Finnegans Wake and Readership.

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Trinity Term 1996. [ie 1997]

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ABSTRACT

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The argument of this thesis is that Finnegans Wake is a peculiarly appropriate text for an investigation of the academic discipline of English, and that the issue of readership is the best way to approach the Wake. The thesis, which is organised into three main sections, shows that both Finnegans Wake and the discipline of English Studies are similarly engaged in problems of defining audiences. The opening section shows that the Wake has long been seen as a limit to literature, and as a defining text of literary study. Reception theory proves unable to cope with a study of historical audiences. Finnegans Wake was written over a period roughly concomitant with the rapid professionalisation of English studies and underwent a loss of audiences except for its critical reviewers. The extended third chapter sets out in some detail the growth of English studies, both in itself and more specifically as a context for the name of Joyce in the 1930s and beyond. This also includes analysis of the passage of the Wake in university syllabi. The second section considers post-structuralist claims that the Wake disrupts or subverts the space of the academy. It analyses a wide range of post-structuralist and other reactions to the Wake, and proceeds to a study of inscriptions of readership in the work of Derrida, and explores Derrida's idea of audiences for Joyce. The third section presents two readings of key elements of Finnegans Wake. Analysis of the letters, and of some of Joyce's sources, stresses the important role of the professor figures, which is indicative of the extent to which Joyce's last work was influenced by the professionalisation of literary study. Textual analysis proceeds with the Four, who function as an internal interpretive community. A brief conclusion sums up the argument of the thesis.

Finnegans Wake and Readership.

Abstract.

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Acknowledgements

The greatest debt of thanks I owe is to my supervisor, Dr. John S. Kelly of St. John's College, Oxford. His perceptive and thorough reading of many earlier drafts of this thesis, and his remarks on its overall direction, have helped improve it immensely. He has not only been a great source of academic help but also an excellent companion.

Others who have provided helpful comment, whether on earlier versions of a chapter or in conversation, include: Tony Archdeacon at Southampton University; Professor Terry Eagleton, Jonathan Lenehan and Adrian Passmore at Oxford University; Kristen Bluemel and others at the XIII James Joyce Symposium in Dublin 1992. Thanks also to Dr. Dinah Birch of Trinity College, Oxford and colleagues at Trinity College, Dublin for their encouragement. In addition I would like to acknowledge the two Wake reading groups I participated in during the writing of this thesis, in Oxford 1992-3 and Dublin 1995.

Among those who have helped delay presentation of this thesis, for the best possible reasons, are a number of family and friends. Thanks to: the Aged P's; Steve; Rob and Gail; Tony; Satnam Singh Choongh and family; Jonathan Grimes; Samantha Williams and John "My grandad was at school with Joyce" Gallen; Irene Campbell; Aidan Jones; the D.R.G.; Anne and Dan; the hospitality at the Byrne's; the Boro'; and many others, not least my colleagues and friends at Trinity College, Dublin.

Note on Presentation

The presentation of this thesis complies with the recommendations set out by the Board of the Faculty of English Language and Literature at the University of Oxford in their Graduate Studies in English (Michaelmas Term 1990) and with the MHRA Style Book, 4th edn (London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 1991).

The only references given parenthetically in the text are to Joyce's fiction. Those for Finnegans Wake are by page and line number, for example, (125.34). Citations of A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man and Stephen Hero in chapter five are preceded by the abbreviations P and SH respectively. These accord with the accepted forms of reference used by the James Joyce Quarterly.

The following abbreviations of journal titles have been used in footnotes throughout the text and in the bibliography.

JJQ	James Joyce Quarterly
NLH	New Literary History
PMLA	Publications of the Modern Language Association of America

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INTRODUCTION.

This project began from considering what precisely was the point of reading a book like Finnegans Wake. What did it mean to say that it interrupted the space of the academy? What academy anyway? What did it mean to *read* Finnegans Wake? For this thesis, 'reading Finnegans Wake' is more than a question of how to read the book, it is also a question of who reads it and under what conditions. To what extent is it possible to identify an audience? Moreover, how does the text itself configure audiences? Does it project a kind of readership? What is the relation between such a projection and its identifiable historical audiences? It is these issues which this thesis sets out to answer.

Any attempt to write about Finnegans Wake must at some stage acknowledge the book's difficulty and the immense secondary material that has accumulated around it. The growth of what has become known as the Joyce Industry has been traced in several historical reviews.[1] Finnegans Wake was written about in the critical press during the years of its composition and publication as Work in Progress. The first book-length work of literary criticism devoted to the Wake appeared ten years before it was published in 1939. Regular checklists of studies of Joyce began serialisation in the early sixties in the new periodicals that specialised in Joyce's work, and although they continue to appear and are now more thorough, it is a mark of the growth of the Joyce industry that they have lost their original ideal to be comprehensive. In the mid-nineties, there are currently several periodicals devoted exclusively to Joyce, an International Foundation of scholars in his honour, and a major symposium every year (alternating between North America and Europe), not to mention the vast array of books and bibliographies, as well as

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[1] See, for example, William S. Brockman, '"Catalogue these books": Joyce Bibliographies, Checklists, Catalogs, and Desiderata', Joyce Studies Annual, 4 (Summer 1993), 119-137.

miscellaneous items such as stage plays, CD ROM recordings and recitals, devoted to Joyce's work.

Such a mass of various critical materials suggests both the difficulty of identifying audiences and the inevitability of approaching Joyce via some of those materials. In Ireland especially, and Dublin more particularly, Joyce is also an image, a cultural icon. As Emer Nolan's recent book points out,

> Joyce's Irish audience, of course, also extends beyond these intellectuals and writers, encompassing many thousands of Irish people who will never read the texts of this supremely obscure writer, but for whom his name and image have none the less become a significant aspect of cultural identity.[2]

This thesis is concerned with readership in a narrower sense than such a broad cultural audience, and it is only concerned with that of Finnegans Wake. It is a study of the influential readings that have shaped the received identities of Finnegans Wake, of the relationship between the Wake and English studies, and of the very issues of readership and community that are so pertinent to the discipline, issues with which the Wake itself seems to grapple.

Given the historical character of my method, three areas of relevance to the question of readership may be distinguished: the relationship between a work and its conditions of production; the relationship between a work and its reception; and the relationship between a work and current practice within its discipline. Likewise, this thesis presents three forms of readership: historical, critical and textual. The first deals with the loss of audiences suffered by Finnegans Wake and the contemporaneous expansion of English studies in universities, and the production and the formation of the Wake's subsequent

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[2] Emer Nolan, James Joyce and Nationalism (London: Routledge, 1995), p.xiv.

reception. The second concerns the critical appropriation of the Wake, especially by post-structuralism. It also looks at inscriptions of readership in the work of Derrida. Textual readership comprises the depiction of readers by the Wake which provides a commentary on the issues here under discussion. This thesis analyses these forms (which are not hard and fast distinctions) in that order: to establish the historical basis for readership of the text, mainly in relation to a burgeoning professional criticism; to analyse critical-theoretical formulations of the text and of the issue of readership; to see how readership is portrayed within the text and what help this can offer to critical attempts to develop the issue of readership.

Chapter One establishes the critical identity of the Wake as a 'limit text,' that is, as a limit for literature, and considers the failing of reception theory to provide an adequate account of histories of reading. The second chapter charts the loss of readers suffered by Joyce during the 1920s, showing how he reworked some of them into his writing. It also shows that around 1930 reactions began to change towards Work in Progress. Chapter Three considers the discipline of English studies as a context for Joyce's final work, a context that expanded greatly over the period of composition of Work in Progress. It also records the significance of Joyce within English studies, especially in the 1930s, and analyses the development of his work within university syllabi by focusing on examination papers.

In the second section, Chapter Four presents an analysis of some of the significant ways in which Finnegans Wake has been read by post-structuralism, which has championed it as a texte par excellence. The next chapter offers a reading of Derrida and deconstruction in relation to Finnegans Wake and the concept of readership, showing how Derrida's writing has long been engaged to explore communities of readers, for instance in his work on Joyce but also in the ways that his work inscribes such audiences. The problems that his work poses for any social identification of an audience are worked through in the

following chapters. Chapters Six and Seven in the third section provide readings of significant aspects of the Wake - the professor figures and the letters; and the role of the Four - in order to illustrate the importance of depictions of readership to the text.

It should be clear that the role of Finnegans Wake in this thesis is exemplary: the point is to analyse a key issue in the current development of English studies via the most appropriate text. The point is not to test a literary theory, but to provide a methodology that places reception in an historical framework, and in so doing to illuminate a neglected area within Finnegans Wake criticism.

CHAPTER ONE

Reading Finnegans Wake.

In writing about Finnegans Wake, in attempting to come to terms with the quantity of critical material, one must also deal with the identity, or status, of the text within literary studies, for Finnegans Wake holds an established position as a limit of literature or an end to writing. This can be shown in the way it has been characterized by general historical reviews of the development of literature and by reference to its initial reviews. The identity of Finnegans Wake as a limit begins with the first book-length study of the work, Our Exagmination Round his Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress, published in 1929. That identity remains implicit in the wealth of exegetic and interpretative studies begun in the fifties, continues through the heyday of post-structuralist readings in the mid-seventies, and still operates in contemporary analyses.

The short reviews of Finnegans Wake on its publication (4th May, 1939) continued the practice of earlier reviews of Work in Progress by regarding the work as a literary extreme. Mary Colum found that Finnegans Wake "represents, for good or ill, the very last word, up to the present and maybe for a long time in the future, in the development of the novel." For the review in The New York Herald Tribune this limit was cause for pessimism, because "after this ... there is nothing." The Irish Times was more reserved, balancing the Wake's extremity against its own timidity, finding that "we may be face to face in Finnegans Wake with one of the great milestones of literature," indeed, "it may be a novel to end novels."[1]

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[1] Mary Colum, 'The Old and the New', Forum and Century, 52 (October 1939), 158.
Alfred Kazin, Review, New York Herald Tribune, 21 May 1939, p.4.
Anon., Review, Irish Times, 3 June 1939, p.7.
Reviews of Work in Progress are discussed in chapter two.

It has frequently been noted that Joyce was an influential critic of his own work, and it may even be said that he contributed to the identity of his last work as a literary or linguistic limit, reportedly saying that "Je suis au bout de l'anglais." In his influential biography of Joyce, Richard Ellmann says that Finnegans Wake "forced modern literature ... to accept a new area of being and a new language."[2] From a rather different methodological perspective, Jacques Lacan told the audience of his inaugural address to the 1975 International James Joyce Symposium, "la littérature ne peut plus étre après lui [Joyce] ce qu'elle était avant."[3] In the 1980s, Geoffrey Hartman's reaction against deconstruction maintained that "There is a real danger of literature getting lost, running amok or running scared after Joyce's Wake and Derrida's Glas."[4]

One helpful index of the perceived extremity of Finnegans Wake is its critical identity in general reference works or overviews of literary history, for this gives some indication of how the Wake is seen by non-Joyceans who are nevertheless engaged in the broader critical institution. The most recent, and perhaps most well-known, survey, the New Pelican History of English Literature, provides some idea of contemporary reaction: "By 1939 ... it had been pretty generally accepted that Finnegan's Wake [sic] ... marked the ne plus ultra of that particular line of development," i.e. of experimental breakdown of literary moulds. When David Daiches came to write of The Present Age (1958) in Introductions to English Literature he found that Joyce had "followed up the

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[2] Richard Ellmann, James Joyce, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p.546, p.717.

[3] Jacques Lacan, 'Joyce le symptôme I', in Joyce avec Lacan, ed. by Jacques Aubert (Paris: Navarin, 1987), p.27.

[4] Geoffrey Hartman, Saving the Text: Literature / Derrida / Philosophy (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), p.79. The potential disruptive capacity of the Wake and deconstruction is discussed in chapter six.

implications of his own method with such startling rigour that he left no road that way for others to follow." Daiches' metaphor must be a common one in literary histories, or else Joyce really is a crossroads for writers, for Alastair Fowler concluded that "In the end," in 1987, "it must be judged a wrong turning for fiction." To drive the point home, that other great vehicle of literary trivia, The Oxford Companion to English Literature, under the editorship of Margaret Drabble, found that the Wake "pushed language and linguistic experiment ... to the extreme limits of communication."[5] Finnegans Wake is a limit of the discipline's object of study as defined by histories of the discipline. For this reason, it is a fitting text for a study of the academic growth of English studies, which has also had a significant influence on the Wake itself.

The use of Finnegans Wake as an exemplary text in literary theory similarly suggests something of its special status. For instance, Terry Eagleton has suggested that "It is always worth testing out any literary theory by asking: How would it work with Joyce's Finnegans Wake?"[6] It is significant that Eagleton asks this question in a chapter on reception theory. In order to proceed with this study of Finnegans Wake and readership it is first necessary to set out its methodological basis in terms of its relation to reception theory (and other critical practices). Finnegans Wake seems to be the most appropriate text with which to illustrate the need for an historical understanding of audiences with regard to reception theory, reader-response criticism, and deconstruction. The intention is to show how the issue of readership, with the example

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[5] Gilbert Phelps, 'The Post-war English Novel', in New Pelican History of English Literature, ed. by Boris Ford, 8 vols (London: Penguin, 1983), VIII: The Present, p.419.
Introductions to English Literature, ed. by David Daiches, 5 vols (London: The Cresset Press, 1958), V: The Present Age: From 1920, p.102.
Alastair Fowler, A History of English Literature (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), p.326.
The Oxford Companion to English Literature, ed. by Margaret Drabble, 5th edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

[6] Terry Eagleton, Literary Theory (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), p.82.

of the Wake, provides an adequate way to read what I take to be the most important question for English studies: where lies authority of interpretation? Furthermore, it shows the neglected significance of professional English studies on the production and dissemination of literature.

The issue of authority in interpretation - that is, how textual identities are produced - provides potential for a meeting between deconstructive criticism and reception theory. However, it should be stated that the methodology of this thesis is largely historical, including its reading of Derrida in chapter six, and is oriented towards the issue of readership within a history of the discipline of English. Reception theory itself has little direct relevance to this thesis. The following pages provide a brief overview of some of the major proponents in literary reception theory, in order to show how historical audiences - with which I am here concerned -have been neglected. The remainder of the chapter discusses some applications of reception theory to Joyce, and provides a summary of how this thesis tackles the issue of readership.

As a founder of the Konstanz school of rezeptionästhetik, Hans Robert Jauss developed the terms 'effective history' (Wirkungsgeschichte) and 'horizon of expectation' (Erwartungshorizont) found in the work of Gadamer, his teacher at Heidelberg, and in Husserl. Jauss reproved Gadamer for his traditional adherence to a classical canon, and one advantage of Jauss's work is its emphasis on the historical formation of canons, that is, the creation by a readership of the identity of texts via an epochal 'horizon of expectations'. Such a notion is quite at ease with Derrida's definition of deconstruction

as a study of the historical sedimentation of language.[7] Perhaps, then, there is some room for developing a methodology from this historical corrective to reception theory. What this coupling (of Derrida and Jauss) points to is a historical community that has the social authority to determine interpretation. It is an investigation of this community in specific relation to Finnegans Wake that this thesis offers.

Jauss's manifesto, 'Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory' (1967), proposes a theory of reception built from a critique of objectivism whose principle targets are formalist aesthetics and Marxist historiography. The constructive side of this essay posits seven theses toward a new literary history structured around a theory of reception which attempts to bring "historical and aesthetic considerations ... into a new relationship."[8]

Jauss discredits historical objectivism and seeks to replace it by analysis of the 'horizon of expectations' that governs textual reception and influence. Jauss's theory is dependent upon the ability to 'objectify' that horizon, and so does not entirely escape the determinism he criticizes. The advantage of this objectification for Jauss lies in its avoidance of psychological factors of reception. Prior to interpretive reception, says Jauss, remains the aesthetic character of a work. A number of "ideal cases" evoke "the reader's horizon of expectations ... in order to destroy it step by step."[9] Reconstruction of previous horizons of expectation allows one to understand previous receptions of a

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[7] Derrida: "déconstruction ... is simply a question of ... being alert to the implications, to the historical sedimentation of the language which we use." Discussion following the presentation of 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences', in The Structuralist Controversy, ed. by Richard Macksey and Eugenio Donato (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972), p.271.

[8] Hans Robert Jauss, 'Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory', in Toward an Aesthetic of Reception, trans. by Timothy Bahti (Brighton: Harvester, 1982), p.10.

[9] Jauss, pp.23-4.

work, but only within the current horizon. Any text can then be seen in a diachronic series of interpretations determined within particular audiences. Jauss also posits a synchronic categorization of works within "an overarching system of relationships in the literature of a historical moment."[10] Finally, Jauss proposes that literary history has a "unique relationship" to general history, whereby a text may effect the "social behaviour" of its audience.[11]

Although Jauss never offers any sociological or historical examination of particular audiences, and does not go into the real problem of the power relations between audiences, he does allow for the effect of a literary work in forming a new audience.

> There are works that at the moment of their appearance are not yet directed at any specific audience, but that break through the familiar horizon of literary expectations so completely that an audience can only gradually develop for them.[12]

Some texts form their own readership, Jauss says, but he concentrates only on a speculative reader's "horizon of literary expectations." That is, he ignores the relation between literary and social horizons, or rather, fails to place the literary within the social horizon, and this failure is symptomatic of a broader aestheticization of reading in Jauss's theory.

Interestingly, in possibly his only published attempt to deal with literary reception, Derrida chose the example of Joyce to make a point similar to that made by Jauss.

> Joyce dreamt of a special institution for his oeuvre, inaugurated by it like a new order.... Aren't we, today, people or characters in part constituted

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[10] Jauss, p.36.

[11] Jauss, p.39.

[12] Jauss, p.26.

> (as readers, writers, critics, teachers) in and through Joyce's dream? Aren't we Joyce's dream, his dream readers?
>
> The dream we were talking about concerns what it is in the work which produces its reader, a reader who doesn't yet exist, whose competence cannot yet be identified, a reader who would be "formed," "trained," instructed, constructed, even engendered, let's say invented by the work.[13]

Certain texts, of which Ulysses is Derrida's named example, create their own readers and teach them how to read. As ever, a pedagogic interest is not far from Derrida's thoughts in this passage, and it is this which gives an extra dimension to a similar aestheticization of reading as that proposed by Jauss: readers are made by the text, but they also, in turn, teach the text. With regard to Finnegans Wake, I hope to show how assumptions about the creation of an audience neglect the already constituted historical audience (described in chapter two), and this in turn has repercussions on deconstructive (and other) assumptions about the text's disruption of pedagogy.

The example given by Jauss to demonstrate his final point that texts can be "socially formative," and also to illustrate his third thesis, that artistic character may be measured by the distance between the work and its presupposed audience, is that of the trial for obscenity in 1857 of Madame Bovary.[14] Jauss finds that

> when at first it [Madame Bovary] was understood and appreciated as a turning-point by only a small circle of connoisseurs, the audience of novel readers that was formed by it came to sanction the new canon of expectations.[15]

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[13] Jacques Derrida, '"This Strange Institution Called Literature": An Interview with Jacques Derrida', trans. by Geoff Bennington and Rachel Bowlby, in Acts of Literature, ed. by Derek Attridge (New York: Routledge, 1992), p.74. See chapter six for a detailed discussion of this interview in relation to deconstruction.

[14] Jauss, p.45. It would be possible to think of the trial of Ulysses in the same light.

[15] Jauss, p.28.

For Jauss, in the case of Madame Bovary, a new horizon has been set, whereas for Derrida, Joyce's texts continue to erase any tentative horizon of competence so that the literary text continually asserts its power over readers. Jauss's theory could be developed by two lessons of deconstruction. First, there is a metaphysical danger in reliance upon a prior category of the aesthetic. Second, how and why does a "small circle .. sanction" an interpretation that then governs reading practices? The point is rather to analyse by what means authority is exercised in interpretation. By declaring that Madame Bovary "was able to jolt the reader ... out of the self-evident character of his moral judgement," the only authority cited by Jauss is back in the text itself.[16] There is thus a hermeneutic circle to rezeptionästhetik. The trial of Flaubert's book also demonstrates that many readers were precisely not liberated by the author's innovative style indirect libre. This incongruity points to a further problem with Jauss's essay (and reception theory in general): a marked ignorance of who comprises the audiences they discuss. There is a crucial historical difference between the examples used by Jauss and Derrida (and the fact that Derrida used Joyce to illustrate his point is itself significant): by the time Joyce was writing, English literature was an established academic subject and its professionalization was concomitant with his work. As the following chapter shows, this was especially significant for the readers of Work in Progress.

However, reception theory often has had little or nothing to do with the actual reception of a text, but has been more concerned with either its postulated effect (Wirkung) or its speculated reception (or horizont) in terms of aesthetics. Hence every invocation of an audience by Jauss is largely speculative. Moreover, the relationship between current horizons and the recreation of past horizons (necessarily within the current ones) is clarified no further than Gadamer's advice that "Understanding ... is always the process

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[16] Jauss, p.44.

of the fusion of these horizons."[17] Since an horizon defines an audience, the historical model in rezeptionästhetik is unclear about the relationship between current audience and past audience, other than to say that the present is always influenced by the past and that the past is always known through the present.

For Paul de Man, rezeptionästhetik itself has an 'horizon' and about which he is uneasy. For instance, the phenomenological concept of 'horizon of expectations' may not be applicable to language as it is to sociology. "The hermeneutics of experience and the hermeneutics of reading are not necessarily compatible." Language, he says, may overrun the structural determination of Jauss's newly defined theory: literary history may not hold literature. There are "linguistic factors that threaten to interfere with the synthesizing power of the historical model."[18] Indeed, Jauss does refer to an "overarching system" of synchronous literature as well as to "the objectifiable system of expectations."[19] This critique by de Man is about as close a meeting as exists between the academic discourse of deconstruction and literary reception theory.[20]

Jauss's reliance upon the aesthetic as a discrete category becomes more pronounced in his later work, Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics (1977), in which also the concept of objectification is largely replaced by a nebulous 'experience'. This

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[17] Hans-Georg Gadamer, Truth and Method, 2nd edn (London: Sheed and Ward, 1975; repr., 1985), p.273.

[18] Paul de Man, Introduction to Jauss, p.xvii.

[19] Jauss, p.36, p.22.

[20] Although de Man's Introduction to Jauss, promises a meeting of deconstruction and reception theory, claiming that rezeptionästhetik has been "well-received" (p.viii) in the United States, much remains to be done in this area, as demonstrated by the partisan review in Robert C. Holub, Crossing Borders: Reception Theory, Poststructuralism, Deconstruction (London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), which includes a lengthy attack on the politics of deconstruction and a personal attack on de Man.

reliance upon the aesthetic detracts from the theoretical value of reception and precludes investigation into historical audiences. Moreover, by postulating the supposed aesthetic effect of a work, Jauss conceives of the literary text as known and complete, and this is the problem perceived by de Man: a text is capable of subverting one's knowledge of it. For Jauss such texts are a rare example, "ideal cases," but for de Man any text retains that capacity.[21]

The work of Wolfgang Iser exhibits similar concerns and problems to that of Jauss, although on a different scale. Iser's work pertains to particular reading situations of noted textual examples, a "microcosm of response" as opposed to Jauss's "macrocosm of reception."[22] Iser also refuses to be drawn into a history of actual reception, preferring instead to posit an 'implied reader' whose roots are "firmly planted in the structure of the text." This role anticipates "the presence of a recipient without defining him."[23] The implied (male) reader is ahistorical, a textual construct idealistically removed from any interpretive or social context. Iser's model is biased towards his own presumed audience of like-minded liberal intellectuals, for whom he "imbues modernism with a mainstream morality more congenial to the liberal traditions of the academy," for instance in his reading of Ulysses in The Implied Reader.[24]

Iser stipulates that communication occurs through a common participation in linguistic and social conventions.[25] An historical analysis of those conventions can in principle

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[21] Jauss, p.23.

[22] Robert C. Holub, Reception Theory: A Critical Introduction (London: Methuen, 1984), p.83.

[23] Wolfgang Iser, The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), p.34.

[24] Holub, p.98.

[25] Iser, p.61.

lead to the nub of the issue: how authority is exerted in interpretation. The Rezeptionästhetik of the Konstanz school, only two of whose members have been discussed here, and much reader-response criticism from the United States, has pointedly failed to address this issue. Empirical studies of actual responses have also failed to do so, for instance, the classroom analyses of East German research and the psychological portraits by Norman Holland. These instead concentrate on individual responses to language: a troubled empirical attempt to classify response to an undefined aesthetic.[26]

Peter Bürger's Theory of the Avant-Garde, first published in German in 1974, introduces a notion of 'the institution' to account for the reception of art this century, which he claims is dislodged by the avant-garde. Such art, he argues, moves the site for its reception, reintegrating art and life. He thus moves towards analysing institutional determinations of literature. This thesis employs not dissimilar 'modes of appropriation' in its analysis of the critical reception of Finnegans Wake in chapters three and four. However, whereas avant-garde art of the early twentieth-century may in some fields have partially achieved a dislocation of art, a more specific account of reception is needed for a text such as the Wake, not published until 1939, but already undergoing various forms of appropriation. Moreover, Bürger's somewhat dry theorization of the functions of the avant-garde is reluctant to forego artistic autonomy and consciously ignores the history of the university institutionalization of literature, which is the context in which I want to place Work in Progress and Finnegans Wake.

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[26] Empirical reception theory in the old German Democratic Republic is discussed in Holub, pp.134-147.
Norman Holland, The Dynamics of Literary Response (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968).

It would seem, then, that there has been little recognition of the theoretical significance of a historical readership. Walter J. Ong has questioned the validity of the term 'readership', arguing that only oral communication has an audience and that there is no collective noun for readers (readership is an abstraction). However, it is preferred here to the term 'audience' which derives from oral interaction, especially as the etymology of 'read' suggests counsel, control and consideration.[27] Coincidentally, but not very surprisingly, Ong cites the Wake as an example of the difficulty in defining an audience/readership: "To whom is Finnegans Wake addressed? Who is the reader supposed to be?"[28] Ong's two questions are indicative of the confusion in most reception theory between actual readers and textually inscribed or implied readers. In a sense, this may be seen as prime ground for deconstruction in that it signals the textual character of an historical audience. However, I want to defer that issue by arguing that, textual or not, a readership still has an important historical place and function which demands interpretation. In the case of Finnegans Wake, the mass of critical and other material surrounding the text means that any contemporary approach is mediated by various received identities. My reading of the Wake, then, first works through its criticism.

There have been few studies of Joyce and readership and most offer unsatisfactory analyses of the issues involved, and none deal specifically with Finnegans Wake. Unfortunately, Fritz Senn's essay on Ulysses is too brief to provide methodological

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[27] Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology, ed. by C.T. Onions (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966; repr. 1992).

[28] Walter J. Ong, 'The Writer's Audience is Always a Fiction', PMLA, 90.1 (January 1975), 9-22 (p.20).

assistance.[29] A recent thesis on early critical responses to Ulysses places that historical reception solely in the context of reception theory, and in doing so also ignores the central issue of interpretive authority. The analysis offered cannot, as hoped, form a "case-study" for it amounts to little more than an account of various schools in early criticism of Ulysses and a partial commentary on reception theory.[30] The only other known recent studies of readership and Joyce are articles on A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, both published in special edition of James Joyce Quarterly devoted to structuralist and reader-response theories. Joseph Kestner reduces readership to a textual effect, and James Sosnoski offers a method for analysing interpretive disputes such as that over aesthetic, or ironic, distance in Joyce's depiction of Stephen Dedalus.[31]

Regrettably, Hofheinz's recent Joyce and the Invention of Irish History arrived too late to be given more than cursory mention. Hofheinz deploys a method (rather too) reliant upon Gadamer and Ricoeur to analyse Joyce's invocations of historiography, with particular reference to modern Irish history. "The Wake may disorient us and shake our sense of where we have been and where we are going, but in that process it can help us find out where we are."[32]

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[29] Fritz Senn, 'Ulysses and its Audience', in James Joyce: the Centennial Symposium, ed. by Morris Beja, Phillip Herring, Maurice Harmon and David Norris (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986).

[30] Suman Gupta, The Construction of Criticism: Critical Responses to James Joyce's Ulysses, 1922-1941 (unpublished doctoral thesis, Oxford University), p.68.

[31] Joseph Kestner, 'Virtual Text/Virtual Reader: The Structural Signature Within, Behind, beyond, Above', JJQ, 16.1-2 (Fall 1978 / Winter 1979), 27-43.
James J. Sosnoski, 'Reading Acts and Reading Warrants: Some Implications for Readers Responding to Joyce's Portrait of Stephen', JJQ, 16.1-2 (Fall 1978 / Winter 1979), 43-65.

[32] Thomas C. Hofheinz, Joyce and the Invention of Irish History: Finnegans Wake in Context (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.187.

It is precisely the pedagogic imperative implied by Hofheinz, and his assumption of a reading community, that is at stake in this work. The following chapter begins the attempt to identify such an audience for Finnegans Wake.

CHAPTER TWO

Production and Readership of Work in Progress.

This chapter presents a roughly chronological account of the publication and reception of Work in Progress from 1924 to 1939, concentrating on issues of readership. It examines how responses of reviewers changed towards Joyce's last work and considers the implications of its reviews as well as how the work itself changed and affected its reception, for instance by incorporating its lost readers into revisions. Identifying the period 1927 to 1929 as crucial to the production and critical reception of Work in Progress, this chapter argues that by the end of this period the critics and reviewers were the only remaining audience of the work.[1] Some quantitative analysis of reviews is offered to show the identity of Joyce's last project as a limit of literature.

Support for the arguments here developed comes from three sources: readers' responses to Work in Progress as it was being written; Joyce's letters insofar as they outline reactions to his work, and how he viewed them; and the various texts of Work in Progress as they record Joyce's inscriptions of responses to his work.

Joyce's letters reveal something of his ambivalence towards the issue of his work's readership. Indeed, he seems to read his readers as they read Work in Progress, that is, with cynical suspicion and reluctant acceptance. The epistolary is a form much used in Joyce's work to highlight models of communication and reception. His own correspondence might be taken to show something of the extent of his actual audiences and the importance he attached to them. That Joyce himself has traditionally been seen as the (only possible) reader of the Wake, and that its letter(s) is critically associated

[1] Full references for episodes and reviews of Work in Progress, including those cited in this chapter, may be found in the Appendix, A Chronological Bibliography of Publication and Criticism of Work in Progress 1924 - 1939.

with the Wake as a whole, suggests some significance for Joyce's correspondence on the topic of his audience. He also included in Our Exagmination two letters from readers of Work in Progress. It certainly seems as though the epistolary form has some strong thematic significance for the author, especially as letters are recurrently employed in his texts to explore questions of readership.[2]

The epistolary form is explored in this chapter for its significance in Joyce's work and its generic adaptability. Published letters represent an interface of the public and the private, and are used by Joyce also to blur demarcation between the literary and the historical and between the creative and the critical, as in his exegetical letters to Harriet Shaw Weaver. Letters are, moreover, the prime formal means of invoking questions of readership. They are therefore a fitting guide to the relationship between Work in Progress and its potential audiences.

Work in Progress suffered many of the problems of readership earlier encountered by Ulysses. The following letter from Joyce to his patroness shows how the reception of the earlier novel remarkably anticipates some of the readership problems encountered by Joyce as he prepared Work in Progress. It was written less than a week after writing the first two tentative pages of that new project in March, 1923.

> Dear Miss Weaver: Many thanks for your letter and the article in the Manchester Guardian.[3] I shall send a few lines of formal thanks to Mr

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[2] Apart from the letters in Finnegans Wake, see also the correspondence that circulates in Ulysses, most notably from Milly to Leopold and Molly in 'Calypso' (ch.4); between Leopold Bloom, in the guise of Henry Flower, and Martha in 'Lotus-Eaters' (ch.5); between Mr. Deasy and the Evening Telegraph (where Stephen Dedalus, Shaun-like, acts as postman) from 'Nestor' (ch.2) to 'Aeolus' (ch.7); and the recurring riddle ("U.P.") delivered on a postcard to Denis Breen which Bloom first encounters in 'Lestrygonians' (ch.8). These, and others, are discussed in Shari Benstock, 'The Printed Letters in Ulysses', JJQ, 19.4 (Summer 1982), 415-29.

[3] Stephen Gwynn, 'Modern Irish Literature', Guardian, Manchester, 15 March 1923, pp.36-40.

> Gwynn who after sixteen years of literary criticism has discovered my existence. One half of his article is taken almost verbally from the text of Ulysses, the other half consists of phrases which I myself set in circulation. They now come back to me. You ask me to whom I wish copies to be sent. The copies of Ulysses which I presented to certain of my fellowcountrymen and fellowcountrywomen were either unacknowledged or locked up or given away or lent or stolen or sold and, it seems, in all cases unread. Nevertheless it remains part of my policy to inflict notices of myself upon the recipients.[4]

Many themes familiar to the tortuous reception of Work in Progress are here evident: the difficulty of getting reviewed; reviews consisting of mere quotation; the persistence of Joyce as a self-publicist; the lack of an Irish readership.

The ambivalent relationship between Joyce and Ireland is very much evident in the reception there of his work. Ulysses had been virtually unavailable and certainly popularly unread in comparison to the works of the nationalist revival. Part of the problem was Joyce's refusal to woo an Irish audience (including Irish publishers and printers), a longstanding facet in the history of his publications. Before Work in Progress began, he had resisted overtures from Lady Gregory and W.B. Yeats to visit Ireland (the last visit he ever paid was in 1912), thus declining to personally spread interest in his work. After all, as any Leopold Bloom knows, newspaper advertisements reach more people than personal appearances. In August 1922, Joyce, in reply to Lady Gregory, refused to be considered part of the contemporary Irish literary movement, which in Finnegans Wake he was to call the "cultic twalette" (344.12).[5] Two years later Stanislaus wrote to his brother of "the current of hostile

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[4] To Harriet Shaw Weaver, 30 March 1923, Letters of James Joyce, ed. by Stuart Gilbert and Richard Ellmann, 3 vols (London: Faber, 1957, 1966), iii. 74. Hereafter cited as Letters with volume and page numbers.

[5] To Lady Gregory, 8 August 1922, Selected Letters, ed. by Richard Ellmann (London: Faber, 1975), p.290. This letter is referred to in Letters iii. 77 n2.

opinion still against you in Dublin" and in 1925 Joyce complained to his patroness of the dearth of notices from his native country, "How is it that your [press cutting] agency never includes Irish notices?"[6] As Terence Brown has shown, Joyce's Irish reception during the period Work in Progress was written depicted him very much as a European writer.[7] Although Ulysses attracted attention to Joyce it failed to secure him a permanent audience for his new work, whether in Ireland, France or England.[8]

In 1924 Stanislaus wrote to his brother that

> Gorman's book[9] on you practically proclaims your work as the last word in modern literature. It may be the last in another sense, the witless wandering of literature before its final extinction.... I for one would not read more than a paragraph of it, if I did not know you.[10]

This letter anticipates the critical debate over the "unspeakably wearisome" Work in Progress and its status as a literary limit. It also shows a marked correspondence in the responses of Joyce's private readers. In effect, Stanislaus calls Work in Progress both the limit of literature and unreadable. As Ellmann has noted, something of his attitude is given to Shaun in Finnegans Wake. What he does not record is the relevant context in Work in Progress of the Shaun episode (expanded to become the third section of the Wake). This section was begun in March 1924, revised throughout 1925 and set aside

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[6] From Stanislaus Joyce, 7 August 1924, Letters iii. 102; to Harriet Shaw Weaver, 29 August 1925, Letters i. 232.

[7] Terence Brown, 'Yeats, Joyce and the Irish Critical Debate', in Ireland's Literature: Selected Essays (Mullingar: Lilliput Press, 1988).

[8] On the loss of an audience in England see Patrick Parrinder, 'The Strange Necessity: James Joyce's Rejection in England 1914-30', in James Joyce: New Perspectives, ed. by Colin MacCabe (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1982).

[9] Herbert Gorman, James Joyce: His First Forty Years (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1926).

[10] From Stanislaus Joyce, 7 August 1924, Letters iii. 103.

as 'finished' in April 1926.[11] Joyce was thus able to impute to Shaun much of the opposition he encountered from his readers while in the early stages of his new work. Note also that Joyce explicitly identified himself with Shaun's twin and rival Shem, not only in the text but also in his letters. One such letter to his patroness at the end of 1926 is signed with the siglum used for Shem rather than the author's signature.[12] It is also significant that Joyce initially, in March 1924, conceived of the ALP letter as part of the Shaun section before including it in I:5, which was then published in 1925 ahead of Shaun.[13] Shaun's section was thus associated with both Stanislaus and the problematics of epistolary interpretation. As the project grew, the letters took on increasing importance for the work as a whole.

There were other potential audiences available, other than among Joyce's home country and readers of his previous work, the most notable of which was the critics of the literary press. Although it has been argued that 'modernists' despised the press as symptomatic of a 'mass culture', this particular readership is of great significance to Work in Progress, as a means of acquiring both literary status and readers.[14] Louis Gillet's attack on Ulysses in Revue des Deux Mondes in 1925 expressed the problem of audience for Work in Progress:

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[11] Dates of composition of Work in Progress are taken from A. Walton Litz, The Art of James Joyce: Method and Design in Ulysses and Finnegans Wake (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), Appendix C.

[12] To Harriet Shaw Weaver, 29 November 1926, Letters iii. 147.

[13] To Harriet Shaw Weaver, 15 March 1924, Letters iii. 90.

[14] John Carey, The Intellectuals and the Masses (London: Faber and Faber, 1992). Carey defends (and so implicitly accepts the definition of) the masses on grounds of liberal individuality but also condemns the intellectual elite for their very individualism. Carey's schema has no place for Work in Progress, surely the most avant-garde literature of the twenties despite being reliant upon newspaper reviews for its public reception.

> Voilà encore un auteur devenu tout à coup célèbre par un de ces livres indigestes qui semblant plutôt faits pour rebuter à tout jamais le public.[15]

Gillet's article nevertheless pleased Joyce as he had been trying for three years to get noticed in a respected French journal, arguing that "the tone of the article does not matter much."[16] If his writing rejected a public audience, Joyce still sought to publicize it via the literary press, such is the complex character of Joyce's relationship to his potential readership. Joyce's geographical exile undoubtedly also contribited to his exclusion, and to his deliberate obscurity.

Over a year before his article was published, Gillet received a letter from Edmond Gosse, who had previously been an official of the Royal Literary Fund which had granted Joyce a nine month stipend in 1915-16. Before agreeing to act on Joyce's behalf, Gosse sought out Joyce's political affiliation in the war from one of his sponsors, W.B. Yeats, objecting that neither Yeats nor Joyce had expressed sympathy for the Allied cause. Yeats replied in support and added that Joyce had "only literary and philosophic sympathies ... not anti-English feeling."[17] In 1924 Gosse wrote to Gillet:

> I should very much regret your paying Mr. Joyce the compliment of an article in the "Revue des Deux Mondes". You could only expose the worthlessness and impudence of his writings, and surely it would be a mistake to give him the prominence. I have a difficulty in describing to you in writing the character of Mr. Joyce's notoriety. It is partly

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[15] Louis Gillet, 'Du Côte de Chez Joyce', Revue des Deux Mondes, 1 August 1925, p.686.

[16] To Harriet Shaw Weaver, 29 August 1925, Letters i. 232.

[17] W.B. Yeats to Edmund Gosse, The Letters of W.B. Yeats, ed. by Allan Wade (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1954), pp.600-1.

> political; it is partly a perfectly cynical appeal to sheer indecency. He is, of course, not entirely without talent, but he is a literary[18]

Gosse's letter is evidence of the political collusion of the English literary establishment in attempting to suppress Joyce's work (despite patronising it) and it perhaps influenced the tone of Gillet's article. (Gillet later apologised to Joyce and wrote an appreciative account of Work in Progress in Revue des Deux Mondes in 1931.) Like Gillet, Gosse was clearly aware, although dismissive, of Joyce's fame, and continued to view him as "literary". To observers with no pre-disposition towards Joyce, he was a well-known but little-read literary writer when he began Work in Progress. As that work continued Joyce was to become more familiar with the critical press who in turn came to constitute his one audience.

In the mid-twenties opposition to Work in Progress was also registered by writers and critics as they came to know of Joyce's new work, and Joyce was not above using his latest project to recall unfavourable reviews of his previous work. Shane Leslie's review of Ulysses had rather pompously declared, "There are some things which cannot, and we should like to be able to say, shall not be done."[19] In the second episode from Work in Progress to be published, in Contact Collection of Contemporary Writers (May 1925), Joyce mocks this in the lines (now FW 033:19-21):

> there are certain statements which ought not to be, and one should like to hope to be able to add, ought not to be allowed to be made.

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[18] Edmund Gosse to Louis Gillet, 7 June 1924. Quoted by Eugene Jolas in 'Homage to James Joyce', transition, 21 (March 1932), 251. The letter was exhibited at the Exposition des Cent Ans de la Vie Française in celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of Revue des Deux Mondes. The rest of the letter, says Jolas, was not visible.

[19] Shane Leslie, 'Ulysses', Quarterly Review, 238 (October 1922), 219-34 (p.225). Cited in Roland McHugh, Annotations to Finnegans Wake (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), p.33.

Joyce's repetition of "ought not to be" deflates Leslie's careful manoeuvre from "cannot" to "shall not", a deflation which then undercuts the authority of the reviewer to disallow certain artistic practices. Likewise, the insertion in the middle of the sentence of an extra semantic and logical clause, "to hope", adds to the pomposity and tiredness of Leslie's remark, and signals a further move to deny critical authority, for it suggests that the reviewer's judgement rests upon a fanciful idealism ungrounded in any external authority. Moreover, Joyce has substituted "we" and replaced it by "one", further implying that Leslie's unsympathetic reading of Ulysses was based upon personal whim.

The review of Dubliners in the Times Literary Supplement had warned that

> The reader's difficulty will be enhanced if he is ignorant of Dublin customs; if he does not know, for instance, that "a curate" is a man who brings strong waters.[20]

This presumably refers to the curate in 'Counterparts' who intervenes in the Scotch House after Weathers has defeated Farrington in an arm wrestle. In Finnegans Wake Joyce relaunched the review's description:

> Let a prostitute be whoso stands before a door and winks or parks herself in the fornix near a makeussin wall (sinsin! sinsin!) and the curate one who brings strong waters (gingin! gingin!) (116.16-19).

This occurs in I.5, the chapter most explicitly concerned with the problematics of interpretation.

Perhaps the most celebrated of critical inscriptions in Work in Progress is Joyce's reply to the attack on him in Time and Western Man (1927) by Wyndham Lewis, whose

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[20] Anon., Times Literary Supplement, 18 June 1914, p.298. Also in McHugh, p.116.

book Joyce called "Spice and Westend Woman" and, in parenthesis (the somewhat self-reflexive), "utterly exhausted before publication" in transition 11 (now 292.6-7). By inscribing its lost readers into the text, Work in Progress insures against its own exhaustion, which Lewis apparently could not avoid, and simultaneously promotes its continual reinterpretation. Once an avant-garde writer championed by Pound, Lewis here reacts against Joyce and other innovative writers, so perhaps "utterly exhausted before publication" may simply mean that Lewis has sold out. He had claimed that "there is not very much reflection going on at any time in the head of Mr. James Joyce."[21] This was recorded in transition 3 (June 1927) as

> There was not very much windy Nous blowing at the given moment through the hat of Mr Melancholy Slow! (now 56:28-30)

Lewis is signalled by "windy" and his criticism of Joyce's writing as too temporally intricate is returned by replacing Lewis's "at any time" with "at the given moment."

Accusing Joyce of writing a 'time-book' in Ulysses and being "dedicated to Time," Lewis has nothing to say about Work in Progress but is not above hostile personal criticism.[22] Joyce's reply comes in transition 12 (March 1928) in the fable of the Ondt and the Gracehoper, which returns to the time:space relation begun in the story of the Mookse and the Gripes in transition 6 (September 1927).[23] The spatialist Gracehoper ironically asks

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[21] Percy Wyndham Lewis, Time and Western Man (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1928), p.90.

[22] Lewis, p.84.

[23] Joyce added this fable at the eleventh hour to the copy for transition, 6 as a reply to Lewis. See Dougald McMillan, transition: The History of a Literary Era 1927-38 (London: Calder and Boyars, 1975), pp.205-6. McMillan also provides other references in the history of Joyce's struggle with Lewis over the period of Work in Progress.

Your feats end enormous, your volumes immense,
(May the Graces I hoped for sing your Ondtship song sense!),
Your genus its worldwide, your spacest sublime!

But, Holy Saltmartin, why can't you beat time? (now 419:5-8)

Again, Joyce parodies the double value practised by his critics: Lewis had acknowledged where "everyone is in agreement" that Joyce resides "very high up in contemporary letters."[24] Work in Progress mimics Lewis's implicit value of inherent worth ("your genus") and explicit charge of unreadability ("song sense" is lacking). A former friend and literary patron - "I pick up your reproof, the horsegift of a friend" (418.20) - Lewis privately claimed to be an "ever devoted friend" in his correspondence with Joyce.[25] In Finnegans Wake III.1, Shaun says of Shem, with more accuracy than Lewis could muster, "I'm an everdevouting fiend of his" (408.18).

This episode of Work in Progress, now Finnegans Wake III.1 (403-28), also includes references to Samuel Roth's journal, Two World's Monthly, which had pirated Ulysses and Work in Progress from 1925 to 1926. Shaun complains of Shem "blundering all over the two worlds" (422.15-6) accusing him of "The last word in stolentelling" (424.35). Joyce, as the Shem character, seems to acknowledge the irony of Roth's piracy, for Work in Progress itself creatively borrowed from myriad sources, including its critics. For instance, Shaun, as both Stanislaus and a standard reviewer, remembers his twin "always cutting my phrose to please his phrase" (423.15-6).

One implication of Joyce's incorporation of critical readers into his work is to confuse the boundary between a text and its criticism, a suggestion which is also implicit in the

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[24] Lewis, p.75.

[25] To Harriet Shaw Weaver, 14 August 1927, Letters i. 257.

sheer volume of critical work on Joyce, work which asserts the difficulty of Work in Progress and Finnegans Wake, hence implying a need for prior critical elucidation. However, it would be perhaps disingenuous to leave the issue there without recalling Joyce's role in the purposeful revision of Work in Progress. While certainly obscuring the limits of his text, Joyce also attempts to assert the mastery of his text over criticism (that is, over its readership) by incorporating critical reviews within his new work, thus both settling old scores and encompassing a reflexive critical function within a literary project.

Perhaps Joyce's coterie of friends and admirers could never be classed as a readership anyway, contrary to Patrick Parrinder's suggestion.[26] Many of them even contributed to the making of Work in Progress, as Eugene Jolas has testified.

> All his friends collaborated in the preparations of the fragments destined for transition .... It seemed almost a collective composition in the end, for he let his friends participate in his inventive zeal."[27]

Editions of Work in Progress also imply this claim. From the first published version of I.5 (104-25), Joyce's coterie are grouped within the text. As the narrator explains, one difficulty in interpreting the Boston letter which appears in this chapter is that its context was not only temporally indeterminate but also part of that letter. All versions of this chapter assert that "every person, place and thing ... anyway connected with [the letter] was moving and changing every part of the time" (118.21-23) and these were, or included,

> the continually more and less intermisunderstanding minds of the anticollaborators (118.24-26).

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[26] Patrick Parrinder, James Joyce (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p.200.

[27] Eugene Jolas, 'My Friend James Joyce', in james joyce: two decades of criticism, ed. by Sean Givens, 2nd edn (New York: Vanguard Press, 1963), p.7.

The circle of friends surrounding Joyce in the twenties and thirties could therefore be described as not so much a potential readership as collaborators in the work's production.

Other types of audience were lost and then inscribed into Work in Progress in its early years, such as his patrons, literary and financial. When Joyce sent to Ezra Pound an early version of the Shaun section, which he labelled 'abcd', the latter's reply was forthright:

> Ms. arrived this A.M.. All I can do is wish you every possible success. I will have another go at it, but up to present I make nothing of it whatever. Nothing so far as I make out, nothing short of divine vision or a new cure for the clapp [sic] can possibly be worth all the circumambient peripherization.[28]

Joyce had already published in Criterion (July 1925) the first version of the chapter containing the Boston letter, which opens with a list of alternative titles for the as yet "untitled mamafesta" (recall that Finnegans Wake was not publicly named until its completion) "which has gone by many names at disjointed times" (104.4-5). In the subsequent revised version of this piece, published in transition 5 (August 1927), the list of titles was expanded to include (among others), "A New Cure for an Old Clap" (104.22-3). The same phrase is also referred to at 117.05, and after the 1927 version of this chapter, Joyce, in describing the professor's reaction to the letter, added the phrase "unbluffingly blurtubruskblunt as an Esra" (116.01-2), where the misspelt name forms a suitable anagram: not only is calling Pound an arse blunt, it is also written backwards.

However, despite Pound's reluctance to endorse Joyce's project he still wished him "every possible success." This response is typical of Joyce's patrons during the early

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[28] From Ezra Pound, 15 November 1926, Letters iii. 145.

years of Work in Progress: without exception, they rejected his project by withdrawing their readership yet sanctioned the work by maintaining their investment in Joyce as a 'literary genius'. Joyce seems to have reserved a fitting rebuke for all those, patrons and critics alike, who rejected his last work, except the person who provided more support than any other.

The generous backing of his fiscal patroness in London, Harriet Shaw Weaver, enabled some degree of financial autonomy, as did the subsequent success of Ulysses. A letter from Joyce to Sylvia Beach in 1923 records that he received "the very great gift" of £12,000 from Miss Weaver, and in total £21,000 from her.[29] Yet Weaver never took to Joyce's last work, finding it too great an effort for too little reward; for her, its progress was rather regress. Her initial reaction was incomprehension. His letters to her, while amounting in full to a virtual diary of his later life, show the importance he attached to her response, for they always included the latest fragment, replete with exegesis, and her reticence frequently prompted some minor self-defence. An interesting exchange of letters between Joyce and Weaver sets out the reasons for Joyce's concern over his dwindling audience.

Near the beginning of the crucial phase in the composition of Work in Progress, at the beginning of February 1927, Joyce became stuck in an unproductive depression (brought about by worry for Lucia and his failing eyesight) which was compounded by Weaver's silence over Work in Progress. When Joyce complained of her reticence, she criticized the work indirectly by citing Pound and others, and deferred the issue indefinitely. Notable is Pound's ghostly presence in a rift between author and benefactress. She wrote to him, "perhaps when the present book is finished you will

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[29] To Sylvia Beach, 12 July 1923, Letters iii. 78. On Weaver's funding of Joyce, see Mary T. Reynolds, 'Joyce and Miss Weaver', JJQ, 19.4 (Summer 1982), 373-405.

see fit to lend ear to several of your older friends (E.P. to be included in the number): but the time to talk of that matter is not yet."[30] There is an ambivalence in Weaver's tone that characterizes her response to Work in Progress. A few days later, at the beginning of February 1927, Joyce replied on the defensive, calling the piece "the best I could do." He goes on,

> Do you not like anything I am writing. Either the end of part I [ALP siglum] is something or I am an imbecile in my judgment of language. I am rather discouraged about this as in such a vast and difficult enterprise I need encouragement.
> It is possible Pound is right but I cannot go back.... He misled me hopelessly as to the source of the first benefaction in Zurich and since then I have not relied on his perspicacity.... he asked me 'Was it John Quinn then?'![31]

Remarkable in Joyce's response is not only a wavering faith in his own work, coupled with a refusal to change tack; but also the causes for that nervousness: the opinion of his financial patron, and, indirectly, Pound's not altogether unreasonable guess as to the identity of that patron about a decade ago. The issue is not what Weaver thinks but whether or not Pound is right. Curiously, Joyce's test of Pound's judgement is his failure a long time ago to grasp the identity of his patroness. Weaver's rejoinder to Joyce's defence was to declare, "It seems to me you are wasting your genius." Her ambivalence, and good sense, again come out in the following remarks: "But I daresay I am wrong and in any case you will go on with what you are doing, so why thus stupidly say anything to discourage you."[32]

Towards the beginning of his reply to Weaver, dated 18 February 1927, Joyce asserts, "I want the case of Pound's soundness of judgment at the present moment more gone

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[30] From Harriet Shaw Weaver, 29 January 1927, Letters iii. 154 n2.

[31] To Harriet Shaw Weaver, 1 February 1927, Selected Letters, pp.318-19. The first volume of Letters does not give the text of this letter in full.

[32] From Harriet Shaw Weaver, 4 February 1927, Letters iii. 154 n2.

into." The crux of their dispute was, then, not so much the worth of Work in Progress as the value of Pound's opinion. It must be recognized, however, that Pound's opinion is an issue of some significance for Joyce and his reception. Since 1913 Pound had been Joyce's most influential ally, securing publication of A Portrait in The Egoist (for which Weaver paid fifty pounds) and winning sources of financial patronage for him. On Pound's opinion Joyce's reputation primarily rested until publication of Ulysses. That Pound should now dismiss Work in Progress (as well as the later stages of Ulysses) threatened to deprive Joyce of any audience: his middle-man had deserted him.

As suggested by the series of letters from early 1927, issues of patronage and readership significantly affected Joyce's work. This could explain Joyce's curious slip when addressing the second letter. Joyce's reply from Paris brilliantly connects the issues of readership and patronage, typically by a misprint. It is addressed, rather than to Miss Weaver, to "Dear Miss Marsden". Yet at the end of the same letter, he asks "Remember me to Miss Marsden."[33] The same figure is thus both a nominal reader and historical character of the letter Joyce writes. An inversion of this manoeuvre is often undertaken in Work in Progress where actual readers, though 'lost', are retrieved into the text as 'characters'. Prior to Weaver, Dora Marsden had been editor of the Egoist, which previously had been titled the Freewoman and then the New Freewoman, and Joyce records this journal in Finnegans Wake, where Shaun says,

> And once upon a week I improve on myself I'm so keen on that New Free Woman with novel inside. (145.28-9)

The "novel inside" was, of course, A Portrait, serialized in the Egoist (from Joyce's birthday of 1914 to the summer of 1915) thanks to pressure from Pound. There was,

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[33] To Harriet Shaw Weaver, 18 February 1927, Letters iii. 154-5.

then, some excuse for Joyce's confusion between Weaver and Marsden. By connecting Marsden's (rather than Weaver's) journal with the serialization of his first novel, Joyce seems to allude to the mistake made in his letter. The letter switches straight from the wrong addressee to the issue of Pound's opinion, and this comes "Before I write trying to explain what I am doing." Pound's influence on Joyce's potential audiences, especially patrons, was believed to be so great that it came before Work in Progress itself. The issue for Joyce, in his unproductive state, was not the project he had embarked upon, but his reputation and reception. It should be said, just to clarify the issue, that Joyce's concern was not that Weaver might withdraw her patronage (the money was already in a trust fund) but that without Pound's support he might not secure any audience.

At the beginning of 1928, nearly a year after the above exchange, Weaver travelled to Paris to reassure Joyce of her unconditional support. What is interesting about Weaver's position is its interaction between capital wealth and literary worth. In the early stages of Work in Progress Weaver was not merely a financier of Joyce's writing but also an active agent in its composition: she was the person to read most of its initial stages, usually with the benefit of the author's exegeses. However, geography determined the manner of her support: unlike the Paris coterie, Joyce's benefactress literally maintained her distance from Work in Progress. Her investment of capital into an avant-garde work still in progress represented a certain risk, which was offset by her faith in Joyce's genius and the inherent worth of his writing. Within the most relativizing of texts, which for the most part she considered incomprehensible at best, Weaver found an absolute literary value which sustained her commitment. This relationship between unreadability and implicit worth characterizes the response of all Joyce's patrons.

Weaver was the one significant influence among the reception of Work in Progress not to be explicitly inscribed in its revisions. Her material support was a condition of the book's production, for it allowed Joyce the freedom for sixteen years of revision. Weaver's influence is thus pervasive in his later work. Although her historical role is as an active, collaborating reader, she did also maintain an implicit faith in Joyce's ability and in that sense offered a form of ideal support. Moreover, for Joyce she was always an absent reader: virtually their only contact during nearly two decades was epistolary. Weaver's role in the production and consumption of Work in Progress after February 1927 is as a stable audience already predisposed to accept Joyce's new writing. It is this facet of reception - the predisposition to accept and to accommodate Joyce's work - that is increasingly important in Joyce's search for an audience for Work in Progress and Finnegans Wake. It might be said that Harriet Shaw Weaver was thus the initial interpretive community for Work in Progress.

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Work in Progress gained its title from Ford Madox Ford as editor of transatlantic review when that magazine published eight pages of the work in April 1924. Although continually revised over the next decade and a half, its publication was focused on one journal over a short period: transition from April 1927 to March 1928. In less than a year Joyce published ten instalments and a further three subsequent instalments were made in summer 1928, February 1929 and November 1929. By the time the first book-length study, Our Exagmination Round his Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress, was published in May 1929 (ten years ahead of Finnegans Wake), Joyce had written the greater part of Work in Progress. Also in this period at the end of the twenties, Joyce published three books containing material from the new work: Anna Livia Plurabelle (October 1928), Tales Told of Shem and Shaun (August 1929) and Haveth Childers Everywhere, (June 1930). After 1930, only three more instalments

were printed in transition; and two more books appeared: The Mime of Mick Nick and the Maggies (June 1934) and Storiella as She is Syung (October 1937). As the appendix shows, the late twenties were the most intensely active years in the history Work in Progress.

The one faction of the readership of Work in Progress that did persist was its criticism, including reviews. Since this is an heterogenous body but also a significant influence on Joyce's writing, some quantification of the criticism of Work in Progress is necessary. However, any such analysis can only be partial, especially as many reviews refuse explicit judgement and so are difficult to quantify as either supportive or hostile. Work in Progress was reviewed and written about, as it was gradually published, in popular daily newspapers, literary magazines and avant-garde journals. Although, in general, the latter unsurprisingly supported it, other periodicals published both favourable and unfavourable reviews. Particular critics were tied to certain periodicals, so whereas one can generally say that avant-garde magazines (such as transition in France, New Republic in the United States and Criterion in England) supported Joyce's writing, this factor alone accounts for little as other literary magazines and more popular newspapers carried mixed opinions. Even Eliot's culturally superior Criterion, with a circulation deliberately under one thousand at its height, and which had already published only the second fragment of Work in Progress to appear, was not above including unsympathetic criticism of it a couple of years later.

However, there does seem to be one important factor in each review's judgement: that is, when it was written. The longer Joyce's last work remained in progress, the more accepted it became by reviewers. From 1927 to 1929, the key period in the composition and publication of Work in Progress, there were at least as many unfavourable as favourable reviews; but after this period the proportion of more sympathetic reviews

grew steadily, so that in the early thirties the number of sympathetic notices was roughly twice that of unsympathetic ones. Some periodicals were willing to change their opinion, and, significantly, of those who published both 'good' and 'bad' reviews, the 'good' always followed the 'bad', and the division was always around 1930. The hostile review of Anna Livia Plurabelle in Criterion in September 1928 was followed by Hamish Miles's supportive review in October 1930. The New York Herald Tribune followed an unfavourable review of April 1927 with a favourable one in January 1930; the Times Literary Supplement changed its opinion between December 1928 and June 1930, the same month as the New Statesman published a response to a hostile review it had previously issued in May 1927. In January 1929 Sean O'Faolain's attack had the last word in an exchange with George Russell in the Irish Statesman, before Frank O'Connor gave a favourable review in April 1930; and Max Eastman, writing in Harper's may be said to have changed his mind between April 1929 and October 1931, from "the cult of unintelligibility" to a recognition that "literature is not of necessity a communicative art."

Work in Progress has consistently been taken to represent some margin, some border, some limit for literature or writing or communication, and this is evident in reference to its early reception. This public response to Work in Progress differs little from the private responses made to Joyce in correspondence, from his patrons, his family and his friends. From its first reviews in the mid twenties, it was debatable whether the new work could be considered part of the literary corpus, so finely did it tread the line of acceptability. Mary Colum, writing in the New York Herald Tribune in 1927, dismissively opined, "no literary critic could possibly admit that [Work in Progress] could belong to the domain of literature," although after his reading of Anna Livia Plurabelle Joyce responded that "its future is inside literature."[34] The following year the

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[34] Mary Colum, Our Friend James Joyce (New York: Doubleday, 1958), p.130.

Times Literary Supplement declared that Work in Progress "has attempted to change the whole face of the English language" and "Certainly this is a new literary dialect." In 1929 the Irish Statesman published a letter from Sean O'Faolain declaring that it was "not sane enough to be literature itself" in that it had "taken a good idea to the extremity of foolishness." The following year the same journal published an article by Frank O'Connor arguing that "By this new work, Joyce has kept for himself a place among the greatest in literature today." O'Connor often argued that Joyce's deliberate obfuscation made him a writer to be studied rather than read.[35] Literature, note, has moved into the realm of pedagogy.

Other early readers refused explicit judgement. Reviewing Anna Livia Plurabelle in 1929 Cyril Connolly declared, "it is not possible to pronounce a verdict on Joyce's work when it is fragmentary. The best that this article can hope to prove is that the new work of Joyce is respect-worthy and readable." Similarly, the following year Leon Edel warned, "what will be its later value we cannot now estimate. But that it is worthy of consideration I am certain." This process of deferral - perhaps inevitable with a work published in instalments - is an important factor in the critical appropriation of Joyce's last work. It both maintains the critical audience and implicitly inscribes Work in Progress as a work of value. The review by Hamish Miles in Criterion in 1930 exemplifies this process, arguing "Until Work in Progress is available as a whole, judgement must stand in suspense" but anticipating that it "looks like turning him [Joyce] into a don's writer." By the mid-thirties Joyce's reputation as a writer, along with the realisation that his new work was to be taken seriously, had secured a critical readership. However, the consequence of this was not to encourage more readers but to discourage potential readers while asserting the literary value of Work in Progress. For

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[35] See James D. Alexander, 'Frank O'Connor's Joyce Criticism', Journal of Irish Literature, 21.2 (May 1992), 40-53.

instance, Gilbert Highet called it "never readable" but "overpoweringly worthy": "It can be studied ... but it is impossible to read it." These reviews of Work in Progress are significant in that they posit it as a limit, as unique writing, as literary and therefore of implicit value. The reception accorded it thus helped create the conditions for the entry of Finnegans Wake into academia.

At the end of the twenties came two publications which probably did more than any others to turn the critical tide: in October 1928 Anna Livia Plurabelle was published in New York and in May 1929 the first book-length study of Work in Progress, Our Exagmination Round his Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress, was published in Paris.[36] Although earlier versions of the former book had been published in Navire d'Argent (October 1925) and transition 8 (November 1927), its publication as a book - the first section of Work in Progress to be distributed in that form - was undoubtedly aimed at securing critical attention. It ran to a printing of only eight hundred and fifty copies and sold at $15 each. Two years later in London, Faber published it at 2s. and sold, between June 1930 and 1957 (when Slocum and Cahoon recorded the figure), ten thousand, one hundred and sixteen copies in all printings (cloth and paper).[37]

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[36] In 1927 Joyce had published Pomes Penyeach (Paris: Shakespeare & Co.) in an attempt to remind critics that the author of Work in Progress was also a respected literary figure who should still be taken seriously. However, the main critical acceptance of the latter work did not come about until the end of the decade, and it is that reception with which we are concerned here.

[37] A similar pattern characterizes the publication of Tales Told of Shem and Shaun and Haveth Childers Everywhere. The former was first published in Paris (August 1929) in an edition of six hundred and fifty selling at $20 each, and reprinted by Faber as Two Tales of Shem and Shaun (December 1932) in London at 2s.3d. and had sold nearly four thousand copies by the mid-fifties. The latter was first published in New York in June 1930 in an edition of six hundred and eighty-five copies costing $20 each, and was released by Faber in May 1931 at a price of 2s., selling over five thousand copies in paperback. J.J. Slocum and H. Cahoon, eds., A Bibliography of James Joyce (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1953).

The fragment of Work in Progress that was most successful with Joyce's reviewers and friends was the Anna Livia Plurabelle (ALP) section, now Finnegans Wake I.8. Joyce said it was a piece "on which I am prepared to stake everything." A few days after completion, he gave a reading of it for transition towards the end of 1927, to a group of friends on whom it "made a profound impression." That this group hardly constituted a readership for the work is signalled by Joyce's comment that the audience was "about 25 people of the world's 1500 million."[38] The occasion of Joyce's reading is inscribed into the drafts of the ALP section: between the galleys for the aborted Calendar publication (dating from July 1925) and the galleys for transition 8 (November 1927), there is added the phrase "of the night of Allclose," referring, to the reading which, I would claim, took place on 2nd November, All Souls' Day, 1927.[39] This addition occurs in a passage, although spoken by one of the washerwomen, which seems to apply to the event of Joyce's reading.

> I'll tell you a test. But you must sit still. Will you hold your peace and listen well to what I am going to say now? It might have been ten or twenty to one of the night of Allclose (207.30-3)

Significantly, Joyce chose an episode about the telling of tales with which to publicise and encourage support for his project. Like much of Work in Progress, the ALP section shows the author's concern over his readership, for he was aware that his audience for the reading, even if only "ten or twenty" were, for the most part, already converts. Neverthless, it was this section more than any other part of Work in Progress that persuaded his critics of the project's literary merit.

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[38] To Harriet Shaw Weaver, 4 November 1927, Letters i. 260.

[39] Ellmann records that the transition version of ALP was finished on October 27 and that the reading was "a few days later," James Joyce, p.598. Joyce wrote to Weaver about the reading, 4 November, Letters i. 260. Given this information, and Joyce's changes, it seems reasonable to conjecture that the reading took place on 2nd November 1927, which does not appear to have been previously noted.

Throughout the revisions of I.8 further references were made to the voicing of stories, such as the addition of

> Are you listening? Yes, yes! Indeed I am! Listen now. Listen in (now emended at 201.3-4)

between the second draft (in Joyce's hand) and a fair copy and typescript sent to Weaver in March 1924. There were also references to objections encountered by Joyce, such as the addition of "Tell us in franca langua" between the Calendar and transition galleys. The galleys for the Gaige Anna Livia Plurabelle (1928) show also "And call a spate a spate" added immediately after the previous emendation (now 198.18-9).[40]

The ALP section in each version has explicitly referred to itself as a piece that can be spoken, as the voices of the washerwomen mimic the text's listeners: "O tell me all about Anna Livia! I want to hear all about Anna Livia" (196.1-4). In the description of one of the women washing herself Joyce has added the word "quincecunct" (206.35) to the transition version which he read to his friends since he regarded it as highly undesirable to swear in front of women. Another addition, to be found in the book version of Anna Livia Plurabelle but not in transition 8 (November 1927) is the phrase "Nivia, dochter of Sense and Art" (199.34-5). The rivers Nive, Sense and Arta are all here, but so also is an allusion to the reception of ALP as a daughter (the Dutch is dochter and the German Tochter) of art and sensibility, for it was of this section that critics and listeners most readily made some sense.

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[40] The revisions to ALP from 1924 to 1928 have been usefully collated by Fred Higginson in Anna Livia Plurabelle: the Making of a Chapter (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1960). Higginson has compiled six composite texts from different versions, so no one text which he presents is exactly the same as any one text composed, let alone published, by Joyce. I have compared Joyce's published versions.

The recording of part of Anna Livia Plurabelle read by its author, released by the Orthological Institute in Cambridge in 1929, sold only five copies in its first year.[41] It is important that Joyce's reading, and its recording, are not made to a readership but to listeners whose understanding more closely follows the reading imposed on his text by Joyce. It is this chapter, and these two events (his group reading and the record release), that provided the impetus for the critical myth that Finnegans Wake must be read aloud to be understood. However, the phonic publication of the ALP section did also provide a necessary point of entry to the text for many perplexed reviewers. Their mistake, barely corrected in subsequent criticism, was to over-generalize and assume that the whole of Finnegans Wake should be voiced aloud.[42]

In December 1928 Joyce seemed hardly to regard Anna Livia Plurabelle as a publication, although he was (quite typically) concerned about its reception, noting that "I seem to have drawn a critical blank all around."[43] However, over the next year, 1929, reviews began to appear and the response became more favourable, splitting 'judgements' evenly. Sean O'Faolain's initial attack on the book in Hound and Horn had asked "whether, if this be literature, literature is worth while?" yet still suggested that "no genuine student of literature can dare be unfamiliar with Anna Livia." Even unfavourable reviews were prepared to admit some significance for Work in Progress as a defining limit of literature, especially now that literature was a pedagogic industry. The ALP section encouraged reviewers to assimilate Work in Progress by reading it aloud, and to this end Joyce's recording for the Orthological Institute was an important

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[41] To Mrs Herbert Gorman, 5 October 1930, Letters iii. 203.

[42] For example, see Michel Butor, "the best way to become acquainted with Finnegans Wake is to hear it read aloud." 'Crossing the Joycean Threshold', JJQ, 7.3 (Spring 1970), 160-77 (p.168).

[43] To Harriet Shaw Weaver, 2 December 1928, Letters i. 277.

early step. C.K. Ogden had arranged the recording with which he issued, with Joyce's assistance, 'Notes in Basic English on the Anna Livia Plurabelle Record.' He later wrote in 1930 that without the recording 95% of readers would extract no more than 5% of ALP's significance. Ogden had written the preface for Tales Told of Shem and Shaun and his creation, Basic English, is referred to in the revisions of I.5 where "basically English" (116.26) appears for the first time in 1939. Future reviewers were to read Work in Progress as though it all had to be voiced aloud, even marrying this to a literary status. An editorial in New Britain declared that "Work in Progress cannot be understood unless read aloud" and that "the greatest literature is meant to be spoken."[44]

Our Exagmination was published in May 1929 and by the end of July, Joyce complained, "though at least a hundred copies have been freely circulated to the press and pressmen not a single criticism has appeared."[45] One reason for the book's apparent failure was perhaps the arrangement of its essays. These were compiled according to their authors' alphabetical order, without any note of the time of their individual composition and previous publication in transition. The initial criticism of Joyce's last work, then, set an ahistorical standard for others to follow. Although this critical work proved unpopular with reviewers (they were not yet ready to publicise books about Joyce, nor, as now, books about books about Joyce), its publication came at a crucial stage in the critical accommodation of Work in Progress, further enabling critics and reviewers (some of whom read Our Exagmination even if they didn't write about it) to pronounce judgement on Joyce's last work. Its significance is that it signals the emergence of a critical readership for avant-garde writing even though as Joyce said, "up till the last day I had to supervise it."[46] The importance and influence of this

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[44] Unsigned, 'What is Poetry?', New Britain, 8 November 1933, p.784.

[45] To Valery Larbaud, 30 July 1929, Letters i. 283.

[46] To Harriet Shaw Weaver, 27 May 1929, Letters i. 279.

book in the history of criticism of Work in Prpgress and Finnegans Wake will be discussed in the next chapter, but the timing of its publication was a crucial factor for the readership of Joyce's last work. The production of such a major piece of criticism at that time provided guidelines for other critics and helped convince them of the worth of Work in Progress, thereby helping to secure its one audience.

Our Exagmination is cited in Finnegans Wake several times, most notably in III.3 (497.02-3), where Shem asks his twin brother:

> His producers are they not his consumers? Your exagmination round his factification for incamination of a warping process.[47]

This passage directly links Our Exagmination with the composition of Work in Progress, a process which did much to confuse the relationship between production and consumption. By inscribing its criticism into the text as it progresses, Joyce was able both to invoke a real readership (of critics and reviewers) and to blur the distinction between text and criticism for future readers. This "warping process" both asserts the power of the text to dominate its critical context and simultaneously demands to be critically and historically opened out into such a context, thus denying the text complete mastery.

Our Exagmination is also notable for two letters from readers of Work in Progress published as appendices to the volume. The first is "by G.V.L. Slingsby" (in fact it is by a customer of Shakespeare and Co. called Mrs Kennedy), written apparently as an act of homage to Joyce, although this is not easy to detect. The second adopts a similar

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[47] Other close citations of Our Exagmination Round his Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress occur in Finnegans Wake at: 006.20; 245.31; 284.18-21 and 523.21.

use of puns and is from Vladimir Dixon, long thought by scholars to be a pseudonym adopted by Joyce himself, but in fact a contemporary reader of transition and minor poet, as was established in 1979.[48]

The first letter is a mixture of reverence for Joyce and apparent dissatisfaction with Work in Progress, a combination hardly unknown to criticism. It makes the telling point, "Whether or not a public can be trained to absorb this kind of thing seems to me extremely doubtful."[49] The Slingsby letter implicitly accepts that 'training' occurs, and so implies the possibility of a specialised audience, recently formed, for the dissemination of Joyce's work and other literature.

Dixon's letter offers a more subtle complaint by also adopting a language of puns and misspellings. Dixon is careful to show that he has read Work in Progress by pointing out that he has been ill, and thus had the time to read it, "Leyde up in bed with the prewailent distemper," and demonstrating his intelligence, "by nominals dump." The thrust of Dixon's letter is that Joyce has left much of his audience behind for an experiment of dubious merit (although Dixon at least appreciates a joke). Dixon appropriates the language of Work in Progress in more than a general fashion, by referring specifically to the Boston letter that first appeared in the initial priblished

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[48] Sylvia Beach was responsible for the initial error, annotating Dixon's envelope, "Vladimir Dixon: probably JJ himself," a mistake unfortunately corroborated by Stuart Gilbert and Richard Ellmann, which probably explains its wide acceptance. The error was noted by Thomas A. Goldwasser, 'Who Was Vladimir Dixon? Was He Vladimir Dixon?', JJQ, 16.3 (Spring 1979), 219-23. See also John Whittier-Ferguson, 'The Voice Behind the Echo: Vladimir Dixon's Letters to James Joyce and Sylvia Beach', JJQ, 29.3 (Spring 1992), 511-33.

[49] G.V.L. Slingsby, 'Writes a Common Reader', in Samuel Beckett, et al., Our Exagmination Round His Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress (London: Faber, 1929), p.190.

version of I.5 in 1925, and in transition in 1927. That fictional missive is dug up, in Finnegans Wake, by Biddy Doran the "hen" (110.22) from a "dump" (110.26) or midden heap, and referred to earlier as "The letter! The litter!" (093.24) which is close to "your pecker" (111.36). In the letter at the end of Our Exagmination, Dixon uses the word "dump" (for dumb) and confesses an inability to "combprehen" some "ass pecked" of the work's "compostition."[50] He signs off with an apology for any inconvenience caused by "this litter." Work in Progress thus provided the ammunition for its own criticism. By appropriating its language, Dixon also implies that Joyce's last work could only be approached on its own terms, that it was therefore self-sufficient, autonomous. As will be seen, this has been a common view in criticism of Finnegans Wake.

The previous year, in 1928, Joyce had received a not dissimilar letter from H.G. Wells, as follows:

> You have turned your back on common men, on their elementary needs and their restricted time and intelligence and you have elaborated. What is the result? Vast riddles. Your last two works have been more amusing and exciting to write than they will ever be to read. Take me as a typical male....
>
> .... Your work is an extraordinary experiment and I will go out of my way to save it from destruction or restrictive interruption. It has its believers and its following. Let them rejoice in it. To me it is a dead end.
>
> .... I can't follow your banner any more than you can follow mine. But the world is wide and there is room for both of us to be wrong.[51]

The "literary experiment" that was Work in Progress was nevertheless perceived by many reviewers to possess inherent value. To Wells it was a fruitless extreme, a "dead end" but one which he still encouraged as implicitly worth resuscitating.

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[50] Vladimir Dixon, 'A Litter', in Our Exagmination, p.194. My emphases.

[51] From H.G. Wells, 23 November 1928, Letters i. 275.

Like Dixon, Wells is careful to stress the productive reason for the difficulty of Joyce's work (it took so long to write, and too long to read), which is disingenuously stressed by Wells's claim to be a "common male" (a common reader?) of "restricted time and intelligence". Wells's comments amount to a further rejection by another former patron (he had written a complimentary review of A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man).[52] He anticipates the academic division of literature into a universe of disparate worlds, but not the creation of a specialized readership for such texts as Joyce's within academia.

The form and context of publication of Work in Progress obviously made a difference to its reception. The three sections printed in book-form are an important transition of the work from eclectic avant-garde journals to single volume. By releasing parts in book-form Joyce encouraged it to be regarded as finished and he therefore found a more receptive critical audience, prepared to judge sooner than prevaricate, and he also, of course, attracted the attention of more reviewers.

The journal transition had been fundamental to the early stages of Work in Progress but it faded quickly at the end of the 1920s, so much so that G.W. Stonier, in his review of Anna Livia Plurabelle and Haveth Childers Everywhere in 1930 could already note that "Mr. Joyce's one shop-window has gone."[53] By this stage transition had fulfilled its

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[52] In 1917 Wells had declined the invitation of Miss Weaver to review her limited edition of A Portrait on the grounds that he did not have enough time and he only capitulated when Rebecca West pushed him. His favourable review appeared in Nation, 20 (24 February 1917), 710-11. Perhaps there is also something of Wells's attitude to time in the fable of the Ondt and the Gracehoper.

[53] transition began in April 1927, suspended publication in June 1930, was revivified in March 1932 and finally ceased in 1938. Its history is thus roughly concomitant with Work in Progress.

main task as an educational advertisement for Joyce's experiment. Yet the journal also maintained the avant-garde quality of Work in Progress, for it was deliberately obscure and elitist. "Elliot Paul chose with great care what to put into transition. He said he was afraid of its becoming too popular. If ever there are more than two thousand subscribers, I quit, he used to say."[54] Elliot Paul has described the rejections of Work in Progress that Joyce endured during the 1920s, which he said made Joyce "over-susceptible to praise and to blame."[55] Even the critical historian to have most stressed the importance of transition conceded that "To be involved with transition was to be marked as part of the zealous avant-garde and to invite misunderstanding and hostility."[56] Like other aspects of Joyce's readership, transition passed Work in Progress on to literary criticism as difficult but worthy.

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Readers of Ulysses could not be relied upon as a continuing audience for the new work. Since its publication in 1922, Ulysses had brought a certain literary renown to Joyce, yet he continued to agonize over its reception, for as Gosse and Gillet had indicated, it was more notorious than read. A general unlimited edition was not available in Britain until 1936 after the New York District Court in December 1933 had allowed it to be printed and distributed in North America, where the first unlimited edition appeared early the following year. In transition 7 (October 1927) Shem is seen "making believe to read his usylessly unreadable Blue Book of Eccles" (179.26-7). (The first edition was printed in a blue jacket and 7 Eccles Street was the address of

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[54] Arnold Goldman, 'Elliot Paul's transition Years: 1926-28', JJQ, 30.2 (Winter 1993), 241-75 (p.243).

[55]Elliot Paul, 'Farthest North: A Study of James Joyce', Bookman, 75.2 (May 1932), 156-63 (p.157).

[56] McMillan, p.230.

Leopold and Molly Bloom.) It is the only time the word 'unreadable' appears in Finnegans Wake. The main reason it was unreadable, in Britain and the United States, was because it was banned. In Ireland, as the letter at the beginning of this chapter indicates, it was available but unread. In 1929 Thomas McGreevy, a contributor to Our Exagmination, criticized Sean O'Faolain for supporting the "moral cowardice" of the "university intelligences" of England and America in banning Ulysses.[57] During the 1920s, then, Joyce did not have an established audience resource ready to pass onto his new work.

In 1934, writing in his role as publisher with Faber, T.S. Eliot reassured Joyce that there would be a domestic market of potential readers of Work in Progress already acquainted with Ulysses, despite its non-publication in Britain until two years later: "I am convinced that there is a very large public indeed familiar with the book - though only in part in possession of it - which is quite ready for WIP the moment it appears."[58] Eliot's confidence fails to conceal a difference between familiarity and reading, which is the crux of avant-garde and academic readership in this period: the difference between knowing of and reading, and the way the former came to be the latter. For instance, as Joyce noted at the beginning of 1932, there would soon be seven books of criticism on Ulysses, "about a text which is unobtainable in England."[59] Eliot's supposition of brand loyalty is misplaced precisely because of this difference, which in Joyce's case is heightened by the lack of unlimited editions of Ulysses until the mid thirties and the advance publicity which Work in Progress generated for Finnegans Wake.

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[57] Thomas McGreevy, 'Anna Livia Plurabelle', Irish Statesman, 16 February 1929, pp.475-6. Also cited in Brown, 'Yeats, Joyce and the Irish Critical Debate'.

[58] From T.S. Eliot, 9 January 1934, Letters iii. 300.
[59] To Frank Budgen, 1 March 1932, Letters i. 315.

If potential Anglo-American audiences were already lost to Work in Progress, that in Ireland was never lost because it never existed. In 1932 William Butler Yeats and George Bernard Shaw had written to Joyce with the idea of forming an Irish Academy of Letters. Although acknowledging the "helping hand" of Yeats, Joyce modestly declined to join on the grounds that he had "no right whatsoever to nominate myself as a member of it."[60] Having already accepted, in times of greater penury, the patronage of the Society of Authors and of the Royal Literary Fund, Joyce refused to accept the responsibility that would accrue to an internationally recognized artist in an Irish academy.

When Yeats wrote to Joyce he quoted Boccaccio's story that Dante undertook an embassy to the Pope with the words "If I stay, who goes? If I go, who stays?"[61] At the end of Finnegans Wake - and this was also the last part to be written, in 1938 - Anna Livia Plurabelle thinks, as she rolls out to her father, the sea, "Thinking always if I go all goes" (627.13-4). By this stage, his artistic reputation intact, Joyce was for the first time in his life in a position to refuse patronage, albeit literary rather than financial.

In writing Work in Progress he was to link this form of institutional patronage with Empire, thus drawing a connection between national academies and political systems, already apparent in the conditions of his patronage by the Royal Literary Fund. In 1916 Joyce received the support of the Society of Authors, who allotted him a stipend for six months. Writing after Yeats's entreaty, in transition 22 (February 1933) Joyce (in the guise of Shem, with whom he associated himself) considers that he will

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[60] To W.B. Yeats, 5 October 1932, Letters i. 325.

[61] W.B. Yeats to James Joyce, 2 September 1932, The Letters of W.B. Yeats, p.800.

> Go in for scribenery with the satiety of arthurs in S.P.Q.R.ish and inform to the old sniggering publicking press (229.07-8)

Senatus Populusque Romanus (S.P.R.) was the Imperial Roman motto, here merged with Irish (R.ish) in the question 'speak you Irish?' One of the problematic political issues of Joyce's texts is the use of the English language in Ireland. To join an Irish Academy of Letters might be to overlook the political and literary relations between his country and the British and Catholic empires. At least, Joyce could not pretend to court the favour of an Irish audience which Work in Progress never enjoyed. As that ongoing text shows, and this is one of its political achievements, Joyce had moved beyond a narrow identification of nationality and language, and was, moreover, no longer subject to English as she is spoken.

The above quotation (229.07-8) does indicate the initial power-base of Joyce's readership, those to whom he turned, "the old sniggering publicking press." His relationship with reviewers was far from harmonious. For instance, writing to his son in 1934, he noted with only slight exaggeration that a sympathetic article in The Irish Times was the first for twenty years.[62] Ireland's revenge for the author's neglect came in 1939, quite suitably in the form of a 'misprint' by The Irish Times which, in its review of Finnegans Wake, attributed it to "Sean O'Casey." The flattered O'Casey explained to the real author, "I don't think the reference was a misprint. I know many of Dublin's Literary Clique dislike me, and they hate you."[63]

As shown by this chapter's initial references to reviewers of Work in Progress, Joyce was often content with publicity, even of an adverse kind. Throughout the twenties

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[62] To George Joyce, 21 November 1934, Letters iii. 331 n2.

[63] From Sean O'Casey, 30 May 1939, Letters iii. 442.

Joyce's potential audiences fell away, bar the literary review press, which increasingly academically specialized, and whose numbers continued to increase as Work in Progress expanded into Finnegans Wake. Joyce's coterie of friends were so active as to hardly function as a readership beyond the work; most readers of Ulysses found the next project a step too far; and by 1927 Joyce's financial and literary patrons were at best only cool in their response.

The patrons did, however, pledge their support for the project, and this double value was taken up by an expanding body of reviewers willing (or forced) to tackle Work in Progress, and who quickly identified it as both too difficult to read and also a literary limit. This was the one potential audience to persist with Joyce's last work, and even grew. At first reaction was muted: the Irish response was so minimal that Joyce despaired; the Anglo-American reaction was also affected by Joyce's exile; and on the continent, where reviewers found more linguistic difficulties than usual, the response was poor. However, by the end of the 1920s the body of press 'readers' had swollen significantly, and by about 1930 the proportion of favourable reviews became dominant. The following chapter shows how Work in Progress, with its limited audience, inevitably passed into academy study, in different forms with varying effect.

The question of Joyce's readership is thus a crucial issue in the production of Work in Progress, for it shows the significance of Joyce's financial and literary patronage as well as the importance he attached to the reception accorded to his work. As Work in Progress developed, its readership diminished and its status as a 'literary limit' grew. By alluding to these facets in his revisions, as well as to his many rejections, Joyce stresses the importance of readership for Finnegans Wake, and the partial coincidence of production and consumption. The readers in and of Work in Progress and the Wake are thus both real and ideal. The issue of readership in and of Finnegans Wake is crucial

for an understanding of Joyce's contexts. The mediation of history - as Finnegans Wake well shows - is of primary importance to a reading of Joyce, and that encounters critical and pedagogical contexts. By bringing its readers within itself, Work in Progress is permanently situated in relation to its audiences, especially the burgeoning critical and academic reception that was to provide its principal interpretive community.

CHAPTER THREE

Finnegans Wake and Academic Institutionalism

Introduction.

As the historical review in chapter two shows, the readership of Work in Progress, by the 1930s, had credited Joyce's last work with literary status but, because of its apparent extremity, had often refused explicit judgement upon it. The work was thus indefinitely deferred or retained. Concomitant with the writing of Work in Progress was the development of English as an institutionalised subject of study, so that at the same time Work in Progress was losing its potential audiences, a new one was forming in university departments of English literature. This chapter is intended to trace the emergence of that readership in its relation to Joyce.

In a recent account of the relation between literary modernism and various audiences it may or may not have reached, John Carey argues that Ulysses makes 'mass man' also an individual hero, but

> yet it is also true that Bloom himself would never and could never have read Ulysses or a book like Ulysses. The complexity of the novel, its avant-garde technique, its obscurity, rigorously exclude people like Bloom from its readership. More than almost any other twentieth-century novel, it is for intellectuals only. This means that there is a duplicity in Joyce's masterpiece.[1]

Although Carey has nothing to say about Finnegans Wake, he would presumably extend his argument to cover Joyce's last book as well, even though its central

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[1] John Carey, The Intellectuals and the Masses (London: Faber, 1992), p.20.

protagonist is at once more and less of an everyman than Bloom. Carey's book is significant for the emphasis it places on the role of educational systems in the context of modernism. However, Carey ultimately overlooks those very educational structures which allow for the possibility that "people like Bloom" will read Joyce. In this chapter, I want to set Work in Progress and Finnegans Wake, as well as the name of Joyce, in the context of the expansion and professionalisation of English studies.

In particular, I will concentrate on the English university system, which did more than other national systems to promote the study of English literature, and which in the early decades of this century betrayed the Victorian legacy that had marked England as "the most exceptional case of educational development." Exceptional, that is, in its very lack of state guidance and its reliance upon a liberalist ideology that allowed a fissiparous 'system' of different sectors each "dominated by powerful interest groups." Until the Education Act of 1918 (and implementations in 1921), British schooling thus had no equivalent of the continental *lycee* and *Realschule*, or the American high school. The universities were dominated by the Oxbridge collegiate model - with a fear of centralised administration not dissimilar to British schooling - despite the growth of numerous provincial universities.[2] The influence of critical methodology developed in the United States on the role of Joyce in British university teaching will also be considered, as the institutionalisation of Joyce's work in North America in the 30s and 40s has had a large influence on what has become the Joyce industry.

In the course of tracing the relation between Joyce and this new instituted readership, this chapter occasionally draws upon examination papers set to undergraduates of

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[2] See Andy Green, Education and State Formation (London: MacMillan, 1990), pp.312-13. See also the account of British education provision in John Dover Wilson's autobiography, Milestones on the Dover Road (London: Faber, 1969).

English at four universities: Cambridge, London, Oxford and the University of East Anglia. London papers were taken by students at most constituent colleges as well as by external students. In terms of numbers, its influence was the greatest. Oxford papers are analysed because they come from the oldest department, and which is nowadays the largest. Papers from the University of East Anglia are analysed to see what difference there may be between the occurrence of Joyce and Finnegans Wake at a new university founded in the post-war expansion and older, more traditional universities. The Cambridge department is probably the most significant. Although a separate English Tripos was not established until 1917, 'Cambridge English' soon became the most progressive: it did more than others to promote the importance of the study of modern English; some of its members were influential in subsequent school teaching; in the 1920s and 1930s it was instrumental in defining modernism within a literary tradition (sometimes excluding Joyce) and in the 1970s some of its members were effectual in the accommodation of post-structuralism in British universities, and hence the creation of the academic subject of critical theory. The early days of the Cambridge English Faculty is thus accorded a distinct section, as is F.R. Leavis, whose distinctive, iconoclastic voice was the only one within the Cambridge school to write on Work in Progress, and who played a decisive role in formulating a critical version of modernism that neglected Joyce. The work of Leavis is also important for its direct engagement with questions of education and culture, themes of great pertinence to the reception of Joyce. There is also a section devoted to the place of Joyce's name and work within the cultural debates of the 30s. The chapter concludes with an account of how Joyce has figured in more recent academic examinations, and the complicity of Joyce's name with critical theory.

1. The Growth of English.

To offer a history of English studies, however abbreviated, is to enter a debate on the political and cultural function of the subject within intellectual and institutional domains.[3] It seems one of the most enduring and endearing characteristics of English studies has been, moreover, a sense of its own crisis, and that this has been a particularly self-conscious arena in this respect. That is to say that current debates over the past of the subject are similar to debates held at its outset and in the early years of its formation. I hope to give some sense of this in the following pages. The principal concern of what follows is to portray the complexity of this early history of the subject without losing sight of its relation to Joyce: which is to say that I wish to record Joyce's emergent audience in the contexts of the growth of English studies.

Although the study of English literature had been a part of admission to the India Civil Service, was a subject of study in women's education (including some university provision), and in the variety of adult education, especially Mechanics Institutes, it was not a university degree subject until the late nineteenth century. Indeed, this early history of English studies mitigated against its adoption by universities concerned to maintain their prestige.[4]

The oldest and largest English Faculty is at Oxford University, where the Honours School was founded in 1893, although in the 1870s and 1880s there was a campaign in

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[3] See Chris Baldick, The Social Mission of English Criticism 1848-1932 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983); Brian Doyle, English and Englishness (London: Methuen, 1989); Josephine Guy and Ian Small, Politics and Value in Enlgish Studies (Cambridge: Cambridge universoity Press, 1993).

[4] See Baldick, ch.3.

newspapers and magazines for the establishment of English literature as a distinct degree course. In its first few years, the new English school was small in numbers and unhoused. Most of the teaching was done by one man, Ernest de Selincourt (later Professor at Birmingham). The first students to pass through the course did so in 1897, and in the first five years there were 68 female and 18 male graduates. That a high proportion of women entered the subject is due to two factors: there had been some provision of teaching in English literature in Oxford for women since 1880 when the University had special exams - "of a pretty high standard" - allowing women to get English Honours.[5] In 1904 Oxford appointed Raleigh as Professor and began to increase the number of lecturing staff, although the fledgling department lacked a detailed plan for its future direction, being allowed to assume its own shape. Thus the form of English studies at Oxford initially reflected the genteel and amateur (in the strict sense of the word) approach of Raleigh, very much in tune with the liberal approach to educational administration in Victorian England. When Firth compiled his brief history of Oxford English in 1908-9, he noted that "in 1907 and 1908 the class list at last revealed signs of real progress." Actually, numbers began to show a marked increase from 1906 onwards; it is only the proportion of men that dramatically increased from 1907. Firth's error may be just an oversight but it is also emblematic of a more general attitude towards a subject thought to be too trivial for the serious attention of gentlemen. Defenders of English also required the inclusion of male students as a necessary step towards academic respectability.

Due to the socio-cultural associations of its background, the study of English was seen to fall beyond the classical disciplines that had become the cornerstone of a humane

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[5] The information in this paragraph is taken form C.H. Firth, The School of English Language and Literature. A Contribution to the History of Oxford Studies (Oxford: Blackwell, 1909).

education. For several decades pioneers of English studies met with this resistance, and one reason for its eventual acceptance was the support of some men form other 'safer' disciplines, particularly Classics.[6]

Those arguing the case for a separate school of English literature needed to overcome the arguments of those such as E.A. Freeman, Professor of History at Oxford, who claimed that English would degenerate into mere "chatter about literature," and that "As subjects for examination we must have subjects in which it is possible to examine."[7] This is a crucial argument against the distinct rights of English as a subject, holding that literature is a matter of taste and that taste, or literary value, cannot be assessed as mere knowledge. The danger was that rigorous analysis would be replaced by gossip. Wary of this trap, Oxford English became tied to the historical study of language, and was thus based in philology and old and medieval literature, because the proper study of modern literature was thought too difficult to ascertain.

There were thus two broadly distinct kinds of argument against the formal study of English literature. One was an overtly cultural reaction against a subject associated with Britain's colonies, women and the working-class. The other was based in an intellectual argument about the possibility of English as a distinct discipline: if literary value was a matter of taste, how did one test it? These two positions held as a common factor that a

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[6] It should be noted that there was a battle, most notably at Oxford, between an English course open only to classicists (as proposed by John Churton Collins) and one based in philology and Anglo-Saxon (as promoted by A.S. Napier, appointed first Merton Professor of English language and Literature in 1884). The Cambridge Tripos was to be initially in line with Collins's views in that its designers intended that those taking it would have already studied classics (see Tillyard, The Muse in Chains).

[7] E.A. Freeman, 'Literature and Language', The Contemporary Review, vol.lii (October 1887), 549-67 (p.556, p.562).

gentleman - who is by definition educated - would possess whatever taste and literary knowledge were appropriate.

Likewise, a twofold justification of the subject was expressed by its practitioners. This consisted of simultaneously asserting the social relevance of the subject while also defining literature as a set object of knowledge. There is in this latter arena an interesting institutional expression of the viability and value of study, in the overlap between the syllabus and the canon. The latter is a problematic notion, originally a religious or scriptural term, which may be said in literary study to refer to the body of most valued works regarded as comprising literature; it is not permanently fixed but can carry a massive inertia: revision is slow. Obviously, however, its identity varies from place to place and time to time; different communities can hold to different canons within any institution. Its borders are difficult to grasp (which troubles the easy identification of 'it') and this is a central concern to those instituting English literature. In the 1930s Joyce's name becomes a focal point for this problem. Syllabi vary similarly and at any point can only express a portion of 'the canon'. Nevertheless, syllabi are crucial in the formation of a distinct body of knowledge which is English literature. They offer a way of beginning to define pedagocically the borders of the subject.

One of the ways in which syllabi tend to conservatism is in their dependence upon examinations. In this respect, the Civil Service in the nineteenth century drew up examinations prior to the organisation of teaching, let alone the acceptance of teaching methods. Thus one examiner for the India Civil Service and the Council of Military Education declared to the Taunton Commission, "I understand by teaching English Literature, the reading and remembering as much as you can of as many authors as you

can."[8] Thus Baldick concludes, "English Studies were subordinated to examinations before anyone could really say that English Studies existed."[9] In order to overcome arguments against the inability to examine in English, the subject had to accommodate itself to institutional demands, that is, it created syllabi that came to reinforce a seemingly fixed canon of literary works. It is perhaps not so surprising, then, that a recent defence of "the Western Canon" begins, "Originally the Canon meant the choice of books in our teaching institutions."[10]

One can identify examinations as a key issue in the early history of English studies because they are a feature of the debate about the subject, and because they portray the teaching syllabus. In the analyses that follow, examination papers are taken to be suggestive of the ways institutional English studies functioned and defined itself and not simply as "the ultimate location of institutional power."[11] Such a phrase seems too readily to locate institutions as homogenous power-centres, and overlooks the facts that exams are set by individuals and not necessarily answered in a prescribed manner, let alone the economics of political suasion.

With the recruitment from Cambridge in 1903 of Stanley Leathes as Secretary to the Civil Service Commission, exams from the following year became "more reasonable and humane" than at the universities, setting "far more enlightened English papers than

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[8] G.W. Dasent, cited in Report of the Schools Inquiry Commission (1868), v. 521. Quoted by Baldick, p.72.

[9] Baldick, p.72.

[10] Harold Bloom, The Western Canon (New York: Harcourt and Brace, 1994), p.15.

[11] Catherine Belsey, 'Literature, history, politics', Literature and History, vol.9 (Spring 1983), 17-27, (p.17).

the universities."[12] In 1914 Leathes was appointed First Commissioner for the Civil Service Commission, having published What is Education? the previous year. (The example of Leathes - a Fellow of Trinity - was to be cited by those establishing the new Tripos in English at Cambridge in 1917.)

Some indication of the university study of English in the early years of this century may be gathered from examination papers set for students matriculating in English (English Language until 1911) at London University. These reveal the twofold manner in which English studies was asserted, and the bifurcated abilities expected of students. These students had to sit one three hour exam consisting of an essay paper and a language and literature paper. In 1914 the latter contained four sections on language: precis of a prose passage; grammatical analysis; vocabulary test and comprehension test; and two sections on literature: on Shakespeare, candidates had to quote at least ten consecutive lines (any lines) and describe their speaker's role; from a list of texts they had to name the authors and rough dates of composition, showing familiarity with one of the texts. The paper from June 1915 was reprinted six years later with model answers. The question, What English novelists have been especially successful in their treatment of humble life?, should, apparently, have been answered:

> The chief English novelists who have been specially successful in their treatment of humble life are Fielding, Scott, Dickens, George Eliot, George Meredith and Thomas Hardy.

The crucial thing about such questions is their role in canon formation: they don't only test knowledge, they also create it.

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[12] Tillyard, p.52. John Gross, The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters (London: Penguin, 1991), p.209n.

It is from the other half of the London Matriculation exam, the general essay paper, that the social concerns of academic English can be detected.[13] There were essays on: The power and responsibilities of the press (January 1911); The novel as an instrument of reform (June 1909); The tyranny of fashion (September 1909); The advantages and drawbacks of a reformed English spelling (January 1910); Classical legends in English literature (September 1910); The good qualities and the defects of the modern daily newspaper (September 1910); The English in Ireland (June 1912); The use and abuse of advertisements (September 1912); Greek myths (January 1913); The qualities most essential to a successful colonist (January 1913); Dreams (June 1914); "Words change as men change" (September 1914); "An author is not to write all he can, but only what he ought" (June 1915).[14] These last three were all included in a set of model papers published in 1926 as a collection "representative of the Examination in its present form."[15]

Questions of nationality and militarism were common. Titles included: Our problem of national defence (June 1909); Compulsory military training (September 1909); The growth of the British navy (June 1910); and then in wartime, The people of Germany (January 1914); Should military training be a necessary qualification for a University degree? (September 1914); and more simply, Militarism (June 1915). One of the model

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[13] Many of the examination questions between 1910 and 1930 bear a retrospective resemblance to the issues of Joyce's writing. Those quoted here stem from the period in which A Portrait was undergoing its varied composition.

[14] London University, Matriculation English Papers (London: Tutorial Press, 1921). This covers the years 1909 to 1915, with model answers to the last paper.

[15] London University, Matriculation English Papers (London: Tutorial Press, 1926), Preface.

papers carried the memorable question, "Who dies, if England live?"[16] Regrettably, model answers were not provided.

There were, then, social issues of thematic significance that helped define the subject of English literature, most notably a certain bombastic patriotism (in terms of Empire as well as the war), but also the press, advertising, womens' roles, and education. Some questions made fairly explicit assumptions about candidates' interests and even attitudes, signalling that their potential readership - and therefore the social composition of university students - was not overwhelmingly heterogeneous. The essay titles, The charm of poetry (January 1909) and The tyranny of fashion (September 1909) tend to invoke positive and negative values respectively. Some indication of the expected social class of candidates may be discerned in the title, Strikes and how to deal with them (January 1912).

It can be seen, then, that if the most pressing issues for English studies in its initial period - from the end of the previous century to the Great War - were how to examine in literary taste, and how to conceive of the relation between societal concerns and institutional education, then the new subject of English literature responded by establishing a limited syllabus as an object of knowledge that could be tested, and by directly asking its students to encounter contemporary political and cultural questions.

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[16] London University, 1926, Paper D.

2. A Portrait: Literature and the Marketplace.

Joyce took his matriculation honours exam for the Catholic University, Dublin in 1899, but was awarded only a pass in English, in which he was taught by two Englishmen, Fr. Joseph Darlington and Thomas Arnold, brother of Matthew and a convert to Rome. Joyce's English exam had a similar structure to those at London wherein candidates were tested on literary knowledge (two Shakespeare plays; essays by Macauley and from The Warwick library), scansion of verse and use of grammar, plus an essay paper. No doubt Joyce was not impressed by "the school's conservative curriculum and Darlington's unimaginative treatment of the same."[17] It seems rather far-fetched to imagine that if Joyce answered a particular essay ('Obedience to superiors') in a particular way, it may have contributed to his low mark. Thus to read Joyce's "only average" result as a reaction against "the authority of the university itself ... as the sort of pro-church, authoritarian institution" he opposed, is rather fanciful.[18] Nevertheless, as Stephen Hero and A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man show, Joyce was seriously engaged in questions of university education.

The two-fold operation of early English departments - justifying the subject socially and securing an object of study - correlates to a distinction made throughout much contemporary (modernist) writing.[19] The clearest example of this distinction is made by Stephen Dedalus:

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[17] Neil R. Davison, 'Joyce's Matriculation Examination', JJQ, 30.3 (Spring 1983), 393-409 (p.396).

[18] Davison, p.398.

[19] For example, Ursula Brangwen in D.H. Lawrence, The Rainbow (London: Methuen, 1915), also in an educational context.

> One difficulty, said Stephen, in esthetic discussion is to know whether words are being used according to the literary tradition or according to the tradition of the marketplace (P 192).

Dedalus uses the term 'marketplace' to denote the commerce of everyday exchange, implying that the language of business is not restricted to economic transactions. The market, then, is that which commonly surrounds the specialised discourse of the literary, and it can be exemplified by the media, especially the press, and advertising (later combined in the work of Leopold Bloom). This distinction also entails one between readers: the 'common' from the 'serious'. Furthermore, one growing discourse that surrounds 'the literary tradition' at this time is formalised education, particularly the study of literature. In this sense, the two traditions delineated by Stephen are increasingly broken down and merged by the rise of English studies which brings literature into the everyday. In this respect it is notable that despite Joyce's rejection by his audiences, some attempts were made to secure his accessibility, for instance Charles Duff's James Joyce and the Common Reader (1932). Both Joyce, through Stephen, and the organisation of English studies, refer to a similar distinction: the specialised language of the literary and the everyday exchange of the marketplace.

Rather than illustrate the social concerns of the act of writing - a well-worn novelistic path - Stephen attempts to emphasise the distance between traditions. Seamus Deane is right to call him an intellectual rather than a writer, and he embodies the division of labour within which intellectuals have been apportioned their share.[20] This is the context in which Work in Progress was being written and revised and in which the reception for Finnegans Wake was in preparation. It is evident in A Portrait, as well as in contemporary English studies, that the work of the intellectual is a specialised

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[20] Seamus Deane, Celtic Revivals (London: Faber, 1985), p.80.

division within the labour market, and this remains the case also when it comes to considering the role of deconstruction in chapter five.

In Stephen Hero, which offers most detail on Stephen's life at university, the young student "insisted on the importance of the literary tradition," finding only "debased value" (SH 30) in the marketplace. Nevertheless, the dean and professor of English, Father Butt, impresses another distinction upon Stephen, saying "We have the useful arts and we have the liberal arts" (SH 31). Stephen appropriates the language of the marketplace, draining it of use:

> It was not only in Skeat that he found words for his treasure-house, he found them also at haphazard in the shops, on advertisements, in the mouths of the plodding public. He kept repeating them to himself till they lost all instantaneous meaning for him and became wonderful vocables. (SH 33)

This form of mimicry was also Joyce's method of composing and revising his work, especially with the Wake.

The example used by Stephen in both A Portrait and its earlier version to distinguish literary from market traditions is the verb 'detain'. The same word carries different meanings in literary (John Henry Newman) and market (everyday expression) traditions. In this example the same word is from both traditions. The potential for confusion is exemplified by the failure of the dean to distinguish at first Stephen's reference from the marketplace lexicon. This confusion suggests one way in which to define the market tradition, for it is impossible to 'quote' an everyday expression without some confusion. Even if that lexicon is itself a tissue of quotations, how can one expression be removed from that context in order to exemplify it? That is to say, in the jargon of speech act theory, the market lexicon may be mentioned but not used, whereas the literary may be quoted, that is, used. Therefore the distinction between

literary and market, according to Stephen Dedalus, is dependent upon a shared knowledge or assumption of which kinds of texts or situations belong to each category (the sort of knowledge taught in academic English studies), prior to his transferral of them from one to another in his writing.

A further lesson for Stephen in this episode is that the 'marketplace' is an unstable community, indeed, it may be politically defined along national lines. What Fr. Butt calls a funnel, Stephen calls a tundish; but the former, an English Jesuit, does not recognise the word tundish. In Stephen's oft-quoted response what is crucial is that English is both "so familiar and so foreign" (P 189). The fact that tundish is an English word - "and good old blunt English too" (P 251) - casts some irony on Stephen's claim that "my soul frets in the shadow of his language" (P 189) for it is a language in which Stephen is the more skilled. This episode illustrates that language travels beyond the borders of its communities, both into the marketplace and overseas, even threatening the identification of any community.[21]

In A Portrait, Stephen Dedalus, during his time at the Catholic (soon to become National) University, attends but one lecture notable not for any educational value but for heightening his national consciousness, which after all was one of the values of English (for the English). Stephen's mind is "offended" by the "sharp Ulster voice" of a fellow student, but he then rejects this criticism as belonging to a "comic Irishman" (P 193). Stephen's education - including his journey and the place of it - helps attune his mind to the nuances of a national consciousness. He may not have been a model student, but such selectivity as Stephen's was also a positive advantage betraying a discriminating critical mind. As Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch advised his students, with

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[21] This issue is explored in theoretical terms in the following chapter.

uncommon modesty, "seriously I tell you to choose your lectures; and to choose a few only."[22] Stephen imagined, without attending, a literature lecture wherein the audience noted definitions, dates and "a favourable and an unfavourable criticism side by side," and in Sampson's terms he was right that his mind "wandered abroad" (P 181).

The national politics of academic institutions would no doubt have troubled Stephen's mind more readily than his English or continental counterparts, as each morning he walks past Trinity College to get to the future National University.[23] Concurrent attempts in England to raise a national consciousness from literature were for Joyce not without problems, as the end of A Portrait shows. Indeed, 'The Dead', written in the summer of 1907, alludes to "the University question" which Molly Ivors talks with Gabriel about (D 215). This controversy centred on the representation of 'Irish values' in education and threatened to prevent fiscal reforms promoted by the British government. Newman's Catholic University was not proving a success, and was constrained within British control. The proposed National University of Ireland was to include Trinity, Queen's and University College, although Trinity was to secure its independence as Dublin University amid Protestant concern that the N.U.I. would be a publicly funded 'Jesuit university'.

The substitution of literature for religion in the aesthetic theory of Stephen Dedalus in some ways anticipates the evangelical zeal espoused on behalf of English studies in

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[22] Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, 'On Reading for the English Tripos', in Studies in Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1929), p.74.

[23] The Catholic University was opened in Dublin on 3rd November, 1854. It was renamed University College in the year of Joyce's birth (1882) and transferred to Jesuit control the following year. In 1908 the Irish Universities Act led to the creation of the National University of Ireland which was to include University College, Dublin.

England in the early 1920s (this is discussed in the next section). As Stephen admits in the final chapter, he has maintained the form of Catholic ritual but replaced its content to become "a priest of the eternal imagination, transmuting the daily bread of experience into the radiant body of everliving life" (P 221). Literature for Stephen is "the highest and most spiritual art" (P 219).

Stephen's religious and educative experiences have been so closely entwined that it is difficult to tell them apart; to remain at the university would simply mean "an eternity of bliss in the company of the dean of studies" (P 239). Teaching is so fundamental a part of the Church that the prayer book Stephen uses as a child in Blackrock comes equipped with a sort of easy-reading guide: Stephen read "above his breath from a thumb blackened prayer book wherein catchwords were printed at the foot of every page" (P 62). (About to embark on Work in Progress in 1923 Joyce advocated the use of catchphrases for "the reading public" in order that we may cope with Ulysses.)

Thanks to his artistic powers Stephen leaves the university, briefly his patron, to travel abroad and there to forge "the uncreated conscience of my race" (P 257). The author's irony has distanced him from the young artist - belying any easy correlation of the two - and does so again at the end of the book by setting his writing loosely within historical borders,

"Dublin, 1904

Trieste, 1914."

There would seem to be some intellectual and historical connection between Stephen Dedalus and the establishment of the organised study of English literature, especially as they both discriminate literature from the marketplace, from within universities. One irony in Stephen's position is that he uses his art as a means of escape from the

university, yet the institutionalised critical study of literature is founded upon the same premise as drawn by Stephen for the creation of literature. There is a contextual significance here for Joyce's writing and especially Work in Progress which was composed during the period of rapid growth and professionalisation of academic English studies, especially as it has consistently been identified as a limit of literature or as an end to writing. Work in Progress refers to the link between education and nationalism, in the four evangelists' account of the historical growth of Ireland, as "earnasyoulearning Eringrowback" (389.4-5). This suggests a link between an economy of knowledge and national revival. If England needed criticism to justify its literary tradition after the war, Ireland already had a thriving literary revival, a form of growing back that was also nationalist: *Éire go bráth* as Ireland until judgement day. Nevertheless, it is only recently that Joyce's final work has been placed in an Irish national context.[24]

A Portrait also significantly hints at the breakdown of Dedalus's distinction. By portraying both the dean's confusion over 'detain' and Stephen's naiveté, Joyce's irony attests to an inevitable failure to establish any such firm differentiation. It was in Work in Progress and Finnegans Wake that Joyce most fully documented the commixture of literary and market traditions. For this reason, although by 1930 Work in Progress had a readership restricted to reviewers and a coterie of friends who advertised the literary qualities of the work, it sat somewhat uncomfortably within English departments as a literary text that appropriated language from discourses of the marketplace.[25] If A

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[24] See John Garvin, James Joyce's Disunited Kingdom (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1976) and Emer Nolan, James Joyce and Nationalism (London: Routledge, 1995).

[25] Hugh Kenner has noted as a context for the study of modernism the advance in etymological scholarship in the mid-nineteenth century that found different tongues to share a common root. Skeats's Etymological Dictionary was published in four volumes

Portrait is indicative of the modernist aesthetic implicit in the creation of English as an academic subject, Joyce's last work seems to anticipate some of the changes within the subject. Nevertheless, its concern with the literary / marketplace relation has maintained its aptitude for an institutional English studies that consistently seeks both to define its objects and socially to legitimate itself.

3. Post-War English Studies.

Crucial to the role of English studies in the post-war period is the question of its role within education and national culture, where culture is understood in its more traditional sense as "the 'spirit' which informed the 'whole way of life' of a distinct people."[26] English studies, then, was accorded a distinct cultural significance after the Great War, particularly within an educational system in desperate need of overhaul. As John Dover Wilson - an educationalist and literary scholar who edited Shakespeare and worked in the civil service - recalls in his autobiography, the greatest single issue facing the Board of Education after the 1918 Education Act was the teaching of English Language and Literature.[27] This led to the establishment in May 1919 of a Departmental Committee,

> To inquire into the position occupied by English (Language and Literature) in the educational system of England, and to advise how its study may best be promoted in schools of all types, including Continuation Schools[28], and in Universities and other Institutions of Higher Education, regard being had to -

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between 1879 and 1882. See Hugh Kenner, The Pound Era (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), pp.94-105.

[26] Raymond Williams, Culture (London: Fontana,1981), p.10

[27] John Dover Wilson, Milestones on the Dover Road, p.95.

(1) the requirements of a liberal education;
(2) the needs of business, the professions, and public services; and
(3) the relation of English to other studies.[29]

The great breadth of the remit for the new committee allowed it a scope to comment on far more than the internal workings of a school discipline, and that the terms were drawn too broadly "became generally acknowledged."[30] A brief history of the English Association - which came to dominate the committee - is here necessary.

Around the same time that numbers on the honours degree in English at Oxford University began to show signs of significant increase, the English Association was formed (in 1906), according to the schoolteacher who conceived the idea, for "the dissemination of right ideas on the teaching of English."[31] The main work of this group was in the teaching of English in schools, and in 1908 it boasted over 1,000 members, and roughly double that number by the start of the war, and during the war membership never fell below 1,700. The Association seems to have been most successful in promotion of English literature as a school subject and as reading material for people not involved in the profession, for instance in their publication Poems of To-day in 1915. However, in the same year, some danger was noted in the need to maintain extra-professional contacts, and this was a constant theme as the English Association

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[28] Continuation Schools were designed to allow people to keep learning while at work, but they appeared in only a few areas of the country and were effectively gone by the mid 1920s. John Dover Wilson was a keen advocate of Continuation Schools while in the Board of Education. The fact that they were dropped from the final Act of 1918 hastened his departure back to academe.

[29] Quoted by Dover Wilson, pp.95-6.

[30] Dover Wilson, p.96.

[31] The initiator was a Mr.E.S. Valentine, whose circular letter dated 15th January 1906 to a select number of potential sympathisers is quoted in Charles Nowell Smith, The Origin and History of the Association, The English Association Chairman's Address (London, 1942), p.4.

continued to expand in the 1920s (to 5,000 in 1922 and over 7,000 at its peak in 1927) and then shrunk in the 1930s.[32]

The influence of the Association is usually difficult to gauge, although it is notable that the period of its fastest growth is from the end of the war to 1922, and that it was during this period that members of the Association's executive provided nine of the fourteen members of the new committee.[33] Their report, published as The Teaching of English in England in 1921, and known as the Newbolt Report after the chairman, "sold like a novel" and "was at once widely welcomed by teachers in general" according to one of its principal contributors.[34]

Sir Henry Newbolt had been member of the English Association since 1913, but was not known as either an educationalist or a literary scholar.[35] Although, then, something of an odd choice, his character "dominated" proceedings in what appears to be a rather

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[32] All figures taken from Nowell Smith.

[33] Baldick reports the "steady growth" (p.103) of the Association, but the post-war period certainly seems to be its busiest. In 1919-20 the Association established the Year's Work in Enlgish Studies, an indication of both the specialized academic expansion of the subject and the role of overseer envisaged by the Association. Other Journals sponsored by the English Association around this time were Essays and Studies and English.

[34] Dover Wilson, pp.98-9. (Dover Wilson was "mostly responsible" for chapters 5 and 8 and part of chapter 9.)

[35] Sir Henry John Newbolt (1862-1938) was a sometime poet and novelist, and a barrister. He was knighted in 1915 and during the First World War worked in both Admiralty and the Foreign Office before becoming was controller of cable and wireless. He also served on committees for the Royal Literary Fund, Royal Society of Literature and the Central Council for the Care of Churches. In 1920 he was made an honorary Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford; in 1923 he edited volumes iv and v of History of the Great War: Naval Operations; and published a memoir, The World as in My Time, in 1932.

relaxed style of interviewing.[36] Newbolt was joined by eight other Association members; only three of the fourteen were professors, and two of those (Q and Charles Firth) attended one meeting between them. The committee also included school teachers and George Sampson, who, to the annoyance of some, used committee material towards his English for the English, published shortly before the Newbolt Report.[37]

The Newbolt Report is notable for the ecumenical zest it displays towards the study of literature. The "so-called Industrial Revolution" is blamed for instilling "a gulf between the world of poetry and that world of everyday life," wherein lies "the root cause" of contemporary "indifference and hostility towards literature." The importance of Literature is that it is "one of the chief temples of the human spirit, in which all should worship." The teaching of English is then an essential mediation: "The rise of modern universities has accredited an ambassador of poetry [with "a staff of assistant missionaries"] to every important capital of industrialism in the country."[38]

This indication of the religiosity of literary study is characteristic of the missionary zeal which Newbolt brings to English teaching. As in Arnold, the value of culture (the best that is thought and said) comes to replace the value of religion in society, so spiritual profit may be gained from literature during this period of the promotion of its study.

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[36] Dover Wilson, p.97. See the account of Newbolt's interview with W.P.Ker and Israel Gollancz, pp.97-8.

[37] George Sampson (1873-1950) was a schoolteacher and inspector of schools in London from 1925; he produced numerous editions of authors, including Berekeley, Burke, Newman, More, Herbert, Keats, Coleridge and Hazlitt. He received an honorary M.A. from Cambridge in 1920. His one volume Cambridge History of English Literature was published in 1941. He was also a member of the Cambridge Advisory Council on Religious Instruction.

[38] The Newbolt Committee, The Teaching of English in England (London: H.M.S.O., 1921), p.259.

However, the Newbolt Report also qualifies Arnold in this section (which was drafted by John Dover Wilson), placing the emphasis of culture on its properties shared by all rather than an intellectual elite.[39]

It is in large part this spiritual value of literature that allows the claims for the study of English as the central discipline of a humane, liberal education. Newbolt's terminology may be said to be "ecclesiastical" and that of Sampson's English for the English "confessional" or even Methodist.[40] Sampson sees literature as "a religion" and reading as "almost sacramental."[41] There is an Anglophile populism in Newbolt's approach, similar to Leavis's 'low church', one whose emphasis on a liberal (or Protestant) 'inner voice' (one that may encourage nonconformity) is at odds with the 'high church' of Arnold and Eliot which sees as necessary an orthodox Catholic establishment in order to produce a great culture.

Sampson associates the subject of English with the full worth of education. It "is the one subject that will cover all three aspects of education - intellectual, moral and emotional."[42] The study of English literature has a metaphysical value as "a possession in which rich and poor can be equal without disturbance to their material possessions."[43] Sampson's method of evaluation is itself based upon a distinction

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[39] This aspect of Sampson and the Newbolt Report is taken by Baldick as an indication of the precarious social divisions in English society, so that an emphasis on communal access to literary reward is urged as a means to overcome unequal distribution of wealth.

[40] Baldick, p.101.

[41] George Sampson, English for the English (London, 1921; repr. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p.105.

[42] Sampson, p.136.

[43] Sampson, p.136.

between the literary and the market - as was the Newbolt Report, and which has been identified in the founding of English studies - for in equating English with the pinnacle of education he dissociates education from the marketplace:

> The national mind must be got to see that education is a spirit and not a substance.... Its scale is not the material scale of the market.[44]

Education, and specifically a literary one, as the full expression of educational worth, is thus seen to give access to a national community.

As many of the exam papers quoted above and the Newbolt Report make clear, nationalism - a pervasive and liberal notion of Englishness - was one of the defining characteristics of the new academic subject of English. It is even in part responsible for the continued amateurism of English in British universities, as opposed to what is seen as an American professionalism derived from a Germanic methodology, as the Newbolt Report shows.

> Many of the elaborate theses on English Literature produced by American students for their Doctorate, and afterwards published, were monuments of misdirected effort; in short, a true sense of literature as a living thing was lost, and in its place was substituted an investigation after the worst pattern of German 'research', deadening alike to those who wrote and those who read it.[45]

Not for nothing was the subject known simply as English.

The questioning stance of Joyce's texts towards a colonising English language would hardly have endeared him to the contributors to the Newbolt Report. In the relationship

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[44] Sampson, p.20. Interestingly, Dover Wilson claims that the Newbolt Report was "widely read in business as well as educational circles" (p.99).

[45] Henry Newbolt, The Teaching of English in England (London: HMSO, 1921), p.237. Hereafter cited as Newbolt Report.

between literary and marketplace upon which English thrived in the post-war period, it should be remembered that an important aspect of that market was its nationalism. The polyglot character of the Wake is a further instance of Joyce's undermining of the founding distinction of literary studies. Nevertheless, the very concern of Joyce's works with the same issues that motivated the new subject meant his texts were always at least pertinent to its object of knowledge, English literature.

The self-exiled Dubliner who lived in Paris perhaps inevitably found himself the object of some scorn from parts of the London literary establishment, as can be seen from Gosse's reaction to Joyce.[46] There can be little doubt that Joyce's reputation was unsavoury among the London establishment, although there is a suggestion that his stock may have improved since his final return from Ireland in 1912.[47] Joyce was recommended for a grant of £100 from the Royal Bounty Fund, partly on the strength that he had been "teaching in order that he could write as he wished, not as the public demanded," a clear indication of the extent to which a split between literature and broader society was expected.[48] Asquith, who as Prime Minister administered the fund, expressed "doubts as to Mr. Joyce" but his secretary's measured comment secured the grant: "his [Joyce's] writings are occasionally 'outspoken', but I think not excessively so."[49] The same letter notes that the Royal Literary Fund considered Joyce "a good

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[46] Discussed in chapter two.

[47] For the information in this paragraph concerning Joyce's grant, I am indebted to Eunan O'Halpin, 'British Patronage and an Irish Writer: The Award of a Government Grant to James Joyce in 1916', JJQ, 24.1 (Fall 1986), 79-83.

[48] 'Particulars concerning James Joyce', n.d., Public Record Office, T1 11959/22297.

[49] Letter from Eddie Marsh to H.H. Asquith, 18 August, 1916. Eddie Marsh was a well-known literary patron as well as private secretary to the prime minister, and later to Winston Churchill when he was Chancellor (1924-29). Churchill subscribed to Ulysses

case" for a grant from the Royal Bounty Fund. One of the members of the Royal Literary Fund committee was Henry Newbolt. It is clear that the British establishment was prepared to offer some encouragement - on certain political conditions - to a writer they considered literary even if obscure.[50]

The main scope of the Newbolt Report is directed at school rather then university teaching, and its influence is not easy to assess. Despite its apparent popularity among schoolteachers, the report met with scathing opposition form some university quarters, particularly those such as W.P. Ker of University College, London, and his successor R.W. Chambers, who interpreted the commission's role as an attack on Anglo-Saxon. Chambers also pointedly remarked on the lack of experience of teaching English of some of the committee.[51] In part, the opposition was due to Newbolt's personal attitude towards English literature. The report follows the view of its chairman (one by no means unanimously shared by the rest of the committee) in placing Old English and Medieval English as appendices to the history of English literature, thereby implying that a knowledge of the subject need not be based on the origins of the language. This was also to be expressed in the reform of the Cambridge English Tripos in 1926. As one of the committee who disagreed with Newbolt on this, John Dover Wilson claims

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when first advertised for private circulation in 1921but appears to have made no effort later to lift the ban.

[50] The fact that one Leonard Merrick was awarded £200 at the time Joyce was given half that amount underlines the suspicion with which Joyce was treated.

[51] See the alternative proposals for the study of English contained in R.W. Chambers, The Teaching of English in the Universities of England, English Association Pamphlet no.53 (July 1922). In 1923 Chambers was appointed to the chair at UCL and in his inaugural lecture again defended philology against its 'Germanic' condemnation by the Newbolt Report. See D.J. Palmer, The Rise of English Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), p.183.

that "he [Newbolt] possessed little knowledge or sympathy with English scholarship and the teaching of the history of English literature in universities."[52]

Nevertheless, the Newbolt Report was both popular and influential. Baldick claims that the Report "became a guiding influence upon the development of English studies, particularly in the schools, but also in the universities through the work of I.A. Richards."[53] Certainly, there is some correspondence in the findings of the Report and Richards's work, but they are by no means the same. As Stephen Potter's wry commentary on the founding of the subject observes, it was the striving for rigour in analysis of literary effect promoted by Richards, what Potter calls "the new scientific attitude, and not the recommendations of the Report, [which] was the source from which the new Lit of the later 'twenties was to spring."[54]

However, the Report had an indirect influence which is impossible exactly to quantify. Although very much a product of post-war optimism, it did have the effect of promoting to centre-stage the study of English in schools. This was to have two consequences: one, an increasing number of school-leavers going to university were already partially trained readers of literature; two, an increasing number of teaching jobs were to become available (especially to women and men from families not previously

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[52] Dover Wilson, p.97.

[53] Baldick, p.94.

[54] Stephen Potter, The Muse in Chains (London: Jonathan Cape, 1937), p.244. Although Tillyard's account is written against Potter's thesis, they seem to agree on this point, which has the effect of emphasising the importance of Cambridge. Tillyard does not mention the Newbolt Report and refers only once to the English Associaion, noting the opposition to the new Tripos (in 1917) from Wyatt (within Cambridge) and signatories including W.P.Ker, John Bailey, A.C. Bradley, F.S. Boas, C.H. Herford and Caroline Spurgeon.

educated). The 'professing' attitude of the report created an intimacy between literature and teaching which in effect acted to perpetuate the subject. The growing numbers entering degree courses in English, and their increasing sophistication, inevitably forces changes in the subject at university level. This can be seen in the workings of the English Tripos at Cambridge.

4. Cambridge English.

At Cambridge during the war years vague plans were laid for the creation of a new Tripos in English literature. Previous to the instigation of the new Tripos, English teaching, as part of the Modern Languages Tripos, was largely ad hoc, although G.C. Macaulay, moving from Aberystwyth in 1907 brought with him "the kind of condition that prevailed in a provincial university."[55] In 1909 Macaulay supported a proposal for reform of English teaching which included an appendix showing that Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and Sheffield already had papers on literary criticism of the kind he had put forward. This disposition towards the literary critical rather than the philological (and history of language) can be seen in the terms of the King Edward VII Chair established in 1911, which stipulate that "The Professor shall treat his subject on literary and critical rather than on philological and linguistic lines."[56] The post was filled by the west country Liberal, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, an author and journalist of some popularity, on the death of Verrall in 1912. As Tillyard remembers, "Q was not

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[55] E.M.W. Tillyard, The Muse Unchained (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1958), p.34. Tillyard's personal account of the Cambridge English Tripos was written in later life while Master of Jesus College. It is a classic of ivory-tower infighting that may profitably be read alongside C.P. Snow's The Masters.

[56] Quoted in Tillyard, p.38.

the man to excogitate a drastic reform, let alone push it through."[57] Rather, the local political action initially fell to H.M. Chadwick, who although Professor of Anglo-Saxon was originally a student of classics.[58] He enlisted the enthusiasm of Manny Forbes, who "wrote a wildly mannered and exuberant prose and was playing Joycean tricks before he had ever heard of Joyce," and whose wide scope of personal contacts later substituted for a kind of informal appointments committee when the Tripos had been set up.[59] The Cambridge English Tripos, inaugurated in 1917, was first examined as a separate school in 1919.[60]

Forbes, however, was not an implementer of policy. Initially, Chadwick was the driving force in the establishment of the Tripos, and then with the recruitment of I.A. Richards in 1921 (a Fellow of Magdalene and with a first in moral science) the school found its guiding intellectual presence. Tillyard argues that himself, Forbes and Richards became an informal triumvirate directing policy, through the trust placed in them by Chadwick; all shared "general consent in the principle of liberalism."[61] In questions of taste it seems to have been Forbes who was most influential: both Basil Willey and Joan Bennett (both soon to be lecturers at Cambridge) recall "an imagination

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[57] Tillyard, p.45. The appointment of Q - a position nominated by the government - appears to have been politically motivated.

[58] Hector Munro Chadwick (1870-1947) had previously been part of the Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages. He was obviously held in great respect by his peers - a special lectureship was generated to keep him at Cambridge - and was able to manipulate this respect in committees.

[59] Tillyard, p.45.

[60] In 1917 and 1918 papers on Shakespeare, the History of English literature 1350 -1832, Middle English, Chaucer and Old English were subsumed under the Medieval and Modern Languages Tripos.

[61] Tillyard, p.82.

from which ours caught fire, and an extraordinary sureness of taste and rightness of judgement."[62] Even Richards came under this spell: "in matters of taste he relied on the sureness of Forbes's intuitions."[63]

However, it was Richards who was the most popular lecturer and whose fresh emphasis on both emotion and rigour in reading provoked many followers. For example, on The Waste Land: "the items are united by the accord, contrast, and interaction of their emotional effects, not by an emotional scheme that analysis must work out. The value lies in the unified response which this interaction creates in the right reader."[64] Such claims to a right reading and a right reader provide an answer to the objection to English studies that it cannot be examined. In this sense, if Cambridge further promoted the fundamental importance of English studies (which had been the central tenet of the Newbolt Report) then the work of Richards did much to secure its institutional place.

The particular impact of Richards was to direct the work of literary criticism away from a rather vague and gossipy appreciation (for instance, favoured by Q) that had characterised literary critics in the pre-war years, and in this respect he provided a lead for other young members of the Cambridge English school. Furthermore, he linked this desire for greater rigour to his previous training, by relating the study of psychology

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[62] Basil Willey quoted by Joan Bennett, '"How It Strikes a Contemporary": The Impact of I.A. Richards' Literary Criticism in Cambridge, England' in I.A. Richards: Essays in his Honour, ed. by Reuben Brower, Helen Vendler and John Hollander (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), p.47

[63] Tillyard, p.89.

[64] I.A. Richards, Principles of Literary Criticism (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1924), p.290. This book was published in a series entitled International Library of Psychology Philosophy and Scientific Method.

and philosophy to the reading process. Indeed, English studies, in these years, especially at Cambridge, was characterised by its relations with other disciplines. For instance, Richards had a degree in moral science, Forbes was a historian, Tillyard and Chadwick were classicists. This means that prior to these years at Cambridge, those teaching the Tripos had not themselves been educated in it. When, in the mid-twenties, new lecturers arrived who had taken the Tripos in earlier days (the first of these was Basil Willey, followed shortly by H.S. Bennett and F.R. Leavis), they inevitably brought fresh ideas on the direction it should take. Furthermore, as the decade went on, increasing numbers joining the Faculty had not experienced the war and were less content to rejoice in the new, as the founders of the school may have done. English was therefore able to benefit from other approaches but nevertheless attained its own institutional and intellectual space. Its crossover with other disciplines can be seen in the title of examination papers on the Tripos: Literature, Life and Thought. Moreover, the Tripos was simply called English, and was therefore not restricted to Language and Literature, as Q had proudly informed the (other members of the) Newbolt Committee.[65]

The popularity of Richards at Cambridge in the 1920s should not obscure the dissent he also roused, most notably from F.L. Lucas, whose contribution to University Studies, Cambridge 1933, summarises his position on both Richards and the work of the Leavises. Lucas quotes examinees form 1932 to demonstrate that Richards's method spawns shallow and dismissive results. He also attacks Queenie Leavis's thesis (although he does not name her) which Richards had supervised. For instance, Lucas sets out to defend with sarcasm the middlebrow reader from Leavis's implication that Joyce is only for the "highbrow" reader: "these creatures, on being told [by Leavis]

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[65] Report of Evidence given on 4 March 1920. Cited in Palmer, p.182.

what garbage they are enjoying, when they ought to be deciphering Mr. Joyce, are simply rude."[66] This seems to have the curious implication that Joyce is, after all, a highbrow writer, one to be 'deciphered'. A university such as Cambridge that is collegiate always maintains the possibility, if not the likelihood, that several teachers of a discipline will severely disagree within the power-body and it is possible that students may pass through without much direct contact with those shaping Faculty policy. Yet Richards, for example, was always able to fill a lecture hall.

The new Tripos attempted to pull the study of English away from the history of language (as the Newbolt Report advocated), even going so far as to claim "there was no academic distinction between a good short story written yesterday and a Petrarchan sonnet of the age of Elizabeth."[67] The Tripos thus allowed study of contemporary authors; although "Ulysses had to be smuggled out of Paris" they still "studied Pound and Joyce."[68] Richards lectured on Yeats's The Tower the year it came out.[69] As Bradbrook claims, this put Cambridge more in touch with Paris and America than other English universities. However, the design of the initial Tripos did not permit quite the degree of freedom that Tillyard remembers, for examinations still contained period papers, and it was not until the reform of the Tripos in 1926 that it was possible to take

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[66] F.L. Lucas, 'English Literature' in University Studies, Cambridge 1933, ed. by Harold Wright (London: Ivor Nicholson and Watson, 1933), p.279.

[67] Tillyard, p.82.

[68] M.C. Bradbrook, 'I.A. Richards at Cambridge', I.A. Richards: Essays in his Honour, pp.64-5.

[69] In contrast, at Oxford as late as the fifties, "it was a rule that living authors were not to be studied." Bernard Bergonzi, Exploding English (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), p.80. In 1935 Bradbrook had been "astonished at the difference of mental climate" implying a staid anti-modernism at Oxford. Bradbrook, p.63. Reform of the Oxford Schools (finals) syllabus in 1919 divided the history of English literature into eight period papers (up until the end of the nineteenth century), plus a dozen special subject options.

a degree solely in modern English. Nevertheless, some of the reformist zeal comes across in their concentration on text above critical commentary and 'historical background': "we felt rather as the first Protestants had felt about Scripture."[70]

This ability to teach literature that was contemporary allowed members of the Cambridge Tripos to work with modernist writers. Inevitably, though, Cambridge English came to define a particular strand of modernism, and therefore contributed to the canonisation of some writers over others. For instance, there seems to have been a particularly close association with T.S. Eliot - whose own essays were very much in the mould of discerning who was in and who was out - who attended some of the 'protocol sessions' that went to make up Richards's Practical Criticism.[71]

Cambridge University introduced new statutes in 1926, creating a separate English Faculty, greatly expanding the number of official lecturers and admitting women lecturers (although women such as Murray and Paues had given lectures since 1924). At Cambridge in the 1920s, when Virginia Woolf lectured to Newnham and Girton Colleges, there was a preponderance of women studying English.[72] As Bradbrook recalls, "the women's Colleges were centres of English studies."[73]

The new statutes also had the effect, as Tillyard wistfully recalls, of breaking the old informal alliance mode of policy formation and making the teaching of English more

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[70] Tillyard, p.82.

[71] I.A. Richards, Practical Criticism (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1929).

[72] These lectures, delivered in October 1928, were revised to form A Room of One's Own (London: Hogarth, 1929).

[73] Bradbrook, p.62.

administratively democratic. It was also at this stage that Chadwick left the English Faculty, removing one of its important politicians. A redesigned Tripos also came into effect, allowing Q and Basil Willey to teach the English moralists, giving prominence to tests in practical criticism (showing the influence of Richards), and making possible a degree solely in modern English (since Chaucer). Tillyard sees the increasing proportion of high marks in the years up to 1929 as vindication of these changes. In 1929 a new syllabus operated: first years, taking Tripos part one, sat mainly period papers (divided into four from 1066 onwards), called 'Life, Literature and Thought'; plus papers on Shakespeare; passages for critical comment (under the influence of I.A. Richards); and Anglo-Saxon with early Norse. Finalists, taking Tripos part two, had in total nine thematic and linguistic papers, still including a general essay paper (with questions such as, The right functions and limits of a censorship of literature). Also introduced in 1929 was a paper entitled 'History and Theory of Literary Criticism', testament to the importance attached by the Cambridge Faculty, and the subject itself, to critical self-consciousness. The first such paper in 1929 quoted contemporaries J. Middleton Murry and Clive Bell on the moral role of criticism.

The personal account of the formation of the Tripos provided by Tillyard records much of the "network of human contacts" that constructed the Cambridge course, but one has to look elsewhere for the broader cultural significance of the changes brought about in this era.[74] As Baldick concludes, Cambridge was the institution that most maintained the status of English as central to education and as a liberal force for cultural change.[75] The rise of English studies coincides with a period of rapid professionalisation of

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[74] Ian McKillop, F.R. Leavis: A Life in Criticism (London: Allen Lane, 1995), p.49.

[75] See Baldick, pp.196-7.

academia, and the central place argued for English within a liberal education is significant in that this professionalisation entails a growth of student numbers. Moreover, the new importance of the subject in the post-war years is suggestive of a broader nationalism as a response to changes in the labour market and the collapse of the British Empire. The new popularity of English ensured its continuation as it provided a training ground for schoolteachers ready to enlarge the growing British middle-class.[76]

The self-conscious character of English studies means that the subject has been able to comment upon its own development. Part of this process of professionalisation was the increased specialism of the critical press and it is important to recognise some of the ways in which the new subject of English was from its beginnings able to deal with such questions as the role of the press. A special subject at Oxford in the early twenties was Periodical Literature, offering questions such as, Trace the beginnings of literary criticism in periodical literature (1921). The specialisation of the periodicals market was an important factor in the passage of literary studies into the academy.[77] For instance, The Year's Work in English Studies was formed in 1919, The Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature was first issued in 1920 and five years later saw the foundation of The Review of English Studies. These journals attest to the increased number of academic publications within English studies.

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[76] In the late 1920s and early 1930s, in the provision of English teachers, "supply ... notoriously exceeds the demand" and this is "especiallly in girls' schools." E.R. Dodds, 'What is Wrong with the Modern Universities?', The Universities Review, 4.1 (October 1931), 9-21 (p.12).

[77] For a general, liberal discussion of this topic see John Gross, The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters (London: Penguin, 1969; repr. 1991).

5. The 1930s: Joyce and 'Culture'.

Culture was first a noun of process: the active cultivation of animals, crop, and later, metaphorically, used to refer to human growth or development.[78] The word was often associated with traditional or national cultures, especially around and after the industrial revolution, so a common nineteenth century usage of the word 'culture' described a people or community. It was

> used to attack what was seen as the 'MECHANICAL' character of the new civilisation then emerging: both for its abstract rationalism and for the 'inhumanity' of current industrial development. It was used to distinguish between 'human' and 'material' development."[79]

A clear example of this use of culture can be seen in the Newbolt Report, which refers to "Culture, like all spiritual gifts."[80] Towards the end of the century and into the twentieth century, the word culture also came to indicate especially valued works of intellectual and artistic activity.[81]

In arguments for the foundation of English studies it could be asserted that English literature represented the national culture, but also that it was culture. Thus another argument in defence of English studies is that it protects culture, where here a particular set of values and practices are privileged. An aptitude for literature can then betoken

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[78] On the word culture, see Raymond Williams, Keywords (London: Fontana, 1976) , pp.87-93; and Culture (London: Fontana, 1981), pp.10-13.

[79] Williams, Keywords, p.89.

[80] Newbolt Report, p. 260.

[81] Temporarily, around the years of the Great War, culture was also associated with the German *Kultur* , and thus attracted a certain amount of hostility.

human development, so for instance the English Association gained prestige from "cultured and influential circles."[82] For critics like the Leavises, literature manages to keep all these connotations of the word, for not only is it a valued practice but also one that can revivify a communal culture. Notably, Leavis traces contemporary social divisions back to the Industrial Revolution, and his writings betray a fear of anything considered too 'mechanical', such as the prose of Work in Progress.

One of the primary concerns of the early thirties is an apparent gulf between 'the common reader' of the masses and the specialist reader or critic. As chapter two has shown, the response to Work in Progress in the late twenties reveals this anxiety. This is partly a consequence of the professionalisation of study, although obviously the growth of academe and its appropriation of modernism provides further education to increasing numbers. It is thus not possible to identify fixed categories of different communities of readers. Q.D. Leavis's claim that "the serious novel can no longer percolate through successive strata of the reading publics" does not so much respond to the problems of education as ignore education altogether.[83]

It is not surprising to find the chairman of the English Association, at the beginning of the forties, referring to the instituted divide between professional readers and lay readers. He reminds the Association that they have veered away from their goal of making literature communally accessible, urging them "to break down the wall of partition between teachers as a class and the rest of the community. And the study and enjoyment of English Literature is obviously ground on which the professional teacher

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[82] Nowell Smith, p.6.

[83] Q.D. Leavis, Fiction and the Reading Public (London: Chatto and Windus, 1932), p.212. Ulysses is one of her named examples in this passage.

and the layman can most easily be brought together for their common pleasure and profit."[84] The message and the metaphor in this quotation indicate a defining characteristic of English studies, one which the Association also stood for, and that is its insistence on a body of texts that formed English Literature while also asserting the broader social relevance of that body. There was a perceived divide between literature and the marketplace, with the former housed within professional education.

It is therefore not surprising to find this issue occupying a major educational debate of the period, and this can be seen in most pages of journals such as The University and The Universities Review. As one contributor remarked in 1928,

> Words are as unstable a vehicle for our ideas as veal is an uncertain meat for travellers on the continent. And most unstable of all vehicles is the word "University".[85]

Other than its parochialism (if there is one sure thing to separate England from the continent it is one's diet), this passage is indicative of a number of contemporary concerns. Linguistic indeterminacy was of course being exploited to the full by Joyce and others. Indeed, Joyce's exile in fanciful Paris certainly erected a further obstacle to his acceptance in England. The anxiety over the definition of university is typical of the late twenties and early thirties, as is the wanton capital initial. Universities fought between their necessary requirement to train students for careers and a desire to maintain a spirit of learned privilege. As a regular contributor to The University put it in 1929, "The modern University is a strange duality," that is, it represents "the general clash between Culture and Materialism, Intelligence and Mechanism, Ideals and

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[84] Nowell Smith, p.9.

[85] Frank Darvall, 'The Changing University', The University, (Autumn 1928), 21-2 (p.21).

Reality." Like much of this journal (published from London), this piece defends the Oxbridge collegiate model where work is "real, spontaneous and vital." Careerism elsewhere is unfortunately a "necessary evil." As the careerists "are still winning," culture is seen as a spiritual quality which is "impossible to establish or maintain ... in a Careerist University."[86]

A sample of university exam questions from the 1930s show how English studies continued to be concerned with problems of education and culture. In 1930 the essay paper at Cambridge gave the title, Mass-education in taste. An alternative title summed up the apparent conflict within the word culture:

> Culture is on the horns of this dilemma: if profound and noble it must remain rare, if common it must become mean.

The following year's essay paper on part one of the Tripos exemplifies the introspection that characterizes English studies, giving as a title, The ultimate value of English as an academic subject. In 1932 the same paper offered, The Common Reader versus the Highbrow; and the year after, The function of a university in the modern world. In 1934 a preliminary exam was introduced, consisting of five papers, one of which was again an essay paper. In 1936 it set the title, The teaching of English in schools. Two years later, the Tripos essay paper included the following question:

> The presentation of a large sum of money to a University, to whatever purposes the gift is limited, is always the cause of jubilation by University authorities and respectful admiration by the Press. A few persons may wonder, from time to time, whether either the donors or the recipients are fully aware of what they are doing, or of the possible questions in the long run.

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[86] J. Stewart Cook, 'Culture and Career', The University, (Lent 1929), 7-8 (p.7).

Clearly, an important issue in English studies was then (as now) the question of its own place in education, as well as the roles of educational institutions within a broader society.

The above examples show how universities, and particularly English studies, felt a sense of crisis that may be seen within the different connotations of the word 'culture', for this word appeals at once to a spiritual quality and to a common people. It is precisely these two elements that English studies had been set the task of uniting by the Newbolt Report, with its emphasis on the spirituality of literature as the unifying ingredient of the national culture, and by the Cambridge Tripos, which examined simply in 'English' and which sought to maintain the value of English studies as the cornerstone of education. It is fair to say, then, that English studies found itself in crisis in the early 1930s, and it is in response to this that we can best read the work of F.R. Leavis.

The name of Joyce came to be a minor test-case for the dispute within English studies between syllabus reformists and propagators of a national culture based upon the assumed tradition of 'the canon'. In 1931 this dispute reached the pages of The University, sparked by an article bemoaning the ignorance of students in arts' subjects, for instance,

> I have heard of persons with English honours degrees who are quite unaware of the existence of James Joyce.[87]

The implication of this claim, provoked by surprise, is that Joyce is well-known but also that similarly he is both central (everyone should know of him) and also marginal

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[87] W. Worthy, 'Art in the Universities', The University, (Summer 1931), 14-17 (p.17).

(he is not an institutionalised writer). In the early 1930s, then, at a crucial period in the modernisation of literary studies, the name of Joyce - not his texts, or a text, or even the reading of him, but his name or reputation - is a testing ground for syllabus reform. This easily accords with the contemporary critical appropriation of Work in Progress as an unreadable literary limit.

The traditionalist response, in the name of an absolute standard of culture, engaged the emotive argument more than the intellectual one:

> if Culture is not entirely a question of fashion (and it is not), it should be more or less possible to be cultured without being "aware" of Mr. Joyce's "existence." In any case, a hundred years ago, nobody knew of Mr. Joyce, yet, we presume, Culture had existed then and before then.[88]

The point remains, is reinforced, that Joyce's name is a key element in the definition of "Culture" - of what is worth knowing about - for the contemporary student must still know that Joyce is excluded from "Culture". Interestingly, Cook continues, "you cannot enjoy the fruits of culture without some economic sacrifice," suggesting that universities necessarily combine culture and careers, the literary and the marketplace (and that in doing so the first element loses its absolute value and its capital initial).

Joyce's own position within a rather different culture - avant-garde Paris dominated by expatriate figures - indubitably contributed to the rather stuffy dismissive attitude towards him from some English quarters. Writers in the conservative The University are thus able to imply the importance of Joyce while marginalising him within English in England. The pages of transition (which made special appeal to expatriate Americans)

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[88] J. Stewart Cook, 'Universities and the Things That Matter', The University, (Michaelmas 1931), 18-20 (p.19).

and The Little Review (in which Joyce's work appeared when Pound was running its output[89]) show an enthusiasm for the new that was far in excess of English studies, even at Cambridge, which was proud to think of itself as contemporary.[90] Joyce's name does not appear on exams in England until the 1940s.[91]

The name of Joyce in 1930s England thus occupies a dual position, as both central and marginal to the literary tradition (and its institutions). He is a testcase of cultural standing, yet at the same time the subject of suspicion. The words of Eliot from 1931 neatly summarise the situation:

> the only two authors , of 'recognized ability and position', officially disapproved in England, are James Joyce and D.H. Lawrence.[92]

In 1926, Leavis had gone to the trouble of applying for Home Office permission to bring a copy of Ulysses into the country - for the purposes of lectures on modern literature - but was refused (as was Stepney public library in the same year). The Home Office and Director of Pubic Prosecutions even tried to prevent Leavis teaching Joyce, although neither police nor university authorities in Cambridge abetted them. By 1933, the situation was slightly different: an evening school teacher was permitted to use the book in classes, although in 1934 Desmond MacCarthy was prevented from using the book in lectures at the Royal Institute. The Home Office refused to risk public

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89 See Ian Hamilton, The Little Magazines (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1976), pp.11-43.

90 Bradbrook, p.69.

91 "To the conservatism of examiners we must attribute the English graduates' ignorance of contemporary writers." Gabriel Seal, 'The English Honours Syllabus', The New University 16 (November 1936), p.5.

92 T.S. Eliot, 'Thoughts After Lambeth' in Selected Essays (London: Faber, 1972), p.366.

questioning of its policy while privately recognising that the ban could not be universal.[93]

6. F.R. Leavis and Joyce.

This section aims to illustrate the interaction between Joyce and English studies in the 1930s by focusing on the work of F.R. Leavis. Much has been written on Leavis's career and the influence of Scrutiny, but my interest here is to focus on the relation between the character of university English and Joyce's last work, as each are perceived by one of the most important critics of the period.

Leavis and Scrutiny were to be instrumental in promoting a particular modernist line, which included (especially the early) Eliot and Lawrence - and some of the later Yeats - but from which Joyce was excluded. Leavis was one of those who helped make Cambridge English engaged in contemporary literature[94]; those he praised embodied the values his criticism espoused, specifically an English cultural unity apparently to be found prior to the industrial revolution. Unlike Eliot's increasingly 'aristocratic' high Catholicism, however, Leavis's cultural faith is based in a common social heritage (which at one stage led him close to socialism) transmitted through via the language. The language of literature was thus an important tool of cultural cohesion.

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[93] Alistair McLeery, 'Naughty Old Leavis', Times Higher Educational Supplement, 13 September 1991, p.18; Alistair McLeery, 'A Curious History: United Kingdom Government Reaction to Ulysses', JJQ 32.3-4 (Spring / Summer 1995), 631-41.

[94] Leavis later claimed that "new creation ... compelled an intense critical interest" and "poetic innovations entailed ... study." English Literature in Our Time and the University (London: Chatto and Windus, 1969), p.69.

Nevertheless, Leavis's emphasis on the vitality and range of the language led him to oppose the plans for 'Basic English' espoused by his colleague I.A. Richards and C.K. Ogden.[95] This was also to be the basis for Leavis's criticisms of Work in Progress.[96] Leavis's attitude to Joyce does reveal, however, that at the very least he took him seriously, that is, as a serious literary figure, whose work, if not to be commended, had to be engaged.

Leavis's project is based upon a differentiation between art or literature and other media of cultural expression such as "films, newspapers, advertising - indeed, the whole world outside the classroom."[97] In Education and the University Leavis typically bases his faith in an educated literary consensus: "we can ... count on a sufficient measure of agreement, overt and implicit, about essential values to make it unnecessary to discuss ultimate sanctions, or provide a philosophy, before starting to work."[98] Although notorious for consistently refusing to set out explicitly a theory of criticism, almost the whole of Leavis's critical output is concerned with the function of criticism and with what constitutes literature and a proper response to it. Leavis's project is based on the assumption of a determinable pre-existing interpretive community, and its blind faith in the values of that community demonstrates the dangers inherent to such a notion.

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[95] One of the reasons Richards left Britain - first for China and then for America - was that the British government also refused to take seriously these plans to encourage international communications.

[96] It is notable that Ogden presumably saw some potential similarity between the linguistic method of Work in Progress and the techniques of Basic English; see chapter two.

[97] F.R. Leavis and Denys Thompson, Culture and the Environment (London: Chatto and Windus, 1933), p.1.

[98] F.R. Leavis, Education and the University (London: Chatto and Windus, 1943), p.18.

For Leavis, a question "of the utmost importance" is "the relation of reading to education and culture," and so his theoretical work is directed towards the social function of literature and criticism.[99] The cultural apparatus that joins the literary to the marketplace is education, and Leavis's career is a history of trying to think and practise what a literary education can and should be.[100] It is in the classroom, in a literary education, that Leavis situates an approach between aesthetics and the marketplace. Education, then, is the third term that defines the structurality of the literary\market opposition, and from whence Leavis presumes to speak. This is how Culture and the Environment begins, and as soon as the second sentence Leavis places his narrative voice inside the classroom in the mind of a teacher, and this allows him to write "from our point of view. "To stand aside from the opposition he enforces, Leavis is required to situate himself within a third element which is yet the condition for that opposition, and so, "if one is to believe in anything one is to believe in education."[101] The idealism of his logical position is evident in his terminology: he will later speak of the "Idea of a university" (the capital is itself illuminating), ironically in a confession that practice falls short of theory.[102] The impossibility of maintaining an ideal neutrality reveals his bias in the phrase "literary education," for like Newbolt and Sampson before him, and

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[99] F.R. Leavis, 'How to Teach Reading' in Education and the University, p.138.

[100] In this respect his publishing career spans from Mass Civilization and Minority Culture (1930) to English Literature in Our Time and the University (1969), by way of Culture and the Environment (with Denys Thompson, 1933), Education and the University (1943) and including Scrutiny 1932 to 1953, a journal for "a small minority for whom the arts are something more than a luxury product" ('Scrutiny: A Manifesto', Scrutiny, 1.1 (1932), 5). Leavis (1895-1978) was a probationary lecturer at Cambridge University from 1927 to 1931 and was a Fellow from 1935 to 1964 at Downing College.

[101] F.R. Leavis and Denys Thompson, Culture and the Environment, pp.3-4.

[102] F.R. Leavis, Education and the University, passim.

others working in Cambridge, Leavis assumes study of English literature to be the epitome of educational value. His third term, education, was always predisposed towards the literary rather than the marketplace.

There is an interesting admission on the first page of Culture and the Environment that education, the partisan site that combines the literary and the market, is a supplement or replacement for a lost, original culture.

> But literary education, we must not forget, is to a great extent a substitute. What we have lost is the organic community with the living culture it embodied.

Yet this supplement is in danger of being forgotten, that is to say, it has itself been supplemented by something else, another definition of education. The living culture is dead, substituted by literary education, itself becoming substituted. But that original culture was always anyway combined with an educative form, was supplemented (replenished) by education. Leavis's critical theory is fraught with a sense of danger and of irreparable loss, of the theorist on the margin of contemporary culture bordering between a vital organicism and meaningless abyss:

> the English people did once have a culture (so nearly forgotten now that the educated often find it hard to grasp what the assertion means).[103]

The only means of revitalisation is an educative act of memory, of accepting the chain of supplementarity, as directed by the author who has placed himself within his defined readership of "the educated." This educative act of memory must be achieved within the subject, as both the individual in his\her literary response, and as English literature, the

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[103] F.R. Leavis and Denys Thompson, Culture and the Environment, p.3.

community or discipline of study through which a national cultural memory is activated in its participants.

The educational combination of the literary and the marketplace has been, and must be, determined by power relations within a broader society. Literary study alone is not enough.

> Practical criticism of literature must be associated with training in awareness of the environment - advertising, the press, ... for, clearly, to the pervasive counter-influence of this environment the literary training of sensibility in school is an inadequate reply.[104]

Power relations between discourses has, then, determined the active co-operation between the opposing realms distinguished by Stephen Dedalus in A Portrait. Dedalus also had noticed the same power relation later identified by Leavis, although Joyce's position is assimilative rather than combative:

> it wounded him to think that he would never be but a shy guest at the feast of the world's culture and that the monkish learning, in terms of which he was striving to forge out an esthetic philosophy, was held no higher by the age he lived in than the subtle and curious jargons of heraldry and falconry. (P 179)

Some of the contradictions of English studies may be exemplified by the Cambridge Faculty in which Leavis taught. On the one hand, the subject is seen as an agent of cultural unification, and on the other hand, as both Dedalus and Leavis recognise, it does not provide a specific vocational training and is therefore not tailored to the labour market, where it is held in no more esteem than heraldry or falconry. The subtle and curious jargon of English studies at once directs itself towards questions of education, the press, advertising, but also, as one of the Cambridge English school recalls, "we

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[104] F.R. Leavis, Education and the University, p.138.

were not much concerned with the outside world or with publicity."[105] Incidentally, one of the guiding lights of Cambridge English, Forbes, something of an eccentric, held that the only serious science was heraldry.[106]

The power relation between the discourses of the literary and the marketplace is dependent upon the site of that relation. Dedalus spoke of the language of the "marketplace" and Leavis called advertising, cinema and the press "outside the classroom."[107] Within the educational institution, however, both see possibilities of subverting the oppositional hierarchy. For Leavis, such a readjustment must occur within the school or university; for Dedalus, education is a necessary stepping-stone towards his artistic freedom. Dedalus attempts to pass beyond the opposition only to encounter it at each social juncture, and Leavis attempts to overturn the opposition within his limited sphere of education only to run up against the contradiction between a socially divisive education and a supposedly national culture. Leavis's endorsement of a divisive education can be seen in his later stringent defence of 'standards' and hostile opposition to educational reform.

Leavis's teaching career spanned a period of intense professionalisation and expansion of English departments as well as British higher education in general. During the period of Work in Progress, from 1923 to 1939, British universities had more full-time male students in Arts faculties that in any other faculty, reaching its peak in 1933-4.[108] Arts

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[105] Bradbrook, p.63.

[106] Bradbrook, p.62.

[107] F.R. Leavis and Denys Thompson, Culture and the Environment, p.1.

[108] See Nuffield College, The Problem Facing British Universities (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), p.68, Graph III.

was consistently the most popular faculty with women students, whose numbers increased during the war. Moreover, access to higher education was also eased by a general fall in the birth-rate for England and Wales. In particular, there was a significant trough in the years 1917-1919, so that in the mid thirties there were notably fewer people of student age in the population. Despite such trends the overall pattern from the beginning of the century up to the second world war was one of significant decline: the average birth rate for the years 1905-1909 was c.927,000, and for the years 1934-38 it was c.606,000.[109] During the 1939-45 war, student numbers dropped dramatically, affecting Arts more than any other faculty. Two years after the end of the war the number of students was bolstered by ex-servicemen, and figures showed an increase of nearly fifty per cent on the previous peak in the mid-thirties. The total number of students in the sixteen universities and five university colleges in 1938-9 was c.50,000 and in 1947-8 c.77,000.

The Nuffield Report that compiled these figures was called to examine how higher education could cope with this massive increase, and warned about "the incompatibility between true education and large numbers."[110] The Nuffield Report gives some indication of the prevailing ethos in British academia. Brian Simon's account of educational politics argues that during the inter-war period British universities saw little expansion (except for the years immediately after the first war), and that their renowned autonomy results from social isolation due to "lack of demand for new knowledge from a stagnant economy."[111]

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[109] See Brian Simon, The Politics of Educational Reform 1920-1940 (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1974), Table 12, p.374.

[110] Nuffield, p.99.

[111] Simon, p.253

In defence of university autonomy, the conclusions of the Nuffield Report suggested a tendency towards homogenisation in higher education, arguing that universities

> have a common aim, which they pursue by broadly identical methods. They are regulated by mutual criticism enforcing standards derived from a common tradition and continually adapted to new conditions.[112]

Yet the report also acknowledges "the accidental historical growth of the present system," suggesting that their "common tradition" (like that of the English departments within them) nevertheless contains some socio-ideological determination of their identity, but which is subsumed under the rubric of academic freedom or autonomy.[113] It is this degree of apparent accident that most distinguishes the development of British education from that in other counties.

Similarly, Leavis recognised "the problem of higher education" but refused to identify this with "the problem of the university," thus maintaining the distinction between a firmly held ideal and its material practice. Later, Leavis was to oppose the reformist spirit of the 1960s, exemplified by the Robbins Report, on the grounds that "there can be no satisfactory solution" to the problem of educational expansion "if standards are not maintained somewhere." He thus resisted "the righteous jealousy and the automatic will to level down that present themselves in our time as democratic principle." Leavis

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[112] Nuffield, p.103. Compare the following observation from a rather different study of modern universities:

> the most striking fact in the last forty years is a convergent movement of all the universities of Europe that is tending to make them all homogenous.

José Ortega y Gasset, Mission of the University, trans. by Howard Lee Nostrand (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944), pp.51-2.

[113] Nuffield, p.104.

also anticipated The Open University, fearing that "a ministerial potentate ... may think it progressive to empower an exalted and subsidised correspondence college to confer degrees."[114]

The increasing numbers entering higher education increased the demands on teaching time as well as students' time in which to read. The implications of this for a literary readership within academia can be seen from Leavis's reaction to Work in Progress.

The response of F.R. Leavis to Work in Progress at once resembles many newspaper reviews and typifies his critical theory. It is, he says, "for the most part, monotonous non-significance" although the more purple passages of ALP provide him some satisfaction.[115] Leavis's criticism of Work in Progress is that "the spuriousness, the mechanical manipulation, is pervasive" and regrets that it is not the product of some "deeply serious purpose."[116] Leavis is primarily concerned with the role of literature in the university and what he calls a "responsible practice of criticism."[117]

Assuming to speak for "the English-speaking reader," Leavis asserts that

> The 'meaning,' or an impressive amount of it, can always be worked out at leisure, just as it was worked in (the opportunities that the Work in Progress offers for knowing elucidation insure it a certain popularity ...).[118]

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[114] F.R. Leavis, English Literature in Our Time and the University, p.64, p.67.

[115] F.R. Leavis, 'Joyce and "The Revolution of the Word"', Scrutiny, 2.2 (September 1933), 193-201 (p.197).

[116] F.R. Leavis, 'Joyce and "The Revolution of the Word"', p.197, p.198.

[117] F.R. Leavis, 'Restatement for Critics', Scrutiny, 1.4 (March 1933), 315-24 (p.319).

Leavis shows how a readership maintains itself: by elucidating "an impressive amount" of meanings it is able to "insure" a text's popularity; and like H.G. Wells and Vladimir Dixon, Leavis finds relevance in the length of the text's production, assuming a direct correlation with its potential reading, which would interpret "at leisure, just as it was worked in." Moreover, it is "always" the case that its reading would be so leisurely. No matter how long, its productivity is seen to be constant.

The site for such an absolute production of the text is the concern of the influential Scrutiny movement. Leavis closes his article on Work in Progress - the only time he wrote directly on Joyce - moved to a clear exposition of the nub of his critical theory (perhaps because Joyce's last work has that effect on readers?):

> We are back at the question, which has been raised in Scrutiny before and will be again, if Scrutiny performs its function, whether there can be a culture based on leisure, and if so, what kind.[119]

Leavis's call for literary continuity, buoyed by language, he felt to be threatened by Work in Progress, and he was no doubt somewhat relieved for the future of his leisured "culture" that the principle site of that tradition, the university, had not yet discovered Joyce, remarking that "it is surprising, Paris having long enough ago given us the cue, that our undergraduate intellect stays content with the Cantos."[120] Leavis's implicit acceptance of Pound as an attraction to "our undergraduate intellect" makes an interesting comparison with Joyce, since the two writers raised similar technical problems, a fact tacitly accepted by Leavis. His comment again suggests the placement

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[118] F.R. Leavis, 'Joyce and "The Revolution of the Word"', p.196.

[119] F.R. Leavis, 'Joyce and "The Revolution of the Word"', p.201.

[120] F.R. Leavis, 'Joyce and "The Revolution of the Word"', p.196.

but also ignorance of Joyce within academia. Leavis for one seems prepared to stomach only so much.

What Leavis did not explicitly appreciate in 1933 was to become clearer by the late 1960s, by when he realised that time for a leisured reading was a factor that limited a text's readership. For instance, "the undergraduate reading English ... must inevitably be faced with more than he can get properly done." Leavis here seems to accept a more pragmatic approach to pedagogy than his previous theoretical pronouncements would seem to imply, especially as "the profit of his education" is to be counted by "responding constructively to the situation."[121] Even for the most committed of literary idealists there is some recognition that the educational market places limits on the consumption of literature. The pleasures of Work in Progress or Finnegans Wake, of a reading worked out at leisure, would thus seem to be denied even to students of English. Leavis's texts are, after all, aimed at a specific audience, "the educated" as his review of Work in Progress put it, or those "likely to read this."[122] However, the apparent sympathy Leavis shares with those whose work-loads are unmatched by opportunity is also the pretext for his demands that only the 'great tradition' should be read.

Within the university, even as an artist, Stephen Dedalus finds that temporal constraints continue to measure the rate of his production. The dean asks, "when may we expect to have something from you on the esthetic question?" to which the student replies, "I stumble on an idea once a fortnight if I am lucky" (P 191). This is, however, a

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[121] F.R. Leavis, English Literature in Our Time and the University, p.67.

[122] F.R. Leavis, Culture and the Environment, p.3; F.R. Leavis, For Continuity (Cambridge: Minority Press, 1933), p.15.

significantly faster rate than Joyce's future consumers were to master. Writing to his patroness, Harriet Shaw Weaver, when about to embark upon Work in Progress, Joyce advocated the critical use of catch-phrases for "the reading public," such as Larbaud's coinage of the term "interior monologue."

> They [the reading public] cannot manage more than about one such phrase every six months - not for lack of intelligence but because they are in a hurry.[123]

Whereas Leavis maintained an inverse relationship between temporality and readership - only a privileged minority can have the time to devote an indefinite period to reading the great texts - Joyce seems to have realised that reading can rarely be so leisured.

Against the charge that Work in Progress was too demanding on time and patience, is the advice given by Finnegans Wake: the textbook chapter (II.ii), in which the twins and Issy are seen reading, offers the cryptic guidance to "volve the virgil page and view" (270.25) which refers to 'Sortes Virgilianae', the practice of opening a book at random and proceeding from any line that catches the eye. This is reinforced a few pages later by the marginal note, "SORTES VIRGINIANAE" (281R). The body of the text thus explains in advance a forthcoming marginal gloss, from which it is characteristically divorced, while the note, itself eye-catching, appears to licence its reading in conjunction with any part of the body of the text.

These concerns of Joyce, with his readership and his texts' consumption, perhaps inevitably led to the recognition of a discrepancy between production and consumption in his last work. The temporal relation between production and consumption is an

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[123] To Harriet Shaw Weaver, 19 November 1923, Letters iii. 83. Joyce wanted Eliot to adopt a phrase such as 'two-plane', which he had used in conversation.

essential aspect of modernism and its audience: the lack of time for reading, and a consequent need for pre-interpretation, which relation continues - as Leavis admitted - in the university consumption of literature. As previous chapters show, this is also a continuity of Wake criticism. There is an obvious discrepancy between the leisured reading of a Leavis and the hurried absorption of a notional "reading public," which may also be seen in the relationship between the length of time Joyce took to write Work in Progress and its accretion of fragmented language, that is, its suitability for select quotation.

A similar discrepancy holds between Joyce's haste to publicise his writing and his caution to publish it, suggesting a concern for readership that extends his literary practice to the realm of advertising, mixing the realms of the aesthetic and the economic. Yet the actual readership of Work in Progress became increasingly institutionalised, moving Joyce's last work into an academy that operated a similar structure of value: reading should ideally be given an infinite time, but in practice it was necessarily hurried. Finnegans Wake seems peculiarly well-adapted to this structure, for it both demands an absolute attention yet self-consciously permits the most fleeting of readings.

7. American Joyce.

In this section I want to examine the appropriation of Joyce's last work within North America as this played a significant role in the overall accommodation of Joyce within literary academia. Thereafter, readers of Finnegans Wake in an English context could not help but be influenced by the volume of critical output on Joyce.

It is the reception of Ulysses that did most to promote Joyce's name, notably in the United States (after much initial hostility in the twenties), where the ban was eventually lifted in 1934. Gilbert's book on Ulysses, published in England in 1930 and in the United States the following year, perhaps put off more than it encouraged, by over-emphasising the text's ordered Homeric parallels. Frank Budgen's book in 1934 countered this tendency in its strongly biographical approach.[124] However, these kinds of scholarship were unsuited to the tenets of the rising New Criticism whose emphasis on scrutinising internal coherence and themes of wit, irony and tension seems to preclude external sources for criticism.[125]

Joyce's "first substantial and sympathetic American audience" was formed in the early 1930s by left intellectuals, perhaps best exemplified in the work of Edmund Wilson.[126] Wilson reacted against the Stalinist charge of idealism levelled against Joyce, presenting Ulysses in particular as a series of real-life events and moral decisions. Frustrated by the work's digressive parodies, notably in 'Oxen of the Sun', Wilson confusingly found them "artistically...indefensible" yet "we are obliged to grant them a certain necessity."[127] Writing on Finnegans Wake in 1941 Wilson was more inclined to psychological conjecture, praising the universality of its particular focus, found to continue the technique of Joyce's previous work. Yet it was more flawed: Earwicker,

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[124] Stuart Gilbert, James Joyce's Ulysses: A Study (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1931). Frank Budgen, James Joyce and the Making of Ulysses (London: Grayson and Grayson, 1934; New York: Harrison, Smith and Haas, 1934).

[125] This point is made by Hugh Kenner in 'The Making of the Modernst Canon' in Canons, ed. by Robert von Hallberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), p.372.

[126] Jeffrey Segall, Joyce in America: Cultural Politics and the Trials of Ulysses (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p.83

[127] Edmund Wilson, Axel's Castle (New York: Scribner's, 1931), pp.216, 236.

famously, has "too much literature poured into him" and his story becomes lost in the "impulse to pure verbal play."[128] Ironically, the importance of Wilson now is his very stress on the importance of Joyce, holding out against those like Philip Rahv who dismissed the later work as mere solipsism, and preparing a groundwork for a growing audience of liberal interpreters such as Lionel Trilling. It also positioned Joyce in the American cultural debates of the 30s as a mildly progressive liberal, an important manoeuvre which American academic criticism has until recently persistently espoused.

In the United States, the work of Richards and Cambridge English had an impact both intellectually and institutionally. Grant Webster, in his The Republic of Letters, calls the 1920s Cambridge school "The first Formalist organisation of an English curriculum." Webster contends that Richards's concentration on the formal qualities of poetry "established the basis for the academic acceptance of explication" as the role of the student and critic in American universities.[129] Certainly the work of Richards contributed to the theoretical foundations for New Criticism, which distinguished the literary work as a verbal object of a different order than everyday language, and one which contains an immanent meaning. The literary work is therefore self-sufficient; it has an "autonomous integrity."[130] All it requires is the proper apprehension of it by the reader-critic. Richards moved to the United States where he taught at Harvard in the thirties and forties, and Eliot gave the Harvard Lectures in 1932. The work of each can be seen as attempting to institutionalise a canon of great literature. Richards later

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[128] Edmund Wilson, The Wound and the Bow (London: W.H. Allen, 1941), p.259.

[129] Grant Webster, The Republic of Letters: A History of Postwar American Literary Opinion (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), p.111.

[130] Stanley Sultan, Eliot, Joyce, and Company (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), p.224.

produced the infamous Harvard Red Book (1945) - which listed the set texts of the English school, while Eliot's essays amount to a judgemental reinvention of the history of literature.[131] Although Eliot is such a strong presence on both sides of the Atlantic, and has associations with the formalist critical orthodoxy, that should not imply a simple correlation between New Criticism and modernism. Critics like Allen Tate and John Crowe Ransom, with backgrounds in the conservative South, were wary of any apparently nihilistic challenge to traditional cultural practices.

The New Critics rose to prominence within the context of a struggle within American cultural life between communists, new humanists and industrialisation.[132] Their professed politics are initially (in the 1930 volume I'll Take My Stand) Southern agrarian: a reactionary appeal to former values of the land and a sort of 'natural order'. Yet in the thirties they increasingly appeal against the 'interference' of politics in aesthetics, in doing so turning criticism into a professional activity (with of course its own political ideals). "It is not anybody who can do criticism," wrote John Crowe Ransom in 1938.[133] "They [new critics] laid the groundwork for a cultural aristocracy governed by the master exegetes of form."[134] Here, the very academicisation of literary activity is seen as a step away from the political world. Such a move also carried with it

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[131] On the relation between Eliot and Joyce see Sultan, plus Nathan Halper, 'Joyce and Eliot: A Tale of Shem and Shaun', Nation 200 (1965), 590-95. It may be argued that Eliot's revaluation was succesful through his combination of brilliant phrasing and assertiveness ("the unpleasantness of great poetry") rather than through any detailed textual account of writers' works. See, as a good example, 'William Blake' (1920) in Selected Essays (London: Faber, 1972), p.317.

[132] This paragraph is based on Segall, ch.4.

[133] John Crowe Ransom, 'Criticism, Inc.' in American Literary Criticism, 1900-1950, ed. by Charles I. Glicksberg (New York: Hendrick House, 1951), p.457. Cited in Segall, p.119.

[134] Segall, p.120.

social elitism: when Max Eastman complained of 'The Cult of Unintelligibility' (including Joyce), Allen Tate responded that it was readers who were unintelligent.[135] Audiences were to become a "few choicer spirits" in the words of Ransom.

The formalist methodology of these New Critics was particularly suited to the teaching of literature, for all it required was a text and willing readers (without historical knowledge), and had the guise of providing determinate conclusions. The work of Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren helped promote the formalist study of poetic language as "viable teaching method" especially with the publication in 1938 of Understanding Poetry.[136] The poetry of Eliot and of Donne (whom Eliot positively re-evaluated) and of the later Yeats became favourite texts for explication. New Criticism was the dominant methodological strand in America from the late thirties through the forties.[137] There were of course differing versions of New Criticism as well as other methods such as the neo-Aristotelian Chicago School.[138] Both stress the internal cohesion of the text, without external factors such as the author, but the Chicago critics argue that New Critics "continue to read all poems as if their authors had constructed them on identical principles."[139] Instead, they argue, structural and generic devices

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[135] Max Eastman, The Literary Mind (New York: Charles Scribners, 1931). Allen Tate, Reason in Madness: Critical Essays (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1935). Ransom quoted in Thomas Daniel Young, ed. The New Criticism and After (Charlottesville: University Pres of Virginia, 1976), p.xix. Cited in Segall, pp.123-4.

[136] Webster, p.112.

[137] Webster finds that "by 1950, Tory Formalism was firmly established in the centers of academic power and influence" (p.113). This is supported by the work of Richard Ohmann, English in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976).

[138] The Chicago School is associated with the direction of R.S. Crane, chairman of the English Department at Chicago from 1935 to 1947 and editor of Modern Philology from 1930 to 1952, wherein their writings mostly appear.

importantly determine the shape and meaning of any work. Those best known as New Critics - John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, Cleanth Brooks, W.K. Wimsatt, Yvor Winters, Robert Penn Warren - rarely wrote on Joyce, being usually explicators of poetry. Indeed, when Brooks analysed 'Clay' he praised its "verbal texture" which "resembles so nearly to the density of lyric poetry."[140]

In 1939 Ransom published the only New Critical commentary on Finnegans Wake in the first volume of what was to become their favoured journal, Kenyon Review (which Ransom also edited). 'The Aesthetic of Finnegans Wake' is both positive and negative about the book, finding fragments of coherence unconnected by any "close logic." There is an underlying political appropriation of Joyce here, for the Wake is championed in part for overcoming scientific positivism and Western liberalism: it is "an object which is different in metaphysical kind from the objects scrutinised by science." Most interestingly, the Wake can almost stand as a New Critical guidebook: showing poets how to "escape from conceptual prose" and providing a means of reading classical poetry "against the processes of science." In this reading, it becomes itself a pedagogic text, "a lesson book for aestheticians." Moreover, it was also the condition of all art (or poetry for a New Critic), for "If Joyce's art is almost completely irresponsible, any poem is, and by definition should be, bent on introducing into discourse something of what prose defines as irrelevance."[141] On its publication, then,

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[139] R.S. Crane, ed. Critics and Criticism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), p.15. Cited in Webster, p.120.

[140] Brooks, in Segall p.126. In addition to the essays mentioned here, Tate wrote on 'The Dead' in The House of Fiction (1950); and Brooks wrote on Ulysses, but not until 1968, when his admssion of it into the literary canon was nothing new (published in A Shaping Joy, 1971).

[141] John Crowe Ransom, 'The Aesthetic of Finnegans Wake', Kenyon Review 1 (1939), 424-428 (p.428).

Finnegans Wake was being read as a pedagogic text, and as a limit text, within literary academia. This essay may rank as the beginning of the New Critical favourable response to modernism, which was to continue through the forties and was so influential in the academic accommodation of modernist writers.

This process was reinforced by those influenced by New Criticism, such as R.P. Blackmur, whose essay on Ulysses, published in 1943, intended to make the novel more accessible to 'the common reader.' In this interpretation, Ulysses is ultimately about the father/son quest; its complex ordering was not only aesthetic; in reality, it reflected a disordered world. Joyce's writing can thus be read as a humane response to external conditions, rather than a chaotic comment itself. This readiness to admit of socio-historic context sets Blackmur apart from New Critics like Brooks, indicating a political difference: Blackmur has more sympathy with Bloom and common readers; Brooks and Ransom favour specialists and Stephen Dedalus.[142]

There is a strong correlation between the kinds of critical practice performed in the rising English studies and the work of Joyce, especially his later work, which provides plenty of puzzles for critical explication.[143] Webster records as the same "kind of critical activity" both "repeated explications of the same poem done according to the Formalist charter" and "the solving of the puzzles of Joyce."[144] For New Critics the

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[142] R.P. Blackmur, 'The Jew in Search of a Son: Joyce's Ulysses' in Eleven essays in the European Novel (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1943), 27-47. See Segall, pp.133-4.

[143] Such puzzles are of course not restricted to literary academe. The rising popularity of crosswords may be attested from this reference to "the cross-word epidemic of the last two years or so." Anon., 'Education in Our Contemporaries', The University Correspondent no.787(March 1927), p.46.

[144] Webster, p.23.

work of Joyce was "decidedly highbrow, a suitable challenge to the exegetical skills of formalist critics."[145] As Philippe Soupault had pointed out to Joyce in 1931, Ulysses was on the syllabus at some North American colleges in the early 1930s, that is, while it was still banned. Joyce's caustic remarks about England and then Ireland following suit ("1000 years hence") are typical.[146]

Nevertheless, there is also an element of high seriousness to the New Critical enterprise of a kind not to be found in Joyce. Not only do they miss the "humanity" of Joyce and others (humility, compassion, fun), as many critics note, but there is also a sense in which Finnegans Wake mocks the endeavours of the serious critical quest.[147] If the New Critics read Joyce in their own image, they also helped provide the opportunity for future students and critics to do so, for one of their legacies has in part been the Joyce industry which Segall finds "within the confines of the academy."[148]

Some of those critics who derived much of their focus, at least initially, from New Critical thought, such as Harry Levin, Hugh Kenner and Bernard Benstock, have noted Joyce's speedy procession into academic letters. Levin's introductory James Joyce, first published in 1944, was reissued with a new preface in 1963, which noted Joyce's "quick transit from the avant-garde to the academy," asking "Has there ever been so short a period between ostracism and canonisation? Suddenly, by ceasing to be a

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[145] Segall, p.134.

[146] To Harriet Shaw Weaver, 27 October 1931, Letters iii. 233.

[147] Segall, p.135; Richard Poirier, The Renewal of Literature (New York: Random House, 1987), p.24. This theme can also be seen in the final two chapters.

[148] Segall, p.136. On this point, see the conclusion to this chapter.

contemporary, Joyce had become a classic."[149] Through the 30s and over the post-war period in the United States, the university system was thus able to accredit Joyce's work with modernist classic status. The point to be made here is that its very difficulty, and the concomitant critical appropriation of Joyce as a difficulty writer, facilitated his reception within academic structures.

8. The Wake Examined.

While Joyce was receiving the academic endorsement of the New Critics in the United States, his work was beginning to appear on university exam papers in England. The following pages present an analytic history of Joyce's name, and especially his last work, in some representative English universities.

James Joyce first appears on examination papers at the universities studied in the 1940s. At Cambridge he first figured on a paper titled English Literature since 1785 on Tripos Part 1 in 1941 (the year of his death) and 1944, before becoming more or less a permanent fixture from 1948 onwards, by which time contemporaries such as Woolf and Lawrence were also established academic authors. At Birmingham University the M.A. in English offered one of its five papers on The Modern Novel in 1940 and its final question was on Ulysses, only four years after the first unlimited edition was made available in England. Joyce's name first appeared on an undergraduate paper

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149 Harry Levin, James Joyce: an Introduction, 2nd edn (London: Faber 1963), p.14. See also, Hugh Kenner, 'The Making of the Modernist Canon' in Canons, ed. by Robert von Hallberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); and Bernard Benstock, 'The James Joyce Industry: A Reassessment' in Yeats, Joyce and Beckett, ed. by kathleen McGrory and John Unterecker (London: Associated University Presses, 1976).

(History of Literature VI) at Birmingham in 1950. The external exams set by London contained a paper on 'History and Principles of Literary Criticism', which featured I.A. Richards and F.R. Leavis in 1951, two years before Joyce appeared on the 'English Literature from 1880 - Present' paper set for Bloomsday 1953. On the London external papers he reappeared by name not until 1956. At Oxford, which had the largest number of arts students of any British university in the years immediately before and after the war, a syllabus reform in 1945 allowed students to answer on literature up to 1920 (from eight period papers plus special subjects). Dubliners and A Portrait figured in Schools papers in 1958 and 1959 respectively. Here, they appeared on the paper titled English Literature from 1830 to 1920, whose final question in 1956 had reasonably suggested, "Justify or attack the choice of 1920 as the later limit of this paper." Interestingly, Joyce's name first appears in an Oxford examination on language rather than literature - "consider any features of diction and syntax of special interest" - in 1962. Two years later his name crops up amidst a list of eight, in a Schools' paper on The English Novel, a place that has continued to accommodate him until the present. Joyce, then, was sufficiently housed within academia only a decade after his death to enter its syllabus. Questions asked of his work, and others which referred to him (as influential, or as "after Joyce"), suggest that in academia he was still seen as a limit to literature, a sort of unacknowledged defining legislator of the canon.

The kind of question asked about Joyce in his early appearances on exam papers is revealing, as are those questions possibly directed at Joyce when his name failed to appear. For instance, in the London exam of 1954 (the year after Joyce's first appearance) candidates were asked to choose between

> Either (a) "Too earnest an attention to psychology or pseudo-psychology is being the ruination of much modern fiction from the detective story upwards." Discuss.

> Or (b) Consider some experiments with the form of the novel which have been made by twentieth-century writers. Have these experiments attempted to express something new or merely to find a new way of expressing the old?

If this was a covert suggestion that Joyce's work was either artistically ruinous or just traditionalist, the Oxford exam questions spelt it out in a manner that expressed some academic hostility. The first Oxford finals question devoted solely to Joyce, in 1966, was "It is as a traditionalist that James Joyce shows his real genius, not as an innovator." Discuss.

Two questions later the paper set the following essay:

> "No novelist has achieved a lasting success by self-conscious experimentation." Attack or defend this judgement in relation to any one or two novelists since 1918.

It is clear that Joyce's name was at least a byword for controversy, just as it had been in the early 1930s when the audience of Finnegans Wake was beginning to form in academia, and many of these early questions seem to hint at hostility (although of course they do not necessarily lead to like replies).

The Cambridge Tripos exams of the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s allowed students to answer on modern writers only in Part 1 (English Literature since 1785), until Part 2 was reformed in 1970. On Part 1 Joyce was a regular name during this period, especially the latter end, but the Wake was never directly specified. In the Part 2 papers (where 1700 was the most recent literature), Joyce's name came up on a History of English language exam in 1955. In 1964, students sitting History and Theory of Literary Criticism were asked to "Discuss ... the effects on criticism of the development of English as an academic study." A paper on The Novel was brought into the Part 2 syllabus in the mid sixties, and Joyce's name appeared here in 1966.

One of the founding principles of the new campus universities established in the 1960s was that they would pursue interdisciplinary degrees. In theory, specialists from several humanities subjects would contribute to new courses that broke the established borders of disciplines. The University of East Anglia was established in 1963 on such a basis. Its School of English in the mid 1960s ran a Preliminary examination which consisted of three papers: philosophy; historical method; and Shakespeare and Elizabethan drama. In 1968 the department was re-named the School of English and American Studies, and in the 1969 Final examination there were nine papers on history, seven on literature (including European, American and linguistics), one on philosophy, and five joint papers. It seems to be these joint papers which contributed most to the interdisciplinary nature of the new courses; the majority seem to have reinforced old borders between disciplines. In the late 1960s, Joyce's name appeared only sporadically, on Finals papers and a 1972 M.A. exam paper entitled The Novel carried questions on Ulysses. It could reasonably be said that the innovative course design at East Anglia - and other new universities - actually prohibited the introduction of recent literature onto the syllabus.[150]

Thus despite the first appearance of Joyce on university exam papers in 1941, there was no specific mention of Finnegans Wake in the 1940s, 1950s or 1960s. The name Joyce appears to function as a locus for controversy, confirming his reputation as a literary limit. However, the propagated ignorance of his last work suggests that although the universities had received Finnegans Wake (it was well written about), they were not yet ready to disseminate it. In its early institutionalism, then, the Wake spawned interpretation but spurned direct pedagogy.

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[150] One area in which disciplines merged and recent writing was introduced was American studies, which in 1970 posed essays on Saul Bellow and Norman Mailer. After 1971, this aspect gained greater emphasis within the School.

The academic placement of Finnegans Wake received further impetus with the initially uneasy accommodation of post-structuralism in British universities. In the early 1970s at University College, London, Frank Kermode led a seminar on structuralism which included Stephen Heath from Cambridge and Jonathan Culler from Oxford, both "already committed to structuralist and post-structuralist thinking."[151] Joyce, of course, had been a regular name on university syllabuses since the late 1940s, but was never more popular than in the 1970s. Cambridge modernised their examinations in 1970, adopting period papers that covered the broad spectrum of English literature in both Part 1 and Part 2, as well as special subjects and an updated History and Theory of Literary Criticism paper. Joyce featured every year from 1970 to 1974 on either the Tripos Part 1 paper, English Literature since 1830 (among eight papers), or on the Part 2 paper, The Novel (among fourteen papers), or the special period paper on literature from 1910 to 1945 (instituted in 1971).

Joyce appeared on First Public Exam papers (Prelims) for Oxford undergraduates at the end of their first year on the paper Literature 1900 to 1945 (one of five papers). The first such question, in 1970, noticed that the Joyce industry was by this stage pervasive, asking

> Is it a sign of strength or of weakness in Joyce's writings that they have evoked so exceptionally large a volume of commentary?

The early seventies represented something of a heyday for Finnegans Wake, concomitant with the initial dominance of post-structuralism in France and its early appropriation in some British and United States universities. Given this historical

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[151] Frank Kermode, interviewed by the editor, in Imre Salusinszky, ed., Criticism and Society (London: Methuen, 1987), p.110.

symmetry it is fitting that the first question on Finnegans Wake concerned readership. A three-part question set to Oxford first years in 1972 offered this final option:

> In Finnegans Wake Joyce speaks of "that ideal reader suffering from an ideal insomnia." What qualities, apart from time and patience, does the "ideal reader" of Finnegans Wake require, and what are his rewards?

Clearly, the academic appropriation of the Wake continued to be troubled by the temporality of reading, an open admission of the conditions of university study. The Wake continued to get a specific mention until 1976, including the effectively simple title, How should Finnegans Wake be read? (1975). Perhaps an undercurrent of hostility can still be detected in some of these Oxford questions, such as the Finals title, Does the fiction of James Joyce justify the demands it makes? Nevertheless, the very appearance of the Wake suggests that its accommodation within academia has not been entirely troublesome.

In contrast to Oxford and Cambridge, Finnegans Wake was not specifically mentioned on exam papers during the 1970s at either University College, London or the University of East Anglia. The former even showed a propensity to deliberately ignore Finnegans Wake in Joyce's oeuvre. In 1978 students were asked what continuities they perceived between Dubliners, A Portrait and Ulysses, with a similar question repeated in 1985. At East Anglia, whose variety of history papers perhaps steers attention away from individual texts and authors, the Wake was not mentioned until 1984. However, East Anglia does have the distinction of being the first formally to recognise the incongruity of placing Joyce on an English literature exam. In order to account for much modern writing, then, a Joint Paper in Irish Politics and Literature c.1890-1935 was introduced in 1975, and included a question on Dubliners. This paper was abandoned in 1982. Through the seventies, Ulysses was reserved for the Masters' exam, presumably leaving Finnegans Wake to the privilege of the Ph.D. student.

The most significant event in British universities' institutionalism of Joyce and new critical theories was the instigation - largely at the behest of Stephen Heath and Colin MacCabe - of two new papers on the Cambridge Tripos Part 2, which were first examined in 1974. These were: paper 7, Special Subject: James Joyce, and the paper, Modern Critical Thought. At the time, Joyce was the only writer other than Shakespeare, Keats and Chaucer to be honoured by a Tripos paper devoted solely to one author. Whereas the Joyce paper only lasted until 1980, the critical theory paper is still offered to finalists. The appearance of the Joyce paper was roughly contemporaneous with the first appearance of Finnegans Wake on exams at Oxford.

Section B of the Cambridge Joyce paper was given over to Finnegans Wake; the first section was on Ulysses, the third on Joyce's other works, and the final section on general and related issues. Candidates were requested to write three essays, each from a different section. The first paper, on 18 May 1974, asked thirty-two questions, including six on the Wake about: specific passages (e.g. the Humpty Dumpty episode); the pairings in the Wake (e.g. Shem and Shaun); the importance of its cyclical form or its language; its relation to psychology, myth and family; the textual history of Finnegans Wake in relation to the final version; and the following allusion to some early criticism of Work in Progress and Finnegans Wake:

> Shem the Penman is accused of 'meticulously bordering on the insane'. How far would you extend this accusation to the author of Finnegans Wake?

Section D of the first paper asked:

> Joyce always buried a good deal of his treasure. Was he right to ask his readers to work so hard to find it?

This question demonstrates that the academic study of the Wake employed the same assumption as Leavis, Wells and other early readers of Work in Progress, of a correlation between the time of production (measured as difficulty of text) and that of reading. Once again, there is a discernible concern over the academic suitability of Finnegans Wake given the temporal conditions of pedagogic reading.

Nevertheless, that there was a paper solely on Joyce at all attests to a marked renewal of interest in his work, and this is entirely related to movements in critical theory. Tel Quel articles on Finnegans Wake, from various post-structuralist positions, began to appear in Paris in 1967, and Stephen Heath had written on Joyce in the same journal in 1972. The writing of Joyce, especially Finnegans Wake, was instrumental to the importation of theoretical models of criticism. Joyce had become an important literary figure in examinations prior to the widespread use of 'theory' and certainly well before the name of Derrida appeared on literary exams. Despite the close connections between Joyce and post-structuralism in the 1970s, exam papers carried little evidence of the latter influencing their style. For instance, the 1975 special paper on Joyce gave the following proclamation as an essay title:

> The experimental language of Finnegans Wake is largely a failure. Its punning makes no distinction between verbal correspondences which reveal or generate live relationships between things and correspondences which are the mere trivia of verbal accident.

One reason for this apparent hostility (although of course such a title may also invite rebuke of its assumptions) to post-structuralist readings of Joyce may be related to departmental structures. If exam papers are set by senior members of the faculty board, and if Joyce-reading post-structuralists and their sympathisers are among the junior members, then Joyce's texts, although recognized, are unlikely to be granted special approbation. The issues of community and readership have continued to be seen as

significant for Finnegans Wake, the 1978 Tripos Part 2 Joyce paper asking, 'What terms of reader and reading does Finnegans Wake propose?'

The final year of the specialist Joyce paper, 1980, offered a question in the section devoted to the Wake which explicitly brought together the judgements of early critics and post-structuralists, while also hinting at the authoritative communities in criticism:

> Is it true that Finnegans Wake is a great book because it is 'illisible' and because it exposes 'l'illusion d'une lecture intégrale'?

The name of Joyce, once it had entered the curriculum was not to leave it, however ambivalent the academy may at times have been in its apparent attitude towards his work.

There appears to have been something of a generational gap at work in the so-called MacCabe affair that rattled the Cambridge English faculty early in 1981. Heath had been working in Cambridge since the late 1960s (as a student of Terry Eagleton) and soon became a fellow at Jesus College. Heath was also the prime defender of Colin MacCabe, also working in Cambridge in the 1970s, whose work on Joyce (James Joyce and the Revolution of the Word, 1978), heavily influenced by Kristeva and Lacan, was the first post-structuralist book published in Britain. MacCabe was refused a tenured lectureship in January 1981 despite initially gaining the approval of the department, thus sparking an ill-tempered and often ignorant 'debate' between conservative defenders of the canon (Howard Erskine-Hill, Christopher Ricks) and post-structuralists (Heath, MacCabe), punctuated by liberal intervention on behalf of MacCabe (Frank Kermode) and derogatory commentary aimed at the faculty in general (Raymond Williams).

As all parties seemed to realise, the issue was not the merits of post-structuralism, and the divisions which became apparent went beyond the narrowly political. What was peculiar about this row was that its protagonists managed to generate so much media attention (partly also due to the status of Cambridge and English in a university education as both a fundamental necessity and an irrelevant luxury).[152] Rather than blaming the newspapers, as does the liberal Kermode, for distorting the issues unrecognisably, one should accept that this involvement with media representation was directly related to what the whole affair was 'about'.[153] It was about community: who constituted a department, and had the wherewithal to prove it? Other than secondary concerns like students and literature, which staff formed the interpretive community that was dominant in the Cambridge English faculty in 1981? (A not dissimilar drama was enacted in 1992 when Derrida was granted an honorary doctorate despite hostile opposition from a large section of the Cambridge faculty.)

Cambridge papers in the 1980s - after the MacCabe affair - continued to mention Joyce, if often with the implication of already having passed a recently triumphant heyday. In 1984 a Tripos Part 1 paper on modernism asked candidates to discuss "the reception and critique of modernism" found in, among others, "post-war French criticism" and "recent Joyce criticism." Throughout the decade, Finnegans Wake was mentioned only three times by name, on the Part 2 paper, The Novel, in 1985, 1986 and 1989. In

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152 See, for example, Anon., 'Dons in Bitter Row over Eng. Lit. Policy', Guardian, 17 January 1981, p.1, p.26; Mervyn Jones, 'The Oxbridge Malaise', Guardian, 14 February 1981, p.7 and Martin Walker, 'New Post Offer to Don in English Dispute', Guardian, 30 May 1981, p.26; also, Tony Gould, 'The Rebel Barons of Cambridge', New Society, 29 January 1981, pp.190-91 and Terry Eagleton, 'The Cambridge Crisis', Time Out, 6 February 1981, p.5. There was also, of course, wide coverage in more specialist press, for example, the Times Higher Educational Supplement, 13 February 1981, p.31; 13 March 1981, p.26; 5 June 1981, p.2; and 26 June 1981, p.3.

153 Kermode, p.121.

Oxford exams in this period, similar assumptions seem to be in place; for instance a 1984 Prelims paper (Literature 1900 to 1945) asked, "Was Finnegans Wake an experiment worth making at such length?" Three years later the same paper asked, "What did Joyce do to - or with - the novel?" Such attempts to stand back and evaluate the contribution of Joyce - similar to theoretical efforts towards deconstruction - characterised the eighties.

The only direct mention of Finnegans Wake on examination papers at the University of East Anglia was in 1984, on the paper 'English and Related Literature: Modernism':

> "Ulysses and Finnegan's Wake [sic] are concerned not with representing experience through language but with experiencing language through a destruction of representation" (Colin MacCabe). Examine the work of Joyce or any two or three Modernist writers in the light of this proposition.

In 1984, 1985 and 1990, this paper asked questions on Joyce prefaced by quotations from either MacCabe or Heath, a clear demonstration of the role of the Cambridge faculty in the academic accommodation of Joyce in Britain, and the promotion of Finnegans Wake within his oeuvre. The passage from Cambridge, where the Joyce paper had its final showing in 1980, to East Anglia where in the 1980s Joyce was associated with post-structuralist critics from Cambridge, is an indication of the joint appropriation of the Wake with post-structuralism. It is more a mark of institutional unfamiliarity than linguistic subversion that Finnegans Wake was initially misspelt at East Anglia, as was MacCabe's name the following year.

At University College, London, a new paper on Literature and Society was first examined in 1987, belatedly replacing a paper called Literary Criticism which was abolished after 1982. That older paper had asked in 1979,

> What effect has the institutionalising of literary criticism in the twentieth century had on the relation between literature and criticism?

The final question on the new paper in 1987 -

> Why do most university bookshops now have a section devoted to literary theory?

- provides an accurate intimation of the rapid institutionalisation of recent critical theories within the broader discipline. It might be noted here that the new universities of the 1960s had in a way created the institutional space in Britain which critical theory was to inhabit, for they had already challenged established borders between subjects. The Critical History and Theory paper at the University of East Anglia in the 1970s exhibited a concern with the political problematics of studying theory, and was markedly less post-structuralist that its Cambridge counterpart.

In Cambridge, the appropriation of 'theory' continued apace (by this stage, there had been some significant faculty turnover). Paper 9 on the Tripos Part 2 was History and Theory of Literary Criticism, which in 1987 contained two questions on Derrida (from forty-two), including, "'To confuse Derrida with American deconstruction is to obscure his most profound contributions to modern critical theory'." Paper 10, the Novel, did not mention Joyce in 1987 or 1988, whereas Derrida continued to feature on Paper 9, with the same pattern in 1990. In 1989, Paper 9 quoted J. Hillis Miller, "Great works of literature are likely to be ahead of their critics. They have anticipated explicitly any deconstruction the critic can achieve." The deployment of this problematic judgement seems to reflect a dominant attitude towards Joyce and Derrida, and is notable for naming deconstruction, whose precursor (Joyce) had already passed into the academy before post-structuralism. Perhaps the only possible response was that of 1991, a year in which Cambridge English exams were entirely devoid of the words Joyce, Finnegans Wake, Derrida and deconstruction.

Conclusion.

In both Europe and America Joyce had a dual status as both central to literature (and its institutions) while also being marginal. This marginality can be seen in establishment suspicion, most obviously manifested in the ban on Ulysses. Joyce's name was able to enter a newly formed literary study, formed from both the rise of specialist literary criticism and the challenge of modernism, with its implied and sometimes explicit revaluations of literary traditions. That Joyce occupies this double space in the 1930s is important, for it is in this decade that professional literary criticism has most clearly demarcated its own professional space for the first time, when the innovations of European modernism are mostly over (and reaction has set in), and when Joyce's last work is still Work in Progress, that is, still pending critical evaluation although already accepted as literature. The role of Joyce's name as a syllabus test-case in the 1930s attests to this dual status.

The most important development in modernist writing has been the formation of a new site and patron for its creation and study: in this case, the rapid academic professionalisation of English studies that was concomitant with the loss of readers suffered by Work in Progress. The result has been "that professionals study it and a few others make it a cult book" because it "is unreadable, though it is studiable," a claim still found in contemporary criticism.[154] In this sense, English studies has become the new patron of Finnegans Wake, maintaining the notion of its implicit worth

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[154] Douglas Hewitt, English Fiction of the Early Modern Period 1890-1940 (New York: Longman, 1888), p.138.

but intrinsic unreadability. Its place in literature departments thus has a certain double-edgedness, as somehow central to literature but marginal to teaching.

The outline of the academic accommodation of Finnegans Wake given in this chapter should make it clear that its critical appropriation has not been absolutely uniform, for the growth of English studies has hardly been uniform. It is therefore not easy to talk of the 'academicisation' of the text; nevertheless, the roughly contemporaneous growth of Work in Progress and English studies does provide some points of historical significance, and the overriding critical identity of the Wake as a limit text does make it peculiarly apt as a focal point for reading the development of the discipline. This very expansion of English studies, and third level education in general, is in itself significant, for the potential audience for Finnegans Wake has correspondingly increased. This would be especially significant in a North American context (although it does not follow that the Wake appears on more syllabi) given the percentage of the population going through universities. The point, of course, is not to lament some 'artificial' process of appropriation, for it is through the specialised division of labour in the academic marketplace that the Wake is able to greet fresh audiences.

Reading Finnegans Wake in terms of its reading communities allows one to look again at claims that the text disrupts the workings of the academy. As the previous chapter has shown, the history of the Wake is inextricably bound up with its audiences in a developing literary studies, in a manner that both affirms and negates that exercise.

II

CHAPTER FOUR

Finnegans Wake and Post-structuralism.

This chapter presents an analysis of post-structuralist accounts of Finnegans Wake under a number of thematic headings: feminism; difficulty; reflexivity; universalism; history; and readership. These are what might be called modes of appropriating the Wake. The initial section sets out the methodological grounds on which this analysis proceeds; and the next section considers the apparent divide between a post-structuralist Joyce and a criticism that pesumes a communicative model of interpretation. Each mode or theme is then considered in turn. This chapter also places post-structuralist work on Joyce within a broader discourse of Finnegans Wake criticism: many critics included in this chapter would not necessarily describe themselves as post-structuralist, and are included for their approximate contemporaneity with that broader theoretical paradigm. The post-structural championing of Joyce's last work makes that particular critical method an appropriate object of scrutiny. This topic is continued in this section in the following chapter which explores inscriptions of audiences in Derrida's writing, and his configuration of audiences for Joyce.

1. Appropriation.

'Appropriation' is a loaded term. Marx and Derrida have both noted its etymology, from the Latin proprius for own and proper, as now conjoined in the French propre.[1] The word thus exhibits a connection between propriety and ownership, between property and identity. It implies consignment as property according to the terms and values of the appropriator. Moreover, it implies the proper limitation of identity:

[1] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, The German Ideology (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1970), pp.100-103. Jacques Derrida, 'White Mythology', in Margins of Philosophy, trans. by Alan Bass (Harvester: Sussex, 1982), p.226.

appropriation defines its object. It does so by enacting a two-way movement of identity: infusion of the terms of the appropriator into a text, setting the propre limits that define its identity; and encryptment of that text-made-object within the schema of the appropriator. It is a dual process of identification and consignment.

This chapter is concerned with the appropriation of Finnegans Wake by literary criticism. It outlines the ways in which a proper identity is created for the Wake as a self-contained object, a necessary initial stage in any process of appropriation. It is in the external imposition of these limits that modes of appropriation can be delineated: modes tend to signal the text as an autonomous object. My list is not intended to be exhaustive. There are other possible modes, for instance, national or economic, which could just as well be treated. This chapter is concerned with those appropriative continuities which Finnegans Wake criticism itself recognizes, and especially with those elements that are crucial to the problematic of the text itself: reflexivity and universality name the poles of identity, from self to totality, by which an object can be defined; difficulty and readership name the means into and the way out from the very question of a text in itself. Sections on feminism and history consider two cultural concerns of the post-structual paradigm.

The methodology that allows one to speak of a critical appropriation is partly influenced by Foucault's notion of discourse, wherein the critical commentary that envelopes Finnegans Wake helps define the identity of the text, which cannot be known without reference to that criticism. Foucauldian discourses are "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak."[2] The significance of the method lies in the emphasis it places on questions of readership, towards which this project is moving. It

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[2] Michel Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge, trans. by A.M. Sheridan Smith (London: Tavistock, 1972), p.49.

should be noted that in the methodology of the following analysis, appropriation does not preclude discussion of a text itself, it merely emphasises the external forms by which a text has been accorded various identities. There are of course ways in which the text of Finnegans Wake has itself influenced criticism. Nevertheless, there are important continuities in the critical discourse surrounding Finnegans Wake, which inform that text's ongoing identity and whose significance is heightened by the Wake's extraordinary status within English studies.

Although the following analysis makes no claim to complete comprehension it is nevertheless wide-ranging; and although it cannot claim that the following modes of appropriation systematically exhaust their object, they remain fundamentally significant to the text's identity and also to the question of a text in itself. Each individual work of criticism inevitably forms an amalgam of overlapping modes of appropriation. This chapter does not intend an inflexible taxonomy, merely to delineate some of the crucial thematic concerns that are fundamental to the received identity of Finnegans Wake and to the broader issue of textual identity.

Every reading is a form of appropriation: it cannot help but enact a limited, and limiting, experience of the text. Appropriation is therefore an incomplete movement. As well as consignment according to the discourse of critical commentary, it also implies a form of resistance to identification. It is somewhat incongruous to refer to the proper limits of a text so complex as Finnegans Wake. The term appropriation, in this context at least, calls attention to its own inadequacy. Any attempted imposition of limits also signals the breakdown of those limits. Textual identity is therefore neither fixed nor immutable. A full or strict appropriation is thus not possible. Paradoxically, a self-identical object, complete in itself, would also resist appropriation because its clearly defined perimeters could not be transgressed; its self-sufficiency would negate all attempts to impose

another formal identity upon it. Thus to talk of critical discourse as a form of appropriation is to suggest an economy of identity which neither arrogates the text in the image of its criticism nor retains the text in itself.

It is the initial argument of this thesis that the criticism of Work in Progress and Finnegans Wake forms an enveloping surround to the text, whose history is in effect the history of its criticism.[3] It is this industry of commentary and exegesis that, given the historical conditions of the production and consumption of the Wake, provides an entry to the text. The focus of interest here is not on that industry in itself (and so not on a class of intellectuals or ideologues) but on the relationship between the pedagogic discourse of Joyce studies and the text and history of Finnegans Wake.

2. Post-Structuralist Joyce.

It is with post-structuralism that criticism becomes self-conscious, and it is with post-structural criticism that Joyce's last work has achieved wider institutional recognition, especially in the United States.[4] It is the contention of Frank Lentricchia, in After the New Criticism, that literary criticism in the United States missed a structuralist phase, and so discovered the methodology of deconstruction without having directly

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[3] For reasons of space it is not possible to provide an exhaustive account of Wake criticism for the years 1929 to the 60s. However, it would be possible to show that the Wake has long been read along thematic lines that in large degree accord with post-structural concerns.

[4] Robert Young. 'Post-Structuralism: An Introduction', in Untying the Text, ed. by Young (London: Routledge, 1981), p.7. I would not go quite so far as William Chace's observation that "the English departments of American universities" are "the home" of Joyce. 'Joyce and the Professors', in James Joyce: the Centennial Symposium, ed. by Morris Beja et al. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986), p.4. See also the concluding pages of the previous chapter.

experienced the theories from which, and against which, deconstruction was acting. This apparent jump to the basis for post-structuralist theories is cited by Lentricchia as a reason for what he and others see as an American misrepresentation of Derrida's work, a discrepancy which will recur during this chapter, which includes both French Tel Quel accounts of the Wake and later American appropriations. The discrepancy between post-structuralisms can be seen as either a misrepresentation by American critics or an exaggeration of the worst points of Derrida's work.[5] .

There has for some time been a perceived divide in Joyce studies (as in the discipline in general) between a criticism that presumes a communicative model of interpretation and a post-structuralist one that places primary priority on the difficulties of communication.

The first published intimation of this divide comes in Margot Norris's The Decentered Universe of Finnegans Wake (1974) - the first book-length study of Joyce to appropriate recent French philosophy - where she characterizes Wake criticism as either radical or conservative, a distinction which she applies also to earlier critics, so that Our Exagmination is radical but exegesis conservative. Norris adopts what she calls a structuralist approach, adapted as much from Lacan and Derrida as from Levi-Strauss (she sees them all as structuralist), which nevertheless retains some of the unitive method and terminology of more traditional Anglo-American criticism.

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[5] Frank Lentricchia, After the New Criticism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), ch.5. This is well-trodden ground and so does not require further elaboration here. However, some knowledge of the issues involved is assumed both for this chapter and for the detailed discussion, in chapter five, of readership as implied in deconstruction. See, for instance, in addition to Lentricchia, Art Berman, From the New Criticism to Deconstruction (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988) and Maria Ruegg, 'The End(s) of French Style: Structuralism and Post-Structuralism in the American Context', Criticism, 21.3 (Summer 1979), 189-217.

Norris's approach retains the text-centred justification of a more traditional methodology prevalent in literary academia. The legitimation for her "radical" approach lies not in a methodological shift but in the text itself, due to "the extent of the challenge Joyce offered not only to conventional literary modes but also to many of the epistemological presuppositions of our culture."[6] Norris develops her legitimation to imply that critical methodology is a matter of its appropriateness to any particular text, and nor is she the only Joycean theorist to make this claim.[7] Finnegans Wake, Norris suggests, opens a new paradigm of writing whose "narrative structure ... appears more intelligible" to her brand of structuralism than to exegetic explication. Norris claims her criticism to be "self-reflexive" and indeed it is.[8] By seeking to come back to itself, with text in tow, such criticism asserts its own position and authority without problematizing the grounds for authority.

The question of an appropriate methodology for reading Finnegans Wake, as implied by Norris, is directly linked to the problem of an institutionalized readership. If certain kinds of writing should be read in certain kinds of ways, a complementary 'fit' is produced between writing and reading and between texts and their audience. Such a 'fit' at once secures the unity of the textual process (its production and consumption within an institutional context) whilst allowing a plurality of approaches (all of which in their turn produce a similar 'fit') without questioning their philosophical or political legitimation. If we allow, for instance, Norris and other representatives of the Joyce industry to claim that their approach is the appropriate one for the Wake, then

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[6] Margot Norris, The Decentered Universe of Finnegans Wake (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p.2.

[7] See Christine van Boheeman-Saaf, 'Deconstruction After Joyce', in New Alliances in Joyce Studies, ed. by Bonnie Kime Scott (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1988).

[8] Norris, p.7, p.3.

Finnegans Wake will be lost to other readings and bought out on the terms that are propre (own and proper) to that one criticism.

Part of the theoretical impetus of this chapter will be geared towards a rebuttal of the notion portrayed by some critics that Wake criticism is a binary structure of opposing factions: an idea only possible with the advent of post-structuralism's differing methodology. Finnegans Wake is more complex: it has several identities supported by each 'faction'. Its critical identities may be contradictory, but its criticism is not oppositional. Norris in 1974 was the first to dualize Wake criticism, and her claims have been repeated more recently by Jennifer Levine in 1979, Bernard Benstock in 1988 and Geert Lernout in 1990.[9] Despite this apparent dualism, all critics of Finnegans Wake necessarily retain some of the appropriative baggage from previous Wake studies. As Lernout remarks of Derrida's dismissal of the possibility of competence in reading Joyce, "this insight itself is based on the work of the Joyceans whose competence does not exist."[10]

It would be opportune here to say some more about Lernout's book. Working to a methodology of Kuhnian paradigmatics, Lernout attempts to show that the presumed dominance of post-structuralist criticism of Joyce, which is said to have bought out the Joyce Industry at the 1984 Frankfurt symposium, is based on shoddy scholarship and an untenable epistemology. Lernout's remark about Derrida's rather slim and shaky output on Joyce, quoted above, can be taken to upset the paradigmatic division he

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[9] Jennifer Levine, 'Rejoycings in Tel Quel', JJQ, 16.1-2 (Fall / Winter 1978-9), 17-27 (p.17). Bernard Benstock, ed., James Joyce: the Augmented Ninth (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1988), p.4. Geert Lernout, The French Joyce (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), p.13.

[10] Lernout, p.227.

draws "between the French and the traditional critics."[11] While his point about the scholarship of Cixous, Derrida and Lacan often hits home, locating aberrant citations and revising dubious translations, the important epistemological critique is reserved until the Conclusion. However, it would be more reassuring if Lernout's own scholarship was more accurate, for instance by giving the correct dates of publication for Norris (1974, not 1976) and Attridge and Ferrer (1984, not 1985).

Lernout's conclusion forms a more engaging critique of "the romantico-idealist nature of poststructuralism," offering a three-pronged attack: post-structuralist textual interpretation is devoid of context; its etymological interest leads to an unhealthy fixation with non-referentiality; and, consequently, comes "the exclusion of historical reality and the ontological status of language."[12] However, if Lernout is serious about this argument, it was wrong of him to suggest that the whole debate "depends on the sympathies of the reader" (since both Derrida and Lacan are said to provide internally consistent theoretical frameworks).[13] If there are sound epistemological grounds to dispute the foundations of post-structuralism then there is only a political sense in which a reader is free to choose for or against it. For this reason, it is somewhat odd that Lernout's epistemological critique is his conclusion rather than his introduction. By allowing Derrida and Lacan their own logical worlds, Lernout covertly concedes the impossibility of challenging them except on their own terms, which he markedly refuses to do. His critique, then, becomes either a non-criticism or a merely political one. It was as the latter that Ferrer chose to respond to Lernout's book.

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[11] Lernout, p.13.

[12] Lernout, p.210. This is not the place for a rebuttal of Lernout's criticisms of post-structuralist epistemology, since what concerns me is its relation to Joyce. For a defence of post-structuralism - and an attack on Lernout's attempted objectivity - see Daniel Ferrer's review of Lernout in JJQ, 29.1 (Fall 1991), 193-200.

[13] Lernout, p.50.

Lernout's book begins from an interesting premise, that "[i]n just a few years Finegans Wake became the most central piece of radical écriture," an observation which signals the importance of historical analysis of the post-structuralist appropriation of Joyce.[14] The balance of power in Joyce criticism has lain with North American professional critics since the publication of Finnegans Wake, and it is in that context that delineations of its critical appropriation should be made.

When the fifth International James Joyce Symposium was held in Paris in 1975 and its inaugural lecture was performed by Jacques Lacan to an audience of mainly bemused American academics, a definite split within Joyce criticism seemed to have been signalled. This moment has acquired something of an infamous status in the history of Joyce studies for its polarization of uncommunicating camps, a problem rightly contextualised by Lernout in terms of the appropriation of post-structuralism in North American universities in the mid to late seventies.[15] By the time Derrida opened the ninth Joyce symposium in Frankfurt in 1984, the take-over of the Joyce Industry by academic post-structuralism was nigh complete (however much Derrida played upon his unease).

The same year, 1984, also saw the publication of a collection of prominent deconstructive essays all translated from French, gathered in Post-structuralist Joyce by Derek Attridge and Daniel Ferrer. In their introduction, Attridge and Ferrer undertake a brief review of Joyce criticism, which they organize around "three main methods of

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[14] Lernout, p.3. Compare Stephen Heath's comment, also made in 1990: "a new centrality of Finnegans Wake." 'Preface to the Second Printing' of James Joyce: New Perspectives, ed. by Colin MacCabe (London: Harvester, 1990).

[15] Lernout, pp.177-184.

assimilation": 'transcendental' readings emphasize universal structures; 'empirical' readings detail textual referents; and a 'moralizing' perspective draws on humanist notions of character and narrative. These early methods provided "an entirely necessary assimilation" although Attridge and Ferrer seem unsure as to its success since Finnegans Wake "can still hardly be said to be lodged comfortably within the accepted tradition."[16] As it turns out, Attridge and Ferrer want to have their cake when they have already eaten it. Unsure whether the Wake is in or out of the tradition, in or out of academia, the authors are insured by their emphasis on the intertextuality of work and criticism. However, they still invoke

> The power of the Joycean text [which] is such that it tends to lead its perceptive and unprejudiced readers, whatever their theoretical backgrounds, to similar procedures of reading.[17]

The reliance upon "unprejudiced readers" (presumably those same "English-speaking reader[s] who [are] not wedded to a set of preconceptions about critical writing") in this passage, which signals a lack of any notion or interrogation of who might read Finnegans Wake, let alone a theoretical appreciation of the problematics of readership, is indicative of a general confusion in Attridge and Ferrer's curious introduction.[18] They score a duality between a conventional Wake criticism and an innovative post-structuralism, which, like the Joycean text it claims to recuperate, resists institutionalization. This introduction is uncertain how far to take its appropiation of the Wake and how far deliberately "to antagonize instead of assimilate," and is finally dependent upon the insurance policy of intertextuality to bail it out.[19]

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[16] Derek Attridge and Daniel Ferrer, 'Introduction: Highly Continental Evenements', in Post-structuralist Joyce, ed. by Attridge and Ferrer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984; repr. 1988), pp.4-5.

[17] Attridge and Ferrer, p.11.

[18] Attridge and Ferrer, p.11.

[19] Attridge and Ferrer, p.7.

Attridge and Ferrer insist upon the anterior quality of Finnegans Wake as a "radical challenge" to the canon in the phrase "Joyce's revolutionary literary project," which "constantly overreaches ... the best critical constructions." They thus imply an anterior identity whilst also claiming the intertextuality of Finnegans Wake and its criticism: "there is no metalanguage ... the text reads the theory at the same time as it is read by it."[20] Their commentary is a quite open appropriation of the Wake for post-structuralism, indeed necessarily so. At the same time, however, Attridge and Ferrer are still keen to justify their radical Joyce as not dissimilar to the traditional Joyce. Again, this claim is legitimated by reference to an all-encompassing text. There is a circularity in the argument of intertextuality: each text justifies the other with no fixed starting point; a secondary text is dependent upon an anterior known text, but one which can only be known via the secondary text. The critique of intertextuality begun here is continued in the section on universalism when considering Derrida's essay from Attridge and Ferrer's collection, 'Two Words for Joyce'. The editors' introduction will again be referred to in the course of this chapter.

3. Feminism

Appropriation can take many forms, and it need not be covert. One major example of the way in which the critical institution has changed since the time of the early studies of Finnegans Wake is the rise of overtly appropriative analyses, such as those made under the general rubrics of feminism and psychoanalysis. This short section dealing with feminist studies of the Wake attempts to show their consistency with the modes here

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[20] Attridge and Ferrer, p.8, p.10.

analyzed, but also to recognize their difference: as studies aimed not at explication of a literary text, but at a broader political goal.

A summary article by Karen Lawrence adopts North American post-structuralist principles, making the assumption that deconstruction is a textual rather than a reading process, and a simplistic reduction to plurality (the text produces "too many meanings") and indeterminacy.[21] There has been no full-length feminist reading of Joyce's last work. Criticism tends to be either general, as in the case of Bonnie Kime Scott's James Joyce, or very particular, as with Shari Benstock, all of whose work on Finnegans Wake is considered in this chapter. The anthology Women in Joyce contains many essays working within a realistic framework, such as Margot Norris's study of ALP and Shari Benstock's work on Issy, which reads her as an "extension of the virgin/whore complex" already "familiar to readers of Joyce, especially as it dominates descriptions of females from Chamber Music to Ulysses."[22]

The 'Afterword' to Women in Joyce reads as a lame attempt to justify any reading by pre-locating it in Joyce's texts.

> In anticipating the ideal insomniac as his reader, Joyce must have delighted in the knowledge that, however complicated the processes to be uncovered in his work, no one would reveal anything which exceeded or betrayed his intention.[23]

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[21] Karen Lawrence, 'Joyce and Feminism', in The Cambridge Companion to James Joyce, ed. by Derek Attridge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.251.

[22] Shari Benstock, 'The Genuine Christine: Psychodynamics of Issy', in Women in Joyce, ed. by Suzette A. Henke and Elaine Unkeless (Brighton: Harvester, 1982), p.175.

[23] Carolyn G.Heilbrun, 'Afterword', in Henke and Unkeless, p.216.

This link of universalism with Joyce's readership (a clear example of the 'anticipation' argument discussed in the section on universalism) seeks to legitimate itself using a perversely literal interpretation of a decontextualized phrase from Finnegans Wake (120.13-14).

Much feminist writing similarly universalizes texts by its methodology. Shari Benstock's informative study of the letters in the Wake, 'Nightletters: Woman's Writing in the Wake' at once performs a potent deconstruction of the Wakean postal system, and reads Finnegans Wake as only a question of gender whilst reducing all, including her reading, to an element of the text.

> Wake writing poses its riddle of femininity in the woman's body; the secret of the Wake postal system rests with woman - a secret whose riddle remains unintelligible (that is, unreadable) to man.

It seems a little optimistic to hope that the female readers of, for instance, ALP's "mamafesta" letter in book one chapter five, should be able to interpret it any better than its receiver, the dumbfounded professor. In any case, as Benstock has already informed her readers, Finnegans Wake has "traditionally been seen as a male enterprise."[24] For some account of how this might be the case, one has to turn to an overview of Joyce and feminism, such as that provided by Scott. However, there seems to be no study of Finnegans Wake in relation to its receptive context of a male-dominated institutional readership.

Some of the most interesting recent work on the Wake has been feminist post-structuralism. Reacting to Gilbert and Gubar's suppression of Joyce's writings, which, they argue, transform a common mother tongue into a patrilinear expression and hence

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[24] Shari Benstock, 'Nightletters: Woman's Writing in the Wake', in Critical Essays on James Joyce, ed. by Bernard Benstock (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1985), p.229, p.221.

nurse the "male linguistic wound", Hélène Cixous instead sees Joyce's narratives as a prime example of l'écriture feminine.[25] For Cixous and her followers, Finnegans Wake in particular offers the possibility of a woman's writing, a language of desire whose ambiguities open the text infinitely, creating the space wherein gender and identity are non-deterministic because all identity is problematic. This is the quality attributed to ALP's letter by Benstock, and which Scott sees in the conversation of the washerwomen on the banks of the Liffey in book one chapter eight, "a feminine narrative form."[26] According to Cixous, within this form, a reader suffers the same fragmentation which textual analysis assumes for its characters, which she calls "a crazy coalescence of the subject which undoes itself at the very moment when it constitutes itself."[27]

For a Lacanian or Kristevan analysis, the fragmentation of the subject in reading affects gender. In the work of Colin MacCabe on Joyce, and most recently in that of Jean-Michel Rabaté on Finnegans Wake, gender in writing is indeterminate. Philippe Sollers in Tel Quel, where he wrote of "cette saturation des variétés ... de la sexualité; cette déprise de la sexualité" was the first to develop this theme. The title of a recent edition of James Joyce Quarterly, 'Joyce Between Genders: Lacanian Views' is indicative of its continuation.[28] One might say that it curiously re-affirms the neutrality of the text implied by much North American deconstruction. Rabaté comments:

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[25] Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, 'Sexual Linguistics: Gender, Language, Sexuality', NLH, 16.3 (1985), 515-43 (p.532).

[26] Bonnie Kime Scott, James Joyce (Brighton: Harvester, 1987), p.100.

[27] Hélène Cixous, 'Joyce and the (r)use of writing', in Attridge and Ferrer, p.17.

[28] Philippe Sollers, `Joyce et Cie', Tel Quel, 64 (Winter 1975), 15-24 (p.24). 'Joyce Between Genders: Lacanian Views', JJQ, 29.1 (Fall 1991).

> the most resistant and consistent fantasy underlying bisexual impulses: the wish to create oneself, to have no father and no mother, to become autonomous in some sort of parthenogenesis.[29]

Perhaps there is some correlation between the perceived bisexuality of the Wake's language and the critical appropriation of it as an autonomous text?

4. Difficulty

Difficulty functions as the legitimation for critical appropriation of the text: Finnegans Wake, imply most critics, has always been so difficult to read that it must be read for us. It is upon difficulty, then, that the critical identities of the Wake are founded. It is the reason for criticism, its very grounds and foundation.

Derrida's only essay on Finnegans Wake, 'Two Words for Joyce', stresses the impossibility of fully reading Joyce's last book if by reading is meant knowing the text. Derrida's argument is based on a philosophical rather than a literary training: Finnegans Wake is seen by deconstruction as a text par excellence, its difficulty epitomizing a philosophy of language. So when Derrida calls the Wake difficult or unreadable, he means it in a quite different way to previous literary critics of Work in Progress or Finnegans Wake.

Although Derrida here says Joyce, and has already spoken of Ulysses in this essay, he undoubtedly includes Finnegans Wake in the following warning:

> the utterances 'I am reading Joyce', 'read Joyce', 'have you read Joyce?' produce an irresistible effect of naivety, irresistibly comical.

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[29] Jean-Michel Rabaté, Joyce Upon the Void (London: MacMillan, 1991), p.176.

> What exactly do you mean by 'read Joyce'? Who can pride himself on having 'read' Joyce?
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> With this admiring resentment, you stay on the edge of reading Joyce.... Is this true to the same extent of reading all works? In any case, I have the feeling that I haven't yet begun to read Joyce, and this 'not having begun to read' is sometimes the most singular and active relationship I have with this work.[30]

Perhaps any method leaves one on the edge of reading Joyce? Or, rather, Joyce leaves one on the edge of any method?

Derrida's comments seem to parallel the dual function of difficulty developed by the Wake's critical envelope: it is at once a reading ('I read that text as difficult'), an appropriation or grounds for appropriation; and it is also a denial of reading, or of being able to read in any way which for its critics seems adequate to the text, so also a postponement of the act of reading, setting the terms for a future reading. In this last sense, any approach to Finnegans Wake must necessarily come from within a formation of readings that cast the text as difficult. The text itself is not read alone; it is read only as a difficult text (replete with criticism), whose most enduring quality or identity is its difficulty, that is, its very lack of an identity that seems (to Derrida and post-structuralists as well as to early critics) adequate to the text.

Jennifer Levine's article on the Tel Quel appropriation of Finnegans Wake in the early to mid seventies insists on the popular conception of Anglo-American criticism and Tel Quel Derridean deconstruction as opposites "who did not share the same language." But they shared the same response to the language of the Wake, implying that it is somehow

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30 Derrida, 'Two Words for Joyce', trans. by Geoff Bennington, in Attridge and Ferrer, p.148.

autonomous of critical discourse. "The unreadability of the Wake," she clearly informs her readers, "is taken as a starting point, and as a historical fact to be understood."[31]

It would be slightly misleading to wholly homogenize the Tel Quel Joyce essays (as, for instance, does Lernout). Stephen Heath's essays stand out as more carefully exploratory and less immodestly demanding, "very substantial" as Ferrer puts it, "compared to the rest of Tel Quel's shaky Joycean production." Seemingly pre-empting Derrida, for whom such modest questioning is a useful rhetorical device in that it demonstrates a disposition of the subject in discourse, Heath asks, "Comment écrire la lecture de Finnegans Wake, d'une partie de Finnegans Wake? Comment faire accéder à ce tournoiement?"[32]

Much recent psychoanalytic work on Finnegans Wake, taking its cue from Lacan's enigmatic comments on Joyce, also assumes the text's intractable difficulty. At the 1975 Paris Symposium, Lacan had attributed the difficulty of the Wake to the reading process, telling his listeners, "lisez des pages de Finnegans Wake, sans chercher à comprendre - ça se lit"; and during his seminaire that year he had also reiterated Sollers's remark that after Finnegans Wake English no longer exists.[33] Some of Lacan's followers will be considered in the section on universalism.

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[31] Jennifer Levine, 'Rejoycings in Tel Quel', JJQ, 16.1-2 (Fall / Winter 1978-9), 17-27 (pp.17-18).

[32] Daniel Ferrer, Review of Lernout, The French Joyce', JJQ, 29.1 (Fall 1991), 193-200 (p.199). Stephen Heath, 'Trames de Lecture', Tel Quel, 54 (Summer 1973), 4-15 (p.5).

[33] Jacques Lacan, 'Joyce le symptome I', in Joyce avec Lacan, ed. by Jacques Aubert (Paris: Navarin, 1987), p.25.

The dispute between Lacan and Derrida over the signification of the phallus in Poe's 'The Purloined Letter' has been read into the letter(s) of Finnegans Wake by Hanjo Berressem. This is an instance of a literary, pedagogic application of post-structuralism (or a suture within post-structuralism) to Joyce's work nearly two decades after the debate occured. The Wake is thus seen to uphold the 'findings' of Derrida (or others) while fulfilling a pedagogical function to which that reading is nominally opposed.[34]

For recent pyschoanalytic criticism of Finnegans Wake, intractable difficulty is an inherent feature of language, hence Lacan's insistence that to read is not to (seek to) understand. The book's complexity is thus almost forgotten by these critics for as Sheldon Brivic puts it, "the obscurity of the Wake facilitates, rather than prevents, the penetration of the veil, so that the appearance of an obstacle represented by the wall of language is an illusion." Brivic continues, "By speaking not with words as they are conventionally understood ... the text speaks from outside social codes."[35] Here, though, the difficulty of Finnegans Wake is taken as absolute in order to justify the splintering of the reading subject constituted within discourse. By confusing readership ("conventionally understood") and enunciation ("the text speaks"), by writing reception into performance, Brivic divorces Finnegans Wake from social codes of reading and from its readership only to re-impose his own social code of reading, his own readership.

This passage from Brivic has been quoted approvingly in a review by Garry Leonard in James Joyce Quarterly. Leonard's own comments further typify the ahistoricity of

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[34] Hanjo Berressem, 'The Letter! The Litter! The Defilements of the Signifier in Finnegans Wake', in Finnegans Wake: Fifty Years, ed. by Geert Lernout (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1990).

[35] Sheldon Brivic, The Veil of Signs: Joyce, Lacan and Perception (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1991), p.180.

North American post-structuralism: "When we confront the obscure surface of the text with open minds, we feel something stirring behind it that a clear text would hide."[36] Leonard seems to retain a dualistic model of surface and depth in literary meanings, compounded with the "open minds" (minds which are presumably conversant with "social codes", yet removed from them like the text) of his presumed readership whose complicity is taken for granted.

Deconstruction makes a virtue of difficulty. Where previously incomprehension signified a fault, now signification is inevitably at fault. Attridge and Ferrer's introduction to Post-structuralist Joyce is keen to continue the critical strain, for which "the aim is not to produce a reading of this intractable text ... but on the contrary to confront its unreadability."[37] A problem with this approach is the inescapability of producing a reading whether one wants to or not: it is too simplistic to embrace or dismiss Finnegans Wake with the accusation that "It has remained ... literally unreadable."[38] Moreover, it is soon clear that this reading of the text (ostensibly a non-reading) is no more than a legitimation of deconstruction, for Attridge and Ferrer imply that it deliberately employs the same theoretical tactic: part of their aim is "to follow up within it [Finnegans Wake] the strategies that attempt a deconstruction of representation."[39] Deconstruction is here seen as always already within the text: Finnegans Wake anticipates and contains its own reading. The necessary agency in the determination of reading is thus ostensibly transferred from the critic to an enlarged text.

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[36] Garry M. Leonard, 'Review of Brivic, The Veil of Signs', JJQ, 29.1 (Fall 1991), 185-93 (p.189).

[37] Attridge and Ferrer, p.10.

[38] Attridge and Ferrer, p.6.

[39] Attridge and Ferrer, p.10.

The best example of the way in which difficulty is used to appropriate the Wake as autonomous - remembering that appropriation involves citing the text as an autonomous entity in order to define the limits of its identity - comes from a North American appropriation of deconstructive principles. In 'The Letter of the Law' Shari Benstock contends that Finnegans Wake "constantly recounts the difficulty -indeed, the impossibility - of its own telling" and she quotes Finnegans Wake - "(I tell you no story)" (55.02) - to prove it. Benstock appears to take too literally some of the Wake's irony. She calls it "a story that is both impossible to tell and insistent on telling itself," thereby simultaneously casting its language as autonomous in two ways, as impossibly difficult to read, and by suggesting that Finnegans Wake reads itself independently of its readers and any socio-discursive configuration.[40]

5. Reflexivity

For the most part, there has been a shift in the nuance of reflexivity from early to recent criticism of Finnegans Wake, a shift that has come about with post-structuralist criticism. Many of the early readings of Finnegans Wake placed an emphasis on self-consciousness in their attempts to discover what the text was about. There were two contributory strands to this self-consciousness: an inability to render the text to realism and so uncertainty of its referential function, heightening the importance of self-referentiality; and also what might be called textual evidence such as I.5, the letters, and myriad references in the Wake to reading, writing and the composition of the book. The reflexivity seen by early criticism was therefore mostly textually based. On the other

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[40] Shari Benstock, 'The Letter of the Law: La Carte Postale in Finnegans Wake', Philological Quarterly, 63 (1984), 163-87 (p.167).

hand, post-structuralist criticism stresses linguistic self-referentiality as a pre-condition of language or writing, finding it in any text. Such reflexivity is therefore mostly critically based. This difference within reflexivity in Wake studies has been somewhat homogenized by the Anglo-American academic appropriation of Finnegans Wake and deconstruction.

For Philippe Sollers, writing in Tel Quel in the mid seventies, Finnegans Wake destroys national tongues:

> depuis que Finnegans Wake a été écrit, l'anglais n'existe plus. Il n'existe plus en tant que langue auto-suffisante, pas plus d'ailleurs qu'aucune autre langue. Joyce introduit un report permanent du sens du langue à langues, d'énoncé à énoncés, de ponctualité de sujet d'énonciation à séries. Joyce: toute une démo-graphie.[41]

The pure reflexivity of language is broken because Joyce introduces a deferral of meaning, carrying-over sense from a language to languages, from statement to statements. Sollers finds nothing beyond language as such. By thus implying the universality of languages Sollers merely circumscribes the self-sufficiency of language: by retaining its own sense, language is made even more self-sufficient because readership and authority are excluded.

Self-consciousness can be the catalyst of textual fragmentation. As Stephen Heath, the clearest and best of the Tel Quel writers, explains,

> In their work on language, on forms, Joyce's texts (Ulysses, Finnegans Wake) pose in themselves a critical self-reflexion and it is precisely this reflexiveness on which rhetoric can have no hold and which is thus the activity of its profound and irreparable fragmentation.[42]

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[41] Sollers, p.15.

[42] Stephen Heath, 'Ambiviolences: Notes for Reading Joyce', in Attridge and Ferrer, p.41.

Heath was probably the first English academic to engage the problems of Tel Quel and Derrida, and this essay, written at the pinnacle of that journal's achievement, still relates reflexiveness to texts "in themselves." The implication continues to be one of textual autonomy. Interestingly, Heath hints at the intertextuality of Finnegans Wake and its criticism, for it is a "critical self-reflexion" which is posed within the text. Elsewhere, Heath spells out the process of critically reading Finnegans Wake, a process not of homogenizing thematic elements "mais de repérer quelque éléments du jeu du texte d'où la lecture est sans cesse relancée."[43] That is, reading inevitably involves identification and return, the same process followed by the critical appropriation of Finnegans Wake.

Jean-Michel Rabaté, one of the most prominent post-structuralist Joyceans, has made similar noises about intertextuality:

> Criticism is resumed, cited, consummated and consumed in Finnegans Wake: it is a perpetual self-commentary which says more about itself in advance and in prolepsis than one can say about it.

Rabaté's work is very much like the universalist claims of Derrida, to whom it owes much of its impetus, as the text subordinates all secondary material. Finnegans Wake is here a "word-machine, or a complex machination of meanings," an image repeated in his latest work, and remarkably similar to that used by Derrida, and one which also "glosses its own reading."[44] In this early essay by Rabaté, there is no question of an historical interplay between the Wake and its readers and the question of critical authority is skimmed over.

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[43] Heath, 'Trames de Lecture', p.5.

[44] Jean-Michel Rabaté, 'Lapsus ex Machina', in Attridge and Ferrer, p.98, p.79, p.92.

These essays of Heath and Rabaté - `Ambiviolences' and `Lapsus ex Machina' respectively - are both collected in Post-structuralist Joyce which makes available in English what the publishers' blurb calls "some of the most significant criticism of James Joyce to have appeared in French journals over the last twenty years." First published at the time of the appropriation of deconstruction in the United States (Heath's essay appeared in Tel Quel in 1972 and Rabaté's in Poetique in 1976), these articles can now be read as consistent with that textualizing trend.

That trend may be exemplified by two examples which prescribe Joyce's last work as reflexive. Margot Norris admittedly practices a "self-reflexive criticism," even calling Finnegans Wake a "closed circle" and writing a "closed system."[45] Shari Benstock more recently continues the image, relating a deconstructive self-consciousness to the Wake's apparently cyclic structure, suggesting to her that "the Wake world is sealed, internalized, whole, perfect and complete, that its movement is cyclic."[46]

Although a recent edition of James Joyce Quarterly was devoted to 'Joyce Between Genders: Lacanian Views', there have been few book-length Lacanian studies of Joyce. Such a critical interpretation reads the text as a subject and thus casts readership in the form of the other, ignored by the discourse which defines its position. A reader as subject is almost unknown to Lacanian analyses of Finnegans Wake, the effect of which is to deny the agency of the reading subject and hence also to deny that readership.

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[45] Norris, p.3, p.84, p.122.

[46] Shari Benstock, 'The Letter of the Law', p.164.

Sometimes critics of the Wake relate textual self-sufficiency to critical practice, implicating the one with the other, in a form of intertextual circularity. A recent book on Joyce takes this view of texts and their criticism: Lorraine Weir's Writing Joyce sees Joyce's longer prose works as "The Joyce system [which ...] exists in a state of bounded implicature, knowing only itself" and it is, she says, a system that pre-exists all analysis. Weir realizes the prolific industry of writing on Joyce, but refuses to acknowledge the effects of that industry, continuing to advocate the text as an autonomous entity. "We are dealing," she says, "with a nonreferential structure," that is, with a system of text that remains constant through any reading. Having proposed this impenetrable system, Weir is constrained to similarly define Finnegans Wake as "a maze sufficient unto itself."[47] The 'vicious circle' school of criticism, which has been well represented in each epoch of Wake studies, importantly stresses the self-sufficiency of critical commentary as well as of Finnegans Wake. It thus carries a contradiction between, on the one hand, text and criticism as two autonomous units, and on the other hand, the supposedly reciprocal relationship between text and commentary.

6. Universalism.

Derrida's only published reading of Finnegans Wake is 'Deux Mots Pour Joyce', translated and published in Post-structuralist Joyce. By arguing that language is significantly excessive, and because the Wake is written plurally (in puns and tongues), Derrida wants to imply that nothing can be written about Finnegans Wake which it does not already anticipate, so Western culture is stamped in its memory and the Wake is a

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[47] Lorraine Weir, Writing Joyce: a Semiotics of the Joyce System (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), p.4, p.61.

part of that culture whilst containing that culture. Like Dr. Who's Tardis, Derrida's Finnegans Wake always has another dimension, being bigger on the inside than it is on the outside; it anticipates every relation to it.

This is the logic that allows Jean Paris to write that Finnegans Wake "de son propre mouvement il doit s'étendre à la totalité des langues vivantes ou desparues," in an extreme reading of the text as autonomous, of text as the active subject that extends its a priori own proper self. Jean-Pierre Faye, also in Tel Quel from 1967, universalizes what he calls Joyce's project, which opens on "la quasi-totalité des langues humaines."[48] But if deconstruction is applicable to all languages and every textual manifestation - which are all part of an underlying 'text' - then the same claims can be made for any piece of writing, of which Finnegans Wake is only an exemplar. It is interesting how, in the fullest expression of deconstructive criticism of Finnegans Wake, the reflexive and universalist modes come together in cyclic manner, despite what was initially seen as their contradictory nature. Derrida also wants the Wake to be about everything, and he also describes it as self-containing, as "circular, encyclopedic, Ulyssean and more than Ulyssean."[49]

Post-structuralist psychoanalysis also claims a universal status for Finnegans Wake, whereby Joyce is seen to write at the limit of language. It is this border which defines the Wake's literary identity. For Lacanians, Finnegans Wake realizes the relation between real, symbolic and imaginary, "à la limite du sens, dans un hors-sens comble du sens" as Jean-Guy Godin says, comparing the effort of reading Joyce's last work

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[48] Jean Paris, 'Finnegans, Wake!', Tel Quel, 30 (Summer 1967), 58-66 (p.60). Jean-Pierre Faye, 'Post Scriptum: Shem Trouvé', Tel Quel, 30 (Summer 1967), 56-7 (p.57).

[49] Derrida, 'Two Words for Joyce', p.149.

with the task of the psychoanalyst.[50] Like the Derridean text which is greater than itself, so a Lacanian analysis works within the relationship between an absent signified unconscious and its impossible universal expression. For Catherine Millot, Finnegans Wake represents such a relationship, and thus itself works a form of Lacanian analysis.

> [Joyce's] enterprise culmine dans la tentative deconstruction d'un mot qui dirait tout, d'un signifiant de l'ineffable, qui épinglerait un sens absolu.[51]

Universalism also figures as a mode of reading Finnegans Wake in Jungian analyses, wherein the collective unconscious is privileged as a signified element, for example Sheldon Brivic's Joyce Between Freud and Jung. Rabaté's James Joyce, Authorized Reader also seems to adopt an equation of a kind of collective unconscious and textuality, universalizing the relation between writers and readers: "reader and author lose their identities to fuse with the general system of the textual unconscious."[52]

Other studies, such as Kim Devlin's Wandering and Return in Finnegans Wake, argue instead that any and every subject is shaped by what she calls "textual internalizations". However, this privilege given to language merely raises another universal. "Enmeshed in discourse, Joycean wanderers know the self only as discourse."[53] A post-structuralist psychoanalytic reading thus replaces an absolute, immutable subject with a universalizing language: text subsumes readership.

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[50] Jean-Guy Godin, '*Du Symptôme à son épure: le sinthome*', in Aubert, p.161.

[51] Catherine Millot, 'Épiphanies', in Aubert, p.91.

[52] Jean-Michel Rabaté, James Joyce, Authorized Reader (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), p.47.

[53] Kimberly J. Devlin, Wandering and Return in Finnegans Wake (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), p.5, p.xi.

It has become quite common for critics to claim that Finnegans Wake anticipates much theoretical and literary work that chronologically follows it. This, after all, is what Derrida says of his own relation to Joyce. Such a view gives the text a universalizing aspect by claiming that it offers foreknowledge of future issues. This universalist view once more infects the text with its own critical agency, simultaneously attributing to Finnegans Wake self-determination and validating contemporary critical theory. Much post-structuralist criticism of the Wake is thus apparently legitimated by the text itself, whose identity is both deconstructive avant la lettre and openly foisted upon it. The deconstructive turn covers itself by being both an overt, inevitable, appropriation, and by claiming the universal status of deconstructive processes. This argument thus universalizes both Finnegans Wake and deconstruction. The opinion that Joyce anticipates Derrida, or that Finnegans Wake anticipates Derrida, can ahistorically gloss over the differences between their socio-linguistic configuratons, between their periods, settings, readerships and writing styles. Whilst justly making the case for the influence of a text on its followers, which is evidently the case with some Wake criticism, the 'anticipation' argument takes no account of a text's inability to effect the social context of its influence, nor to gauge to what use its literary ideas may be subjected.

Deployment of the 'anticipation' argument is dependent upon intertextuality: the text reads the theory as much as the theory reads the text. In Derrida's work on Joyce, intertextuality legitimates his claims for the power of the texts. Unable to secure a vantage point outside of text, and impossible to be fixed within text, Derrida's position is necessarily marginal; but in establishing this, he also sets out a position, even if he does pull the rug from under his epistemological feet. Derrida, writing on Joyce, has an identity of non-identity: he writes of the "Paradoxical logic of this relationship between two texts" where "each writing is ... a part larger then the whole of which it is a

part".[54] Derrida's metaphor here is computational, playing between the immense but specific power of a universal software and linguistic différance, capable of escaping even the all-powerful. Each text is a software, so the metaphor goes, even though the difference between them may be "incommensurable"; software which is capable of being read by Derrida's metaphoric computer. The differences between the studies by Rabaté and Derrida are summarized in their metaphors: Rabaté's mechanical text and Derrida's reading computer: the first in the text, the second in its criticism.

One implication of Derrida's metaphor is that deconstruction cannot afford to relinquish the dream of a full reading of Finnegans Wake. Whatever the problematics of representation, Derrida's metaphor recognizes the necessity of remaining (even if marginally) within the 'realistic' paradigm, for it entertains the possibility of finally explicating the Wake.

It is interesting to note how Attridge and Ferrer's 1984 introduction to 'Two Words for Joyce' (originally a "more or less extemporary talk" given in 1982) plays down Derrida's computational metaphor as "not meant to be taken too seriously."[55] But it should be taken seriously because it points to the historic, socio-discursive relationship between Finnegans Wake and deconstruction. It is perhaps significant that the key English language book on Joyce and post-structuralism should attempt to write the history of previous studies whilst effacing its own history.

Such is the close discursive affinity between Finnegans Wake and deconstruction that the implicit universalism of the latter reinforces the universal identity of the former. The

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[54] Derrida, 'Two Words for Joyce', p.148.

[55] Attridge and Ferrer, p.11.

relationship between the two can be seen to follow a similar movement of identity: from linguistic difficulty to self-reflexivity to universalism. This similarity may suggest not only their mutual influence but also that there is a broader historical configuration which in part determines the ways in which certain writing is appropriated and institutionalized. So rather than allow for the denial of history which reflexivity and universalism can inspire, by citing Finnegans Wake as autonomous or without referential context, this thesis turns to the issue of readership in a movement towards a historical resituation of Finnegans Wake.

7. History.

Derek Attridge has recognised the impossibility of approaching Finnegans Wake without prior inculcation within some critical stream or other: nevertheless he goes ahead and imagines such a "hypothetical decontextualized reader" as a starting-point for investigating the received notion of the dream as structural element of the Wake.[56] However, the approach signalled by Attridge in his paper from the 1986 Copenhagen Joyce Symposium makes better historical sense, without losing his post-structuralist orientation:

> The literary text, far from being the most aberrant instance of language, is the instance that reveals its nature most clearly, as an endlessly retranslatable complex of signifiers, existing as part of a set of public, and political, institutions, themselves caught in a process of constant transformation. And, in this respect, Finnegans Wake is the most typical and the most revealing of all literary texts.[57]

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[56] Derek Attridge, 'Finnegans Wake: The Dream of Interpretation', JJQ, 27.1 (Fall 1989), 11-31 (p.12).

[57] Derek Attridge, 'The Wake's Confounded Language', in Coping with Joyce, ed. by Morris Beja and Shari Benstock (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1989), p.266.

The point to be emphasised here is the typicality of Finnegans Wake. Its status within literary discourse and criticism makes it an exemplary focus for study of broader issues. Attridge's approach recognises the public and political character of institutions within which texts operate, but too readily suggests that they are also textual. Such a confusion can easily lead to a disingenuous ellision (and unwitting reinforcement) of power bases within institutional interaction, so that a reviewer of this essay - discussing it in conjunction with Ulysses and the Wake - can say as a paraphrase, "We will not even know, moment to moment, who is teacher, who student."[58] Such idealism on the part of teachers (students always know who is who) will be investigated in relation to deconstruction in chapter six.

A recent study by James Fairhall, James Joyce and the Question of History (1993), has a chapter on Finnegans Wake entitled "Reforming the Wor(l)d."[59] Fairhall extends the logic of Attridge's typicality to argue that the Wake demonstrates methodological problems within historiography. (He thus continues a recent tradition of reading critical theory within the Wake.) Fairhall's argument is that, as his chapter title suggests, the world and language become conflated, hence elliding their difference, denying the fixity of any observing subject and hence demolishing the grounds for a history with any pretence to objectivity or reality. Thus, for instance, discussing the Phoenix Park murders of 1882, Fairhall writes, "As a phallocentric signifier, the name Daedalus serves a purpose not unlike ... Joe Brady's knife."[60] This is a tenuous metaphor hopelessly inadequate for the history of political violence in Ireland or anywhere else.

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[58] John Whittier-Ferguson, Review of Beja and Benstock, eds., Coping with Joyce, JJQ, 27.1 (Fall 1989), 143-6 (p.146).

[59] James Fairhall, James Joyce and the Question of History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.214.

[60] Fairhall, p.243.

Fairhall's metapohoric equation of language and history (as "ideareal" - 262.07) is nominally derived from Finnegans Wake, but is also dependent upon the established twin themes of Wake criticism: universalism and reflexivity. He writes of the Wake's language, "in whose web of endlessly creative and deconstructive words all history-makers and historians are caught." It is also seen as self-sufficient, "immeasurably beyond any other" text, composed of a "new, self-deconstructing language."[61]

Putatively derived from the philosophical work of Derrida, such 'new historicism' as Fairhall practices attacks a straw-target of linguistic representation in order to make three historical points: first, "no history ... can be ... objective;" second, "any narrative about history becomes itself a historical document;" and third, there are "subtexts ... of histories." However, none of these "scary yet potentially liberating ... consequences" for historiography would frighten, or free, many historians.[62] Indeed, Fairhall even seems to retreat from his two radical propositions - that history is linguistic and the historian a divided subject - in the final paragraph of his Wake chapter. Here, he admits that this "potential liberation" may in fact be a Jamesonesque "prisonhouse of words," and that to maintain sanity "we must slow down the kaleidoscope of history," a reminder of the agency of the subject which drives an implicit wedge between language and history. Fairhall can then return to a decidedly old historicist proposal: "as a historical product itself, it [Finnegans Wake] remains rooted in its own time."[63] It is a measure of Wake criticism that even this rings new.

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[61] Fairhall, p.238, p.234.

[62] Fairhall, p.245.

[63] Fairhall, p.247.

8. Readership.

This chapter ends with a summary of how readership has been formulated in Wake studies, arguing that its textual identity includes readers, whether that takes the form of a previous critic, the current reader or a characterized reader inserted by Joyce. These themes will be explored in the following chapters. It is precisely the failure of much criticism to link its habits of reading to the problematics of readership (identity, context, critical history) that has allowed the continued unreflexive critical appropriation of Finnegans Wake without exploring the context of its reception.

The preceding analysis has set out some of the most significant ways in which Finnegans Wake has contunued to be read. The issue of the text's difficulty is of course entirely relevant to questions of readership, though only John Bishop and the recent work of Rabaté seem to link the two issues, the former suggesting that a reader "should justify to himself its stupefying obscurity" presumably because this obscurity "is its essence and its glory."[64] Although Bishop contends that Finnegans Wake is reducible to one aspect, its night-time dream quality, he importantly denies the text as autotelic, turning difficulty back upon its readers. Rabaté, contemporary spokesman for post-structuralist Joyce, summarizes the effects of the previous modes upon readers:

> So when Finnegans Wake develops not only its own code, but also a language that spills over the frontiers of English in order to establish this new schema of reading, the textual system may seem to shut itself within a closed world, restricted to initiates, like a trap that allows the reader to enter only in order to devour him and absorb him in its language games.[65]

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[64] John Bishop, Joyce's Book of the Dark (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986), p.3.

[65] Rabaté, James Joyce, Authorized Reader, p.116.

Here, an entire readership is negated by the power of literary discourse. Rabaté frequently, if obliquely, refers to problems of readership, and hence this final section will frequently have need of recourse to his work.

The issue of readership hinges upon the problematics of identity. For many post-structuralist Joyceans, such as Rabaté, there can be no extra-textual reader, no authority beyond Finnegans Wake because the text confuses the boundary between itself and its context. Such a view takes its original justification from Derridean deconstruction as applied to the Wake by notably Sollers: "Dans ce qu'il [Joyce] écrit, il n'y a plus que des différences: il met donc en question toute communauté (on appelle ça son 'illisibilité')."[66] According to this view, then, there can be no determinable identity for the readership of a text. The argument of this chapter is that even this reading of Finnegans Wake exercizes its own authority on the text, an authority which is in effect extra-textual.

The identification of Joyce as the reader of Finnegans Wake has long been a critical mode, and has gained some theoretical legitimacy with post-structuralism. For instance, Jean-Guy Godin's Lacanian analysis claims that Finnegans Wake confuses the positions of writer and reader:

> Cela suppose, en effet, que l'auteur s'est fait lecteur et a lui-même inséré sa lecture dans le texte. Joyce s'est fait lecteur. Son propre lecteur, devenant l'écrivain et son lecteur; la jouissance de Joyce à écrire se doublerait d'une jouissance à se lire, à s'entendre écrire. Le lecteur, alors, ne peut que tenter de se couler, autant qu'il le peut, dans ce modèle impossible de lecture unique.[67]

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[66] Sollers, p.16.

[67] Godin, p.164.

Much post-structuralist criticism, taking its lead from deconstruction, inverts this process of identifying writer with reader. It instead implicates readers as producers of texts, as writers. In 'Lapsus ex machina' Rabaté attributes this theoretical approach not to a critical approach but to 'texts themselves'. Elsewhere he similarly sees the Barthesian death of the author as more a function of modern writing than a concept of analysis in some modern criticism.[68]

> [M]odern writing would tend to make the reader not a consumer but a producer of text, of the text conceived as being 'writable', not just 'readable'. Finnegans Wake would be the 'writable' text par excellence, constituted by the reader in his reading.

Rabaté continues to refer to "the reader" and "his" "excessive investment" or "ideal insomnia" (120.14).[69] This is no different to the terms in which readers were conceived by the earliest critics of Finnegans Wake, who worked within a realistic paradigm. By working with "an ideal reader suffering from an ideal insomnia" (120.13-4) as reference, criticism reinforces the text's difficulty and its "status as a master-text whose function is the intimidation and humiliation of the common reader" as one senior Joycean put it in a recent introductory essay.[70] Readers are thus implicated in the text but not critically identified other than as "common" in much contemporary as well as early Wake studies.

Whereas Norris writes of "the common reader", Attridge destabilizes readers and text since "neither retains a secure identity upon which the other can depend." Or, in the words of Rabaté, Finnegans Wake "puts an end to the dichotomy between reader and

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[68] Rabaté, James Joyce, Authorized Reader, p.152.

[69] Rabaté, 'Lapsus ex machina', p.97.

[70] Margot Norris, 'Finnegans Wake', in The Cambridge Companion to James Joyce, ed. by Derek Attridge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.175.

author by abolishing the opposition between text and commentary."[71] This is to follow the argument of Sollers, that the Wake dissolves all community into difference. However, it merely prioritizes the text, or literary discourse in general, and privileges difference as absolute. One effect of the fragmentation of the reading subject, as has been argued in the preceding remarks on Lacan, is to deny the determining forces of any reading agency. Not only does it prohibit the possibility of making a future reading (or appropriation), it also denies the agency that compiled past readings, from which any future reading must begin and diverge. Such a method is thus the most ahistorical and surreptitiously appropriative of all modes of reading.

Manfred Pütz claims that there is a fictitious reader figure inscribed in Finnegans Wake as "a creation of the author analogous to the author-persona" and that this figure undergoes a "process of disintegration."[72] Pütz thus does away with a confrontation of text with reader by a twofold manoeuvre: first, by incorporating readership into the text so that the text is seen to include the history of its appropriation; and second, by mediating readers through an implied (and vague) fictitious reader-figure. Füger argues that "the process of reception is fully integrated into the text."[73] Both Pütz and Füger refer to ALP's letter and its confused reception in I.5 of the Wake. Pütz sees the text as a mirror wherein the letter's fictitious interpreters reflect the actual readership of the text. Similarly, Füger says that

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71 Attridge, 'Reading Joyce', in The Cambridge Companion, ed. by Attridge, p.11. Rabaté, James Joyce, Authorized Reader, p.191.

72 Manfred Pütz, 'The Identity of the Reader in Finnegans Wake', JJQ, 11.4 (Summer 1974) 387-94 (p.387, p.392).

73 Wilhelm Füger, '"Epistlemethodology" (FW 374.17): ALP's Letter and the Tradition of Interpolated Letters', JJQ, 19.4 (Summer 1982), 405-414 (p.412).

> This narrated reader [of ALP's letter] with his problems of understanding can be regarded as representative of the actual reader of Finnegans Wake and his reading difficulties.[74]

Füger's argument is probably best considered in a different sense, not of how to read but of who reads: for the reader of the letter in I.5 is a professor, and it is in academia that the readership of Finnegans Wake resides. The significance of the professor figure as a reader in the text is explored in chapter seven.

By inscripting readers into itself the text is seen to read itself, and so deconstructive questions of readership tend only to further the apparent autonomy of the text established by the modes of appropriation initiated by the Wake's early criticism. For instance, the recent work of Rabaté seems to be constrained by a desire to accommodate problems of reading and a theoretical need to subsume readership to text.

In James Joyce, Authorized Reader, Rabaté proposes the idea that a reader of Finnegans Wake undergoes a process of "self-authorization", which once more inverts the notion of Joyce as reader whilst retaining it within his theory of text. Again, it is the difficulty of the Wake which is seen as the necessity for a consideration of readership.

> The reader has to authorize himself to the status of reader; not only because the text requires culture and also an effort that some may deem disproportionate ... but also because this provides an experience of reading which then radically alters any subsequent reading. Once I have become, thanks to Finnegans Wake, the author of my reading, I can keep an awareness of this recurring dissolution in the text, which, far from comforting my own illusory mastery over texts and meanings, underlies the fact that I am porous, open to alterity, read and written in advance by other texts.[75]

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[74] Füger, p.406.

[75] Rabaté, James Joyce, Authorized Reader, p.183.

It is in this "unique book", then, that readers lose their unique aspects. The argument that readers have to authorize themselves, "because" of the text's difficulty and "because" of the "experience" of reading it, has dubious logic. Textual difficulty heightens the role of the reader, but what is the phenomenological "experience" prized by Rabaté? and how does this mystical-sounding experience lead to the reflexivity in which readers are termed? How does a reader "authorize himself"? Are there no areas of authority beyond the reading subject? a subject whose simultaneous "dissolution" thus also signals the transferral of authority from reader to text, and who, we find, is nothing but a text anyway. So in the confusion of identities - between reader and writer, between text (incorporating readers) and reader (as text) - what is at stake, and precisely that which Rabaté's thesis is unable to cope with, is the location and exercize of authority over meanings within texts.

The problem with "self-authorization" is that Rabaté unwittingly assumes Finnegans Wake to have no identity prior to any reading of it, and that each reader has no other form of authority determining the ways in which it is read: interpretation appears to occur within a historical vacuum. In Finnegans Wake, "no place has been ... prepared in advance for the readers."[76] A consequence of this reading by Rabaté is that the role of the reader is confused between passivity and activity: readers are at once the creative element, "the main character", but also mere functions of the broader text, "the-reader-in-the-text".[77] In Joyce Upon the Void, he applies to the text what could be applied to the reading process:

> What is fundamentally at stake behind the ascription of any passage to a narrator is the question of the identity of the subject.[78]

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[76] Rabaté, James Joyce, Authorized Reader, p.190.

[77] Rabaté, James Joyce, Authorized Reader, p.180; Joyce Upon the Void, p.209.

[78] Rabaté, Joyce Upon the Void, p.207.

Likewise, if a reader is implicated as a creative agent in the text, then this applies also to that reader: what is the reader's identity? It should also be remembered that a subject must be identified before its identity can be fragmented.

Rabaté does acknowledge that authority is the crux of the problem of identity, conceding that

> Joyce's apparent paradox would then be that such a birth of the reader-as-writer can only be founded on a philosophy of authority.[79]

That is, the issue of authority over and in Finnegans Wake necessarily pre-exists its reading. As Rabaté is reluctant to identify readership, calling the question 'who writes, and for whom?' "naive", he re-invokes the "absent authorship" of Joyce and the catch-all concept of the writerly reader in the text. Rabaté's extensive work on this, among many aspects of Joyce, shows how no identity is final, be it a question of readership or textual meaning, but it does not answer the problems of the way power is controlled in texts, nor of the distribution of authority between a text and its readership. It leaves no room to consider extra-textual authority, such as the implications for the text of the site of its reception.

The work of Colin MacCabe, typical of a politically-committed British post-structuralism in the seventies, did suggest the importance of the site of Joyce's reception, but ultimately subjugated it to an excessive textualism. Closing his pioneering Lacanian analysis of Joyce's prose, at the end of a chapter called 'A Political Reading of Finnegans Wake', MacCabe proposes the following thesis:

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[79] Rabaté, James Joyce, Authorized Reader, p.152.

> Joyce's texts are politically ineffective because they lack any definite notion of the audience to which they are addressed.[80]

Judging from the author's reactions to the reception of Ulysses and Finnegans Wake, MacCabe further claims that Joyce had some concept of a 'common reader',

> But this purely imaginary audience did not exist and the real audience to whom the texts are thus necessarily addressed is an isolated individual and the only possible individual: Joyce himself. It is this resurrection of the notion of the individual at the limit of texts dedicated to the subversion of that notion which has allowed Joyce to be so easily recuperated by literary critics.[81]

MacCabe takes his recuperation of the old critical line that Joyce is his own reader a stage further, in something of a self-contradiction, by arguing that "the effort of reading Joyce is one of imaginary identification" and

> The only section of society that shares an imaginary identity with Joyce are [sic] the Joyce scholars and it is they who form his only audience.[82]

In a footnote to this, the final sentence of the chapter, MacCabe adds that although there may be differences within the community of Joyce commentary and scholarship,

> what is important for the general political argument is that Joyce's audience do not share a political or social identity which is figured centrally in the text.

It is possible to take issue with MacCabe on several counts. First, he suggests that political efficacy is dependent not upon the audience of a text but the text's notion of its own audience. Political effects are thus defined as textual rather than social. Further, Joyce's possible notion of a 'common reader' is debatable: he also knew the difficulty

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[80] Colin MacCabe, James Joyce and the Revolution of the Word (London: MacMillan, 1979), p.156.

[81] MacCabe, p.157.

[82] MacCabe, p.157.

of his work. Moreover, the growth of a professional audience of literary critics and students concomitant with the production of that work means that MacCabe's binary poles of readership - 'common reader' and author - are too simplistic and historically reductive. It therefore does not necessarily follow that because there was no common readership, Joyce was the Wake's "real audience," and, if that does not follow, there is no need to identify with him on behalf of other (less real?) readers.

Finally, as this thesis shows, Finnegans Wake does inscribe critics as its audience, both real readers who rejected Work in Progress (as shown in chapter two) and fictional readers who figure as critics within the text (see chapters seven eight). The important point to be taken from a study of Finnegans Wake is its insistence upon the interpretive context of reception, which may include the textual figuration of a perceived audience but is not limited to it.

CHAPTER FIVE

Deconstruction and Readership

Previous chapters having shown how Work in Progress lost all audiences but its critical reviewers and how Finnegans Wake was necessarily and inevitably accommodated within the university study of English, this chapter now considers the claims of some recent critics - often informed by deconstruction - that Finnegans Wake retains the power to escape such an institutionalization. One of the most acknowledged recent books on Finnegans Wake, John Bishop's Joyce's Book of the Dark, says that "as 'a comedy of letters,' Finnegans Wake is the antithesis of everything taught in the 'academy of letters'."[1] Before him, Patrick McGee had asserted that

> Finnegans Wake tends to resist any institutional framework - no matter how radical - founded on the principle of reason.... Every time Finnegans Wake breaks into the space of the university, it calls that space into question by drawing attention to what the university only assimilates as a question it cannot solve.[2]

McGee's claim is reminiscent of Derrida's essay, 'The Principle of Reason: the University in the Eyes of its Pupils' and is indicative of what Derrida has described as a "privileged circulation" operating between the Wake and deconstruction.[3] There is an implicit assumption in McGee's claim that the Wake anticipates deconstruction, or is a manifestation of its logic. However, such claims ignore the pointed insistence of

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[1] Bishop, p.309. His quotation is from 425.24.

[2] Patrick McGee, 'Joyce's Pedagogy: Ulysses and Finnegans Wake as Theory', in Coping with Joyce, ed. by Morris Beja and Shari Benstock (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1989), pp.212-13.

[3] Remark by Derrida at the panel 'Deconstructive Criticism of Joyce' at the International James Joyce Symposium in Frankfurt, 1984. Quoted by Ellen Carol Jones, introduction to 'Deconstructive Criticism of Joyce', in James Joyce: the Augmented Ninth, ed. by Bernard Benstock (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1988), p.77.

Derrida in 'The Principle of Reason' that those who seek to deconstruct academic discourses and institutions "need not set themselves up in opposition to the principle of reason.... They may continue to assume within the university ... the imperative of professional rigor and competence."[4]

A perceptive essay by Derek Attridge warns of the difficulty of assessing the "politico-institutional underpinning" of the discourse which presses deconstruction into academic service. After all,

> the analysis of such factors would not in itself loosen the hold of the discourse upon the academy - indeed, it might strengthen it, if the analysis were undertaken according to 'scientific' principles.[5]

Attridge's political point is salient, but his oppositon between science and deconstruction is a false one, as both are holistic and therefore each capable of containing the other. Indeed it is also rash to imply that 'science' in such broad terms is a regressive ideology. Attridge's essay attempts to articulate a "deconstructive criticism of Joyce" but gets little further than finding "most specific to Joyce ... a laughter which irrupts all enclosures."[6]

However, there would seem to be an incongruity between claims that Finnegans Wake subverts the university and its restricted academic readership. The current chapter sets out some of the institutional conditions of deconstruction in order to clarify critics'

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[4] Jacques Derrida, 'The Principle of Reason: the University in the Eyes of its Pupils', trans. by Catherine Porter and Edward P. Morris, Diacritics, 13.3 (Fall 1983), 3-22 (p.17).

[5] Derek Attridge, 'Criticism's Wake', in James Joyce: the Augmented Ninth, ed. by Bernard Benstock, p.83.

[6] Attridge, p.86, pp.85-6.

claims that Finnegans Wake escapes "the space of the university" by showing the extent to which its deconstructive champions may be said to operate an academic discourse. This can be done by focusing on the issue of readership in deconstruction, especially as it is inscribed in Derrida's work. Finally, this chapter returns to the issue of Joyce's place within academic structures.

1. The Motif, the Movement and the Monstrosity.

Discussing, in a recently published interview, the (im)possibility of formalizing deconstruction, Jacques Derrida admits that "what interests me" is the "excellent question ... Why does it take this form and this name today?" Implicit in this question, but stretching thematically through Derrida's career, are two deconstructions: one under whose name "today" some people work; and another which is "always ... at work" since "deconstruction happens [ça arrive]."[7] The first deconstruction is worked by an academic community; the second works that community. The former is a recent phenomenon, undoubtedly an academic, theoretical discourse, albeit in different shapes in different institutions; the latter is ceaselessly productive, it "has always been at work everywhere."[8]

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[7] 'Politics and Friendship: an interview with Jacques Derrida' by Michael Sprinker, transcribed by Cecile Rivoallan, trans. by Robert Harvey, in The Althusserian Legacy, ed. by E. Ann Kaplan and Michael Sprinker (London: Verso, 1993), p.226. Interview conducted at the University of California at Irvine, April 1989.

[8] Jacques Derrida, 'The Time of a Thesis: Punctuations,' trans. by Kathleen McLoughlin, in Philosophy in France Today, ed. by Alan Montefiore (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p.44.

To define further these two deconstructions: on the one hand, "this open and nonself-identical totality of the world is deconstruction;" and on the other hand there is "the apparently academic discourse to which we grant this name." That is to say, Derrida's distinction here appears to be a straightforward one between the intellectual and the institutional. The relationship between the two he characterizes thus:

> what is called "deconstruction" in the sense of a relatively coherent set of discursive rules at a given moment in Western discourse is only a symptom - an effect of deconstruction at work in what one might call history.[9]

The institutional kind of deconstruction, Derrida tells his listeners and readers, is somehow caused by its intellectual parent, as a sort of blip in its otherwise monotonous machination. Deconstruction, in that sense, "is a word I have never liked and one whose fortune has disagreeably surprised me."[10] It is precisely in the relationship between the operations of <u>différance</u> and its roughly contemporary theorization that one has to look for an understanding of deconstruction.

What Derrida "would like to call deconstruction would be above all an effort to respond to" the following question.

> If it [deconstruction] has always been at work everywhere ... why does it attempt today to formalize and thematize itself, to name itself as well, but without being able to do so? .... What is happening today that causes "deconstruction" to become a theme under this name?[11]

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[9] Derrida, 'Politics and Freindship', p.226.

[10] Derrida, 'The Time of a Thesis: Punctuations', p.44.

[11] Derrida, 'Politics and Friendship', p.226.

Derrida's way of answering his question, indeed his way of putting the question to presuppose his answer, of course favours the intellectual figure of deconstruction over its institutional formalization. By framing the relationship between "these 'real' deconstructions and the apparently academic discourse to which we grant this name" in terms of this question, Derrida shifts analysis of deconstruction onto a broader, unlimited historical process - he moves from Plato to questioning what "today" means in six sentences - a process that he has already associated with deconstruction as différance: "what one might call history.... All this, this open and nonself-identical totality of the world is deconstruction." One can clearly say about this form of deconstruction that it undermines history as objective linearity. There is also a specific history in Derrida's question, twice called "today" and whose relation to the transhistorical is the key issue for deconstruction. Derrida's framing of this relationship, however, privileges the transhistorical over the specific, so that the latter is just as problematic as the former:

> What is happening today that causes "deconstruction" to become a theme under this name? What is "today"? Really, when I think about it, this is what interests me and seems to me to not have any fixed limit.[12]

There are, then, two forms of history in deconstruction: a transhistorical deconstruction which represents différance, and which can be called the motif of deconstruction; and a specific history, represented by the contemporary articulation of the motif, which includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the academic discourse bearing that name. This can be called the movement of deconstruction.[13] This section looks at the

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[12] Derrida, 'Politics and Friendship', p.226.

[13] These terms are to be understood as set out in this essay and not in relation to either Rorty's "two senses" of deconstruction or Derrida's "two motifs of deconstruction," neither of which refer to the distinction made here. See Richard Rorty, 'Deconstruction and Circumvention', Critical Inquiry 11 (1984), 1-23; Jacques Derrida, 'The Ends of

relationship between motif and movement, to argue that the necessary significance of the latter, as a gateway to the motif, is under-acknowledged in Derrida's texts (which nevertheless always point to this double meaning of deconstruction), and to see what consequences this has for Derrida's work on institutions of knowledge.

The importance of the movement as a means of access to the motif - the logical supposition that knowledge of deconstruction must be via the texts that promote it - can be established by reference to 'Some Statements and Truisms', a lecture from 1987 addressed to the theory industry and also delivered in California. Derrida says that deconstruction "is neither a theory nor a philosophy.... It is what happens .... Deconstruction is the case." For Derrida, the motif appears to be all. He goes on to dismiss the recent rise of new historicism in academic literary circles with the telling phrase, "monsters cannot be announced."[14]

This paper - twenty-one years after the Johns Hopkins conference where 'Structure, Sign and Play' was first presented before an English-speaking audience - in a way marks the coming of age of deconstruction. At the close of that former address Derrida had signalled the birth of his monster:

> Here [in différance] there is a kind of question, let us call it historical, whose conception, formation, gestation and labor [le travail] we are only catching a glimpse of today. I employ these words, I admit, with a glance toward the operations of childbearing - but also with a glance toward those who, in a society from which I do not exclude myself, turn their eyes away when faced by the as yet unnamable which is

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Man', in Margins of Philosophy, trans. by Alan Bass (Brighton: Harvester, 1982), p.135.

[14] Jacques Derrida, 'Some Statements and Truisms about Neologisms, Newisms, Postisms, Parasitisms, and other small Seismisms', trans. by Anne Tomiche, in The States of "Theory", ed. by David Carroll (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), p.85, p.80. First given as a lecture at Irvine in 1987.

> proclaiming itself and which can do so, as is necessary whenever a birth is in the offing, only under the species of a nonspecies, in the formless, mute, infant, and yet terrifying form of monstrosity.[15]

'Some Statements and Truisms' clearly refers back to this passage (the phrase "formless form" is repeated), to its contextual milieu and its historical path. It goes on to warn against pale imitations:

> A monstrosity never presents itself; or else ... it only presents itself ... by allowing itself to be reduced to what is recognizable; that is, to a normality, a legitimacy which it is not, hence by not letting itself be recognized as what it is - a monstrosity .... It can only be recognized afterwards, when it has become normal or the norm.[16]

The relationship between the two deconstructions set out above has now become more problematic, uneasy, even monstrous.[17] Derrida's rehearsal of his earlier essay, which introduced 'deconstruction' to North American academics, suggests that there has been a domestication of his monster, and <u>through which</u> an imperfect knowledge of an underlying deconstruction must travel: "today" access to the latter has to be via the former, hence the importance of today. There can be no question of understanding <u>différance</u> without encountering the academic discourse within which it is a form of knowledge. The claim that deconstruction disrupts the space of the academy - that it forms "the most directly underground thinking about the abyss beneath the university" - thus needs careful thought.[18]

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[15] Jacques Derrida, 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences', in <u>Writing and Difference</u>, ed. and trans. by Alan Bass (London: Routledge, 1978), p.293. Translation modified.

[16] Derrida, 'Some Statements and Truisms', p.79.

[17] It could be said that the monstrous birth of the movement is due to its incestuous relationship with the motif. The following chapter discusses the 'logic of incest' in relation to deconstruction and <u>Finnegans Wake</u>.

[18] Derrida, 'The Principle of Reason', p.17. In this essay Derrida alludes to some peculiar physical features of the campus at Cornell.

The relationship between motif and movement which has been suggested in Derrida's comments about deconstruction can also be seen in his early and most famous work. In 'Structure, Sign and Play' Derrida seems to hint at the distinction between two deconstructions which has been discussed above. The essay opens by discussing the history of the concept of structure, which Derrida claims has been ruptured by an 'event', a "decentering" which is later described as "thinking the structurality of structure." This event - which can be indicated by reference to the work of Nietzsche, Freud and Heidegger - entails a dual conception of history.

> It is no doubt part of the totality of an era, our own, but still it has always already begun to proclaim itself and begun to work [travailler].[19]

The historical double-think demanded of Derrida's in(de)finite readership is of the 'event' and the 'birth' as part of a local chronology ("an era, our own") and as a transhistorical figure ("always already"). 'Structure, Sign and Play' is traversed by this dual historical configuration. It is quite clear from this essay that Derrida is at least attempting to place his work in some kind of historical framework (the word history is used seven times in the first two pages). Hence this second gesture is transhistorical but not necessarily ahistorical.

The mutual necessity of the motif and the movement can be indicated by the passage that immediately follows the above quotation and which describes the significance of the 'event' (of thinking the structurality of structure). There is a "kind of circle" which traps the Nietzschean, Freudian, Heideggerean, and now Derridean, discourses in the

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[19] Derrida, 'Structure, Sign and Play', p.280. Translation modified.

"relation between the history of metaphysics and the destruction of the history of metaphysics."[20] The necessity of remaining within metaphysics in order to offer a critique of it suggests the historical valency of deconstruction within a transhistorical process. The duality of deconstruction, then, is doubtlessly closely linked to the very system which it critically inhabits. It offers both a universal motif of differentiation and a specific movement for its articulation.

At the end of the essay (quoted above), it becomes apparent that Derrida is proposing a further twist to the 'event' he had signalled, a twist which he names as "the as yet unnamable which is proclaiming itself."[21] It may not be possible to announce a monster but sometimes they proclaim themselves. Derrida thus posits this essay firmly within the movement of deconstruction at the same time as announcing its motif.

In 'Différance' (1968), Derrida similarly inscribes the mutual necessity of the motif and the movement:

> différance, which is neither a word nor a concept, strategically seemed to me the most proper one to think ... what is most irreducible about our "era." Therefore I am starting, strategically, from the place and time in which "we" are, even though ... it is only on the basis of différance and its "history" that we can allegedly know who "we" are, and what the limits of an "era" might be.[22]

If the motif represents différance as set out at the end of this statement (as the basis for thinking of historical community) and the movement is its contemporary articulation (within certain historical communities), then the relationship between motif and

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[20] Derrida, 'Structure, Sign and Play', p.280.

[21] Derrida, 'Structure, Sign and Play', p.293.

[22] Derrida, 'Différance', in Margins of Philosophy, p.7.

movement is here enacted in a double strategy: the former is the condition of possibility for the latter ("only on the basis of") but it is the latter which grants access to the former. That it is necessarily through its articulation that différance can be approached is signalled later in the essay: "this word must defer to the discourse in which it occurs, its interpretive context."[23]. Even in that context is a deferral, both in subordination to and differentiation from its discourse. Hence it is possible to question what "today" means because our questioning is also specific to today. Derrida is quite clear that deconstruction is also a contemporary movement signalled by "différance [which] is but the historical and epochal unfolding of Being or of the ontological difference."[24] This movement is referred to as "we" whose labour is a "rigorous reading of metaphysics" and the "nonsynonymous substitutions" for différance, that is, attempts to name the motif, must operate "according to the necessity of the context."[25] Motif and movement have a mutual necessity: the one cannot be thought without the other.

One of Derrida's rhetorical (but also institutional) strategies has been to retain principally for himself something akin to 'the voice of deconstruction'. This may be seen, for instance, in one of his most recent publications, a "circumfession" to Geoff Bennington's systematic survey of deconstruction in Jacques Derrida.[26] Derrida's contribution to this volume takes the form of fifty-nine footnotes, designed to comment reflexively and autobiographically upon Bennington's descriptive analysis. This format, as the foreword explains, derived from a bet that Derrida could show how any

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[23] Derrida, 'Différance', p.8.

[24] Derrida, 'Différance', p.22.

[25] Derrida, 'Différance', p.22, p.12.

[26] Geoff Bennington and Jacques Derrida, Jacques Derrida (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

systematic description of deconstruction would itself be undone by a deconstructive motif. The odds were stacked in Derrida's favour since in order to write his "periods and paraphrases" he first read Bennington's text which could not subsequently be revised. The very format of this book offers three points: Derrida is in the position of the person most competent to speak for deconstruction as a motif; in doing so he must also mark himself as a disseminator of its contemporary movement; and there is an attempt within the movement (although Bennington is not the best example of this) to further institutionalize deconstruction beyond the wishes of Derrida.

The theoretical movement obviously suffers the same problem of positioning which is purported by the motif. A theory that deconstructs every authority including its own leaves no position for its own voice. If deconstruction as a movement can be politically allied with either marxism or feminism, it can only do so within an alliance it has already made with the academy. The key issue for contemporary practitioners of deconstruction (who are interested, for instance, in its application to the legal system) is how the motif can subvert the movement, whether there can be a movement that is deconstructive and whether it can have any political efficacy within an institutional system such as academia (let alone the law). The question is thus primarily one of the role of various contexts within which deconstructive movements operate, primarily the institutionalization of knowledge. One might also note how a particular place can be associated with a particular form of deconstruction.

An understanding of the movement known as deconstruction - however difficult to define - in its institutional history is therefore paramount to an understanding of the subversive possibilities of the motif, since the texts that proclaim to embody or disseminate deconstruction are the principle means to the motif. In 'Some Statements and Truisms', Derrida describes a theoretical movement as a "jetty" which can undergo

"reappropriation as a theoretical set, a theory with its axioms, its methodical procedures, its institutional structures" and, of course, "these theoretical jetties are also institutional fortifications."[27] Derrida attempts to give jetty an extra significance, as both a safe harbour and as that which throws something, from the French se jette. The way in which Derrida here distinguishes between the two meanings of jetty - between movement and motif - is via the speech act terms of use and mention: the theoretical movement mentions deconstruction by conceptualizing it, whereas the deconstructive motif uses, re-uses and abuses language. He would thus accept the importance of strategic functionality for these deconstructions. The use (or more strictly re-use) of language "destabilizes even the opposition between discourse with and discourse without quotation marks, mention and use."[28]

Derrida is then able to focus upon the border between motif and movement, which is neither real nor ideal: "always being crossed, erased and retraced." The border or margin that both distinguishes and holds together these deconstructions has the status, in Derrida's Levinasian terminology, of "Il y en a." He can then claim, "il y a ... this border which doesn't exist."[29] Yet this description of the border reads suspiciously akin to Derrida's characterization of deconstruction as "what happens .... Deconstruction is the case." The similarity with which one side of the border and the border itself are seen suggests the extent to which that side is privileged in Derrida's texts. Unfortunately, the price of this privilege is ignorance of the mediating role played by that broad body of texts which can be termed deconstructive criticism. If

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[27] Derrida, 'Some Statements and Truisms', p.65, p.67.

[28] Derrida, 'Some Statements and Truisms', p.75.

[29] Derrida, 'Some Statements and Truisms', p.76.

contemporary understanding of deconstruction as motif is inevitably mediated by an academic movement, and especially if that motif, as différance, has the effect of always undermining that discourse, then analysis of the margin between these two deconstructions must somehow pay greater attention to the role played by the movement. If the motif is to undermine institutional structures - for instance via texts like Finnegans Wake - then due account has to be taken of the role of the movement in relation to those structures and to the motif. Hence the necessity, which is not belied by the difficulty, of mapping the terrain between motif and movement, and the history of their border.

2. Institutional Affiliations.

It is possible to understand the role of critical theory in contemporary universities in a similar way to the motif and movement of deconstruction. In a recent edition of the Times Literary Supplement, Terry Eagleton wrote:

> [Theory] is not an academic discipline, but the symptom of a crisis in our current disciplinary carve-up ....
>
> It is just the name for a crisis in the discursive division of labour; and what finally comes of that will be a question of politics, not of theory itself.[30]

It is difficult to dispute such general comments. Eagleton does not deny the movement of theory. When he says it is "not an academic discipline" he means that the discipline does not correspond to some underlying object of study. However, he still posits a

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[30] Terry Eagleton, 'Discourse and Discos', Times Literary Supplement, 15 July 1994, pp.3-4.

motif, in "the discursive division of labour" whose crisis "springs from the pressure of momentous new social developments."[31] It is almost as if Eagleton had written

> what is called "deconstruction" ... is only a symptom - an effect of deconstruction at work in what one might call history.

In fact, these words are Derrida's, quoted above. This social analysis of the role of critical theory suggests the further significance of the contemporary cultural expression which is theory: not only the timing of its appearance, but also the site of its articulation.

In the Sprinker interview, Derrida went on to suggest the necessity of analysing the fortune of deconstruction within a politico-institutional context, for "One can understand nothing of this period of deconstruction, notably in France, unless one takes this historical entanglement into account."[32] This interview is notable for Derrida's assertion of the significance of Marxism for his work, a fact not previously made explicit and subsequently repeated. It is undoubtedly important that Derrida now feels a necessity to align his work with the name of Marx, to insist that "People who decipher my discourse on the French scene of the 1960s know that I speak with Marxism" and that his apparent marginalization of Marx was in fact "an active calling into account of the Marxian legacy."[33] As Derrida explains it, his reticence over Marxism was partly

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[31] Eagleton, p.3.

[32] Jacques Derrida, Specters of Marx: the State of Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International, trans. by Paggy Kamuf (New York and London: Routledge, 1994), p.15. Derrida's primary reference is to the influence of Marxism on French life and thought in the period. This book is undoubtedly an important step in Derrida's work, signalling a determination to investigate historical contexts of deconstruction, following from the Sprinker interview.

[33] Derrida, 'Politics and Friendship', pp.218-19.

due to the institutionalized dominance of the Parti Communiste Française (PCF) which when he was a student at the Ecole Normale Supérieure (ENS) in the early 1950s operated a "truly hegemonic" control over the students and "dominated in a very tyrannical manner."[34] The role of the PCF would be important to any complete political history of the rise of the deconstructive movement, and its influence at the time was tied very closely to another institution, of which Derrida says little but in which he worked for twenty years, the Ecole Normale Supérieure.

In Teachers, Writers, Celebrities Régis Debray has written of the diminishing political significance of academics as a whole in modern France, arguing that French intellectual life has gone through three broad power stages this century: one dominated by the universities, roughly 1880 to 1930; the rule of publishing, from about 1920 to 1960; and under the control of the media since 1960. Nowadays, he says, it is not the universities who hold intellectual power but a small number of individuals, who have found expression in newspapers, television and radio. This elite form of "high intelligentsia" he claims is complicit with developed capitalist states:

> the sociology of real capitalism ignores (or marginalizes) it in order to conceal it as an active political force and to perpetuate the illusion that it does not exist.[35]

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[34] Derrida, 'Politics and Friendship', p.199, p.187. In his biography of Foucault, Didier Eribon testifies to the prevalence of PCF members and activists at the ENS in the late 40s and early 50s. See Michel Foucault, trans. by Betsy Wing (London: Faber, 1992). See also Jean-François Sirinelli, 'Les Normaliens de la rue d'Ulm àpres 1945: une génération communiste?', Revue d'Histoire du Monde Moderne, (October -December 1986), 569-88.

[35] Régis Debray, Teachers, Writers, Celebrities, trans. by David Macey (London: New Left Books, 1981), p.29.

Although Debray over-emphasises the homogeny of the high intelligentsia, and underestimates the role of intellectual dissidents within the broader academic structure, his work is a refreshing analysis of the complicity in power structures of modern intellectuals.

There is a further, important conclusion to be drawn from Debray's analysis. As Paul Bové notes, "the historical role of the leading intellectual is an ideology no longer acceptable to people struggling to change society."[36] Michel Foucault had intimated as much in saying that after les événements of May 1968, "the intellectual discovered that the masses no longer needed him to gain knowledge."[37] In the expansion of the British higher educational system, most notably in the 1960s and more recently, it has not taken such drastic events to diminish the role of the leading intellectual. The erosion of power from the universities (if not from the intelligentsia themselves) at the same time as the broadening of their market in terms of student numbers has created two generations - a middle class new to higher education - who know the subordinate status of their knowledge. Derrida, and the movement of deconstruction, can be read in the light of this history: as part of Debray's high intelligentsia, but whose ability to subvert the institutions that employ him is contradicted by his very success.

A brief sketch of some philosophical affiliations pertinent to post-structuralism and the ENS can give an indication of the closely-knit academic culture from which Derrida's

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[36] Paul A. Bové, In the Wake of Theory (Hanover and London: University of New England Press, 1992), p.117.

[37] Michel Foucault, 'Intellectuals and Power: A Conversation Between Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze', in Language, Counter-Memory, Practice, trans. by Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Oxford: Blackwell, 1977), p.207.

"terrifying form of a monstrosity" emerged.[38] Between 1933 and 1939 at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Alexandre Kojève lectured on Hegel's Phänomenologie des Geistes to an audience that included many of the most influential thinkers and academics in mid-century Paris: Raymond Aron, Georges Bataille, André Breton, Jacques Lacan, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Raymond Queneau, Jean-Paul Sartre.[39] In 1939 and 1941, Jean Hyppolite published his two-part translation of Hegel's Phenomenology, and in 1947 Kojève's lectures were published as Introduction à la Lecture de Hegel. Kojève is a suitable starting-point for this historical sketch for many reasons. He is central to the reintroduction of Hegelianism in France, a philosophy which has allowed the thinking of the history of the end of history. He provides a Marxist and sociological interpretation of Hegel in the 1930s, published shortly after the liberation of Paris. Kojève's work also engages phenomenology, which was already a major influence, and became so for Derrida, especially in his early work on Husserl. More tangentially, Kojève's work and the return of Hegelianism in Paris in the 1930s and 40s was coterminous with the revision of Work in Progress and the publication of Finnegans Wake and their early reception. Both Kojève and Finnegans Wake attempt a writing of the end of history, for only from such a position can a cyclical history be sketched.

The influence on post-structuralism is discernible, and not just in its reaction against Hegelianism, which in Derrida's case has taken the form of situating Hegel as a

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[38] See Vincent Descombes, Modern French Philosophy, trans. by L. Scott-Fox and J.M. Harding (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), commissioned by an English publisher for an English-speaking audience. See also Eribon's biography of [illegible]ult and Elisabeth Roudinesco, Jacques Lacan & Co.: A History of [illegible]nalysis in France 1925 - 1985, trans. by Jeffrey Mehlman (London: Free Ass[illegible] Books, 1990).

[39] See R[illegible]ron, Mémoires (Paris: Juillard, 1983) and Roudinesco.

philosophical limit to be undone (and not just surpassed): if différance has a definition, it is the limit or destruction of aufhebung.[40] Elsewhere, Derrida calls Hegel "the last philosopher of the book and the first thinker of writing," that is, "the thinker of irreducible difference."[41] Moreover, Derrida has refered to Joyce as "perhaps the most Hegelian of novelists."[42] Modern philosophy - that is, the possibility of deconstruction - appears to begin with Hegel, and Joyce too marks this end of the book and beginning of writing.

Derrida's indebtedness to Kojève is acknowledged in a footnote to 'From Restricted to General Economy': Derrida's reading of Hegel is dependent upon Bataille and his reading of Kojève, "whose mark dominates visibly."[43] A contemporary commentator sums up Kojève's work as "a reading that emphasised the violent, heterogenous elements in Hegel's text, and resisted the phenomenological drive toward an ultimate reconciliation of history and meaning."[44] Seen in this light, Kojève's reading paved the way from Hegel to deconstruction and post-structuralism.

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[40] Derrida, Positions, trans. by Alan Bass (London: The Athlone Press, 1987), pp.40-41. On Hegel and deconstruction, see the introduction to Mark C. Taylor, Deconstruction in Context (London: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

[41] Derrida, Of Grammatology, trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p.26.

[42] Derrida, 'Violence and Metaphysics', in Writing and Difference, p.153.

[43] Jacques Derrida, 'From Restricted to General Economy: A Hegelianism without Reserve', in Writing and Difference, p.334.

[44] Christopher Norris, 'Philosophy as Not Just a "Kind of Writing"', in Redrawing the Lines: Analytic Philosophy, Deconstruction and Literary Theory, ed. by Reed Way Dasenbrock (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), p.196.

The influence of Kojève and the post-structuralist response to Hegel is also discernible in a more subtle but also more material, institutional form. From 1946 to 1950, Michel Foucault attended the ENS, writing his dissertation Hegel's Phenomenology of Mind shortly after its translation by Hyppolite (who had been his teacher at Lycée Henri IV) and the publication of Kojève's lectures, and also attending all Merleau-Ponty's lectures on existentialism and phenomenology between 1947 and 1949. Foucault went on to teach Derrida, four years his junior, at the ENS during the academic year 1953-4. He read Derrida's student work on Husserl, an agrégation paper from 1955 (which was failed by the examining committee). In 1956-7, having passed the agrégation, Derrida spent a year at Harvard University and it was here that he first read Joyce, and began to read Finnegans Wake. In 1957 Derrida registered his first thesis topic, 'The Ideality of the Literary Object', directed by Hegel's translator and Foucault's former teacher, Jean Hyppolite, who "let[...] me go wherever my path led me."[45] He continued to work under Hyppolite's supervision until the latter's death in the autumn of 1968 (a few months after the death of Kojève).

In the relations between Hyppolite, Foucault and Derrida there can be seen a "genealogy of the Rue d'Ulm philosophers."[46] These former normaliens who each became a caîman (director of studies in philosophy at the ENS) form one example of the personal and institutional ties that have helped shape recent philosophical thought and all that is influenced by that thought. Derrida's example of "the strange history of this strange institution"[47] - a term which, significantly, he also applies to literature -is his

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[45] Derrida, 'The Time of a Thesis: Punctuations', p.36.

[46] Derrida, 'Politics and Friendship', p.185.

[47] Derrida, 'Politics and Friendship', p.185.

relationship with Althusser, symptomatic of his reticence to criticize a scientific and sometime Stalinist Marxism supported by the PCF. Derrida went to the ENS to teach in October 1964 at the invitation of Althusser, seconded by Hyppolite (who had then moved to the Collège de France) and stayed for twenty years.

Towards the beginning of Derrida's work at the ENS, Althusser began the seminars that led to Pour Marx and Lire le Capital (both published in 1965), and Derrida felt himself "paralyzed because ... I didn't want my questions to be taken for crude and self-serving criticisms connected with the Right or the Left - in particular with the Communist Party."[48] After the publication of Althusser's seminars, which were later to transform the intellectual wing of the PCF, Derrida saw him as the Party's leading philosopher, who changed the Party "from inside." Although shunned by the Party apparatus until shortly before 1968, Althusser's work according to Derrida

> was not the discourse of a marginal opposition: it was a dominant discourse. Not from the standpoint of the Party apparatus, but from that of a certain intelligentsia of the Party.... I saw the Althusserian discourse as a hegemonic discourse inside the Party.... It was the interesting thing, the novelty, the basic reference. In Paris, when we thought of "Marxism" and "Communism," it was always in relationship to that discourse.[49]

Derrida is prepared to see Althusser as central despite being marginalized in terms of power-relations within the PCF, yet is all the time insistent on his own marginality. No doubt in terms of the PCF Derrida was marginal, but in relation to academia and academic discourse Derrida was in a position similar to that of Althusser in relation to the PCF. Prior to circa 1967 Derrida's name was comparatively little-known (in 1966

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[48] Derrida, 'Politics and Friendship', p.188.

[49] Derrida, 'Politics and Friendship', p.200.

the most commonly cited names on ENS agrègation papers were those of Althusser and Foucault).[50] In 1967 Derrida published Of Grammatology, Writing and Difference and Speech and Phenomena, and joined the editorial board of Critique.

Although Derrida has held numerous appointments in North American universities, at Johns Hopkins, Yale and now at the University of California at Irvine, this in itself does not necessarily make him (or deconstruction) 'institutionalized'. Indeed, Derrida can point to an active interrogation of the place of the academy in his work since the mid 1970s as well as official roles in non-university academia. Derrida's involvement at the Sorbonne and the ENS testifies against the argument that his work somehow 'became institutionalized' in its American context: the conditions were already in place for this academic discourse in the well-regulated French network and the closely-knit society of the ENS. As Derrida is quick to point out, the American system has fewer marginal institutions, restricting "intellectual life ... to the university," but the point about this kind of institutional accommodation is not who holds university appointments and where, but the effects of that discourse: how and where and to whom it is disseminated.[51]

Without retreading the paths of the Anglo-American reception of post-structuralism, it is worth making one point about that particular accommodation. Deconstruction problematizes the ground on which any truth-claim can be made, arguing that no truth can exist within language and that language is universal insofar as it mediates every perception. In passing across cultural borders from the more diverse Parisian

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[50] Eribon, p.160.

[51] Derrida, 'On the University: an Interview' with Imre Salusinszky, Southern Review, 19.1 (March 1986), 3-12 (p.8).

intellectual scene to American universities in the early and mid 1970s, deconstruction also crossed institutional borders by moving from the realm of philosophy to that of literature. One of the points of Derrida's work has been to collapse the philosophy\literature distinction. The most frequent criticism of deconstruction in its American guise is that it reduces all meanings to textual freeplay, a form of semantic relativism that reinstates the superiority of the aesthetic text.[52] It can be seen how a philosophy that questions the truth-claims of its own discipline can enact a freeplaying relativism in literary studies since institutionally literature makes no claims to truth in the same sense as philosophy. Once the grounds for truth appear to have been abolished, philosophy investigates the grounds for that abolition but literature is able to rejoice in its inherent superiority. Hence the institutionalization of Derrida's work was not solely due to its cultural transfer but also to its academic transfer into departments of literature. The academic context of interpretations of deconstruction is thus important.

The remarks made in this section are not intended as a dismissal of Derrida's work, and certainly not as an accusation of hypocrisy, they are simply one continuation of a contextual or historical reading of deconstruction - in its relevance for Finnegans Wake criticism and English studies - that was begun in Derrida's 'Politics and Friendship' interview.

3. Readership in Deconstruction.

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[52] See Frank Lentricchia's critique of the Yale critics in After the New Criticism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980) and Rodolphe Gasché's attack on the 'Newer Criticism' in 'Deconstruction as Criticism', Glyph 6 (1979), 177-215.

The point of noting the academic status of deconstruction and Finnegans Wake is that they are symptoms of broader sociological changes in the organization and dissemination of knowledge. Deconstruction and Finnegans Wake are in danger of becoming detached from the intellectual and cultural crises of which they are symptoms, while at the same time feigning to disrupt or subvert the institutions which increasingly nourish them. There is the danger, then, that those institutions can affect epistemological understanding of the symptoms. Before seeing how Derrida's work addresses its readers, it is pertinent to consider Derrida's professed institutional models.

At roughly the same time that deconstruction was becoming institutionalized as an academic critical theory, Derrida was also engaged in more marginal academic pursuits that attempted to question established educational forms. He launched GREPH (Groupe de Recherche sur l'Enseignement Philosophique) in 1975 in order to revise and promote the teaching of philosophy in French schools, and in 1983-4 he was the first director of the Collège Internationale de Philosophie (CIP), a "free, private and autonomous institution" whose "regulating idea" is to foster research topics which are "marginalised or repressed" in existing universities (in France and beyond), and thereby "to displace and to question the dominant model, let us say of the western University." That model "dominates all the western universities in Europe, the USA and even in England." It is a model based upon the primacy of philosophy (as an adjudicator of truth) which is supposed to define the fields of "the whole institution" while remaining one of those fields.[53] Philosophy, according to Derrida, thus has a similar structural

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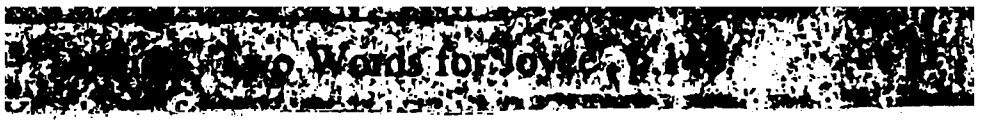
[53] Jacques Derrida with Geoff Bennington, 'On Colleges and Philosophy' in Postmodernism: ICA Documents, ed. by Lisa Appignanesi (London: Free Association Books, 1989), pp.209-10. As "free, autonomous" Derrida's CIP corresponds to the position described by the educational sociologists Halsey and Trow as "retreatist," but with which they have "considerable sympathy." See A.H. Halsey and M.A. Trow, The British Academics (London: Faber, 1971), p.95.

relationship to its context as does Finnegans Wake, which is "a part larger than the whole [all the culture, all the history and all the languages it condenses] of which it is a part."[54]

Following the logic of Derrida's argument, philosophy as a university subject and Finnegans Wake as a book are both symptomatic of some broader historical and linguistic manoeuvres to which they are related. This is of relevance to the institutionalization of deconstruction and its effects as a movement. For instance, Derrida has been criticized for maintaining the word 'philosophy' in the title of CIP, but defends it by arguing that competence is still required in the institutional field of philosophy.[55] In this case, then, Derrida readily acknowledges the name and the significance of the academic movement of philosophy as an important gateway to the motif of philosophizing.

Yet he refuses to make the same concession in the case of deconstruction. Geoff Bennington quotes Derrida as saying that "any text or any part of a text always projects or prescribes an institutional model or a model of a possible community of interpretation and reading." The response by Derrida to Bennington's questioning is to avoid that interpretive community in which his texts primarily function (initially by re-using the word 'project' as a noun rather than as a verb as in Bennington's quotation):

> the idea of a project is incompatible with deconstruction. Deconstruction is a situation.... Of course sometimes it takes the shape of a project, of a text signed by somebody and so on. But what we call deconstruction in its academic or in its editorial form is also a symptom of a



[55] Derrida, 'On Colleges and Philosophy', p.218.

> deconstruction at work everywhere in society and the world; so the 'enterprise' is not the essential thing in deconstruction.[56]

In this account, deconstruction as a motif must remain a transcendental category until it recognizes the "possible community of interpretation and reading" which has been created within a broader institutional framework (which in turn had allowed the conditions for a deconstructive discourse). As Derrida acknowledges, "especially the academy" survives, that is, "lives through" deconstruction.[57] So although the texts of the deconstructive movement will have future unknown readers and interpretations in different sociological contexts, one should remain alert to the strictures which its current contexts place upon it, not only for the function of deconstruction today but also because current manoeuvres will effect future receptions. It is this question of a "possible community of interpretation and reading", and its relation to a text such as Finnegans Wake, which is central to this thesis.

When Derrida describes the CIP as "free" he is talking about intellectuality not finances: the CIP is funded by the French government ("we live on the money of the state" which is "almost nothing") and "one of our main concerns" is to be "without any goal-oriented organisation of the research."[58] It thus aims to be free in terms of direction if not wholly free in terms of funding and charter, which "is not supposed to be published ... a secret document."[59] Derrida's desired model of academia accords to his conception of

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[56] Derrida, 'On Colleges and Philosophy' p.222.

[57] Derrida, 'On Colleges and Philosophy', p.223.

[58] Derrida, 'On Colleges and Philosophy', p.212, p.214.

[59] Derrida, 'On Colleges and Philosophy', p.215. The distinction between text and document Derrida has made before, in his reading of Rousseau's Confessions, "Which I would like to read as a text and not as a document" (Of Grammatology, p.149). In each case, it appears that a document has a finite readership and method of reading, whereas a text is itself limitless and has an in(de)finite readership.

readership: free, undirected research has by definition an undetermined reception, an entirely open and in(de)finite readership. Not only does it not purposely serve some 'social end', it may serve and escape from any political code that encompasses it. The open research of the CIP is thus quite opposed to the politico-institutional condition of the charter of its legitimating body, that "secret document" of the founding of the CIP which is closed, with a pre-determined readership. This example is symptomatic of the inscription of readers in deconstruction, a mark that effaces the sociological conditions of deconstructive philosophy.

It is here, in the relationship of deconstruction to institutions of knowledge, that some account of Derrida's references to readership are relevant. Initially, returning to the interview with Sprinker, it should be noted that Derrida has made some effort to identify his earlier audiences. The "we" that ends the quotation above - "when we thought of 'Marxism' and 'Communism' it was in relationship to that [Althusserian] discourse" -is a reference to "my little milieu - that of a small group of philosophers of a certain left."[60] The interview is awash with references to what he calls "the Parisian theoretical scene," "the French scene of the 1960s" and "that normalien milieu."[61] Such an historicist backdrop is in place when he talks about his inability to communicate with Althusser:

> Everything took place underground, in the said of the unsaid. It's part of the French scene and is not simply anecdotal. An intellectual sociology of this dimension of French intellectual or academic life remains to be undertaken and notably of that normalien milieu in which the practice of avoidance is stupefying.

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[60] Derrida, 'Politics and Friendship', p.200.

[61] Derrida, 'Politics and Friendship', p.210, p.218, p.193.

The problem of non-communication relates as much to academic institutional organization as it does to the politics of the PCF and "All this is related to the theory of philosophical games within a tiny milieu overtrained in decipherment."[62] Thus within the institutions housing the movement restrictions operated upon it, limiting its potential efficacy. This by no means lessens the need for deconstruction to be understood in these terms.

It should not be forgotten that when Derrida discusses the interaction between the motif and the movement of deconstruction, he quickly problematizes the context of his questioning by asking what "today" means. Yet in recalling his political silence of the 1960s, not only can he speak of the "normalien milieu," he even talks about "I myself at that place and time."[63] This inconsistency towards contextual determination is symptomatic of Derrida's inscription of notions of readership in (and for) his work. In turn, this inconsistency points to the mark in his texts (and within deconstructive logic) which effaces the historical and political inevitability of a broadly determinate contextual readership, instead emphasising an indefinite readership and thereby privileging the deconstructive motif over the movement of deconstruction (through which knowledge of the motif is produced and disseminated). Such privilege perpetuates the theoretical myth that tactics of textual subversion can be translated into the socio-cultural sphere without specific and rigorous accounts of the institutional conditions of knowledge within which that subversion is scheduled to appear. How can a monster be planned?

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[62] Derrida, 'Politics and Friendship', p.193.

[63] Derrida, 'Politics and Friendship', p.198.

There is one point in 'Politics and Friendship' when Derrida hits upon the limitation which academia places upon readership. Derrida explains how he suffered "a sort of theoretical intimidation" when formulating questions derived from phenomenology and how this reached "the point of making them [his writings or questions] unreadable for those at whom they were directed." He can thus claim marginal status within that "tiny milieu overtrained in decipherment."[64] This hardly makes deconstruction a subversive discourse dangerous to any appropriating institution. There must have been some form of political intimidation, but Derrida was to philosophy what Althusser was to the PCF: he was becoming accepted and respected in the late 1960s. Like Finnegans Wake before him, Derrida was to find his 'unreadability' a factor in his accommodation within universities.

Significant in this example is Derrida's apparent intimation of a specific audience, that is, "those at whom" his texts or questions "were directed." It is a paradox typical of his thought that at the moment a determined readership has been signalled the writing in question is rendered "unreadable." That is to say, the institutional and political positions within the ENS and the PCF in the mid 1960s prevented his work being read as he would have wished and even obscured it from recognition. Derrida refers to a specific readership for his work which itself functions within a specific social arena, a work "with its own field and framework, a work possible only in a historical, political, theoretical, etc., situation that is highly determined."[65] At the same time, say after about 1970 (when the first translation of Derrida appeared), Derrida's work was increasingly read in the United States, within not dissimilar institutional conditions but in a different

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[64] Derrida, 'Politics and Friendship', p.188, p.193.

[65] Derrida, Positions, p.63.

political context. Perhaps, like Work in Progress after 1930, Derrida's work found itself necessarily and inevitably accommodated in a burgeoning western higher educational system? There is, then, a further paradox to Derrida's "unreadable" texts: they proved to be highly readable in a different context (broadly speaking, American academic literary criticism) in which they were nevertheless read in ways of which Derrida often did not approve. Thus one finds references to "those who, lacking the ability to read" and "those who are willing to read," that is, a certain reading of deconstruction as part of Derrida's determined context.[66] When Derrida refers to specific audiences - those who read in a way he approves, or those for whom his work was "unreadable" - he talks about the movement of deconstruction, about determined texts and audiences. This has been a fairly common feature of his work, notably in interviews (and the number of these has increased hugely over the past ten years or so[67]) but also present in early texts.

In a key moment of 'Plato's Pharmacy', in the section titled 'The Pharmakon' (which explores the double meanings of that word: poison and remedy), Derrida refers to those unnamable "links" in the "chain of significations" that "go on working of themselves," and which subvert the "communications or corridors of meaning" attached to Plato's text. Derrida asks how this can happen in the relation between text and language, "for what reader? at what moment?" The questions are entirely necessary for this form of

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[66] Derrida, Dissemination, pp.181-2 n8, and Positions, p.84. This is also the flavour of Specters of Marx.

[67] In the ten years from 1982 to 1991 there were 57 published interviews with Derrida (including remarks made at conferences etc but not interviews conducted with written texts) as opposed to only 14 in the first nineteen years (1963 - 1981) of his publishing career. See Albert Leventure and Thomas Keenan, 'A Bibliography of the Works of Jacques Derrida', in Derrida: A Critical Reader ed. by Michael Wood (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992).

deconstructive reading, for the motif (however and whenever it operates) can never fully escape the sociologically determinable movement that it attempts to disrupt. Derrida raises these questions about a specific readership only in relation to Plato's text, to conclude, "To answer such questions in principle and in general will seem impossible."[68] They are the necessary questions of deconstruction which are as yet unreadable. Instead, throughout this essay, Derrida draws attention to "the reader" (for example in a footnote at the bottom of the same page), "him," who later "will have noted that" etc.[69] Other than a Socratic technique for demonstrating the inclusive force of logic, Derrida's plural personal pronoun includes every and any "reader" as part of "we," implying that "everyone knows" the incontrovertible logic of the inevitable deconstructive motif.[70] In the first part of 'The Double Session' - also published in Dissemination -Derrida refers to "you, dear everyreader," thereby collapsing the singular into the collective and necessarily unknown: every reader is "everyreader."[71]

According to the motif, then, its infinite and indefinite readership assures its readability: the motif is part of any reading. Structurally, it assures the act of reading by undermining that act. Yet this motif cannot be read as itself: it is not a text nor an act nor a metaphysical figure; it works in ways that are unseen, unknown and ultimately unreadable because always in the end never fully read. Deconstruction as a motif is unreadable, yet its function within deconstructive logic is to ensure the further readability of any text.

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[68] Jacques Derrida, Dissemination trans. by Barbara Johnson (London: The Athlone Press, 1981), pp.95-6.

[69] Derrida, Dissemination, p.101.

[70] Derrida, Dissemination, p.76.

[71] Jacques Derrida, 'The Double Session', in Dissemination, p.224.

The question of a specific readership and its relation to the movement is tied to that of intentionality and function. For instance, 'Structure, Sign and Play' (which significantly occasioned the growth of the movement) refers to "discourse - provided we can agree on this word," where the "we" is both Derrida's immediate audience at the Johns Hopkins conference and every subsequent reader of that essay.[72] This duality corresponds with the function of language in deconstruction: it has a contemporary community who already agree on meaning, but also the inherent possibility of overturning that communal agreement. Thus within the contemporary manifest movement known as deconstruction references to readers take two forms: an address to a specific, determinable readership and an invocation of an in(de)finite body of unknown readers in unknown contexts. It is this latter form of readership that governs the logic of the *motif*.

The indefinite readership referred to by the motif thus theoretically includes, as a subset of itself, the more specific readership of the movement. However, there are two related problems here: first, the motif can only be approached within the movement, so the hypothetical unlimited readership is only 'knowable' by an historically specific minority; and second, this effort of knowledge on the part of the movement necessarily arrests the motif, temporarily fixing an interpretation upon it and so denying its supposedly unlimited readership. By collapsing the movement into the motif, Derrida attempts to collapse a broadly determinable audience into an unlimited readership.

By referring to readership in this manner Derrida ensures that the motif of deconstruction operates as a transcendental category, and yet it is also clear that

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[72] Derrida, 'Structure, Sign and Play', p.280.

Derrida's texts make specific addresses, hence maintaining a binary relation within the concept of readership.[73] However, Derrida's privilege of the motif signals his privilege of an in(de)finite readership and the partial effacement of the sociological conditions of the deconstructive movement. The concept and category of readership is thus an important tool for the analysis of not only Finnegans Wake but also its related discourses.

However, there is the further problem of determining the community of reception. In 'Envois' in The Post Card Derrida says that readership cannot be empirically determined by an address. Yet Derrida goes on to make another form of empirical deduction by generalizing the conclusion drawn for his addressee to every addressee.

> Understand me, when I write, right here, on these innumerable post cards, I annihilate not only what I am saying but also the unique addressee that I constitute, and therefore every possible addressee, and every destination.... To do so it suffices only that I be legible - and I become illegible to you, you are dead.... the very idea of destination includes analytically the idea of death.[74]

Derrida's justification for universalising his annihilation of addresses would be that every destination, although "unique," includes within it the possibility of non-arrival, of adestination. Yet there is a further difficulty for Derrida to overcome, for the sense of his statement is dependent upon its safe arrival with his readership, that we "understand" him and that he "be legible." However, this very legibility also marks our

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[73] Compare Irene E. Harvey's conclusion of the function of the term 'writing' in Derrida's texts as both local and general. Inseverable from its local context, the term generally constitutes "a model which is then transplanted from the 'empirical' plane of this writing here to one which can only be considered, if not metaphysical ... at least ... transcendental." Derrida and the Economy of Différance (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), p.241.

[74] Jacques Derrida, The Post Card, trans. by Alan Bass (London: University of Chicago Press, 1987), p.33.

inability to read it, it "become[s] illegible" in the act of reading, for even when a missive is delivered it becomes lost, that is, not fully read or comprehended. "The condition for it to arrive is that it ends up and even that it begins by not arriving."[75] In short, Derrida's postal system and the letters that travel within it are inexhaustible.

The paradox of Derrida's reliance upon his own reception - that we read and understand him, that he is legible; and his insistence that we cannot read him, that he be illegible to us in the act of reception - is further articulated later in 'Envois'.

> How could I ask you to burn, which is as much as to say not to read, what I was writing to you? I immediately placed you in an impossible situation: do not read me, this statement organizes its transgression at the very instant when, by means of the single event of an understood language ... it assumes command. It compels the violation of its own law, whatever one does, and it violates it itself.[76]

The "impossible situation" in which Derrida's readers struggle is one which Derrida has previously encountered as an objection to his work: that he attempts to impart meaning while undermining its possibility. By now transferring this conundrum onto an inscribed readership, Derrida turns the very impossibility of deconstruction (its self-defeating contradiction) into the condition for deconstruction (as a self-violating law).

There remains the problematic question of the sender, of the writer, who, in Derrida's frame, sends letters to himself. In 'Envois', the Derridean narrator finally receives the lost letter he had previously sent, wrongly addressed, and which the postal network returns to sender, as if to underline a deconstruction of logocentrism. For texts that are addressed to a specific readership - but this refers to letters more than post cards - the

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[75] Derrida, The Post Card, p.29.

[76] Derrida, The Post Card, p.59.

possibility of misdirection and non-arrival is no doubt crucial. Yet Derrida's universalization of the point simplifies a complex system, reducing it to one aspect of its structure (its potential failure as a structure) and effacing the necessity of a rigorous account of reception and readership. Here, the sender takes priority, at every stage, over the receiver: "that's life .... for life I must lose you, for life, and make myself illegible for you. J'accepte."[77] In 'Envois' the life of the writer is at the expense of the death of the reader. However, the autobiographical narrator never loses sight of his addressee ("you yourself") who he fears will "judge" his writing "monstrous," declaring moreover that "I am monstrous."[78] Again, then, the mostrosity of deconstruction is announced, and this time associated with the narrator, a Jacques Derrida, who in remembering his specific audience also reduces it to a subset of writing and the broader postal system.

This effacement of readership by Derrida is dangerously close to a dismissal of a text's history of reception. Such would be an unfortunate move for deconstruction since it is concerned precisely with the historical sedimentation of language.[79] Also in 'Envois', the narrator remarks that the post card "always opens on the side of literature" and that "at this point it no longer comes back circularly. No rigorous theory of 'reception,' however necessary it might be, will get to the end of that literature."[80] Here there seems to be an admission of the necessity of a rigorous theory of reception, as well as

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[77] Derrida, The Post Card, pp.33-4.

[78] Derrida, The Post Card, p.175.

[79] See discussion following 'Structure, Sign and Play', in The Structuralist Controversy, ed. by Eugenio Donato and Richard Macksey (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972), p.271.

[80] Derrida, The Post Card, p.71.

Derrida's customary problematization of what he calls for. A determined readership, he later says, "can never be the object of knowledge."[81] Later still, Derrida worries about his reception, wondering if "Perhaps they are going to find this writing too adroit," but dismisses the anxiety by turning on the audience: "Why, they ask themselves, incessently let the destination divide itself?"[82] A destination is historical (and spatial) and so always somehow incomplete, but there is still a readership, "they," communally presumed by deconstruction. It is this possible community for Finnegans Wake, given Derrida's work on Joyce, that the next section examines.

4. Derrida, Joyce and Readership.

The inscription of audiences in Derrida's texts in part resembles the technique of Work in Progress, but more importantly suggests how to approach the key issue of the relationship between the motif and the movement of deconstruction. Why does the motif - call it différance or whatever - come to be theorized in the last circa thirty years? The attempt from within the deconstructive movement to harness the power of unreadability, in the form of the motif, suggests a desire to incorporate all that remains in the category of the unknown and a recognition of the power of the unreadable. A text like Finnegans Wake, consistently seen by critics as unreadable, is a symptom of that power and as such is an important forerunner of the deconstructive movement. These related cases thus indicate the expansionist capacity of institutions of knowledge - their

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[81] Derrida, The Post Card, p.174.

[82] Derrida, The Post Card, p.223.

universalising tendency - as they attempt to cover all ground, including the 'unreadable'.

This confirms the claim of Geert Lernout, who in his rather pedantic study of post-structuralist Joyce (see also chapter four) has one or two pertinent things to say about the International James Joyce Foundation (IJJF), confessing that it

> could be seen as a typically liberal American organization that is much more flexible and open to change than some of its critics feared, which is obvious if we look at what has happened since the Frankfurt symposium [1984]. Like most American literature departments, it has answered the challenge of poststructuralism and feminism by adopting them, by not resisting theory.[83]

In this respect, Lernout seems to be accurate: like Finnegans Wake, the IJJF is capable of expanding to accommodate whatever it can appropriate (even if that means it adopts only a certain form of post-structuralism or feminism).[84] Of course the Foundation initially did reject 'theory': one has only to look at the debacle that resulted from the 1975 symposium in Paris (where Lacan was a key speaker) to see just how great the antipathy was from both sides.[85] But perhaps the real point in response to Lernout is not that one feared the Foundation would not accommodate post-structuralism and feminism, but exactly that it would do so. The easy familiarity of Lernout's liberalism ("obvious if we look") barely conceals the Foundation's paternalism: prodigal critics are adopted into the Joycean family (Derrida's metaphor from 'Ulysses Gramophone',

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[83] Lernout, The French Joyce, pp.227-8.

[84] For a post-structuralist response to Lernout see Daniel Ferrer's review, JJQ 29.1 (Fall 1991), 193-200.

[85] See Jacques Aubert and Maria Jolas, eds., Joyce et Paris. 1902...1920-1940...1975: Actes du Cinquième Symposium Internationale James Joyce, 2 vols (Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1979).

whose appropriation by Lernout is somewhat ironic), but its North American character remains undiminished. However, Lernout is right to point out that (part of) Derrida's address "is based on the work of the Joyceans whose competence [Derrida says] does not exist."[86] The point is not one of competence but of institutional accommodation, of the extent to which Derrida (i) is already a part of such structures, and (ii) cannot according to his own philosophy place himself in the position of absolute authority beyond any institutional demand, so that there cannot be a right deconstruction which has not been appropriated. Moreover, in tying himself to Joyce, Derrida was also placing himself alongside Joyce in the academy.

Derrida's opening address to the International James Joyce Foundation's 1984 Symposium in Frankfurt was translated and published as 'ULYSSES GRAMOPHONE' four years later. Throughout the oration to "the cosmopolitan, but very American James Joyce Foundation," Derrida offers a few hints about the relationship between Joyce and the university,[87] recognizing that

> the modernity of Joyce ... is linked to the declared project of keeping generations of university scholars at work for centuries of babelian edification.[88]

Certainly Finnegans Wake is "linked" to the professionalization of literary studies, but a joke by Joyce hardly makes it the Wake's "project" even if it is its destination. There is

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[86] Lernout, p.227.

[87] The term 'the university' is Derrida's, one of the few generalizations he is prepared to make, arguing that modern western universities are becoming increasingly homogenized. For examples, see 'The Principle of Reason', p.12, and 'On Colleges and Philosophy', p.210.

[88] Jacques Derrida, 'ULYSSES GRAMOPHONE: Hear Say Yes in Joyce', trans. by Tina Kendall, rev. by Shari Benstock, in James Joyce: the Augmented Ninth, ed. by Bernard Benstock, p.47.

a hint also that the pre-modernity of Joyce was somehow free of professional literary critics. As chapter two indicates, the readership of Finnegans Wake was increasingly academic from about 1930 onwards, that is, in the pre-history (let alone "modernity") of its existence.

Even so, Derrida is right to acknowledge the most obvious (and most ignored) aspect of Joyce studies, its institutionalism, the shape of which, he says, is a consequence of Joyce's universalizing texts. Because Ulysses and Finnegans Wake operate as a "hypermnesis machine" storing "the entire archive of culture," the Joyce scholar has at his disposal "the totality of competence in the encyclopedic field of the universitas."[89] Derrida's argument, or assertion, relies upon the power of the literary text to create its own conditions of reception.

There seems to be a contradiction in Derrida's argument: on the one hand, a text like the Wake is powerful enough to form its own institution, to shape its receptive context; and on the other hand, Derrida wants to claim that it is powerful enough to break the institutional conditions in which it is placed. Not only does Derrida continue to read the Wake as the limit of literature (witness 'Two Words for Joyce'), he also sees it as the limit of the university:

> Joyce laid stakes on the modern university, but he challenges it to reconstitute itself after him. At any rate he marks the essential limits.[90]

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[89] Derrida, 'ULYSSES GRAMOPHONE', p.48.

[90] Derrida, 'ULYSSES GRAMOPHONE', p.49.

The challenge of Joyce is one of competence: how can one be legitimately competent to read and teach so great and difficult a field? It is the "destination" of Joyce's texts to destroy competence; they are

> capable of de-constructing the university institution ... as well as its contract with the extra-university world.[91]

Joyce's work constitutes a limitation to the university because it is associated with deconstruction. In Derrida's logic, Finnegans Wake is deconstruction. By questioning any metalanguage, it is seen to deconstruct the principle of the university. "The very discourse of competence (that of neutral, metalinguistic knowledge ...) is thus incompetent, the least pertinent there is on the subject of Joyce."[92]

The "double bind" of Joyce studies is more fully explained:

> (1) No truth can come from outside the Joycean community, without the experience, the cunning, and the knowledge amassed by highly trained readers. But (2) inversely, or symmetrically, there is no model for Joycean competence, no interiority and no closure possible to the concept of such a competence.[93]

Its tautological conclusion seems only to be that paradox is inevitable: the more one is authorized as a reader of Joyce in his name, the more one is aware of the impossibility of fully reading Joyce, the more one's authority is undone. The point is that Derrida's argument revolves around an unnamable reader whose desire to express is continually undone by the very "destination" of that desire, which, we are told, is deconstruction.

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[91] Derrida, 'ULYSSES GRAMOPHONE', p.50.

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[illegible]YSSES GRAMOPHONE', p.49, p.52.

That the reader is unnamable also makes him\her anonymous and depoliticized: an autonomous sphere upon which an infinite regress of paradoxes can be spun.

Also at the Frankfurt symposium, Derrida said that

> Joyce is one of the most powerful preconditions of deconstruction, and that's why there is a privileged circulation between those two types of discourses.[94]

This seems to be precisely the point. When allied to what Derrida says about no truth coming from outside the Joycean community he perhaps unwittingly shows the extent to which he and the deconstructive movement are also part of that community. Derrida's attempt to shatter its hold on interpretations is just another interpretation given at the company's board meeting. He is right to suggest that there can be no external competence in reading Joyce, but that does not undermine the institution for it is upon such circulation of knowledge and ignorance that academic institutions are founded.

In an interview with Derek Attridge, Derrida refers to literature as "this strange institution," a phrase lent to the title of its published version.[95] This is also the phrase Derrida uses to describe the Ecole Normale Supèrieure in his interview with Sprinker.[96] To see both the material foundation of a university and a discourse credited with a privileged iterable power in the same terms is symptomatic of a tendency in Derrida's work to overlook differences between the motifs and the movements.

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[94] Quoted by Ellen Carol Jones in James Joyce: The Augmented Ninth, ed. by Bernard Benstock, p.77. My emphasis.

[95] Jacques Derrida, '"This Strange Institution Called Literature": An Interview with Jacques Derrida', trans. by Geoff Bennington and Rachel Bowlby, in Acts of Literature, ed. by Derek Attridge (New York: Routledge, 1992).

[96] Derrida, 'Politics and Friendship', p.185.

Notable in a passage from The Post Card is the claim that no theory of reception "will get to the end of ... literature."[97] Derrida here introduces a concept of the literary as that which escapes return: even Derrida's endorsement of a circular system of language cannot contain the literary, let alone any theorization of readership. This apparent privilege of literature as a special concept recalls some remarks made by Derrida in the interview with Attridge. There, he said that "The 'economy' of literature seems to me more powerful than that of other types of discourse: such as, for example, historical or philosophical discourse." Part of the reason for this powerful economy is what Derrida calls the iterable quality of literature as a singular but repeatable act. The texts that he calls 'literary' are those "which are very sensitive to this crisis of the literary institution ... to what is called 'the end of literature'."[98] It is these same texts, presumably, which Derrida was thinking of in an earlier interview when he claimed that "These texts implement, in their very movement, the demonstration and practical deconstruction of the representation that was done with literature."[99]

Notable in Derrida's partial definitions of literature is a certain resemblance to deconstruction: texts that he calls literary are iterable, they mark the limits of a literary institution, and they deconstruct representation. This equation of the literary and the deconstructive by Derrida involves a certain sleight of hand for it largely ignores the (his) role of the contemporary critical theorist. By thus down-playing his own authority that theorist also covers over the historical relationship between deconstruction, the

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[97] Derrida, The Post Card, p.71.

[98] Jacques Derrida, '"This Stange Institution Called Literature"', pp.42-3.

[99] Jacques Derrida, Positions, p.69.

modernist texts he valorizes, and the academic institutions that grant their authority. Instead, deconstruction becomes another token of the modernist critique of literary representation, and the authority of the critic - which was itself instituted contemporaneously with modernism - is subsumed within a literary-deconstructive historical vacuum. In this case, then, readership as a community is suggested but dismissed as too problematic.

In discussing the specific example of Joyce, Derrida relates problems of readership to links between interpretation and community, signalling Joyce as a literary writer whose texts are marked by iterability.

> A text by Joyce is simultaneously the condensation of a scarcely delimitable history. But this condensation of history, of language, of the encyclopedia, remains here indissociable from an absolutely singular event, an absolutely singular signature, and therefore also of a date, of a language, of an autobiographical inscription.[100]

Having established Joyce as the exemplar of a privileged discourse, Derrida gestures towards Joyce's texts and the problem of their reception. His comments are worth quoting at length here because they concern the relationship between Joyce's later work (Ulysses is the text named by Derrida, but Finnegans Wake would do just as well, if not better) and the communities of readers that receive it.

> Every literary work "betrays" the dream of a new institution of literature.... Ulysses arrives like one novel among others that you place on your bookshelf and inscribe in a genealogy. It has its ancestry and its descendants. But Joyce dreamt of a special institution for his oeuvre, inaugurated by it like a new order. And hasn't he achieved this, to some extent?... Aren't we, today, people or characters in part constituted (as

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[100] Derrida, '"This Strange Institution Called Literature"', p.43.

> readers, writers, critics, teachers) in and through Joyce's dream? Aren't we Joyce's dream, his dream readers ...?[101]

The betrayal of a literary institution is twofold: first, the text reveals that institution, and second, it causes it to fail. Derrida's notion of the literary, then, refers to texts that are able to generate, or innovate, their own readership, that is to say, these texts refuse to be accommodated within pre-existing conventions of interpretation. For Derrida, there can be no ready-made community that will hold what he calls a literary text.

The question of the potential readership of such an innovatory work is further interrogated.

> As to the question, "Who would be able to read it?" there is no pre-given response. By definition the reader does not exist. Not before the work and as its straightforward "receiver." The dream we were talking about concerns what it is in the work which produces its reader, a reader who doesn't yet exist, whose competence cannot be identified, a reader who would be "formed," "trained," instructed, constructed, even engendered, let's say invented by the work .... The work then becomes an institution forming its own readers, giving them a competence which they did not possess before: a university, a seminar, a colloquium, a curriculum, a course.[102]

It is clear that, for Derrida, the literary (or deconstructive) text - and Joyce's later work is his example of such a text - creates its audience, which is to say that its community of readership follows from the text and is not already in place to receive it. Although this account has the advantage of recognizing how distinctive patterns of interpretation are shaped by particular texts, it does also beg the question of what that 'new' readership were doing prior to reading such a dream text. It begs this question because it totally discounts the historical situation, which includes patterns of interpretation that have

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[101] Derrida, '"This Strange Institution Called Literature"', pp.73-4.

[102] Derrida, '"This Strange Institution Called Literature"', p.74.

been previously formed, of the community "invented by the work." It suggests that an interpretative community sheds all its previous conventions of interpretation and shares none other than those then provided by the work itself.

However, Derrida's inauguration of a new institute for dream readers has a further complication. For each reading of an instituting text is itself "also an inaugural performance," that is, a re-creation of the text in its (the reading's) own right. With this juncture,

> we recover the structure of iterability which would prevent us, at this point, from distinguishing rigorously between performance and competence, as between producer and receiver.[103]

The institution of a 'new' (literary-deconstructive, Joycean) text therefore includes, without distinction, both text and interpretation. The readership that was "invented" by that text also now creates that same text, and this indistinction is "As much as that between ... the writer and the reader."[104] One of the problems with this claim is that it negates the earlier ground accorded to the instituting text: if text and readership are indistinguishable, then how can Derrida be so sure that the literary-deconstructive text forms its own reception and is not accommodated within some pre-existing community (or profession) of readers?

As previous chapters have shown, even Derrida's texte par excellence, Finnegans Wake, had to fit into an institutionally orientated readership. The existence of the International James Joyce Foundation does not simply mean, as Derrida would have it,

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[103] Derrida, '"This Strange Institution Called Literature"', pp.74-5.

[104] Derrida, '"This Strange Institution Called Literature"', p.75.

that Joyce's oeuvre has "become an institution forming its own readers." Similar institutional structures were in place (in Joyce's place) prior to the Wake and prior to the I.J.J.F. (founded in 1967). Just as it would be shortsighted to deny the influence of the Wake with regards reading practices within its receptive communities, so also it would be historically negligent and politically suspect to mistake the close relationship that has existed between professional literary studies and Finnegans Wake. There is no doubt that the Wake was and can be discomforting to some aspects of that context particularly in the problems it presents to teaching, but that alone is not enough to restructure (or deconstruct) it.

Although Joyce may have referred to Finnegans Wake as "the monster" in its later years, there is no reason to presume that it has quite the subversive effect Derrida associates with this word.[105] Indeed, the contemporary position of Joyce's name is not substantially different to the position of Wilde which Joyce noted in a perceptive early essay:

> Wilde, far from being a perverted monster who sprang in some inexplicable way from the civilization of modern England, is the logical and inescapable product of the Anglo-Saxon college and university system, with its secrecy and restrictions.[106]

One difference might simply be that Joyce's reputation was not made in England and the universities to adopt him have not all been Anglo-Saxon.

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[105] Ellmann, James Joyce, p.729.

[106] James Joyce, 'Oscar Wilde: The Poet of Salomé', in Critical Writings, ed. by Richard Ellmann and Ellsworth Mason (New York: Viking Press, 1970), p.204.

One of the values of an approach that places Finnegans Wake in its institutional framework is that it suggests the complicity of its criticism with those structures. In the case of readings of a literary deconstructive genre, such a complicity can be "more or less lucidly deliberated and systematically calculated,"[107] thus questioning claims like that of McGee that a given literary text can simply subvert its socio-cultural context of readership. The problem is one of category transferral: a critical formulation against institutional constraints does not necessarily imply any ramifications beyond criticism, especially when it is apparently sanctioned by the institutions that support that criticism.

The privileged circulation between Finnegans Wake and deconstruction, which Derrida and some Joyceans take to subvert institutions of knowledge, is thus complicit with those very institutions. Their appearance within academe is merely the symptom or movement of a more general redistribution among political and discursive forces: the expansion of education and the professionalization of reading. The following section traces the issue of professional readers and communities of reception as they are inscribed within the text of Finnegans Wake.

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[107] The phrase is Derrida's, used to describe the "strategic reasons" why one must necessarily operate according to the dominant lexicon which one still tries to deconstruct. See 'Différance', in Margins of Philosophy. My use of the phrase to refer to institutional structures thus bears a certain resemblance to the context of Derrida's usage.

III

CHAPTER SIX

The Professor as Reader in Finnegans Wake.

Section Three marks an entry into the text of Finnegans Wake. The theoretical problems that have been investigated in previous sections using the Wake as an exemplary text are here analyzed within the text of the Wake. The point is not to produce a further allegorical reading of a literary text but to read the theoretical and epistemological concerns in the light of the implications of Finnegans Wake. Having established the historical restriction of readership of the Wake to academia, and its appropriation by the Joycean community, chapter seven now traces a process of textual identification and appropriation within the Wake, and chapter eight moves on to analyse how authority is exerted over interpretation by concentrating on Shaun the post and, especially, the role of the Four. The present chapter concentrates upon the letters that circulate through the text, on the professors, on the character of Issy and the question of incest as it raised in those letters. The notion of incest also provides a theoretical starting-point for the textual analysis.

1. Guilty Readings and the Logic of Incest.

Reading deconstruction in terms of motif and movement partly accords to what Althusser calls a 'symptomatic reading', or at least one that is not, in his terminology, 'historicist'.[1] He argues that one can only understand intellectual categories through their role in contemporary conditions. Althusser's starting-point is the logic that also informs Finnegans Wake and deconstruction, especially in the formulation that there is no metalanguage. Althusser adds, "as there is no such thing as an innocent reading we

[1] Louis Althusser and Etienne Balibar, Reading Capital, trans. by Ben Brewster (London: New Left Books, 1977), p.28, p.64.

must say what reading we are guilty of."[2] The reason why all readers are guilty is that it is impossible to be fully aware of all the preconceptions a reader brings to a text. That also means, contradictory to Althusser's formulation, that it is also impossible to say completely "what reading we are guilty of."

Althusser's way of escaping this criticism (one continually levied at straw targets by Stanley Fish) is to claim that his crime is the best to be guilty of.

> It is a guilty reading, but not one that absolves its crime on confessing it. On the contrary, it takes the responsibility for its crime as a 'justified crime' and defends it by proving its necessity. It is therefore a special reading which exculpates itself as a reading by posing every guilty reading the very question that unmasks its innocence: what is it to read?[3]

Clearly, Althusser is not to be distracted by the reasonable assertion that it is impossible to know fully the extent of one's guilt: there are always crimes committed unawares. Althusser's just as reasonable response would be, 'So what?': the same suspended sentence hangs over every reading, but it is still possible to read in conjunction with communal standards of logic and ethics. However, the very concept of guilt presupposes a metalanguage according to which guilt can be judged. Thus it is inaccurate to signal every reading as guilty because that assertion is dependant upon a prior standard of innocence. The response to Althusser would then be: guilty according to what?

It is in response to this objection that Althusser treads more difficult ground by asserting that his reading is "special." Having sidestepped the previous charge, he then is forced to go back on himself in order to claim his reading as the best available according to logic and ethics. Its crime is said to be "justified," that is, just (or fair, but

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[2] Althusser, p.14.

[3] Althusser, p.15.

not innocent) according to that system of logic and ethics. Althusser can thus claim his reading as free from blame (it "exculpates itself"), and as self-sufficient. It is called a "philosophical reading" and it comes to be equated with 'how to read', for it sets and answers the question of all interpretations, "what is it to read?" Hence the authority of interpretation is philosophy, which is also equated with 'symptomatic reading', and this method is "the law I have pronounced."[4] In order to judge, therefore, Althusser's reading must itself be the law, that is, simultaneously subject to its own value system but also exculpated because it is that value system. Hence his own reading is the standard by which guilt will be judged. Even the law is guilty, but apparently that doesn't matter.

As suggested, both Finnegans Wake and deconstruction also propose the logic that all readings are guilty, and this chapter charts the relationship between reading and guilt as it is literally played out in the letters of the Wake. It also draws an analogy between the logic of the letters of the Wake and the logic of deconstruction, arguing that they propose the same law, in order to write a history of its monstrous manifestation.

The relationship between what have been called the motif and the movement of deconstruction has a parallel in Finnegans Wake. The letter versions that circulate through the Wake may be read as analogous to deconstruction as it was approached in the previous chapter. The same argument holds for these letters, and its relationship to Finnegans Wake, as held for the motif and movement of deconstruction. Like the motif of deconstruction, the letters that pervade the text of Finnegans Wake are cited and invoked, apparently glimpsed, but never available to be read. They have an array of decipherers and deliverers, various media through which they are seen, that are alike to the movement that envelopes deconstruction. Moreover, these letters have consistently

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[4] Althusser, p.28.

been seen by critics of different theoretical persuasions as synecdochic of Finnegans Wake as a whole, allowing the Wake to be read often as an autonomous and discrete text without reference to the historical conditions of its production and reception. By placing the letters in a relationship between their apparent content and their media of dissemination, it is possible to approach Finnegans Wake in a different light. This does not forsake the apparently obvious similarities between the letters and the Wake, which the letters themselves self-consciously invoke, but it does draw attention to the conditions of reception of the text. These conditions of reception can be read through the media for dissemination of the letters. If the letters are the motif, then Finnegans Wake is the movement through which any access to that motif must be made. Just as deconstruction is best understood - and necessarily approached - as a relationship between motif and movement, so Finnegans Wake should be read not only as a self-conscious literary text but also as particularly emblematic of the production and reception of literature within a particular socio- cultural framework.

There is an historical and thematic link between Finnegans Wake and deconstruction in the subject of incest: for each it is the mark or exemplar of a relativism that exceeds determined structures. For both, incest invokes a relationship to the law (natural or social) and as such is a test-case for the power of interpretive communities. The issue of guilt refers to the law as both natural and societal, and so provides a fitting metaphor for partial readings.

In the structural anthropology of Claude Lévi-Strauss "the prohibition of incest" is a "scandal" because it combines both the natural and the cultural orders. It is universal but also a system of norms; it is both absolute and relative. "It constitutes a rule, but a rule which, alone among all the social rules, possesses at the same time a universal

character."[5] Derrida has picked up on this work of Lévi-Strauss in his essay 'Structure, Sign and Play' in order "to question systematically and rigorously the history of these concepts [nature\culture]."[6] As Derrida outlines it, the incest prohibition "escapes ... and certainly precedes" the conceptualization of nature and culture. This philosophical conceptualization, "it could perhaps be said," ignores the very condition of its possibility, which is "probably" the origin of the incest prohibition: that is, he accuses this taboo of being a transcendental category.[7] He takes Lévi-Strauss to task for employing a methodology he knows to be suspect: the nature\culture conceptual opposition is merely a tool whose limit has been broached. His 'science' thus proceeds as normal, but attempts to "separate method from truth, the instruments of the method from the objective significations envisaged by it." Derrida notes an automotive element in Lévi-Struass's work, for "This is how the language of the social sciences criticizes itself."[8] From here Derrida develops the logic of supplementarity (as both addition and replacement) to expose the structural misconceptions of structuralism. The incest taboo, then, leads him to announce the impending birth of his monstrous baby, deconstruction.

The parallel between the letters of Finnegans Wake and the motif of deconstruction becomes more pronounced. The letters announce the apparently incestuous sin of the father just as Derrida's major address in 1966 announced the "birth" of a "monstrosity" after using the incest taboo to crack the structurality of structuralism. The scandal of the incest prohibition is then directly related both to the allegedly scandalous behaviour of

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[5] Claude Lévi-Strauss, The Elementary Structures of Kinship, trans. by James Bell, John von Sturmer and Rodney Needham (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), p.8.

[6] Derrida, 'Structure, Sign and Play', p.284.

[7] Derrida, 'Structure, Sign and Play', p.283.

[8] Derrida, 'Structure, Sign and Play', p.284.

HCE and to the monstrous birth of deconstruction, and as the following pages show, the professor in the Wake interprets according to a taboo that is both natural and cultural.

Derrida's essay had even then acknowledged the movement that must be thought simultaneously with the motif, asking where and how "this thinking the structurality of structure" can occur. He answers himself, "It is no doubt part of the totality of an era, our own, but still it has always already begun to proclaim itself and begun to work."[9] Likewise in Finnegans Wake the insistent plurality of the letter and its interpretations does not occlude a simultaneous insistence on the contextual conditions of their operation. The Wake also manifests an absolute productivity similar to that implied by Derrida for the motif of deconstruction (and suggested also by the aesthetics of Stephen Dedalus).

As indicated in the previous chapter, Derrida's conception of the deconstructive motif is as a ceaselessly operating différance, and 'work' [travail] is one of his favourite terms to describe its activity. In A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man Stephen Dedalus sets out his theory of the aesthetic as a constant repetition, and in Finnegans Wake a similar aesthetic of productivity is in operation. This can be seen, for instance, in the technique of linguistic accretion in the process of the book's composition. Its can also be seen in a reading of the letter as a recurrent motif in the Wake. The elusive letter, with its insinuations and implications, saturates the narrative: although never revealed in itself, its productive capacity generates no end of gossip and suggestion in the rest of the text.

Moreover, the Boston letter as presented in I.5, like the Derridean motif of deconstruction, has "learning betrayed at almost every line's end: the head-strength ...

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[9] Derrida, 'Structure, Sign and Play', p.280.

revealed by a constant labour" (120:24-26). Here, the ceaseless productivity of the Wake has been transformed into an absolute consumption by the letter's readership. The letter demands

> to be nuzzled over a full trillion times for ever and a night till his noddle sink or swim by that ideal reader suffering from an ideal insomnia (120:12-14).

The never-fully-present letters of the Wake, with all their impossible demands and infinite suggestions, can be read only via the readings of them that form the text of Finnegans Wake. The "made-at-all-hours" (117:29) letters are the source that produces within the Wake an apparently ceaseless consumption: their readers will be interpreting them "for ever and a night," continually recycling that "goodish-sized sheet of letterpaper" (111:08-09).

This internal relationship between writing and reading of letters has further ramifications. Its demand of an absolute consumption is relayed onto the readers of the broader text, not in the form of making the Wake impossible to read, but by insisting all the time on its partial (in every sense) reading. The internal relationship between production and consumption thus suggests also the historical relationships in which the Wake stands. It is not accurate to claim that the letters mirror the actual reading of the Wake, for the relation between writing and reading undergoes a transformation between internal conditions within the Wake and cultural conditions of the Wake.

It is in the relation of production to consumption that both Finnegans Wake and deconstruction present their historical relationships, not only between motif (letter) and movement (text), but also towards one another. Reading Finnegans Wake and deconstruction in terms of motif and movement shows their formal and historical correspondences. This relationship is also one way of approaching questions of readership, for instance, the productivity of the motif/letters demands an impossible rate

of consumption, that is, an inevitably frustrated readership. The logic behind this productivity is that which structures both the Wake and deconstruction, which asserts in logic and in language the relevance of all things to all things. It is this 'logic of incest' that allows that charge to be levelled at Earwicker, and which allows Derrida to dismiss as transcendental (idealist, impossible) the notion of a universal incest taboo.

In order to see how this logic of incest fares with readership within the Wake it is necessary to look in detail at the letters, at who reads them, and at the character of Issy.[10] First, though, it should be stipulated that there are two forms of incest at work in Finnegans Wake: there is what has here been called the logic of incest, the technique of the text; and there is the accusation levelled against its main protagonist. The upshot of the first is that no person, event or identity can be known in and of itself, and therefore if the logic of incest operates, there has been no determinable act of incest. The logic of incest makes the act of incest possible but precludes its identification. Since the logic of incest (as the term is used here) offers no independent criteria for judging, the act is not a guilty one. This certainly presents a problem to any attempt to make a moral or political point from the story of Finnegans Wake.

2. The Letters.

The possible sexual guilt of HCE, or Earwicker in a local guise, is often taken as the narrative of Finnegans Wake, by concentrating on either the possible act of indiscretion

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[10] Although in this section certain claims are made about the role of incest in Finnegans Wake, allegations of incest within Joyce's family are irrelevant to the purpose, which is epistemological rather than biographical. Speculative claims such as those made by Peter Costello in James Joyce: the Years of Growth 1882 - 1915 (London: Kyle Cathie, 1992) about the importance of the subject for Joyce and his writing are only of tangential interest to the way the topic of incest is used here.

or the paranoia and guilt it occasions.[11] Briefly, his sin or crime is unclear, even that he has committed one is uncertain, but references abound to a sexual indiscretion in Phoenix Park. It is this unknown ur-event, or more accurately the anxiety from rumours of guilt that surround it, that occasions the fall (and therefore also the rise again) of HCE. It is introduced, as all Wake themes are, in the opening pages, and elaborated several times over, "all told, of the same" (5.29). Here, HCE has a "proudseye view" (7.36) of

> the charmful waterloose country and the two quitewhite villagettes who hear show of themselves so gigglesomes minxt the follyages, the prettilees! Penetrators are permitted into the museomound free. (8.02-5).

The suggestions offered during the Wake as to the exact nature of this alleged act vary from an innocuous glimpse of two girls micturating ("minxt") to an implication of incest with Issy, Earwicker's daughter, who may or may not have deliberately provoked him. In the former version, "Earwicker, that homogenius man" cannot be accused of "any graver impropriety than that, advanced by some ... regarders" of "having behaved with ongentilmensky immodus opposite a pair of dainty maidservants" who were called by "dame nature" to "the swoolth of the rushy hollow whither,"

> but whose published combinations of silkinlaine testimonies are, where not dubiously pure, visibly divergent, as wapt from wept, on minor points touching the intimate nature of this, a first offence ... which was admittedly an incautious but, at its wildest, a partial exposure with such attenuating circumstances (34.14-27).

At the other end of the scale, Earwicker's apparent presence at the scene is full of sexual intent, and the girls are associated with his daughter (herself bipartite). It is in this version, "as it is as it is, that I am the catasthmatic old ruffin sippahsedly improctor to

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11 This theme has been an established storyline for the Wake from Campbell and Robinson to the Benstocks to Rabaté. For a reasonable and comprehensive survey of HCE's possible guilt, see Bernard Benstock, 'Every Telling has a Taling: A Reading of the Narrative in Finnegans Wake', Modern Fiction Studies, 15 (Spring 1969), 3-25.

be seducint trovatellas, the dire daffy damedeaconesses" (366.22-24). This has been put by HCE "in stay of execution" (366.16-17), after addressing the girls:

> Popottes, where you canceal me you mayst forced guage my bribes. Wickedgapers, I appeal against the light! A nexistence of vividence! (366.01-03).

Earwicker's innings is almost up, and like Parnell (who reportedly said, "when you sell get my price"), he wants to know how many he's scored before making the declaration (the cricket metaphor is extended at 583-4). This is the story of Earwicker's possible guilt: every appeal is also a declaration, every defence his own indictment.

Guilty or not, the dreamer of the Wake certainly feels guilty, and guilt in Joyce is always a metaphysical concept, seen frequently in father-figures and tied to religious sin and the potential for redemption. It defers authority to a higher power, a metalanguage that is able not only to define guilt and innocence but also to resurrect, being already beyond that binary construction. It is precisely that issue, namely, the authority of interpretation, towards which both this thesis and Finnegans Wake are geared.

The Wake is narrated by the dreamer and principle figure within the dream, HCE, but other voices are nonetheless apparent. As Devlin rightly says, HCE is the "central 'spoken of'" and the dominating personage of the dream-text, but it would be somewhat reductive to claim, with both Bernard and Shari Benstock, that the whole text is presented by him.[12] The letters are a good example of different narrative registers within the dream, for they are both written and read by characters other than the dreamer. Although the letters, when read, appear in the dream language of HCE, the

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[12] Kimberly J. Devlin, '"See ourselves as others see us": Joyce's Look at the Eye of the Other', PMLA, 104 (1989), 882-93 (p.889). See Bernard Benstock, 'Every Telling has a Taling', and Shari Benstock, 'The Genuine Christine: Psychodynamics of Issy', in Women in Joyce, ed. by Henke and Unkeless. This is also the assumption on which John Bishop's Joyce's Book of the Dark is based.

reading characters retain distinctive interpretive traits, and this is noticeably the case in I.5 with the professor. The narrative significance of the letters and their readers lies in their relation to the possible wrongdoing of HCE: they at once clear his name and implicate him in sexual scandal.

Although commentators often refer to "the letter" in Finnegans Wake, there are in fact many. Two letters in particular seem to be repeated in different guises many times, thus comprising many letters, but there are also many others. Ultimately, it is impossible to make exact distinctions between some of these missives: is it the same letter read by a different character or a different letter on a similar theme? At other stages in the text, it is impossible to distinguish exactly a letter from the narrative. Does a narrator present a letter or merely occasionally adopt some epistolary conventions in the text? Yet it remains discernible that there are letters, and that some of these letters, or references to letters, are the 'same' letter interpreted and presented differently.

It is too reductive to speak of just one letter - in Finnegans Wake there are several - but also it is too exaggerated to insist on an indeterminate plurality of letters. There does appear to be a consistent subject-matter (which might be suggested by the early warning that ALP "adores a scandal when the last post's gone by" (028.17)), but the Wake presents this subject in many diverse manners, sometimes in letters by different characters and often with different readers.

There are two discernible groups of letter-versions: one from Boston and associated with Issy or more particularly with her alter-ego, Maggy, the other written by ALP, dictated to Shem. The two differ in tone: the former provocative, teasing, the latter defensive, measured. They will here be identified as the Boston letter and the ALP letter. Versions of both these letters appear in chapter I.5 (104-125), at 111.10-20 and 113.11-18 respectively, where they form part of the professor's narration in an

important chapter about modes of interpretation. The second of these is written by ALP, as is the final letter version in her closing monologue in book IV at 615.12 to 619.19. There is apparently a further version of the ALP letter in III.3 (474-554) at 494.27 to 495.33, where the conventional opening merges into the enveloping narrative but the closing is provided. This letter appears in a conversational tone during a discussion between Issy and Shaun. Issy has here adopted her mother's voice, or ALP intrudes into her daughter's speech. This version hence exemplifies the difficulty of ascribing an identity to the Wake's letters.

The Boston letter appears to be written by Issy and Maggy (two personalities of the same person) whose footnotes in II.2 (260-308) as well as the body of the missive (280.09-27), provide advice on letter-writing as well as another version. There is a further letter in this chapter at 301.10 to 302.10. The Boston letter recurs in modified form in III.2 (429-473) at 457.25 to 461.32, which incorporates the formal qualities of letter-writing (as well as verbal and thematic repetition of the Boston version) within dialogue.

As well as narration which uses standard letter conventions, there are numerous more fleeting references to the letters in the Wake. The first of these anticipates the Boston letter in I.5, calling it "boaston nightgarters" (011.22), that is, both the letter from Boston that is later presented and the nightletter of II.2. This passage, which describes the "spoiled goods" of a "nabsack" (011.18-19) also refers to "foder allmichael" and "maggets" (011.23-4), that is, Father Michael and Maggy, two of the main characters of the letters in I.5 and II.2. There is further narrative reference in II.3 (309-382) at 369.25 to 370.14 which identifies the Boston letter but probably should not be taken as a version of it.[13] Likewise, there are references to ALP's letter at 420.17 and following

[13] Contrary to the claim of Susan Shaw Sailer, On the Void of to Be (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), p.51.

and 93.24 to 94.12. The letter that closes II.2, the Nightletter, is written by Issy, Shem and Shaun, and is part of neither major category.

Like the relationship between ALP and Issy, mother and daughter, the relationship between the two letters, one written by each, is a close and complex one. Just as at times the two characters appear to merge, so the letters can at times be indistinguishable and may indeed be different readings of the same letter. Neither letter may be taken as anterior to the other. Although the first critic to recognise there are two distinct letters, Shari Benstock is confused as to their relationship and is inaccurate in claiming that ALP's letter includes the Boston letter. ALP refers to the Boston missive in her letter and monologue (617.23, 623.36) but treats it as a separate document.

In Finnegans Wake, as in many literary works (and the Wake could be read in a tradition of the epistolary novel), letters have a broader textual significance. They portray not only much that is learnt about characters and plot (such as it is), they also present a variety of reading strategies and modes of dissemination that are suggestive of the broader text. As has been suggested, neither letter may be taken as a microcosm of the text: it would be too simplistic merely to call chapter I.5, or its letters, synecdochic of Finnegans Wake, as a number of critics have done.

Talia Schaffer has argued that "Biddy's letter is the manuscript of Finnegans Wake itself" and she turns the tables to suggest that as well as the letter being the text, the text is also a letter.

> Finnegans Wake is a letter from Joyce to the reader.... Finnegans Wake is a book which incorporates and demands its own commentary, and is thus a letter to the critic as well as the 'ordinary' reader.[14]

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[14] Talia Schaffer, 'Letters to Biddy: About That Original Hen', JJQ, 29.3 (Spring 1992), 623-43 (p.625).

The Wake is thus seen as self-sufficient in that it necessarily provides its own reception, yet it also communicates with readers who are in some way "'ordinary'." The dual addressees of the text - "the 'ordinary' reader" and "the expert critic" - reflect the dual legitimation of professional English studies (as outlined in chapter five), that of literary objectification and social relevance. One wonders which category Schaffer presumes to write from when she dismisses the "nonsense and unreadability of Finnegans Wake." Given such a judgement, it is all the more curious that she should attempt to assert some social relevance ("a new female language") in the text.[15]

Schaffer's discovery of deconstruction in Finnegans Wake is not, as might be hoped, an interrogation of the relationship between these two discourses and their implications for a potential feminist practice, rather it is the apparently absolute assertion of its feminist power based on the claim that Joyce (or is it deconstruction?) "prevents us from establishing any sort of Absolute." Schaffer's attempt to extend the scope of the Wake, which she calls "the only one of its genre in literature", is typical of a series of critical forays into the relationship between the letters of Finnegans Wake and questions of readership.[16] The first of these was Manfred Pütz's proposal that "the exegetical difficulties of the confused interpreters coping with this letter parallel the difficulty of the assumed readers of Finnegans Wake."[17] Similarly, Wilhelm Füger later claimed that the "narrated reader with his problems of understanding can be regarded as representative of the actual reader of Finnegans Wake and his reading difficulties."[18] The underlying implication of these claims of a parallel readership is that the letter is the

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15 Schaffer, p.641.

16 Schaffer, p.641, p.637.

17 Manfred Pütz, 'The Identity of the Reader in Finnegans Wake', JJQ, 11.4 (Summer 1974), 387-94 (p.391).

18 Wilhelm Füger, '"Epistlemethodology" (FW 374.17): ALP's Letter and the Tradition of Interpolated Letters', JJQ, 19.4 (Summer 1982), 405-14 (p.407).

text as a whole, in the words of Shari Benstock that "Finnegans Wake is the epistle being written by ALP, dictated to her son Shem (Joyce)."[19]

Shari Benstock has identified several instances of letter-writing in Finnegans Wake, and suggests that this plurality presents an

> Inability to determine the inside or outside of the letter or to distinguish the various letters that comprise the larger text of the story. There seems to be a single letter that is written and read within the confines of the Wake family.

This single letter appears "complete and self-contained," Benstock claims, at 615.12 to 619.16. "This letter contains all the versions of the dream story, comprises all the tellings of the tale, and includes all the letters of the Wake."[20] It is unclear how Benstock manages to ascertain the limits of this "complete and self-contained" text when it is not possible to tell inside from outside nor letter from letter. This again appears to be a further instance of equating 'the letter' with Finnegans Wake. Suzette Henke similarly observes that "each of the multiple versions of the letter serves as a textual paradigm for the Wake itself" and most recently, Susan Shaw Sailer has reiterated the suggestion by claiming that "the Letter constantly referred to ... serves as a synecdoche of the Wake itself."[21]

More than that, Sailer also reads "the Letter" as emblematic of deconstruction, an interpretation which is reductive of both. It "can't be read in the usual terms" but "must be learned on its own terms," which neatly sums up the presuppositions of ordinary

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19 Shari Benstock, 'The Genuine Christine', p.186.

20 Shari Benstock, 'The Letter of the Law: La Carte Postale in Finnegans Wake', Philological Quarterly, 63 (1984), 163-87 (p.168).

21 Suzette A. Henke, James Joyce and the Politics of Desire (New York: Routledge, 1990), p.185. Sailer, p.40.

language that accompany seeing the text as autonomous. There is clearly pedagogic potential for Sailer in the letter, for having "learned" how to read it, it "demonstrates the sign as the play of difference" because of "the play of signifiers unfixed by signifieds."[22] This is a simplistic and even wrong account of deconstruction, or of language, as it is nonsense to talk of a signifier without a signified.[23] The inadequacy of Sailer's terms is yet more evident when describing the different viewpoints of the letters, which she calls "perspectives of parallax." She goes on to refer to the "parallax of perspectives" which is a matter of "writing the body," while the letters represent the "embodiment of writing." Sailer's conclusion to this muddle is that "We have arrived ... at language as the play of difference" and, perhaps not surprisingly, the "embodiment of parallax."[24]

The letters of Finnegans Wake seem to suggest similar patterns of interpretation as found in critical studies of the Wake itself. There are important similarities between letters which suggest a common source, or a common reading of a document. Yet there are also clear divergences between letters: not all are written by the same author, not all are interpreted by the same reader. Just as the industry of commentary that surrounds the Wake manifests the impossibility of any unmediated access to the text, so with the letters in the Wake. There will never be discovered an original document, nor will any letter-version open itself out to an unproblematic interpretation. The critical commentary of Finnegans Wake is analogous to the postal system and reading communities within the Wake.

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[22] Sailer, p.49.

[23] See Derrida, Of Grammatology, p.324 n9.

[24] Sailer, p.52.

3. The Professor in I.5

A major problem in attempting to determine authorship of letters in Finnegans Wake lies in knowing whose reading of the letters is being presented: patterns of consumption have to be followed as they mediate the product. The readership of the letters is a major issue not just for this approach to Finnegans Wake, but also for the authors of the letters and those implicated therein. The mediating readers of the letters are also particularly important in the light of the distinctly hazy relationship between the letters and the broader text. In I.5, the reader whose interpretation is followed is a professor who is only explicitly introduced at the very end of the chapter. Thus for most of the chapter (on a first reading anyway) the identity of the mediating voice is uncertain, and the letters' fictional reader is therefore unknown. It appears that Kate may be responsible for part of the chapter as the repeated "Tip" between 111.30 and 112.02 recalls her direction, as in the opening tour around the "Willingdone Museyroom" (8.10). However, the tone and interests of much of the narration may be more clearly identified with a professor figure. The significance of the professor as a reader of the letters in this chapter is such that he may be described as the chapter's principle mediator, for although the chapter still occurs within the dream of HCE, and although the narrative tone is inconsistent, its prime concerns and sometimes the narration itself appear to be that of a professional reader.[25]

Of late, Shari Benstock's essay 'The Genuine Christine: Psychodynamics of Issy', effaces the role of the professor by suggesting that the reading in I.5 is in fact that of ALP in the guise of the hen, Biddy Doran, who found the letter. There is some unintentional irony in Benstock's expression of this claim:

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[25] I do not accept Fairhall's claim that the Four are indicated at 112.24-27 and go on to narrate the remainder of the chapter. James Fairhall, James Joyce and the Question of History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.237.

> like a good critic, [Biddy/ALP] has come up with a 'reading' of the letter (or some bits of it) that bears little - if any - resemblance to the original document.[26]

Not only does this claim ignore the role of the professor, the good critic who reads what the hen has literally "come up with," it also presupposes knowledge of "the original document." However, as Finnegans Wake seems at pains to establish, there is no access to any original document and hence no possibility of an unmediated or 'innocent' reading. Every reading of every letter is a reading on the basis of some past readership and in that sense every reader is 'guilty'. As Benstock unwittingly indicates, it is the responsibility of the professor, and the good critic, to produce readings which in that sense are guilty.

The professor does not make a distinction between the letters. The chapter begins with a series of alternative headings for the ALP letter, her "untitled mamafesta" (104.04), but allows for the possibility that there is more than one, referring to the "documents or document" (107.25). The letters are introduced before being read, first the Boston letter (111.10-20), then that from ALP (113.11-18). Towards the end of the chapter, reference is made towards the letter as "duplex" (123.30-31), meaning twofold or composed of two parts, which would suggest that there is indeed one "original document" (123.31-2). However, duplex also means, in electric telegraphy, the arrangement of wires so that two different messages may be sent simultaneously, even in opposite directions. This interpretation may also be suggested by reference in the following sentence to the letter(s) as "this new book of Morses" (123.34-5), that is, of Morse codes, transmitted telegraphically. Moreover, in the introduction to the first letter, the professor described it as a "radiooscillating epiepistle" (108.24). It seems that

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[26] Benstock, 'The Genuine Christine', p.185.

the letters must by thought of as both different and the same: a single document comprised of two letters; and two separate documents in letter form.

The professor as a reader is pedantic, patient, prudent, pompous, but above all, a contextual critic. He is careful not to fix a single interpretation on a duplex document which lends itself to so many readings. The professor is implicated in the texts he mediates by his reading of them. He compares the envelope of the letter, using economic metaphors, to the body and to a woman's clothing, in an attempt to establish the importance of context. He admits the envelope is "an outer husk" and "its face ... is its fortune: it exhibits only the civil or military clothing of whatever passionpallid nudity or plaguepurple nakedness may happen to tuck itself under its flap" (109.08-12). Discussing the context of the Boston letter, the professor says it is merely the outer attire of an inner mystery, implying that it holds the secret to Earwicker's apparent sin. Yet this analogy, from text to clothing to the body to sex, also suggests that sexual indiscretion is not limited to the characters who write and read the letters. By comparing the material letter with precisely the kind of incident of which Earwicker is accused, the professor also seems to imply that the letter itself - the very evidence - may also be hiding some guilty sexual secret of its own. Its reliability may then be doubted, as may the judgement of the professor who makes the analogy.

Given the complexity of the issue, the contextualising professor warns against concentrating "solely on the literal sense or even the psychological content of any document to the sore neglect of the enveloping facts themselves" (109.12-14). The professor next develops his analogy. To ignore the context, he says,

> is just as hurtful to sound sense (and let it be added to the truest taste) as were some fellow in the act of perhaps getting an intro from another fellow ... to a lady of the latter's acquaintance ... straightaway to run off and vision her plump and plain in her natural altogether, preferring to close his blinkhard's eyes to the ethiquethical fact that she was, after all,

> wearing for the space of the time being some definite articles of evolutionary clothing (109.14-23)

Once again, this analogy depends on the factual status of the context which it highlights. That the imagined woman is dressed is described as an "ethiquethical fact," that is, it is a matter of both ethics and etiquette, of metaphysical value and cultural convention.[27] The evidence of the letter that implicates HCE in front of the law of the courts is enveloped by an analogous "fact" that is derived from two other laws: a higher ethical or moral law, and the (often unwritten) rules of social etiquette. This suggests that the common law is a compromise of these other, apparently contradictory, 'laws'. This fact, like Levi-Strauss's incest taboo, straddles the natural and the cultural in that it is both morally universal (ethical) and socially normative (etiquette).

The professor has here proposed his own interpretation taboo: that ethical considerations cannot be ignored, and that reading must be normative, that is, subject to the mores of a particular reading context. He follows his rule, later accusing the author of the document of "imperfectible moral blindness" (122.35-6), and invoking the receptive context of the letters. However, the professor's formulation of an interpretation taboo hardly qualifies to place him in an (impossible) position of objectivity. His interpretation taboo indicates that, as in Althusser's formulation, all readings are guilty, which is to say, biased or prejudiced. The 'taboo' is thus also an imperfect interpretation. The professor's own weakness for sexual metaphor suggests a guilty reading habit. With the professor, then, method and truth prove ultimately inseparable, as his own implication in the production of readings of the letters testifies.

On the subject of guilt, he warns that

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[27] The word "ethiquethical" was added by Joyce between the 1927 transition version and Finnegans Wake in 1939, that is to say, it was a late addition to the chapter.

> some prevision of virtual crime or crimes might be made by anyone unwary enough before any suitable occasion for it or them had so far managed to happen along. (107.25-8).

That is to say, a careless reader may presume the guilt of HCE when possibly nothing untoward has yet occurred. This is not a refutation, and does leave open the possibility that the crime is waiting for its opportunity. One good reason for this uncertainty is that the letter has not been dated: "the studious omission of year number and era name from the date" (121.28-9) perhaps inferring that the letter was written in a future historic age and has resurfaced in an earlier epoch on the Viconian roundabout. The implication this has for its readership is that their consumption must rival the temporality of its production and delivery. Hence the professor offers the advice keenly appreciated by Wake critics.

> Now, patience; and remember patience is the great thing, and above all things else we must avoid anything like being or becoming out of patience. (108.08-10).

The professor thus sets himself out as a temporal, rather than spatial, interpreter.

The professor's interpretive patience does not prevent him from attempting to locate the context of the document. It would be an "unlookedfor conclusion" to infer from the "absence of political odia and monetary requests that its page cannot ever have been a penproduct of a man or woman of that period or those parts" (108.30-33). This forlorn effort to place the letters implicates the professor also in questions of readership, especially as he goes on to invoke an 'ordinary reader' in introducing the Boston letter and then to legitimate his own response to the ALP letter in distinction from the interpretations made by 'ordinary readers'. The development of the professor's implied readership, and of the professor himself as a reader, can be traced through Joyce's revisions to this chapter in its published versions: in Criterion in July 1925, in transition in August 1927 and in Finnegans Wake.

This "ordinary fellow" as he was named when the first version of this chapter was published in 1925, and then "ornery josser" when it was revised in 1927, is "the dime a dozen type" (109.02).[28] After the 1927 version, Joyce added a description of this plain/ordinary/common reader as "flatchested fortyish, faintly flatulent ... given to ratiocination by syncopation in the elucidation of complications" (109.02-5). That is, the ordinary reader reasons by a process of contraction in interpreting complex matter: s/he simplifies. Later in the chapter, in an addition also made after 1927, the professor declares that "it is surely a lesser ignorance to write a word with every consonant too few than to add all too many" (115.01-2), suggesting his sympathy with the practice of that 'ordinary reader'. Joyce was well-acquainted with critical notions of the ordinary, plain or common reader circulating at the time of composition of Work in Progress, and possessed in his personal library a copy of Charles Duff's James Joyce and the Plain Reader, published in 1932. Joyce's revisions to the 1927 transition piece were made by 1936 when book I was submitted for printing, and he seems to have included and elaborated upon the mythical figure of the critics' plain reader as yet another inscribed audience for his final work. Whether or not he took seriously Duff's optimistic belief that Work in Progress was "beginning to penetrate the strongholds of the plain reader" and "will reach a still wider audience" is, however, doubtful.[29] At least this way, Joyce ensured that one plain reader, if no more, 'read' his work.

The professor's interpretive habit of contextualization leads him to ask, "Has any fellow," meaning that ordinary reader, "ever looked sufficiently longly at a quite

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[28] James Joyce, 'Fragment of an Unpublished Work', Criterion, 3.2 (July 1925), 498-510 (p.500); and 'Continuation of a Work in Progress', transition 5 (August 1927), 15-31 (p.18).

[29] Charles Duff, James Joyce and the Plain Reader (London: Desmond Harmsworth, 1932), p.21.

everydaylooking stamped addressed envelope?" (109.01-8). However, no information about the envelope is given. Although the Boston letter is said to be "transhipt from Boston (Mass.) of the last of the first" (111.09-10), this date could be detailed on the "goodishsized sheet of letterpaper" (111.08-9) itself, rather than appearing as the envelope's postmark. The Boston letter is identifiable as written by or to (or both) Maggy, enquiring after the health of its addressee, thanking for wedding presents and referring to the funeral of Father Michael. Its signature is spoilt by a teastain which marks it as a "genuine relique of ancient Irish pleasant pottery" (111.22-3).[30] This could mean poetry, especially as a little later the professor refers to the letter as "literature" (112.27), betraying his particular attitude to a difficult text. The reception of the Boston letter may be likened to that of Work in Progress, which was often dismissed as unreadable but still literary.

The narrator's initial response to the letter is a single short paragraph, "Why then how?" (111.25). Its difficulty is explained by the sheer length of time it resided in the "orangeflavoured mudmound" (111.34) to which the professor adopts an explanatory tone, offering a repeated "Tip" (111.30, 112.02) to a presumed audience. The mediating professor has an imagined audience of other readers of the letter, referring to "our missive" and "you" (111.31-2). In the Criterion version of this chapter, the first to be published (in 1925), the professor (who was not named until the 1927 version) had here referred to "the reader," who was also included within the conspiratorial "we." For the 1927 transition version, "the reader" became "your pecker," an alteration which - although no different in tone - distracts attention away from any such figure as 'the

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[30] Compare Herbert Read's remark in his prefatory letter to Duff's book: "the closest analogy to the literary method of Work in Progress is perhaps to be found in the early graphic art of Joyce's own country, the abstract involved ornament of the Celts." James Joyce and the Plain Reader, pp.12-13.

reader' while also implicating the act of reading with the pecking act of the hen in discovering the letter (a simile enlarged upon at the end of I.5).[31]

In an addition made for Finnegans Wake, the professor presumes that:

> You is feeling like you was lost in the bush, boy? You says: It is a puling sample jungle of woods. You most shouts out: Bethicket me for a stump of a beech if I have the poultriest notion what the farest he all means. Gee up girly! The quad gospellers may own the targum but any of the Zingari shoolerim may pick a peck of kindlings yet from the sack of auld hensyne. (112.03-8).

This sympathy with an imagined broader audience typifies the reactions of both those who rejected Work in Progress outright as unreadable and those professional literary critics who believed, like Duff, that Joyce's final work was reaching a 'general public' of readers - never directly addressed in the Wake but often inferred - and sought to extend that readership. In his revisions to this chapter, Joyce does seem to exhibit some concern at the fate of 'the plain reader' confronted by Finnegans Wake.

It is significant that the professor admits "The quad gospellers ... own the targum," which is to say that the Four (whose interpretive role is examined in the following chapter) are already in place as authoritative readers of scripture. Despite this, he says, any schoolchild is able to make an interpretation of the letter anyway. However, the interpretation of the Four holds a powerful position over other readers and will in part determine how they read. The plain reader, then, is necessarily guided by pre-existing interpretive communities such as the Four or the professor.

There are several important additions made after 1927 in the middle of this chapter, of which the most significant is ALP's letter (113.11-18). Until final revisions, then, Joyce conceived of I.5 as narrating a single letter reading, even though the word

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[31] Criterion 3.2, p.502; transition 5, p.20.

"duplex" was present from the first published version. Signed "Add dapple inn" it may be attributed to ALP. This account, which is as much ALP's interpretation of the Boston letter as a text in its own right, attempts to defend HCE against the supposed insinuations of the Boston letter, to "tell the cock's trootabout him" (113.12). However, given the apparently innocuous content of the Boston or Maggy letter, ALP succeeds only in providing further suspicion against her husband, whose defence is thus also the prosecution he faces.

Attempting to talk "straight turkey meet to mate" (113.26) or "man to man" (transition 1927), the professor once more implies his conjectured audience, "us" (113.23, 113.32), whose readings are presumed to follow the professor's. He then describes both himself and "you" (113.35), his imagined reader, in an effort also to distinguish two forms of interpretation which was added to the chapter after the 1927 version. The narrator describes himself as "a worker ... anxious to pleace averyburies" (113.34-5) whereas "You are a poorjoist, unctuous to polise nopebobbies" (113.35-6), and as a consequence "We cannot say aye to aye" (114.01-2). The presumed reader, a poor Joyce or a bourgeois, is thus distinguished from the professional working reader in that s/he is not required to satisfy the interpretations of others in her/his reading. There is then a certain aloofness in the narrator's shift from first person plural to the impersonal "One cannot help noticing" (114.02-3). For all, though, either as a private letter or as a public document of interpretation, the "teatimestained terminal ... is a cosy little brown study all to oneself" (114.29-31).

This passage recalls another similar distinction made by the narrator between a professional interpreter such as himself and other readers when introducing ALP's letter version. He asks,

> how many of her readers realise that she is not out to dizzledazzle with a graith uncouthrement of postmantuam glasseries from the lapins and the grigs. (112.36 - 113.02)

That is to say, the professor provides a check on those readers who over-interpret the letter as a great accoutrement of portmanteau glossaries from Latin and Greek. All the same, his tone of chummy collegiality (which is rather pompous in the light of his attitude) provides some information:

> It is not a hear or say of some anomorous letter signed Toga Girilis (teasy dear). We have a cop of her fist right in our nosibos. We note the paper with her jotty young watermark: Notre Dame du Bon Marché. (112.29-32)

The letter is signed by one reaching maturity, as was McCann's paper in Stephen Hero. As McHugh notes, the toga virilis was a garment worn at that age, and this signature suggests the sender of the letter to be Issy or her counterpart Maggy (herself a "teasy dear"). With the letter "right in our nosibos" its readers, as forewarned, may find it more difficult to interpret, "causing some features palpably nearer your pecker to be swollen up most grossly" (111.35-6). This may be a clue to ALP's suggestive version.

As the professor will make clear, that is not to say that distance provides interpretive accuracy for "the farther back we manage to wiggle the more we need the loan of a lens to see as much as the hen saw" (112.01-2). The critical distance of the narrator leads him to proffer alternative readings which "we also know," for instance a Marxian allegory (116.05-10), admitting all the while that the language of the letter(s) is "universal ... anythongue athall" (117.13-16), both additions to the 1927 version. The effect to which the professor puts his knowledge is the continuation of readings, arguing that the letter's

> importance in establishing the identities of the writer complexus ... will be best appreciated by never forgetting that both before and after the battle of the Boyne it was a habit not to sign letters always. (114.32 - 115.01)

This tendency towards textual autonomy, the letter without an author, is reinforced by the professor's relativism. He declares that "every person, place and thing in the chaosmos of Alle anyway connected with the gobblydumped turkery was moving and changing every part of the time" (118.21-3), which suggests that the letter produced from such conditions has "changeably meaning vocable scriptsigns" (118.27-8).

Despite his previous plea for patience (108.08-10), a characteristic that was with him from the earliest published version, as though Joyce were engaged in some wishful thinking, the professor is also keen to draw the line at a certain point, "hoping against hope all the while that, by the light of philosophy ... things will begin to clear up a bit" but noting that in the meantime "there is a limit to all things so this will never do" (119.04-9). It is significant to note that the phrase "there is a limit to all things" was added only between the 1927 version and Finnegans Wake, when criticism of the work had begun in earnest. Moreover, there is a particularly telling moment earlier in the chapter, after the professor has described the material image of the lines on the paper, as he asks, "where in the waste is the wisdom?" (114.20), an addition to the 1925 Criterion version when it two years later appeared in transition. The professor's question betrays a growing impatience in his reading habits that Joyce found in critics and other early readers in relation to his Work in Progress. The question is still so familiar it could have been lifted direct from a contemporary university examination paper on Finnegans Wake.

The professor's insistence on material contexts provides a mundane check upon the farthest implications of the letters. Although he admits that Maggy's letter may hint at "incestuish salacities among gerontophils" (115.12), he finds it erroneous to see the letter as a usual tale of snooping and whoring. For the professor there is "what need to say" so much; it is rather "as human a little story as paper could well carry" (115.35-6). The incestuous allegations are explained by the professor's account of family trees that

go on indefinitely, as in "the cat, the cat's meeter, the meeter's cat's wife, the meeter's cat's wife's half better, the meeter's cat's wife's half better's meeter, and so back to our horses" (116.02-5). The implication is that such a relativist infinity negates identity, as in the photographer's negative, a "grotesquely distorted" image of "masses of meltwhile horse" (111.29-30), and that, in the end, cats are related to horses. A similar argument may then be put about the characters of Finnegans Wake, that their apparently incestuous relations only appear so because of their archetypal stature, encompassing many persons at many times. This archetypal explanation at once declares that in such a form incest is logically inevitable, and that it is socially meaningless.

The mediator's scholastic approach can be deduced from his description of the handwriting of the document. Having set up an opposition between the text as determinate - "once for all done and there you are somewhere and finished in a certain time" (118.07-8) - and relativist - "changeably meaning" (118.27) - the professor makes his assertion that "there is a limit to all things" (119.09) and proceeds to a lengthy palaeographic account of the document. It is at this stage that he realizes it has been prepared with such confusion,

> as were it sentenced to be nuzzled over a full trillion times for ever and a night till his noddle sink or swim by that ideal reader suffering from an ideal insomnia (120.11-14).

The mediating professor has thus established a mythical opposition of readers: a plain reader, or "ornery josser" and an "ideal reader." The former was invoked to stress the context and envelope of the Boston letter, the latter to analyse the internal characteristics of the text itself. In this respect, the professor's dual invocation of readers corresponds to the defining characteristics of English studies during the years of its rapid growth and professionalisation, which was roughly concomitant with Work in Progress. The concept of the plain, ordinary or common reader accords with the social legitimation of English studies, its search for broader contextual relevance; and the concept of the ideal

reader accords with the notion of a stable canon of great literary works whose patient explication can define a national tradition.

Professors' ideal readers most nearly correspond to those professors themselves. The narrator of I.5 explicates the "learning betrayed at almost every line's end" (120.24), reading into the document his own concerns just as ALP had in her ill-judged defence. For instance, an "interpolation" lists manuscript references where certain figures occur, of which "the scholiast" is presumably ignorant, having "misheard a deadman's toller as a muffinbell" (121.32-6). This passage begins a distinction between the professor and the narrator (the latter refers to the former), which allows for the description of the professor at the end of the chapter. However, this does not detract from the professorial tone of the narration through much of the chapter, some of which has been helpful as well as self-involved, such as his annotation on the author of the Boston letter:

> that (probably local or personal) variant maggers for the more generally accepted majesty which is but a trifle and yet may quietly amuse (120.16-18).

Such knowledge or insight of the learning in each line of the document is only "revealed by a constant labour" (120.25-6), suggesting that the professor, whose paid employment it is to read, is the nearest to the ideal reader whose "ideal insomnia" provides the time for such patient and "constant" application. This professor is indeed a 'temporiser'.

The duplex document is found to be "but pierced butnot punctured (in the university sense of the term)" by four stabs from "a pronged instrument" (124.01-3). Far from deflating the document the professor's reading of it explains its obscure punctuation as akin to that in the Book of Kells. Inquiries "rightly suspected" that the damage done to the parchment "could not have been visited" by "Brotfressor Prenderguest" to a text he "venerated shamelessly" (124.14-17). Rather, the four holes were inflicted by Biddy

the hen in her retrieval of it from the midden heap. At the end of the chapter, the introduction of the professor as a reader of the document distinguishes him from the narrator. It is best to see the dreaming self of Earwicker or HCE as the narrator, capable of imitating the voices of others as they mediate events within the dream. Thus it would be impossible to speak of the narrator, only of mediators assembled by the dreamer within his dream. The mediator - a kind of sub-narrator - of the letters in I.5 can thus be seen as the professor.

The professor is thus a character in I.5 whose voice is appropriated (not uniformly, but for long stretches) within the dream as an apt medium for the presentation of the duplex document and corresponding issues of interpretation. He is deployed as a reader within the text and is also a comment upon readership of the text. Moreover, he is a professional reader, one of a particular audience among whom Work in Progress and Finnegans Wake came to find their readership. This reader's invocation of other readers - the fictional audience of a fictional character - thus may be taken as a comment on both a literary professor's presumed audience and on the readership of Joyce's last work. As has been shown, the professor's 'plain' and 'ideal' readers have some correspondence with the development of English studies, and the evolution of the chapter signals changes within the professor's audience that reflect critical reactions to Work in Progress. That the professor was from the beginning of Work in Progress (and I.5 was one of the first passages to be written, in 1923) deployed as the first and principle mediator of the letters, which purport to hold the key to the book, shows that Joyce recognised both the significance of the growth of literary academia and his burgeoning place within it.

4. Issy, the Princes and the Professors.

This section deals with the character of Issy and her relationship with the professor figure. It makes use of some source materials for the Wake in order to emphasise the role of the professor as an interpreter of Issy's letters. In so doing, analysis of the theme of incest is continued.

The character of Issy, daughter of the dreaming Earwicker, is a split personality. Her suppressed other, Maggy, appears often in letters from Issy such as that in II.2. Issy's letter-writing is here a textbook example of how to write a letter, including standard phrases and instructions, such as

> I and we (tender condolences for happy funeral, one if) so sorry to (mention person suppressed for the moment, F.M.). (280.10-13)

This recalls the Boston letter in I.5 which referred to the "grand funferall of poor Father Michael" (111.15-16), who is in one way suppressed. The other person suppressed for the moment is Maggy, Issy's other personality, and it is she who is most clearly implicated in the allegations of incest and sexual indiscretion against Earwicker/HCE, whether as complicit partner or witness. As ALP puts it in her final letter and monologue, "It's margarseen oil" (615.31), that is, it is Maggy who has seen all.

The issue of possible incest between HCE and Issy is further complicated by a speech in chapter III.2 (429-474) that appears to take the form of a letter by Issy. This 'letter' once more has no determinate beginning and end but is rather enveloped in the speech of Iseult. Much of the letter or speech seems to comprise an internal dialogue between Issy and Maggy as she looks into a mirror, "umto extend my personnalitey to the latents" (461.03-04). Issy promises to write letters for Jaun which will "carry on my hearz'waves my still waters reflections in words over Margrate" (460.25-6), that is,

over Maggy, "my linkingclass girl" (459.04). The context of this passage is the relationship between Iseult and Tristan, both figures within the respective archetypes of Issy and Shaun. If the archetypal roles of the Earwicker family encompass so many specific persons, then, as the professor pointed out in I.5, some incestuous relationships are unavoidable between those archetypes. In this way Finnegans Wake endorses what has been called the logic of incest.

There is a further issue of significance in these letters, for it appears that they are addressed to a professor-figure. Issy addresses her speech "engine dear" (457.32), which is an echo of yet another version of the letter, found in chapter I.6 (126-169), which also contains the lecture given by a Professor Jones. The contradictory indications of the writer of the earlier passage suggest that it is written under conflict for supremacy between Issy and Maggy. In reply to the tenth question in a series of twelve "set by Jockit Mic Ereweak" (126.07), alias Shem, to his brother Shaun, comes the answer from Issy/Maggy:

> I hate the very thought of the thought of you and because, dearling, of course, adorest, I was always meant for an engindear from the French college, to be musband (146.18-20)

Issy's ambiguous rejection of Shem's leading question is addressed to "you, Innkipper" (144.07), associating Shem with HCE, but also breaks off to refer to the professor, "hello, Prendregast" (144.06). The same reader of the letter in I.5, "Brotfressor Prenderguest" (124.15), is here hovering in the background even as Issy replies, and is presumably in the audience that hears Professor Jones's lecture in response to the eleventh question. The professor figure thus functions also as a variant on HCE within this bizarre love triangle.

In II.1 (219-59), the children present and partake in the Mime of Mick, Nick and the Maggies, a tale of rivals Glugg (Shem) and Chuff (Shaun) in their quest for Izod (Issy)

who is "approached in loveliness only by her grateful sister reflection in a mirror" (220.08-9). Glugg is asked three riddles, all of which he fails to answer correctly, but lusts after Izod (in the form of the leap year girl). Her tacit reply is to envisage her teacher or professor as a lover:

> Still he'd be good tutor two in his big armschair lerningstoel and she be waxen in his hands. Turning up and fingering over the most dantellising peaches in the lingerous longerous book of the dark....
> 'Twas ever so in monitorology since Headmaster Adam became Eva Harte's toucher, in omnibus moribus et temporibus, with man's mischief in his mind whilst her pupils swimmed too heavenlies, let his be exaspirated, letters be blowed! (251.21-31)

Shari Benstock has briefly looked at this passage in terms of triangular relationships and also in terms of a division within the male figure, recalling well-known splits such as that between Earwicker and Porter and between Lewis Carroll and Charles Dodgson.[32] A split within the professor figure - "tutor two" - is also pertinent, as will be shown. The attitude here is that of Maggy, that the possible reward is worth the risk, for which she is willing to forego her private self, by exposing it not only in the park but also in letters, "letters be blowed!" The teacher here invoked may be cast within the HCE archetype, for his position of responsibility towards the girl, and especially given his fondness for "dantellising peaches." ALP well knows her husband's fondness for such a delicacy, having read her letter version in I.5 to warn that "Dancings (schwrites) was his only ttoo feebles.... Spissially (schwrites) when they peaches" (113.15-17).

The aforementioned letter in III.2 continues the jealous rivalry between Issy and Maggy, and this time a professor figure is not only somewhere present but actually addressed. The epistolary speech by Issy offers "much left to tutor" (458.02-03) and continues by calling the addressee (Shaun) "dear professor" (459.30) and then "dean" (460.31). A professor figure is thus anticipated by Issy/Maggy as the reader of her

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[32] Shari Benstock, 'The Genuine Christine', p.179.

letter, although in I.5 it does not seem to be addressed to him. As the initial mediator of the letters in I.5, "Brotfressor Prenderguest" (124.15) implicated himself only in elliptical fashion, but his role when seen from another perspective - that of the writer of the letter -appears somewhat more sinister. Applied to the broader reception of Work in Progress and Finnegans Wake, this other perspective on the role of the professor figure is a reminder that although academia is the principle medium of those texts, that identity nonetheless holds a social and political valency as it is perceived beyond the academy.

These two themes of Issy's letter-writing - the presence of the professor figure as a reader and/or lover and her split with her other personality, Maggy - may be traced back to the sources for the character of Issy, which have also influenced the important role of the professor figure. In 1954 Adaline Glasheen found that Issy's character and her letter-writing had been partly derived from a study of multiple personality, The Dissociation of a Personality, by Morton Prince.[33] The subject of this study Prince called Christine L. Beauchamp and her other self was named Sally. Glasheen's study showed similar character traits between Issy/Christine and Maggy/Sally, as well as references to Prince in Finnegans Wake, especially in the letters versions in II.2 at pages 279 and 280. Sally had hidden her personal letters, written in Boston, in a box of which only she knew the whereabouts. In the Wake the letter that is by or to Maggy (or both) is delivered from Boston. The two Maggies are the girls in the park who have tempted Earwicker. Glasheen's discovery of this source has provided the impetus for recent work on the letters and Issy, notably that of Shari Benstock in the eighties, which is discussed in this chapter.

There are some additional influences of Morton Prince's study upon Finnegans Wake not mentioned by Glasheen or subsequent commentators. Other than her general

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[33] Adaline Glasheen, 'Finnegans Wake and the Girls from Boston, Mass.', Hudson Review, 7.1 (Spring 1954), 89-97.

character, which is playful and provocative, there are specifics of Sally as recorded by Prince which resurface in Finnegans Wake. During the initial period of Sally's open manifestation she writes in her first letter to Prince, "I am on top of the heap at last," a phrase which Prince took as a chapter heading, and which suggests the midden heap in which the letter is found in I.5.[34] Written at the same time as her first letter to Prince, is a letter from Sally to an old friend arranging to meet. It includes the phrase "please stop," where please could continue the previous sentence and stop indicate a full-stop as in a telegram.[35] In the letter described by the professor at the end of I.5 there are "no signs of punctuation of any sort" (123.33-34), only "paper wounds, four in type" caused by the hen's scratching which "were gradually and correctly understood to mean stop, please stop, do please stop, and O do please stop respectively" (124.03-05). This study could also have provided Joyce with the name Maggy, for Sally at one point destroys "some literary work which represented much labor" that had been undertaken by Christine. As Sally informs her, "The Margaret Margaret is all gone too. I made cigarette papers out of it."[36] In Finnegans Wake any original document or source of the various letters is equally as inaccessible.

Sally's epistolary habits also resurface in Finnegans Wake. Her letters are frequently written as appendices to the letters of others, and when "squeezed" (her word for suppressed) her writing is more constrained, sometimes reduced to printing or cutting and pasting from a newspaper. In this way, her missives may be said to possess a self-conscious materiality, much as Maggy's letter in I.5 is described by the professor, with "lines of litters slittering up and louds of latters slettering down" (114.17-18). In

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[34] Morton Prince, The Dissociation of a Personality (Boston, 1905; repr. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p.96.

[35] Morton Prince, p.38.

[36] Morton Prince, p.127.

Dissociation of a Personality, Prince reproduces what he possesses of Sally's autobiography, including her comments as footnotes, much in the way that in the Wake Issy/Maggy provides the footnotes in II.2, the so-called textbook chapter. Also, when attempting to forge a letter as Issy's, Sally's writing could be recognised by "the transposition of the letters in the individual words" making "a sort of cipher language." She insisted "upon the prerogative of coining words of her own."[37] Her writing then bears a strong resemblance to that of the letter and of Finnegans Wake as a whole. Along similar lines, Sally betrayed herself when impersonating Christine (she was so accurate that close friends could not tell them apart) by stuttering, which is one of the ways in which HCE not only hints at guilt but also reveals his presence as a narrator.

Biddy Doran, the hen who finds a letter, is said to be "scratching at the hour of klokking twelve" (111.07-08), and in the first narrated interview with B II (who turns out to be the real Miss Beauchamp under hypnosis), B II describes Prince's note-taking as "scratching."[38] This verb is often used in the Wake to indicate writing, for instance in describing Shem in I.7 (182.13) and as used by ALP in her final remembrance of the letter in book four (623.31). It is found at midnight (or midday), while it is "klokking twelve," recalling Sally's claim to have witnessed a very long dream of Christine's during the time it took for the clock to strike.[39]

In Issy's letter in chapter II.2, the narrative is punctuated by seemingly unintelligible remarks: "Shlicksher ... Shrubsher ... Shrubsheruthr ... Shlicksheruthr" (280.10-27). In Prince's study, the means by which Sally first appeared as a manifest personality was by forcing Christine to rub her eyes (repeatedly and forcefully): Sally was thus able

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[37] Morton Prince, p.205, p.151.

[38] Morton Prince, p.97.

[39] Morton Prince, p.332.

to bring herself into being against Prince's will and also to escape the hypnotic state. In the Wake, although this is not the first appearance of Maggy, the repressed personality of Issy escapes in her letter-writing, in this instance also by rubbing her eyes. Moreover, this example of the relationship between Sally and Maggy also implicates the professor figure, in his relation to the role played by Prince, as somehow present in this chapter, at least as a witness to Maggy's attempt to infiltrate Issy's letter. This becomes more persuasive when one recalls the academic format of this chapter, known as the textbook chapter, replete with marginalia and footnotes.

However, another important psychological source for Issy exists. An article by Morris Beja from 1977 names several further cases of split personality which appear to be referred to in Finnegans Wake, the most notable of which is The Doris Case of Multiple Personality by Walter Franklin Prince (unrelated to his namesake).[40] Doris Fischer was beaten by her father as a three year old and produced two subsidiary personalities known as Margaret and Sleeping Margaret. The former had much the same behavioural traits as Sally in The Dissociation of a Personality (and so also Maggy in Finnegans Wake); the latter only became manifest during the sleeping hours of Doris, the primary personality, and was the most interesting aspect of the case for the analyst, and possibly also for Joyce. This subject, Doris Fischer, was adopted by Walter Franklin Prince as his foster daughter during the course of her analysis. When Prince came to write up the case for the Boston Society for Psychic Research in 1927 (it was first published in 1915-16) his wife had already died and Doris had been with him as a foster daughter for fourteen years.[41]

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[40] Morris Beja, 'Dividual Chaoses: Case Histories of Multiple Personality and Finnegans Wake', JJQ, 14.3 (Spring 1977), 241-251.

[41] W.F. Prince, The Psychic in the House (Boston: Boston Society for Psychic Research, 1927), p.3.

In Finnegans Wake III.2 Issy/Maggy refers to a Prince as both addressee and object of jealousy in "My prince of the courts who'll beat me to love" (460.12). HCE is also a "footprinse on the Megacene" (137.16-17): a footnote to literature, but a prince to Maggy. It is impossible to escape the letters' web of implications. Although in their works each Prince is ostensibly a disinterested psychologist and narrator, a single Prince has here become entwined in the story he tells, both before the law and in the eyes of his subject. This may also be shown to be the case in the work of each Prince.

Although critical studies of Joyce's debt to the work of both psychologists has concentrated solely on the character of Issy, there is a further aspect of their analyses whose influence on Finnegans Wake has not so far been explored. The roles of the analyst in each case - that is, Morton Prince and Walter Franklin Prince - have also influenced the character of the professor figure in Finnegans Wake.

In Morton Prince's book, there is an amorous rivalry between Christine and Sally: the latter makes several excursions to meet her old acquaintance, Jones, from whom she suffered the trauma which led to her split personality, whereas Christine apparently has an affection for "B." for which Sally upbraids her.[42] Glasheen says that Prince himself came to replace Jones in the affections of Sally. She wrote to him,

> Know all men by these presents that I, Sally, being of sound mind and in full possession of all my senses, do hereby most solemnly promise to love, honor, and obey Morton Prince, M.D., situate in the city of Boston, state of Massachusetts, from this time forth, toujours. Amen, amen, amen.[43]

Prince offers this letter as an example of Sally's wit, although a reader of Finnegans Wake need not take it solely that way. It seems more likely that Christine should hold

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[42] Morton Prince, p.167.

[43] Morton Prince, p.138. Quoted in Glasheen, p.92.

Prince in her affections. Although suppressed by Prince, Christine's personal reliance upon him and his indefatigable protection of her, suggest a closeness in their relationship which goes beyond narrow professionalism. There are several instances in Sally's jealous letters to her other self which may refer to this relationship but in which the names have been excised by Prince.[44] In Walter Franklin Prince's study, his patient, Doris Fischer, became his foster daughter during his treatment of her. Both Princes, then, may be said to have become personally implicated in their cases beyond the confines of duty. Moreover, a combination of their situations produces the suggestion of an 'incestuous' relationship.

The "prince" referred to by Issy/Maggy appears not to be a specific character within the text but an allusion to the two psychologists as source material for the Wake. In that sense, they are mentioned by Joyce more than by Issy. However, it also appears that the allusion is meant to associate "prince" with the professor figure to whom the letter version in III.2 is addressed, who is present during another version of it in I.6, and who initially read it in I.5. In the Wake the professor figure is also a variant upon Earwicker and there is a suggested relationship between him and Issy, his pupil. A combination of the relationship between Walter Franklin Prince and Doris Fischer with that suggested between Morton Prince and Christine Beauchamp provides the material for the relationship between HCE (including the professor figure) and Issy in Finnegans Wake.

The character who delivers the lecture in I.6, in response to the eleventh question, is a Professor Jones.[45] The relationship between Professor Prendergast and Professor

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[44] Morton Prince, especially pp.166-7.

[45] In her Third Census of Finnegans Wake (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), Adaline Glasheen identifies this figure (despite naming the chapter as I.4) with "Freud's sedulous ape" the psychoanalyst Ernest Jones, author of oedipal readings of Hamlet and Julius Caesar. According to Joyce's correspondence, she notes, Jones "the

Jones in Finnegans Wake (chapters I.5 and I.6) needs to be clarified. Prendergast is a reader, whereas Jones is a lecturer. Together, they form the temporal and spatial dimensions of interpretation. Time will tell, Prendergast implies:

> Now, patience; and remember patience is the great thing, and above all else we must avoid anything like being or becoming out of patience. (108.08-10)

On the other hand, Jones is a proud spatialist, declaring "I fail to see when" (151.26) and "the all is where" (151.36). The time/space duality is usually associated only with the tale of the Mookse (space) and the Gripes (time) which Jones tells to illustrate his lecture (152.15-159.18). However, the combination of the professors also illustrates these complementary dimensions, perhaps suggesting their composite union in an overarching professor figure. Yet just as the Mookse and the Gripes cannot get along, so the two professors have an uneasy relationship. Prendergast is sensitive to audiences and plural interpretations, but Jones is more dogmatic, introducing the fable which follows his argument with the reassurance that

> As my explanations here are probably above your understandings ... I shall revert to a more expletive method which I frequently use when I have to sermo with muddlecrass pupils. Imagine for my purpose that you are a squad of urchins (152.04-9).

Jones closes the fable confidently: "I have now successfully explained to you" (159.24). Only having advanced his argument does Jones admit his listeners, having apparently taken the advice of Issy/Maggy: "Musforget there's an audience" (147.01-2).

Jones and Prendergast represent different attitudes towards readership: the former wants to be "near Inaccessible" (159.33-4) but the latter invokes an "ornery josser"

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lecturing animal" is based on Wyndham Lewis, author of similarly reductive readings of Shakespeare.

(109.03). Jones announces that "My heeders will recoil with a great leisure how at the outbreak before trespassing on the space question" (160.35-6) he showed that for "this graded intellektuals dime is cash" (161.06). That is to say, for (disgraced?) intellectuals, time is money, but also spatial. [The "dime-cash problem" (149.17) was initially set out at the beginning of Professor Jones's lecture.] Jones is ready to admit the professionalism and personal rivalry that accompanies intellectual pursuit. Together, the professors from a salient comment upon the conditions of reception for Work in Progress.

The relationship between the two Princes, the psychologists whose studies influenced the relationship between Issy and the professor figure (writer and interpreter), was also an uneasy one with parallels with Jones and Prendergast in Finnegans Wake. In their psychological methods, Morton Prince and Walter Franklin Prince respectively represent temporal and spatial emphases. For the former, Christine's breakdown was due to her "youth, inexperience and extreme impressionability," that is, her time in life.[46] It was important during this longitudinal study to give all the characters time to develop, just as they took years to originally appear. The place of the personalities' appearance - even of the original traumatic event (a hospital) - is seen as less significant. Within this study there is another temporal aspect. Sally has an "absolute ignorance of time," she has no means of remembering time or estimating time. She is more of a spatialist, taking her selves off on unsanctioned jaunts. Christine, on the other hand, regarded as the 'real' person by Prince, is a temporalist and frequently complains that Sally has caused her "lost time": she is highly conscious of temporality, especially as a device for social order.[47]

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[46] Morton Prince, p.221 n3.

[47] Morton Prince, p.153, passim. Prince's emphasis.

Morton Prince may be viewed as one of the models for Professor Prendergast who reads the letters in I.5. In their suggestion of an absolute consumption or ideal reader, the letter-versions of the Wake correspond with the letters from Christine and Sally in The Dissociation of a Personality. As the above reading of I.5 shows, the Boston letter's high level of production demands its equal consumption, of which its reader, the professor figure, inevitably falls short. Likewise in The Dissociation of a Personality, Prince receives letters from Christine which place him in the position of an implicated, idealized reader. She tells him that he cannot think in a derogatory manner of her "if your knowledge and understanding of me are as absolute as I believe them to be"; and "even without my telling you you know my very inmost thoughts." Although "There is only one thing I have kept from you and that is nothing you would wish to hear," Prince goes on to be told it anyway: that her split personality was traumatised by a personal event occurring between her and an old friend whom Prince names William Jones. Sally also makes a similar implication about the reading qualities of Prince, whom she calls "a perfectly charming correspondent - much more interesting and unconventional than Jones - and I am sure I shall enjoy writing to you no end."[48] Prince's role is indeed without end, for not only does what passed between Jones and Miss Beauchamp remain a secret, but she is never fully cured anyway. In that sense, Prince is both an absolute reader - for his job is never done - and less than ideal - for his patient's secret remains hidden, even to herself.

Walter Franklin Prince, like Professor Jones in Finnegans Wake, is a spatialist. Unlike his namesake, he was not in fact a trained psychologist (though he had a Ph.D.) and his interest was more in spirits and mediums, in the mysticism of psychogenesis. For him,

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[48] Morton Prince, p.131, p.163.

> there are what might be called psychogenetic centers, that is, places and especially houses which have the property of causing persons to have similar experiences of an apparently occult character.[49]

Prince the spatialist, at the outset of his case, in November 1911 - which overlapped with that of Christine Beauchamp - wrote to Prince the temporalist. Unknown to the writer, his letter was intuited by Margaret, the secondary personality of his subject. She intuited that he had written to discuss Doris and asked after Christine. However, on that, the first occasion they had corresponded, the writer chose not to enquire after his colleague's subject. Margaret's intuition was thus proven, for her mistake shows she could not have read the letter. This event once more placed Morton Prince in the position of letter reader.

The two Princes also did not enjoy the best professional relationship. Walter Franklin Prince accused Morton Prince of withholding information that would have shown "the most logical way" of explaining Sally "would be by assuming her to be a spirit."[50] It is apt that the spatialist professor in the Wake is called Jones, also the name of the villain (Christine's old friend) in Morton Prince's study.

The two psychologists, both named Prince, have contributed towards the two professors of Finnegans Wake in their attitudes and relationship. They help stress the significance of the role of the professors as authorized interpreters in the Wake. They also provide a further suggestion that the professor figures are implicated beyond professional duty in the case of Issy/Maggy and the possibility of her incestuous relationship with HCE. First, the subject of Walter Franklin Prince became his foster daughter. Second, the 'villain' of Morton Prince's account is carefully exonerated by

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[49] W.F. Prince, p.1.

[50] Walter Franklin Prince, The Case of Patience Worth: A Critical Study of Certain Unusual Phenomena (Boston: Boston Society for Psychic Research, 1927), p.7.

the psychologist who cannot help unwittingly implying his further guilt, much as the professor figure in I.5 clears HCE while implicating him.

The central (and ultimately unknown) issue in The Dissociation of a Personality is the event between Jones, an older family friend, and Christine, a young nurse towards whom Jones had acted as a father-figure, at a hospital one thunderous night in 1893, which caused the latent split in Christine to become manifest, allowing Sally to appear openly for the first time. Prince never discovers exactly what passed between Jones and Christine at that unscheduled late meeting, or what the conversation was which upset her. In dealing with the incident, however, Prince launches into a defence of Jones, blaming the consequences of that meeting on Christine's "youth, inexperience, and extreme impressionability" and stressing that this is the subject's story "and therefore possibly perverted by the emotions experienced at the time." All of this "should be said in extenuation of the other actor [ie Jones] in the scene in case one is tempted to draw unwarranted inferences."[51] Again, the final reference to a need to defend Jones suggests at the very least that he has been accused of wrongdoing, which can only been inferred from Prince himself. Prince exonerates Jones, who continued to meet Miss Beauchamp while she was under the control of Sally, by saying that Jones was "innocently unconscious of it all," but also records that it was as much trouble, and the consequences as great, "as if all had been done with dire intent."[52] Prince thus implicates Jones by raising the previously unheard suggestion that he acted in a guilty fashion during Miss Beauchamp's treatment.

The story cannot be told without raising the possibility of Jones being guilty, nor can it self-consciously step aside of itself to allow the author to exonerate a character.

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[51] Morton Prince, pp.221-2 n3.

[52] Morton Prince, p.109.

Moreover, the rhetoric of Prince's dramatic metaphors cannot curtain the fact that he does not know what happened: his notes from the time refer, ignorantly, to "whatever occurred."[53] The closest we get to the event is the recollection of B IV (a fragmentary personality who Prince describes in his introduction as a typical woman), as she recoils in horror from her vision with the suggestive words (this was all she said), "we separate" and "he was very nervous and excited."[54] Thus Prince's account of his patient's split personality, in defending Jones also brings up the possibility of his guilt. Insofar as Jones had acted as a father-figure to Miss Beauchamp, the issue at stake here is also, metaphorically, one of symbolic incest.

The point about Morton Prince's study is that it leaves the issue undecided: not only is the future health of the subject uncertain, so also the event that led to her lapse is never explained. Freud criticized him for self-censorship and lenience towards Jones, and recently it has been alleged that Jones made a "rape attempt" upon Christine in a show of "sexual prowess", although Prince certainly does not record such a crime.[55] This is in keeping with those critics who too readily assume the sexual guilt of HCE.[56] However, it is clear that however far one traces the evidence for or against HCE the issue remains unresolved. The Wake cannot convict him, the letters condemn but also clear him, the source-books leave the question open, and the initial traumatic event goes unrecorded. Given the confusion generated by these three texts, it seems that documentation of that event would hardly clarify the issue. As suggested earlier, the logic of incest prohibits the determinate discovery of incest, and this is a methodological problem. On the other hand, as the method of this chapter suggests, in its use of

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[53] Morton Prince, p.222.

[54] Morton Prince, p.220.

[55] Shari Benstock, 'The Genuine Christine', p.173, p.190.

[56] For instance, Glasheen: "the sexual crime that H.C. Earwicker committed," p.89.

historical sources for the Wake, this problem does not preclude the attempt to trace specific instances even if their significance is ultimately unknown.

The role of the two professors in Finnegans Wake can be clarified by reference to their textual and historical sources. Their significance as interpreters - especially regards Issy and her letter writing - can thus be more readily understood. They also provide a variation on the incest theme and further documentation for its relevance within the Wake. The professor figure is thus part of that character complex - authoritative, older male figures - grouped under the label of HCE, which also includes Lewis Carroll. Like the professor figure, Carroll was a double, a pseudonym of a real academic, Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, a man who only broke away from his indefatigable letter writing and reading in order to entertain young girls. Dodgson even invented a Wakean device that enabled a resting writer to take notes in the dark. Dodgson's famous pair who are recorded in the Wake are Alice Liddell and Isa Bowman, prototype and actress of Alice in Wonderland, who also influenced the Issy/Maggy character. The relationship between Alice/Isa and Dodgson/Carroll was, at least, one of "symbolic incest," especially in that Isa called Dodgson 'uncle'.[57] There is another double in Dodgson/Carroll's writing. In Sylvie and Bruno, "the book which probably formed Joyce's introduction to Carroll," there are two professors, known simply as the Professor and the Other Professor.[58] The former, who is not sure which professor he is, has prepared a lecture for the two young children. At the close of the chapter in which the professors appear, the narrator remarks:

> I am of opinion that, when you are really anxious to impress a criminal with a sense of his guilt, you ought not to pronounce the sentence with

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[57] Hugh Kenner, Dublin's Joyce (London: Chatto and Windus, 1955), p.288. Stuart Dodgson Collingwood, Life and letters of Lewis Carroll (London: T.Fisher Unwin, 1898), p.402.

[58] James Atherton, The Books at the Wake (London: Faber, 1959), p.135.

> your lips quite close to his cheek - since a kiss at the end of it, however accidental, weakens the effect terribly.[59]

Hence in this other source for the professors of Finnegans Wake there is also a precedent for the implication of the interpreter with that which is interpreted. In the Wake, the professor figure, far from remaining disinterested in his material becomes - on one reading - personally involved in the letters he interprets. As the precedents of both Princes and Lewis Carroll suggest, that implication of the professor in his interpretation also takes the form of incest.

The writer-reader relationship between Issy and the professor figure acts as a commentary upon the conditions of production and reception undergone by Work in Progress as well as a more general reflection on the broader epistemological and hermeneutical problems involved. It is thus possible to argue that although the Wake appears to operate a logic of incest (whereby everything can be related), it also opposes that logic by inscribing an historical reading - via its portrayal of letters and their academic readership - whose specificity grounds (but also confuses) its relativism. It is this necessary paradox in interpretation that leads to an examination of the crux of the issue: the authority to determine reading. Although that is the pedagogic role of professors, within the Wake they remain individual, and are only communal as an actual readership. In Finnegans Wake the authority of an interpretive community rests elsewhere.

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[59] Lewis Carroll, Sylvie and Bruno (London: MacMillan, 1989), p.142.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Readership and Community in Finnegans Wake

This chapter records the fictional portrayal of reading communities in the Finnegans Wake. As chapter five showed, deconstruction can be understood in terms of its relationship to audiences. It is no surprise, then, that Finnegans Wake, whose logic deconstruction shares and which has been critically appropriated by it, should also address the logic of deconstruction in terms of audiences. This has been shown in analysis of the letter(s) in the previous chapter. The epistemological problem left by deconstructive logic concerns authority in interpretation: how are texts read in order to promote certain meanings? who has the authority to sanction a particular interpretation? Nor are these questions straightforward in that their answers cannot be defined solely in terms of sociology, for the identity (subjective or communal) upon which such a response would depend is itself a problem of interpretation.

The communities that establish interpretations are thus the real object of analysis; they are the political residue of deconstruction. Attempts to outline theories of interpretive communities have been made by Stanley Fish and others, who posit the notion of community as creators of textual identity rather than as mere receivers. However, this does not dispel the problem of identifying a community. The issue of readership is hence of central importance, for it combines the epistemological problems of interpretation with the historical problems of community.

This chapter first considers the role of Shaun as postman, then the work of Fish, and finally the role of the Four in Finnegans Wake.

1. Shaun the Post.

Having seen in chapter six how Derrida views the formation of a readership from and around a text like Finnegans Wake, it is necessary to see how such communities are formed and portrayed within the text itself. To this end, one can trace the path of Shaun-the-post, first on his round of deliveries and later in interview with the Four. That it is letters rather than post cards that come under scrutiny in the Wake is significant: for in Finnegans Wake the immediate enveloping context remains crucial to any interpretation, whereas Derrida's analogy with post cards relies upon their dual openness and specificity of address. Their similarity lies in their submission to the vagaries of the postal system. In The Post Card Derrida frequently remarks on his lost and unread letter, but in Finnegans Wake Shem's letter, although variously and wrongly delivered by Shaun (III.1), does get read, even if that readership is only Shaun (representative of the postal system). Those to whom it is read - the Four - in their role as an audience, are party to the letter's loss of privacy: in their reception of the letter, the letter becomes public. No such fate befalls Derrida's stray missive. Shaun and the Four are thus significant figures in the epistemological problems discussed in Finnegans Wake.

The role of Shaun, as postman, is crucial to the passage of the letters. Just as the communicative capacity of the letter form is questioned in the Wake, so the postal service is more than merely an innocent medium of attempted communication. As will become clear, the post and the law are thus analogous. Just as the law is an imperfect administration of justice, so the legal system is not simply the representation of the law. In each case, this double confusion is important. Not only is the direct agent of communication (letter and law: personal and public) inherently defective, but, further, it is also thwarted by the 'system' (for personal matters, this is called a 'service') supposed to deliver that communication.

The Wake places emphasis on this system in which a potential communication circulates. It shows that even when a letter or the law is delivered, it still remains also within the system. The system of delivery is thus also the arena of reception. Applied to literature, the Wake's rule would imply that a text is delivered and received within its critical commentary, or at least within institutions of criticism and publishing.

The most explicit discussion of Shaun's mediating role as postman in Finnegans Wake occurs in book three chapter one (III.1). The third book was among the first to be planned in Work in Progress and was described by Joyce as the four watches of Shaun. It charts his progress with the letter, from failed delivery, to his own reading of it, and his self-defence in interview with the Four.

Shaun refers to Shem's letters as "furloined notepaper" (419.30), recalling Poe's 'The Purloined Letter', on which Derrida based part of The Post Card. Shaun describes Shem's writing as "a pinch of scribble" which is "Overdrawn!... auctionable, all about crime and libel" and should be "entered for the foreign as second-class matter" (419.31-36). Shem's letter-writing, it is implied, has also produced Finnegans Wake just as the letter in I.5 has been taken to represent the text as a whole.

Shaun's comments recall the theme of relationships between the literary and the marketplace, a distinction made by Stephen Dedalus in A Portrait. Shem's writing refuses to recognize any difference, its value literally "second-class." One might here register a distinction between Shem's letter-writing and Finnegans Wake. The latter ostensibly combines both literary and market traditions, and although its resting-place is very much more inclined to departments of literature than marketplaces, it is possible to define academic criticism as the marketplace of literature (see chapter five). Joyce's work operates within the critical system just as Shem's writing is destined to remain

within the postal system, each circulating in a sphere that leans toward literature and marketplace respectively.

Shaun's role is as a parasite upon his brother's texts in an endless repetition of his twin's language. Even the form of III.1 suggests the secondary nature of Shaun's exercise, "which is," as Joyce called it, "a description of a postman travelling backwards in the night through the events already narrated."[1] As Shaun admits early in the chapter, "what Sim sobs todie I'll reeve tomorry" (408.21-22), a phrase which suggests the equivalence of reading and reaping (the only difference being the position of the character d/p by rotational symmetry) and, by extension, the collusion of the value of the literary with the economy of the marketplace. This is also an admission of some consequence for a postman: he reads the mail he delivers. What it further suggests, then, is that the delivery and reception of texts are part of the same system, that consumption is predicated in production, but that there still is a reception or consumption. This idea will be revisited in analysis of the Four as an interpretive community.

By his own admission, Shaun is "all too unwordy ... a mere mailman of peace" (408.10), "the bearer extraordinary of these postoomany missive on his majesty's service" (408.13-14). This reference to the state control of the postal network recalls the letter as found in I.5 which was stained by Maggy's tea, that is, majesty, the name in which the post is carried. The link is reinforced by Shaun's vocabulary, "to scratch, to compound" (412.32) which recalls the action of Biddy the hen in discovering the letter. The Wake suggests that its letters are 'tainted' prior to entering systems of dissemination (the letter in I.5 is already stained by Maggy's tea, or majesty), for instance by use of the English language. Biddy's letter travels from the United States to

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[1] To Harriet Shaw Weaver, 24th May 1924, Letters i. 214.

Ireland, both nations where English is the politically dominant language but not the indigenous one. English is at once a token of political oppression and its subversion a means of resistance for the Wake.

Shaun embodies a certain political ambivalence. In III.3, Yawn (Shaun) is spreadeagled across the whole of Ireland as the Four (Mamalujo), representing the provinces as well as the gospel writers, approach to interview him. As Joyce wrote to Miss Weaver, Shaun's map is here a kind of stamp, a "philatelic curiosity" (which was apparently quite common) commemorating the Irish Free State which nevertheless also includes in its depiction Northern Ireland.[2] As a political figure Shaun appropriates his brother's text (the letter he has written for their mother) to his own advantage, meanwhile Shem has already flown by the national net.

In III.1 Shaun refers to his interlocutor as "pay Gay" (419.31), that is, P.G. or Postmaster General, having earlier complained about his working conditions, warning, "not what I wants to do a strike of work but it was condemned on me ... and there does be a power coming over me that is put upon me from on high" (409.33-410.01). Whether or not Shaun is lazy or threatens industrial action against an oppressive management, his dissatisfaction with the post is clear enough. Part of this attitude is surely a political gesture, and one which can be more enlightened by recalling the place of General Post Office in the Easter 1916 uprising.

There is thus a political edge to the system in which letters or texts circulate. This system, as previously suggested, operates both the delivery and the reception of letters, yet it remains secondary to those letters, which thus stand as primary texts. For instance, Shaun is accused by his questioners:

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[2] To Harriet Shaw Weaver, 24 March 1924, Letters i. 213.

> since you rose to the use of money have you not ... used up slanguage tun times as words as the penmarks used out in sinscript with such hesitancy by your cerebrated brother (421.16-19).

The system that envelopes texts is thus accused of being not only secondary but also wasteful. In this economy, value is accorded to the sparse, and critical commentary, however accurate or helpful, is by its very nature profligate.

However, as Shaun points out, the letters of Shem are also somewhat derivative and extravagant. Shem's writing is said to be an "idioglossary" (423.09), that is, a distinct or private language. Shaun's analysis of Shem's writing may then be said to parallel that of many of the critics of Work in Progress. Shaun argues, "Ickick gav him that toock, imitator! And it was entirely theck latter to blame" (423.10), which is to say that the "idioglossary" was previously Shaun's, and was caused by a letter. The letter referred to may be a version of the one dictated to Shem by ALP; it may also refer to Stanislaus's letters, which suggested that he had given Joyce the idea for Ulysses, and rejected Work in Progress as "unspeakably wearisome" and "the witless wandering of literature before its final extinction." Stanislaus went further: "I for one would not read more than a paragraph of it, if I did not know you."[3] Shaun distantly echoes these lines as his invective against Shem reaches its height: "I would never for anything take so much trouble of such doing" (425.33).

Shaun's claim that "Shem Skrivenitch" was "always cutting my prhose to please his phrase" (423.15-16) involves arguing that Shem's "idioglossary" is derived from the material of Shaun's language, and that Shem's reworking of it has made it a language peculiar to himself. Shaun's questioners adopt an obsequious attitude, calling him "thrice truthful teller" (424.14), "strong Shaun" (424.24) and "so strikingly brainy and

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[3] From Stanislaus Joyce, 7th August 1924, Letters iii. 103.

well letterread" (425.05), thus egging him on to further emphasise his own claims to artistry at the expense of Shem, whose writing is now labelled plagiaristic (rather then merely derivative) as well as profligate:

> Every dimmed letter in it is a copy and not a few of the silbils and wholly words I can show you in my Kingdom of Heaven. The lowquacity of him! With his threestar monothong! Thaw! The last word in stolentelling! ... He store the tale of me shur. (424.32-425.02).

Shaun's claims involve some contradictions: how can he know that Shem has stolen his writing if Shem's is a private language? and assuming that this can be satisfactorily answered, would Shaun's accusations of obscenity ("root language" 424.17) then also be levelled against himself, "footinmouther" (424.19)?

Part of the pathway of the letter that Shaun delivers is given at 420.17 to 421.14, including versions of every address that Joyce lived at in Dublin, and eventually ends with the line, "Came Baked to Auld Aireen. Stop." This indication that the letter is 'returned' to Ireland (again a political gesture on Shaun's part) suggests also the impossibility of proper delivery. Each subsequent address of Joyce (they are listed by McHugh) is punctuated by a reason for non-delivery: "Not known at .... Nave unlodgeable. Loved noa's dress.... Noon sick parson.... No such no.... None so strait.... Place scent on.... Wrongly spilled." That the letter is returned to the dead letter office is indicated by the directions then given: "Search Unclaimed Male" where it is "All reddy berried." Not only could it not be delivered because its address was incorrect, the letter itself does not meet postal requirements: it is "Overwayed" and "Understrumped" so goes "Back to the P.O. Kaer of."

Its postmark is given as "Boston (Mass). 31 Jun. 13, 12." Given that the Boston letter in I.5 was dated "the last of the first" (111.10), this appears unlikely to be the same missive. However, Shaun's fable of the Ondt and the Gracehoper, recited previously in

III.1, had referred to "hegelstomes" covered by "June snows" (416.32-33). A similar quirk - reducing the difference between winter and summer - plus an exaggeration of the inevitable postal delay, could make these letters one and the same. A further correspondence between these letters can be deduced from the professor's question in I.5, "who in hallhagal wrote the durn thing anyhow?" (107.36 - 108.01). If Hegel's tomes refers to the letter, written in January, and so 'covered' in snow, but not postmarked until June, still bearing the imprint of snow, then the postal system can appear to occasion a quirk in natural order as well. Hegel's notion of a cyclical history, one which is partially reproduced in Finnegans Wake, would then be open to a sort of deconstructive critique.

A random event that undermines a predictable system, such as June snows in a cyclical history, encapsulates the deconstructive turn. On one hand, the passage of Shaun's delivery of the letter, as evidenced in III.1, is a further example of chance upsetting determinism. On the other hand, it reconfirms the system by retaining the letter within it: although it cannot be 'properly' delivered, it does not escape the postal network. Such moves do not negate the system, rather they reinforce it by retaining emphasis on the system as the medium of (attempted) delivery or communication. It is important that the system is understood not simply as linguistic but as an agent of social organization which therefore includes non-textual, political and institutional practices.

In Finnegans Wake the path of the letters comments upon social constructions of textuality. These issues have been misread in a recent book by Susan Shaw Sailer called On the Void of to Be (its title taken from 100.27). Sailer takes various given forms of post-structuralist theory (mainly from Kristeva and Derrida) and applies them to the Wake in order to measure the extent of their compatibility. There seems to be no theoretical or historical point to Sailer's book, other than a crude reduction of history

into language (and language understood as 'theory'). Discussing the relationship between Finnegans Wake and The Post Card, Sailer asserts that

> At the heart of each work is a message troped as card or letter that has been sent but not received. Each work tropes the present looking back at, and at the back of, the past and rewriting as well as being written by it. In folding the Wake into itself, The Post Card tropes this activity itself.[4]

This sub-deconstructive reading of two complex texts reduces each to a "message" that assimilates history, such as in the relationship between the Wake and The Post Card, within tropic language. Both texts do of course play upon the problematic relation between language and history, but Sailer's conclusion, that Derrida's text acts at a meta-tropic distance from tropic history (here seen as the work of the Wake), is a misreading of ahistorical character. For instance, Sailer's undue emphasis on the textuality of history allows her to make the later, and erroneous, claim that

> not only does it become impossible to sort out "truth" from "untruth", but it is irrelevant as well since what the reader encounters can be recognized only as the text's verbal surface, never as referentiality.[5]

Sailer's problem is that she works to a strict binary model of reference/nonsense which is simply unable to cope with the plurality of signification offered by the Wake. Hence truth may be relative but as a structuring principle - for instance in the alleged indiscretion of HCE - it is never irrelevant.

There are two significant offshoots from Sailer's wallowing in the indeterminacy of difficult texts. First, she casts the text as autonomous:

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[4] Sailer, On the Void of to Be, p.107.

[5] Sailer, p.145.

> Finnegans Wake ... maintains a tropic relationship with genres and referentiality that requires the reader encounter it on its own terms rather than via paradigms by which it may be preprocessed.[6]

Thus, implies Sailer, the Wake is accorded its own private language and an independent self-sufficiency that disqualifies the conventional expectations of any reader. Who, then, are its readers? This question refers to the second offshoot from Sailer's excessive textualism, which can be suggested by going back to her description of the connections between the Wake and The Post Card: "At the heart of each work is a message troped as card or letter that has been sent but not received." As an inaccuracy, this is itself significant, but as also an expression of Sailer's conclusions, it is indicative of her theoretical presuppositions. It is at least inaccurate, if not plain wrong, to say that the letters of Finnegans Wake have not been received: the missive in I.5, for instance, is viewed in its reception, and even that in III.1, which never reaches its intended destination, is received at other addresses and finally re-received by the post office. Similarly, in The Post Card, the lost letter is returned to the post office and then to its sender. Obviously, these letters are received, even if that reception is not intended or ideal.

This mistake carries over into Sailer's conclusions, and is suggested by her methodology: by according autonomy to Finnegans Wake she disallows any significance to its reception and even implies that it has no readers. Sailer refers to "The Letter" which she says is synecdochic of the text as a whole, and then also says that this is a trope for the text's message which is sent but not received. Sailer's reliance on the metaphoricity of texts at the expense of their history and reception thus effaces the aspect of readership. One might say of Sailer, as Shaun says of Shem to questions put

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[6] Sailer, p.166.

by the inquisitorial Four, that she "has a lowsense for the production of consumption" (422.06-7).

The example of the postal network as it functions in Finnegans Wake indicates that although a readership cannot often be determined it still exists, and its reception of a text is important to that text's future identity. This example also provides a reminder of the complex political character of appropriating systems. It is here, in the relation of identity to institution, that English studies finds its political dimension. A study such as that by Sailer, which leaves both identity and system in an ahistorical void, refuses to encounter that political dimension, and as such is not non-political but regressive.

2. Interpretive Communities.

The previous chapter showed a 'logic of incest' at work in Finnegans Wake which was a law of the text's allusive productivity whereby anything could be related to anything else. One of the crimes or sins of which HCE stands accused is incest, and it is the relationship between the law of the Wake's technique (the logic of incest) and the institutional law (and the agents of social legislation) which is here in question. These two laws can be rigorously distinguished, for the first denies the proper working of the second. If the Wake propounds a logic of relativism wherein all things are related, it is impossible to finally determine the guilt or innocence of HCE because such a determination must be made via the texts's logic. There is then a fundamental contradiction between the text's law and institutional law: the two are incommensurable.

Yet despite this apparent contradiction, one may still be, like Professor Prendergast in I.5,

> hoping against hope all the while that, by the light of philosophy, (and may she never folsage us!) things will begin to clear up a bit one way or another within the next quarrel of an hour ... as they ought to categorically, as, strictly between ourselves, there is a limit to all things so this will never do. (119:04-09)

For such a text, with no categorical limit (or even the likelihood of one), what is required is "that ideal reader suffering from an ideal insomnia" (120:13-14). As previous chapters demonstrate, however, past readers of Finnegans Wake and readers within the text, are all far from ideal. There is thus some tension within what was above called the law of the text: on the one hand it suggests that all things are inter-related, a relativism requiring an ideal reader, and on the other hand it acknowledges the impossibility of there ever being an ideal reader.

Joyce explores this issue in the Wake by placing its letters within particular reading situations. The ambiguity surrounding the issue of an impossible but necessary ideal reader, and the contradiction between the law of the text and institutional law, are explored in Finnegans Wake by their presentation in terms of a legal framework. Moreover, legal interpretation has been taken by much post-structuralist and reception theory as a paradigm for their epistemological problems, so by tracing these questions of readership and community in the circuitous reception of the letters and HCE's trial in Finnegans Wake, one may also comment upon critical theory.

Although these letters make appeals to justice and the law, they yet exhibit no great confidence in the legal system, to the extent of suggesting an awareness of their dual role as evidence for both defence and prosecution. Specifically, ALP's final letter refers to Lily Kinsella (the wife of McGrath, a neighbour of the Earwickers' implicated with Sully in the quotation above) and her "good name in the hands of the kissing solicitor" (618:05-6), and also to "the solicitous bussness by kissing and looking into a mirror" (618:18-19). The immediate agents of the law, the police, are also accused by ALP,

who suggests that "we were treated not very grand when the police and everybody is all bowing to us" (618:20-21) and mentions the intention "to lodge our complaint on sergeant Laraseny" (618:31). Both lawyers and the police, then, are not above similar accusations of indiscretion levelled at Earwicker and others. Indeed, the fluidity of character and role in Finnegans Wake not only necessarily implicates its actors, but also confuses them. For instance, in the opening pages HCE and ALP are announced as, "Hic cubat edilis. Apud libertinam parvulam" (7.22-3). For once Joyce's Latin is virtually unencumbered, and translates as 'here lies the magistrate with the freed girl'. The possibilities arising from this are numerous: male figure is HCE and magistrate; the female both ALP and even Issy.

Just as the evidence of the letters shows that texts may be interpreted in conflicting ways and that no one text functions as a metalanguage to explain the others, so with the people involved: no one group are intrinsically able to judge the morals of others. The point would then be that the authority to interpret or to judge is a social construct: institutional law is very much the authority of an 'interpretive community'. Finnegans Wake consistently suggests the inescapable significance of interpretive communities, yet also consistently undermines them, for instance in its portrayal of the law in the series of letters.

Shaun's deliveries of letters in Finnegans Wake, like Derrida's playful examination of the postal network, necessarily points to - but also problematizes - the critical importance of the community that receives a text. The law is one such area in which the Wake presents a community of readership, usually represented by the Four, whose role as an interpretive community nevertheless takes them beyond legal matters. Before presenting a detailed analysis of the role of the Four in Finnegans Wake, it is necessary to consider the theory of interpretive communities, as it has most notably been developed by Stanley Fish.

Fish's argument, and essentially he has only one (which is repeated in all his essays, as he admits), is that of a total scepticism, or, as he calls it, anti-foundationalism. There are no grounds for any interpretive act that will secure that interpretation as naturally right or neutral, Fish says. Instead, every interpretation is the result of conventions which pre-govern the expectations of the interpreter. Every interpretive act - from reading Paradise Lost or Finnegans Wake to recording a legal judgement - is decided not by the object under scrutiny (say, chapter I.5 of the Wake) but by those conventions, which are necessarily already in place, governing the reader's approach to the situation. It is these conventions which characterize what Fish calls an interpretive community.

This theory therefore has the double advantage of explaining similarities between interpretations without reverting to formalism and of recognizing cultural differences in varying determinations of texts. For the purposes of this study of the relationship between Finnegans Wake, its readership, and the discipline of English studies, the concept of interpretive communities is useful (befitting Fish's neo-pragmatic approach) insofar as it takes on board a critique of interpretive foundations, such as in deconstruction, while also proposing a further analysis based in readership.

For Fish, that readership, in the case of literary texts, is the profession of literary criticism. Hence "the objects of our professional attention - texts, authors, genres, and so on - are as much the products of the institution as are the acceptable forms that attention can take."[7] For Fish, then, there can be no text 'itself' since that text changes with every shift in its interpretation and does not exist without interpretation. Material

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[7] Stanley Fish, 'No Bias, No Merit: The Case Against Blind Submission', in Doing What Comes Naturally (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp.168-9. All citations of Fish's essays refer to this collection.

artifacts exist, but only in a context that involves their pre-interpretation as a particular kind of material artefact, for instance as a novel. What needs clarification in this argument is the community which effects interpretation, asserting a dominant one and, in time, allowing it to change. Too often, for Fish, that interpretive community is merely associated with "the institution" or professionalism. He claims that both anti-professionalism and critical theory are without consequence, being merely alternative expressions of an institutional, professional discourse whose presiding assumptions override any marginal attempt to oppose them: every outrage against a dominant professional ethic or practice is thus, for Fish, an expression of that ethic or practice. No alternatives are given by Fish, other than "business as usual," presumably because there can be no alternative.[8]

Texts are thus subsumed within a combination of authority and interpretation, a theory which would gain more adherents if the relationship between authority and interpretation were not so circular. As Fish says,

> interpretation is a form of authority, since it is an extension of the prestige and power of an institution; and authority is a form of interpretation, since it is in its operations an application or "reading" of the principles embodied in that same institution.[9]

The problem with interpretive communities seen in this light is that they are closed to outsiders, and there is no questioning, on Fish's part, of the forms authority takes, how it perpetuates itself, how it can be overcome, whether or not it is just. In the quotation above, interpretation and authority are mutually involved variables, but the institution is fixed and given.

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[8] Fish, 'Anti-Professionalism', p.243.

[9] Fish, 'Fish v. Fiss', p.135.

Fish's utter scepticism involves a recognition of interpretive plurality and the futility of seeking a neutral vantage point. His contribution to this position is to assert that in any given interpretive act a number of constraints limit and define that act. Yet Fish offers no analysis of those constraints, and his failure to do so may account for the careless way they are deployed in his theory. For instance, discussing Dworkin's example of a coauthored novel, Fish says that all its writers are equally constrained and the preconditional constraints are "uniformly so": "everyone in the enterprise is equally constrained" where "By 'equally' I mean equally with respect to the condition of freedom". In the given example, each author is "as free" as another.[10] As Fish acknowledges, not everyone is subject to the same constraints, so clearly not everyone is, as Fish seems to claim, equally free. Fish mistakenly assumes that all constraints are equally restrictive; he makes no distinction between constraints (values, ideologies) which are unknown and those which are consciously willed; he makes no distinction between unknown constraints that are a serious threat to liberty and those which are relatively innocuous. This concept of preconditioned constraints is crucial to the operation of interpretive communities but is hardly enlarged upon in Fish's work.

The upshot of mistakenly calling constraints equal is, ironically, a position of attempted neutrality unrecognised by the author as such. Only if the theory of interpretive communities was neutral could Fish logically see all ideologies as equally, and inevitably, deviant from an unbiased path. Fish's claim that everything is biased is part of the strength of his work, but which unfortunately can only be made by retaining a sense of neutrality from which all things are biased or deviant; and for Fish that neutral position seems to be represented by his own theory, which he claims has no "political implications built into" it.[11] It is, then, purely a matter for other (and other because

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[10] Fish, 'Working on the Chain Gang', pp.90-91.

[11] Fish, 'Change', p.156.

political) groups within literary academia to appropriate Fish's work and use it for their own ends. Fish's work does have an overt political affiliation (liberalism), but, according to the theory itself, it must also have an unknown bias (or constraint, or ideology, or politics - whatever one wants to call it) which to some extent limits and directs its effective life.

Fish's characterization of the relationship between constraint and freedom is symptomatic of a recurrent theme in his essays, that is, a rigid distinction between opposites which fails to record the myriad shades of indistinction between binary poles. Similarly, his definitions of politics and what he calls consequences are too narrow. Hence critical theory (again Fish's definition is restrictive) has no political consequences. Not only is politics only associated with declarations from the White House, but a consequence is limited to that which necessarily follows from a previous logical position. If Fish's definition of a consequence was extended to include the local effects of a particular position (for instance in its sociological context), it would be more helpful for an analysis of 'theory' and would also enlarge his concept of politics to include much which is naively overlooked.

Fish invokes a distinction between the literary and the marketplace, not in terms of inherent qualities in those discourses, but in terms of their professional or pragmatic expression. Thus professional literary studies

> claims for itself the exclusive possession of a certain skill (the skill of attending properly to poems), but then it defines that skill in such a way as to remove its exercise from the activities of the marketplace where professions compete for the public's support.[12]

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12 Fish, 'No Bias, No Merit', p.173.

This view, that the profession of literary studies has cut itself off from other areas of public life, accords with the criticism made above, namely, that Fish operates distinctions that are too strict. There is also another side to this historical point in that the relatively minor political significance of literary critics is not solely or even mainly a result of their own work, but a direct effect of another political gesture aimed at higher education in general by governments of the day. However, despite distinguishing literary and marketplace professions, occasionally Fish does seem to go back on his theory, such as when arguing that

> The judgement of an authoritively placed literary critic ... can have a profound and direct effect on what gets taught in the schools [etc.] ... [and] can finally have an effect on the very structure of a culture.[13]

Obviously, the distinction cannot be all that firm after all, for Fish here explicitly admits the political significance of a powerful Leavis figure. It should be added, though, that in Fish's argument it is only the position of the critic which has political significance, not what he or she says. Their views can become as culturally important as Fish intimates only if they already agree with the dominant political scenario, whatever it is.

This may seem to provide one with some useful ammunition for a critique of the dominating cliques in any professional discourse, but for Fish that would be ineffective and therefore pointless unless it comes from within that dominant group. If, as Fish claims, the theory of interpretive communities is not a further bolstering of the status quo, how does it allow for change?

Fish's answer is that change does happen, but only from within. An interpretive community must necessarily recognize the potential relevance of any alteration to its

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13 Fish, 'Don't Know Much About the Middle Ages: Posner on Law and Literature', p.306.

make-up, which will therefore "already have been inside."[14] Deconstruction, for example, arose from a set of methods that were already "commonplace and orthodox," according to Fish, and, as a critical theory, any change it might occasion "cannot be determined in advance."[15] This has an uncanny resemblance to Derrida's dictum that "monsters cannot be announced." For Fish, a revolution is never possible since everything that ever happens is sanctioned. This means that although change is accounted for, all enabling power is placed in the hands of the dominant discourse of the day. Change is taken for granted: "since an interpretive community is an engine of change, there is no status quo to protect."[16] However, this does not rid us of a status quo, it merely collapses change into conservatism.

The greatest problem with Fish's theory is that interpretive communities can neither be defined nor recognized. Clearly, for Fish, they are intimately linked to professional structures (and this is largely the appeal of his work), but whether they refer to a cultural group or to all holders of a particular view is not always clear. Certainly, though, sociological communities can be distinguished by either means. But this is made more complicated by the anti-foundationalist stance (which also underpins Fish's work) that all acts are interpretative, and thus everyone in every situation is a member of an interpretive community. Fish sees this problem and puts it to himself, thus:

> how can any one of us know whether or not he is a member of the same interpretive community as any other of us? The answer is that he can't, since any evidence brought forward to support the claim would itself be

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[14] Fish, 'Change', p.147.

[15] Fish, 'Change', p.155, p.156.

[16] Fish, 'Change', p.156.

> an interpretation.... The only "proof" of membership is fellowship, the nod of recognition from someone in the same community.[17]

This is an unfortunate passage in that it makes an interpretive community sound like an all-male masonic lodge. Its expression hides the real problem with the theory: interpretive communities are a useful concept only if they can be defined and analyzed, but, apparently, they can't. The really interesting question would be, 'What is the relationship between different interpretive communities, and why is it so?' but, using Fish's schema that question cannot even be asked, let alone answered.

4. The Four.

In its exploration of the significance of reading and readership in textual processes, Finnegans Wake operates systems of interpretive communities as internal readers. An examination of some of these interpretive communities can reveal what usefulness they may have as concepts for the critical reading of literary texts. The Wake may thus be able to bring some much needed improvement to our critical elucidation of interpretative questions.

One kind of interpretive community has already been discussed in chapter two, which recorded Joyce's inscriptions of some of his hostile critics in Work in Progress. However, these critics form an interpretive community only in their historical role as particular readers of Joyce's work, variously alluded to in the text, and do not function collectively as such in Finnegans Wake, where they are diversely employed. Rather, the Wake's primary example of an interpretive community is the Four, who act in various

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[17] Stanley Fish, 'Interpreting the Variorum', in Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities (London: Harvester University Press, 1980), p.173.

legal capacities in the trial of HCE. They also interrogate Yawn, who is a version of Shaun. The Four thus act as an interpretive community towards the archetypal figure who also represents the postal system. Although that system is an important mediating context for the letters - which are structured to figure centrally in the text - it is itself placed in the context of the Four whose role as an inscribed audience has the specific function of interpretation. That is to say, the Four are within the system which they interpret. Also, as will be seen, the Four function both within Earwicker's dream and, apparently, in relation to the sleeping dreamer or narrator. The Four thus facilitate interpretation of the postal system in their response to Shaun, and of the broader dream in their meta-narrative capacity. Their role as a mediating context and an interpretive community is thus highly important to an analysis of readership in Finnegans Wake.

The inquisitorial role of the Four in III.1 has been mentioned above. However, their cross-examination of Shaun is relatively late in the legal process, which they control. The Four are otherwise known as Mamalujo (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) but also appear as any elderly male tetrad or as the authors of Annals of the Four Masters, a book of early Irish mythology. Associated with wisdom and authority, they command respect from all characters and are representative of the law in both social and spiritual forms ("ethiquethical" perhaps). However, this does not mean that Finnegans Wake always accords them the same respect.

The Four are first encountered in I.4 where they appear as four old judges, "setting around upin their judges' chambers" (94.24-5), who argue about their varying definitions of the law and history. The law itself is "Well and druly dry" (94.27-8) but their historical interpretations enliven the debate, despite the fact that it is "rallthesameagain" (94.27). The Four listen to evidence - "Accourting to king's evelyns" (94.28) - which has been collected "under the suspices of Lally" (94.25-6), a policeman and "conscientious scripturereader" (67.12) who first appears "sporting a

fine breast of medals" (67.11-12) when giving evidence against Earwicker following his arrest in the previous chapter (I.3).

The Four are introduced with a warning: "The Four of them and thank court now there were no more of them" (94.31-2), which appears to be justified when they are subsequently implicated in Earwicker's alleged sexual misdemeanour and begin to quarrel among themselves. They disagree about the narrative which is concocted around what evidence there is: "And so they went on, the fourbottle men, the analists, unguam and nunguam and lunguam again, their anschluss about her whosebefore and his whereafters" (95.27-9). Gradually, the place of Earwicker in the narrative is assumed by the four judges, "contradrinking themselves about Lillytrilly law" (96.03-4). They recall

> the four of them, in Milton's Park under lovely Father Whisperer and making her love with his stuffstuff in the languish of flowers and feeling to find was she mushymushy, and wasn't that very both of them, the saucicissters ... and how they used her, mused her, licksed her and cuddled. I differ with ye! Are you sure of yourself now? You're a liar, excuse me! I will not and you're another! And Lully holding their breach of the peace for them. Pool loll Lolly! To give and to take! And to forego the pasht! And all will be forgotten! (96.09-21)

Here, the Four are clearly identified as the perpetrators of [illegible] probably Earwicker's daughter Issy and her other personal[illegible] which recalls their initial description as "sosie sesthers" (3.12). [illegible] identities of the four provinces of Ireland - Ulster, Munster, Leinster and C[illegible] the sinister intimations of "used her, mused her, licksed her[illegible] therefore implicated in the very allegations which, as judg[illegible] also their role as an interpretive community which co[illegible] interpretation. In this way, the case against Earwicker, as [illegible] judges, is also created by them in the same manner that an in[illegible]

writes the text it is supposed to read. This is intimated in Finnegans Wake by the Four's complicity in the act which they judge.

The difficulty of imposing the label of community on the Four is indicated by the bickering that ensues as soon as it is made evident that they have committed some sexual indiscretion. Immediately, four voices rise in protest at one another, disuniting both the rule of law and their national role as Irish provinces. Indeed, the connection between state and law is direct and explicit. It becomes increasingly clear that the Four are, at the least, disreputable, and this is reconfirmed when it emerges that their power is held together by social position rather than communal similarity and that they are reliant in their authority not on any inherent wisdom or other quality but on the force of the police, here represented by "Pool loll Lolly" who is "holding their breach of the peace for them." The danger of the abuse of power and authority by the Four is that, as agents of the law (as judges) and of the land (as the provinces of Ireland), they can not only shape current events but also re-write history: "And to forego the pasht! And all will be forgotten!" It is notable that this possibility only arises when the Four are once more in accord, as demonstrated by the four brief sequential exclamations which end the above quotation.

The fictive quality of the Four's interpretations, that is, how they decide history, is brought to light in the following paragraph:

> even should not the framing up of such figments in the evidential order bring the true truth to light as fortuitously as a dim seer's setting of a starchart might (heaven helping it!) uncover the nakedness of an unknown body ... our special mentalists now holds ... that by such playing possum our hagious curious encestor bestly saved his brush with his posterity, you, charming coparcenors, us, heirs of his tailsie. (96.26-35)

History is here a play between a creative choice ("framing up of ... figments") and an underlying determinism ("evidential order" and "heaven helping"). The materiality

which is shaped by this process of historical interpretation is already given: the unknown naked body is there waiting to be uncovered. The sexual innuendo of discovery (itself an interpretative act) leads back to HCE ("hagious curious encestor"), the original body and therefore the primary ancestor. From HCE to the Four is merely a question of ancestral descent, legalized as a tailzie, annotated by McHugh as the Scottish law that limits a freehold estate to a person and his heirs. The Four are thus an interpretive community whose legal authority maintains the inheritance of HCE: the original guilt of sexual sin. They as much as anyone, including the readers of Finnegans Wake, "you," are sufficiently implicated in the alleged offences to share that guilt, our common inheritance. All heirs thus form a broader interpretive community whose unifying principle was expressed by Stephen Dedalus in Ulysses: "paternity may be a legal fiction" (U. 10.844).

An essay by Barry Stocker on 'The Return of the Law in Finnegans Wake' argues, from a post-structuralist perspective, that "The law is essentially playful," a somewhat unfortunate expression for its victims and users. However, his analysis confirms "an inevitability of incest" since "the history of law in Finnegans Wake is the history of law breaking." Stocker is right to link "the fragmentation of the law"in the Wake to "the frontier of the state."[18] As will be shown, the divided Four also represent Ireland's four provinces and their interrogation of Shaun - a pseudo politician - constitutes an analysis of the way a concept of interpretive community fails to deal with political division.

The Four reappear in Book Two as the "four avunculusts" (367.14) who harass HCE and accuse him of a "grossery baseness" (367.02). Their identities here are their most common: Matthew Lyons, Mark Gregory, Luke Tarpey and Johnny MacDougall.

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[18] Barry Stocker, 'The Return of the Law in Finnegans Wake', Oxford Literary Review, 14.1-2 (1992), 46-65 (p.48, p.62, p.65).

> And, since threestory sorratelling was much too many, they maddened and they morgued and they lungd and they jowld. Synopticked on the word. (367.15-17)

Together they represent a kind of universal omniscience, structured in a 'three plus one' formation, that is, the synoptic gospels plus John, like the structure of Vico's history (and Finnegans Wake) and three spatial dimensions plus time. The Four thus also comprise the "fourdimmansions" (367.27).

In II.4 (383 - 399) "the old connubial men of the sea" (386.04-5) watch over the voyage of Tristan and Isolde and each of the Four in turn recites his part in an ongoing narrative that comprises various histories of Ireland and their own voyeurism towards the sailing couple. In this account, the Four appear as more of a community: there are no overt disputes, and they have in common references to the early history of Ireland (the Viking invasion as told by John, the attack of the Flemish armada in 1169 as told by Mark and Luke, and Matt's reference to the Battle of Clontarf in 1014) as well as to modern Ireland, and the hovering presence of Lally in three of their reports (387.19, 389.34 - 390.03, 394.18). The previous role of the Four is not forgotten as both John and Luke refer to Justices of the Peace.

In this chapter one of the communal ties between the Four is their ambivalent nationalism. Mark's narrative refers to "the four trinity colleges, for earnasyoulearning Eringrowback, of Ulcer, Moonster, Leanstare and Cannought" (389.04-5). An English translation of 'Érin go bráth' ("Eringrowback") is Ireland until judgement day, suggesting a direct link between pedagogy and the interests of the national state. However, the distorted names of the provinces and the religious violence of "Killorcure and Killthemall and Killeachother and Killkelly-on-the-Flure" (389.06-7), where 'kill' is the Anglo-Irish for Church, suggests also a certain hesitancy in the republican support of the Four. Joyce's association of the Four with pedagogy can be attested

from a letter he wrote to his benefactress early in the composition of Work in Progress. As McHugh records in his Annotations, Joyce described this section (there is a specific reference at 392.05) as "a picture of an epicene professor of history in an Irish university college seated in the hospice for the dying."[19]

The memory of this collective figure of a professor in "the housepays for the daying" (392.07-8) is obviously somewhat imperfect since he is "doying to remembore" (392.11) his constituent selves. Although the Four narrate similar events, each account includes material not found in the others, and collectively their history is far from exhaustive or impartial. This little-recognized professor figure is then important in that he represents the futility of attempting to gather history into a continuous narrative. Instead, he is left "taying and toying" (392.09) with his dismembered recollections.

The fate of the "poor old coax" (392.10) professor has ramifications for the nationalist cause since it is based upon the potential for a unified country, one which could then have a united historical narrative. The attempt by the professor to remember, that is, both to recall and to piece together, encapsulates the aim of the nationalists, with whom the Four have been tentatively aligned. Republicanism can be seen in their name and their profession as lawyers: in April 1922 it was the occupation of the Four Courts Building by Irregulars (those who rejected the Treaty) that sparked the violence which began civil war.

The link between the Four as an interpretive community and nationalism is also revealed in the slogan of the Irish republican movement, 'Sinn Féin, Sinn Féin Amháin', roughly, Ourselves, Ourselves Alone. According to Fish's model of an interpretive community, nationalism thus expressed is an unattainable idealism for there can be no

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[19] To Harriet Shaw Weaver, 23 October 1923, Letters i. 205.

such independent object (such as a country) which is beyond interpretation and therefore beyond dispute. This example throws up another problem with Fish's theory: it fails to say anything about how a disputed historical interpretation can be resolved in the most just manner. Simply denying the possibility of justice does not remove the imperative to seek its fairest manifestation.

In the narration of Matthew, the last of the Four to comment, the nationalist slogan is re-worked as "Itself is Itself Alone" (394.33) in the following passage:

> that which Itself is Itself Alone (hear, O hear, Caller Errin!) exteriorises on this ourherenow plane in disunited solod, likeward and gushious bodies with ... intuitions of reunited selfdom ... in the higherdimissional selfless Allself (394.33 - 395.02).

Even though Itself is presently manifested in various solid, liquid and gaseous natures, its unity is retained in relation to its ideality, which can only be said to exist as a "higherdimissional" ideal. Nevertheless, that ideal realm continues to structure events and attitudes: there may be no justice or no nationality but belief in it continues to exert a considerable influence. HCE is called by Matthew to witness this. Just as analysis of the letter showed that some concept of the text itself must be retained, so in this case some notion of nationality must be retained amid competing discourses. Although "Itself Alone" may be unattainable, its struggle cannot be dismissed as an idealism. The role of the Four as an ambivalently nationalist 'interpretive community' shows that the concept is not incompatible with some notion of the text itself. However, as will be shown, Matthew represents Ulster in Finnegans Wake, so his nationalism must also be seen in the context of loyalism.

Clive Hart has said that the Four's "geometrical positions outline the frame which encloses the book."[20] In III.3 (474 - 554), the Four encompass north, south, east and

[20] Clive Hart, Structure and Motif in Finnegans Wake (London: Faber, 1962), p.64.

west as well as the four provinces of Ireland and the four gospel writers as they focus their attention on Yawn (Shaun) in the investigation of his father's alleged sins. In this chapter and the next they act largely together and are often found in agreement with each other, principally when they interrupt the narratives of others, each making similar comments.

The four converge upon Yawn "for he was ever their quarrel" (475.19), and like their inquisition, this journey never quite reaches its final goal as "the travelling court on its findings circuiting that personer in his fallen" (476.12-13). On finding Yawn in a crib the narrative breaks away from the awestruck Four by invoking the presence of a reader, directly addressed by the narrator ("I") as "drear writer" (476.21). In this way, both fictional and real-inscribed readers (mamalujo and 'dear reader') are presented together at the crucial moment when "question time drew nighing" (476.32-3). Their first demand is that Yawn should "Name yur historical grouns" to which the reply comes, "the orangery" (477.35-6), in which are kept his "Throsends" (478.03) and "Millions" (478.05) of letters. The letters of the Wake, those of Shaun the post, worker in the communication network, are the material 'grounds' of history.

The Four, who are aided by an interpreter (thus fulfilling the mysterious fifth role always associated with them) want to discuss a "deuterous point" concerning "maggers" (478.07). Rather then Maggy, the signatory of letters elsewhere in the Wake, this turns out to be majesty, and Matthew shoots into a defence of monarchism, protesting that Yawns's "malherbal Magis landeguage ... hace not one pronouncable teerm ... to signify majestate" (478.09-12). This line of proceeding fits with their complaint (in bowdlerized French) that Yawn's language is too perplexing: although a key has been found, it has no value (478.21-2). The Four thus signal the course of their interrogation, in which they will rely upon their social authority rather than logical deduction to attempt to bring the case to a conclusion. In this episode, the Four also

fulfil their role as fictional readers of Finnegans Wake, protesting at its language in terms that cast an ironic contradiction over their complaint.

Throughout the interrogation of Yawn by the Four, which comprises the greater part of this chapter (pages 474 to 523), before other witnesses are called upon, there is a subtext of debate concerning conditions of knowledge, identity and expression. This epistemological debate, which frequently has political overtones, concerns the same conditions that are in question in the concept of an interpretive community, of which the Four can be read as an example.

Shortly into the interrogation, Matt Gregory describes the Treaty of 1922, known to de Valera's supporters as Document No.1, as "dogumen number one ... illegible downfumbed by an unelgible" (482.20-21), to which Yawn responds to Matt that he is "too farfar a cock of the north" and, presumably to Mark, "your due south so" (482.27-8). Mark then replies that Matt is "up-in-Leal-Ulster and I'm-free-Down-in-Easia" (482.29-30), attesting his allegiance to the Free State over the partitioned counties. Yawn's position is in the centre of Ireland, as the Four converge on him.

Later in the interview, as the Four let their differences show, Matt (Ulster) is more aggressive about "Doggymens' nimmer win!" (528.33-34), berating the other three:

> Your crackling out of your turn, my Moonster firefly, like always. And 2 R.N. and Longhorns Connacht, stay off my air! You've grabbed the capital and you've had the lion's shire since 1542 but there's all the difference in Ireland between your borderation, my chatty cove, and me. (528.27-31)

Since the Irish lords submitted to the English crown in the mid sixteenth century, Munster, Connacht and Leinster (2 R.N. was the Dublin Broadcasting Company's radio signature), so Matt implies, have agitated for their independence. Matt here represents the claim of Ulster Unionists for the acceptance of the Treaty, yet his

adoption of the term Document No.1 ironically undercuts his argument as this is the name given the Treaty by De Valera's supporters (De Valera had proposed what he called Document No.2 as an alternative to the Treaty). Clearly, by this late stage in the interrogation, the Four represent a divided community.

The relationship of the Four to the object of their interview must then be seen in the context of their historical and political identities. The internal divisions within the Four, the interpretive community who read the object of scrutiny, Yawn, are therefore relevant to the question of unity and division within that object of scrutiny. Will a divided audience always read a divided text? The Four seem quite sure that their text is Yawn, and that Yawn can provide valuable information about the real mystery of Finnegans Wake, the alleged actions of HCE, which the Four investigate in their capacity as judges. However, the self-identity of Yawn is also problematic. He is asked,

> did it ever occur to you, qua you ... that you might, bar accidens, be very largely substituted in potential secession from your next life by a complementary character, voices apart? (486.35 - 487.04)

The question causes him some confusion and his troubled memory is perhaps an indication of his answer as he replies that

> A few times, so to shape, I chanced to be stretching, in the shadow as I thought, the liferight out of myself in my ericulous imaginating.... I indicate out to myself and I swear my gots how that I'm not meself at all, no jolly fear, when I realise bimiselves how becomingly I to be going to become. (487.13-19)

Yawn's response is more than a simple statement of plural identity, for it relies always on a basic persona. The extended identities possessed by Yawn are stretched from his fundamental self, even though that self is never fully realised or self-identical. Its importance may be suggested by the number of times he refers to "I," and its status is

always one of becoming, as a self in process. Like most characters in Finnegans Wake, one could say that Yawn is iterable.

The interview between the Four and Yawn thus charts the questions of identity raised by an interpretive community. In each case, both the Four and Yawn assert a basic identity which is characterized by division or excess. Not only does the interview take the form of discussion of their personal identities, it also explicitly poses the problem of epistemological knowledge of a thing in itself. The interview is concerned also with questions of validity in interpretation, but soon establishes that knowledge reaches beyond language:

> The prouts who will invent a writing there ultimately is the poeta, still more learned, who discovered the raiding there originally. That's the point of eschatology our book of kills reaches for now in soandso many counterpoint words. What can't be coded can be decorded if an ear aye sieze what no eye ere grieved for.
> (482.31-6)

Reading, Mark implies, is as original as writing: interpretation may be a universal activity but it need not be restricted to language. That which cannot be "coded," or put into words, because it is previously unexperienced, can still be interpreted. By arguing this position, the Four as an interpretive community establish that the terms of their inquiry encompass an object that may fall beyond language and at the same time they allow for problems of linguistic interpretation.

The quincunx on the mound in III.3, as Hart notes, has at its centre the tree of knowledge, which is also the proud member of Yawn. The Four are also associated with modern keepers of knowledge, as "Frui Mria" (495.34), that is, Fellows of the Royal University of Ireland and Members of the Royal Irish Academy. Yawn, on the other hand, insists "I am no scholar" (489.26) even though the Four declare his tale "a study" (489.33). Yawn's complaint against the Four, whose linguistic manipulation

outmanoeuvres him, is that "You'd make me sag what you like to" (491.02). The suggestion of over-interpretation or a sort of pre-interpretation, where the question presupposes the answer, is also found in the Four's question about HCE: "His producers are they not his consumers?" (497.01-2). The Four thus exemplify one of the problems of an interpretive community: every reading is preordained. They can make Yawn say what they want and those who judge HCE also already produced him. An interpretive community plays God in a hermeneutic cycle, so it is fitting that the Four are also the gospel writers. Both within and beyond the dream, the Four know that the consumers of the dream are also its producers.

The Four interview not only Yawn but also ALP, as she speaks through Yawn, as well as Thom and the ghost of Finnegan. Thom describes the Four in court as "wise elephants" (513.35) only to be told, "They were simple scandalmongers.... Making mejical history all over the show!" (514.01-3). It is precisely this charge of fabricating historical evidence that an interpretive community is open to if its object of knowledge is pre-interpreted: if there is no object or evidence as such then any history derived from it is unverifiable and so also in a way 'magical'. As the Four deliberate over their findings concerning Yawn they appear to endorse this approach by suggesting that he is 'relatively innocent'. The "deponent" (523.07), they declare,

> may be as much sinned against as sinning, for if we look at it verbally perhaps there is no true noun in active nature where every bally being - please read this mufto - is becoming in its owntown eyeballs. (523.09-12)

Just as not every townsman can be recognized as belonging to his home town, so also language can be opaque. There is then no word to describe adequately any identity, for no "true noun" exists in isolation. The irony of the Four's summary is that they ask us to read "mufto" or 'plainly' having just problematized that very act. Finnegans Wake hence shows itself to be somewhat aware of the pitfalls of an interpretive community.

Although the ghost of Finnegan claims to be "replete in myself ... with all that's buried ofsins insince insensed insidesofme" (499.24-6), the four usually face difficulty even in defining the object of their interrogation. It seems that Finnegan can only speak thus because he reappears as a ghost, risen from the dead, his living self bounded and objectified. When Issy speaks later in the chapter it is to question the viability of a 'thing in itself': "Is dads the thing in such or are tits the that?" (528.15-16). Issy's remark suggests Kant's ding an sich or thing in itself, to be distinguished from the thing as it is perceived. Issy's confusion is not only sexual, and thus a further slight on the reputation of Earwicker, but also philosophical. The same problems of perception that occupied the waking thoughts of Stephen Dedalus recur in more rudimentary form here, and notably Issy's confusion is still not so great as to annihilate a thing itself: for there to be difference there must also be a perception of self-identity in objects in order to recognize their difference. As the whole investigation ultimately pertains to sexual misdemeanour, Issy's philosophical discourse is aptly a case of this, that and a bit of the other.

The interviews and speeches in this chapter refer back to the incriminating letters as they were first discussed at length in I.5, as is to be expected since they too raised issues of identity and difference, of interpretation and the text in itself. As the letter became associated with pedagogy through its readership and opaque content, so also is the sin it refers to a pedagogical activity: just as the sexual secret of ALP's womanhood was the lesson of the twins textbook in II.2, so here the appearance of two children in their "silks apeel" (508.29) is, for Yawn, "Etoudies for the right hand" (508.34). As Yawn, speaking for HCE, admits to peeping in the park, the questions turn to the mysterious figure of Toucher Thom, who, so it appears from Yawn's "watching brief" (509.04), defecates in the park. Yawn's brief is his witness statement, a letter (from the German) and his underwear. "Tomsky, the enemy" (509.05) plays the role of the Russian

General and Yawn is Private Buckley, who watches the action and grows "rooshian mad" (509.07) at him for cleaning himself with (in Joyce's embellishment, Irish) turf. Yawn's description of Tom - he "made a piece of first perpersonal puetry" (509.35) - recalls the letter in I.5, which was described as a "genuine relique of ancient Irish pleasant pottery" (111.22-3), and it looks forward to HCE's defence that he has received "omominous letters and widely-signed petitions full of pieces of pottery" (543.06-7). Biddy the hen's letter, HCE's defence and the Russian General's untimely defecation are all related in this "cock and a biddy story" (519.08).

The letter and HCE's defence are further related by the analogy between sex and tea. Yawn defends HCE by saying "there is luttrelly not one teaspoonspill of evidence" (534.09-10) against him, whereas the incriminating letter in I.5 is marked by a "teastain" (111.20). In this case the letter is a French letter, which Earwicker clearly uses, but as we learn in the next chapter, his French letter is unstained:

> Humbo, lock your kekkle up! Anny, blow your wickle out! Tuck away the tablesheet! You never wet the tea! And you may go rightoway back to your Aunty Dilluvia, Humprey, after that! (585.30-33)

The apparent inability of HCE to "wet the tea" is perhaps his best defence against the stronger implications made against him.

The above quotation comes from III.4, which is divided into four unequal sections each narrated by one of the Four, who here reappear as judges and other legal dignitaries. The attempted sexual union of HCE and ALP comes in Luke's "Third position of concord" (582.29-30), wherein the woman is dominant, "Female imperfectly masking male" (582.30-31). This follows Mark's section on the "second position of discordance" (564.01-2) wherein the "male entail partially eclipses the femecovert" (564.03-4). As McHugh notes, Feme covert is a law which provides for a woman to be

under protective cover of her husband. It is in this section that the trial judgements are pronounced.

The first trial to be decided is that of HCE's conduct in the eyes of the Church. The findings of the procurator are read out in the presence of Mamalujo who appear as "four seneschals" (566.08). It is found that HCE is guilty of "simple infidelities" with Issy, "practising for unnatural coits" (572.23-4) with Shem and Shaun, and urging McGrath to seduce ALP. He has also "tenderly debauched" (573.01) McGrath's wife, Gillie. In short, the whole parodic announcement implicates everyone it mentions in a circular tale of desire and wrongdoing. The upshot of it is that thanks to the Four ALP has been warned of HCE's depravities. The pronouncement concludes with the crux of the matrimonial issue: "Has he hegemony and shall she submit?" (573.32). The question is left open, to be told by the Four in their sequential narrative of the chapter, ending in John's "Fourth position of solution" (590.22-3).

As a source for this passage, Joyce referred to a Church text that offers guidelines on moral issues arising from marriage, a book which Thomas Connolly has described as the most heavily marked in Joyce's personal library.[21] Cases 399 and 400 both included underlining by Joyce, and both pertain to the Vatican's position on incestuous marriage. Joyce underlined the following plea and verdict:

> he desires to enter marriage with a kinswoman, so that he may preserve the family not only in the same blood but also in the possession of their property.
>
> [These causes are compelling and sufficient] if it is a question of a noble or an illustrious family; for then it pertains not only to the private but

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[21] Thomas E. Connolly, The Personal Library of James Joyce (Buffalo: University of Buffalo Press, 1955). The text described and quoted by Connolly is: Fr. M.-M. Matharan, Caus de matrimonio fere quingenti quibus applicat et per quos explicat sua asserta moralia circa eamdem materiam (Parissis: Victor Retaux et Filius, 1893). Connolly provides a translation by John T. Horton.

> also to the public good since families distinguished and at the same time rich are able more advantageously to serve the commonwealth.

No doubt amused by divine sanction for incest, Joyce could afford for his hero to be found guilty of like "infidelities." HCE, it should be noted, although he appears as the publican Earwicker, also comes from exalted stock, for Adam, Finn MacCool and Parnell figure among his guises. Incest, which is central to both the form and the subject of Finnegans Wake, thus reappears in the trials, just as a deconstructive logic leads on to the issue of interpretive communities.

Addressed to "lay readers and gentilemen" (573.35), the second trial (at 573.35 - 576.09) "is perhaps the commonest of all cases arising out of umbrella history" (573.35-6), that is the history of contraception, and it serves as a commentary on the earlier pronouncement. According to a former ruling, "so long as there is a joint deposit account in the two names a mutual obligation is posited" (574.02-4). That is to say, marriage precludes adultery. In this case, a firm which produces "certain proprietary articles" - condoms - is sued by the "heathen church emergency fund," in other words, HCE, "for the payment of tithes due" (574.06-9). The company's defence is that "payment had been made effective" (574.11-12), that the condom had worked, but the prosecution allege that "payment was invalid" (574.13) because it was "drawn by the senior partner only" (574.16-7) when it should have been in their joint names. The "cheque" in question was "a good washable pink, embossed D you D No 11 hundred and thirty 2" (574.25-6). HCE, then, sues the manufacturers of a possibly faulty condom which was inscribed as a dud with Joyce's symbolic number of regeneration (1132), a condom which was moreover not used by them both. HCE thus believes he has discovered that ALP has committed adultery.

The jury, all called Doyle, "naturally disagreed jointly and severally" (574.32) and as Judge Doyle disagreed with them he "went outside his jurisfiction altogether" (574.34)

by ordering the unpaid tithes to be attached to an owner of a rival company. The person thus sequestered was a junior partner from among the jurors, "an absolete turfwoman, originally from the proletarian class" who turned out to have the "sexname of Ann Doyle" (575.05-6). An Dáil is the legislative assembly in the Irish Republic; but this witness is also ALP. She testifies to how she submitted to "brusk demands ... in exchange at nine months from date without issue" (575.10-12) and how she "unbottled in corrubberation a current account" (575.13), for which "services rendered" - an affair using contraception - she became "the payee-drawee of unwashable blank assignations, sometimes pinkwilliams (laughter)" (575.14-15). The term "blank assignations" further suggests her guilt since it refers to an assignment of stock whose assignee's name has yet to be entered by its succeeding owner: that is to say, it is not restricted to ALP and HCE. Moreover, the use of condoms was banned in Ireland (and still is by the Vatican) and was about as popular as Joyce's books. The testimony of Ann (or ALP), which is the climactic point of the trial, is significantly followed by a reminder - laughter - that an audience is always present.

ALP appeals to be allowed to enter into "pardonership with the permanent suing fond trustee, Monsignore Pepigi," from the rival company, as he "seemed to proffer the steadiest interest towards her" (575.28-31). However, on appeal, Judge Jeremy Doyler, "reversing the finding of the lower correctional" (575.33-4), told the jury that

> the woman they gave as free was born into contractual incapacity ... when, how and where mamy's mancipium act did not apply and therefore held supremely that, as no property in law can exist in a corpse ... Pepigi's pact was pure piffle (loud laughter) (576.02-7).

As the Roman mancipium or law of slavery was inapplicable to ALP, who was incapable of forming a contract, she could not sell herself to the promises of Pepigi, and this finding occasions much relief both in the court and to the dreaming Earwicker who appears to have gained control of the judiciary. As soon as the judge's announcement

has been made there is further laughter among the audience and the Four witness this response from Earwicker, in whose dream the trial has occurred:

- He sighed in sleep.
- Let us go back.
- Lest he Forewaken.
- Hide Ourselves. (576.10-13)

The Four as an audience have been present throughout the court scenes but, importantly, they have also been an audience to the dreamer.[22] They have access to both Earwicker's dream and his sleeping self. They thus oversee the tangled relationship between HCE and ALP and his fears of her promiscuity, all narrated within Mark's section, which is a position of discord due to male dominance (such as HCE's legal prejudice). In terms of the story, then, the Four - who sometimes appear as judges - are the medium, the readership, the judges through which the guilty anxiety of the narrating dreamer is announced. In this passage, the Four are the most important audience in Finnegans Wake because they are also here an audience of Finnegans Wake.

Given that this crucial chapter, which tells of HCE's trials before God and man, is narrated by the Four in a sequential progression towards harmony and regeneration (the next passage is ALP's final monologue which comprises book four), the fact of their mediation is significant. These trials provide as close as Finnegans Wake will allow to a resolution to the allegations against HCE. The laughter that greets the judge's pronouncement at the end of the second trial is a timely reminder of the presence of an

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[22] The presence of an audience in III.4 has been suggested by Margaret Solomon, but only in relation to the newsreel shown at the beginning of the chapter, which she argues has a viewer who is part of a "larger and larger audience" as the chapter progresses. Margaret Solomon, 'The Porters: A Square Performance of Three Tiers in the Round', in A Conceptual Guide to Finnegans Wake, ed. by Michael H. Begnal and Fritz Senn (London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1974), p.203. In response to this, Gary Handwerk has argued that "such a group never overtly appears in the chapter" in 'What Really Goes Before the Fall?: Narrative Dynamics in Finnegans Wake III.4', JJQ, 20.3 (Spring 1983), 307-25.

audience for the trial, just as the Four provide an inscribed readership for the dream. At the end of the second position, the four - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John - are presented in their role as audience, "matinmarked for lookin on" (581.21-2). The possibility of harmony for HCE and ALP is thus intricately linked to the issue of a united interpretive community.

By apparently commenting on the sleeping figure of Earwicker, or Porter, the Four thus transcend the boundary of the dream, or at least illustrate its self-consciousness. They break the frame of the narrative in which they are produced, showing that it is one which they also consume. In doing so they also provide a marker to the limits of the text itself, a reminder (as if any were needed) of its status as a book. Their importance as an interpretive community within the web of hermeneutic difficulties that comprise Finnegans Wake overrides the claims of any one character within the dream. Their role also attests to the ubiquity of interpretive communities.

Their role is further defined as that which is potentially ubiquitous, and as an audience that alters but retains its core identity, a community of differences, "one not all the selfsame and butstillone just the maim" (581.33-4). Offering a vote of thanks to "the huskiest coaxing experimenter" (582.03) and "his famblings" (582.05), the Four reflect that there is

> Scant hope theirs or ours to escape life's high carnage of semperidentity
> by subsisting peasemeal upon variables.
> (582.14-16)

This is perhaps the only first-person plural admission made communally by the Four, and it provides an indication of their function as an interpretive community. Their ubiquity is due to their shared identity, marked as 'always' (from the Latin semper), a community that outlives its variables although they are fundamental to its constitution. In this self-portrait, at least, the Four are an ideal audience. The professor's appeal for

an ideal reader in I.5, in order to interpret the letter, did not fall on deaf ears. However, the letter they receive is mediated by Shaun, whose political goals override its transmission. Thus the ideality of the Four as readers remains exactly that: an ideal.

That the Four nevertheless do not represent an ideal readership is also evidenced by the political discord that mars their community in chapter III.3. Although they may at times present themselves as an ideal team of interpreters, they also throughout serve to highlight the drawbacks of the concept of an interpretive community. The label is one that must be imposed upon them, for although they exhibit some historical and sociological criteria of a community, and sometimes they agree in interpretation, they still remain diverse enough for the label to be resisted. The problem of how an interpretive community can be identified is one which they themselves perform, as well as one which occupies their narrative. The Four can also prove guilty of creating the text (court case or interview) which they interpret, thus disputing any retention of a 'text in itself'. However, just as the letters, despite their diverse plurality, maintained some notion of the text itself, so also Finnegans Wake occasionally serves to remind the Four of their inability to escape the text itself in which they figure.

Despite this, the Four also provide the main lessons of Finnegans Wake as a guide to interpretation. First, like the professor in I.5, they illustrate the importance of the mediating or narrating character(s) through whom any reading passes. Second, they teach the necessity of local context, that is, "Never divorce in the bedding the glove that will give you away" (586.05-6). Like the letter the professor urges to be read in the light of its "quite everydaylooking stamped addressed envelope" (109.07-8), so also the mystery and insinuation that surrounds HCE's sex life has to be retained in its immediate context. The point is made literally enough in the trial of the condom, whose significance is more than once alluded to in III.4. Thus at the end of book three, before the cycle renews itself, the issues of interpretation and sexual sinning (guilty readings

and the logic of incest) come to a related head in the role of the Four as an interpretive community.

IV

CONCLUSION

This thesis has argued that the issue of readership is fundamental to any approach to Finnegans Wake, but that, moreover, such is the history of the Wake that it is also an important testcase for understanding the role of English studies.

The first chapter attempted to show that the critical identity of Finnegans Wake accords it a position within academic English studies which is significant for the discipline itself, that is, as a limit of literature. It also outlined some of the issues pertinent to reception theory, such as its inability to conceptualise a sociological community of audience, and suggested that a study of the reception of Work in Progress and Finnegans Wake could comment upon the status of English studies as an audience for the Wake. The second chapter records the lost readership suffered by Work in Progress and the rise of an audience among the concomitant growth of professional readers as the study of literature was increasingly institutionalised.

As shown in chapter two, Joyce was always keen to 'sell' his work to critics. His ready adoption by them facilitated his quick rise to literary worth among what was essentially a new class of readership, one trained in a form of interpretation specifically designated as literary. Finnegans Wake is an extremely important book in this respect because it is on the cusp of a new audience while also innovatory enough to try to create an audience.

The concern of English studies with its audience, is also manifested in the writing of Work in Progress. As chapter three demonstrates, the formation of university departments of English literature could more readily accommodate Work in Progress because they shared many of Joyce's concerns: the relationship between literary and marketplace discourses, the possibility of distinguishing them, as well as other socio-political issues. Although Joyce breaks down that literary / market distinction, his very academic placement has also reinforced it. Nevertheless, Finnegans Wake retains a dual role in

literary studies, as both central to the development of prose writing, as a literary limit, but also marginal because largely untaught (or taught as impossible to teach). The name of Joyce, also, acts as a testcase for syllabus reform in the 1930s. The peculiar compositional history of Work in Progress shows how it was partly influenced by the context of professional interpretation and the move of literature into the universities. This is a neglected aspect of its criticism, but an important element of the book, and one of the reasons why the Wake is an important text.

This thesis has at no stage argued that no-one but academics in English studies reads Finnegans Wake, indeed, such an argument would be patently false. It has instead argued the significance of approaching the Wake in its relation to the expansion of professional literary studies that was concomitant with the book's composition. The history of the Wake's reception as a limit text makes this a peculiarly significant two-way process. Nevertheless, it is clear that the loss of audiences suffered by Work in Progress and the contemporaneous expansion of literary academe did provide a significant readership for the text. Such an audience is of course not stable, and can have effect beyond institutional borders. Yet this does not detract from the importance of that context for the composition and reception of the Wake.

The apparent correlation of concerns between Finnegans Wake and post-structuralism has been noted and discussed in several chapters. The problematic identification of any community that is raised by a post-structural interpretive paradigm is clearly also a topic addressed in the Wake. However, that should not preclude attempts to discuss the reception of the Wake and its appropriation by post-structuralism within a historical context of the professional expansion of English studies. It seems to me that the way in which a text like the Wake encourages new ways of reading, and so a new readership, has been over-emphasised by Derrida, who uses the example of his own practice as influenced by Joyce. However, this is somewhat ironic as both the Wake and Derrida do currently operate within narrow fields. This is not necessarily always going to be the case,

but it is significant. If a readership can affect textual identity (as both the Wake and Derrida suggest), then any broader audience that may encounter them will be influenced by our practice.

The previous section has provided two extensive textual analyses of Finnegans Wake. Chapter Seven examined the role of the professor figure as a reader of the letter(s) in the Wake, showing how Joyce incorporated into his last work a commentary on academic interpreters and the problems of interpretation, and arguing that the role of the professor has been unduly neglected by Wake critics. This chapter also showed the implication of the professor within the material he interprets, undermining the authority of his interpretation. This question was taken up in the second textual analysis, of the role of the Four, which deals especially with book three of the Wake. The Four can be read as a commentary upon the concept of interpretive communities, as developed by Stanley Fish. In section three, then, Finnegans Wake was read for the clarification it may provide for epistemological and hermeneutic problems which have troubled English studies as a result of post-structuralism. These analyses thus also provided a further means of reading the historical relationship between the Wake and contemporary English studies.

This thesis has attempted to provide a framework, or case-study, towards a literary sociology of readership. The aim has been to explore the significance of the growing audience of professional readers via the most appropriate text. Such a project is neither a history of the discipline, nor quite a textual explication of implied readers, although it may involve elements of these approaches. Although the primary object of study has been the historical readership of Finnegans Wake, care has been taken to show how a text such as the Wake also undermines the strict categorisation of the historical. Nevertheless, it has proved possible to trace the history of readings of Finnegans Wake as a commentary upon the concomitant audience it found in professional literary studies. Finnegans Wake can be seen as working through the issues of readership that not only affected its own reception but which were also a key concern to those working within an

expanding body of professional readers; moreover, its attempted appropriation within post-structuralism suggests the continuing significance of attempts to interpret communities of readers within the discipline of English studies. This study demonstrates the importance of the issue of readership for Joyce's last work, and the necessity of considering the implications of one's reading communities.

APPENDIX

A Chronological Bibliography of Publication and Criticism of Work in Progress 1924 - 1939.

This bibliography lists only those reviews, articles or books dealing explicitly, in whole or in part, with Work in Progress (the instalments of which are printed in **bold**) and which were published during its composition. A chronological format has been adopted in order that the historical growth of criticism around Work in Progress may be clearly shown. The main sources of this bibliography are inevitably other bibliographies, particularly the work of Robert H. Deming and John J. Slocum. Several references have been silently corrected or expanded, and some new ones added. Place of publication has been given in appropriate cases. Every effort has been made to cross-check references and to be as inclusive as possible. Where a source has not been verified, for materials unavailable in Britain or Ireland, the item is marked by an asterisk [*].

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