliners: The Corrected Text with an Explanatory Note by Robert Scholes*, London (Jonathan Cape) 1967.
E *Exiles: A Play in Three Acts*, introduced by Padraic Colum, London (Jonathan Cape) 1952.
FW *Finnegans Wake*, 4th edn., London (Faber & Faber) 1975.
GJ *Giacomo Joyce*, ed. Richard Ellmann, London (Faber & Faber) 1968.
Letters Vol. I, ed. Stuart Gilbert, London (Faber & Faber) 1957. Vols. II and III, ed. Richard Ellmann, London (Faber & Faber) 1966.
P *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, New York (Viking Press) 1964. This is the definitive text, corrected from the Dublin holograph by Chester G. Anderson and edited by Richard Ellmann. However, at no point does the pagination differ by more than one page from that of other recent editions, such as those published in England by Penguin Books.
PP *Pomes Penyeach and other verses*, London (Faber & Faber) 1966.
SH *Stephen Hero*, London (Jonathan Cape) 1969.
SL *Selected Letters*, ed. Richard Ellmann, London (Faber & Faber) 1975.
U *Ulysses*, Harmondsworth (Penguin Books) 1971.

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Does the man exist who is able . . . to encompass *Finnegans Wake* or even *Ulysses*? I do not mean on the literal level, but all the allusions, all the associations and cultural–mythic symbolisms, all the combined paradigms and archetypes on which these works stand and grow in glory? Certainly no one could manage it alone. No one, for that matter, could wade through the entire body of criticism that the prose of James Joyce has accumulated to date!

Stanislaw Lem, *A Perfect Vacuum*,
translated by Michael Kandel