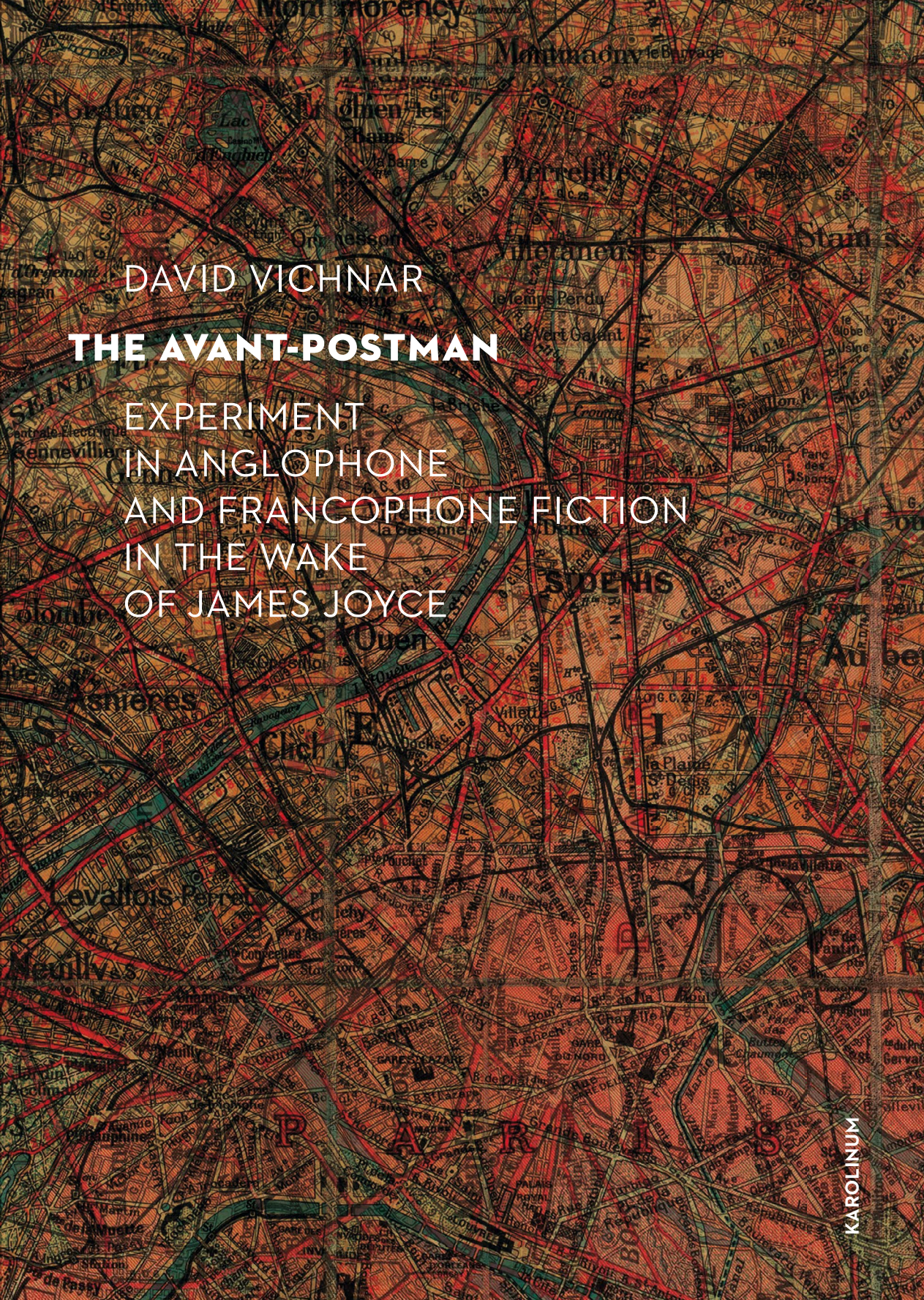

DAVID VICHNAR

THE AVANT-POSTMAN

EXPERIMENT IN ANGLOPHONE AND FRANCOPHONE FICTION IN THE WAKE OF JAMES JOYCE

KAROLINUM

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———

David Vichnar

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In the years following the defence of the thesis in March 2014 and during its lengthy rewriting process, versions of individual sections, author studies, and passages from this book have seen the light of print in the following publications:

1. *Subtexts: Essays on Fiction* (Litteraria Pragensia Books, 2015) p. 120 (esp. sections on Kathy Acker, Christine Brooke-Rose, the Oulipo, Iain Sinclair, and Phillipe Sollers);
2. "Wars Waged With/Against Joyce: James Joyce and post-1984 British Fiction," *Joycean Legacies*, ed. Martha Carpentier (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015) pp. 150–71 (esp. parts of Chapter Five);
3. "Between the Pun and the Portmanteau: Multilingualism in and after Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*," *The Poetics of Multilingualism – La Poétique du plurilinguisme*, eds. Patrizia Noel & Levente Seláf (Cambridge Scholars: Newcastle upon Tyne, 2017) pp. 269–80 (esp. sections on Maurice Roche and Phillippe Sollers);

4. “Remediating Joyce’s Techno-poetics: Mark Amerika, Kenneth Goldsmith, Mark Z. Danielewski,” *Prague Journal of English Studies*, Vol. 8 No. 1 (September 2019) pp. 119–39 (esp. parts of Chapter Eight).

NOTE ON THE TEXT & DEDICATION

Wherever available, quotations from French fiction are provided in their English translation in the main text, and accompanied by the French original in corresponding footnotes. Where no English translation exists (or was not available), the relevant meaning of the French original is elucidated in the commentary. Both French originals and English translations are included in the chapter-by-chapter bibliography side by side.

I dedicate this book to its two spiritual fathers, Louis Armand and Jean Bessière. *Per aspera ad astra.*

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INTRODUCTION

JOYCE THE AVANT-

> We are still learning to be James Joyce's contemporaries,
> to understand our interpreter.
>
> Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* (1983)

The famous opening of Richard Ellmann's monumental biography casts its subject matter—the life and work of James Joyce—in a peculiar double temporality. As if Joyce were somehow ahead of his fellow writers and us, his future readers; as if the actuality of his writing and life had somehow not yet exhausted their potential; as if Joyce's writing, in a messianic fashion, were dependent upon some second coming; as if its message, just as Sir Tristram in the second paragraph of *Finnegans Wake*, had "passencore rearrived" (*FW* 3.4–5). As if the novelty of Joyce's work, its "being ahead," its *avant-*, brought about certain belatedness within our reception of it, a *post--ness*.

The notion of being ahead, of being so novel as to seem to come from the future, is essential to the programmes of the movements of artistic avant-garde that have redefined 20th-century culture. Conversely, the notion of belatedness, of having one's present moment already defined by a past that somehow pre-programmes it, with little left to do for the present beyond re-enacting, repeating, or forging the past's originary actions and statements, resonates within the common detraction of post-war neo-avant-gardes in canonical criticism.[1] In a certain sense, the task set by Richard Ellmann—"to become Joyce's contemporary" (*JJ*, 3)—is reversed here: the present work covers the oeuvre of fifty post-war writers for whom Joyce was a contemporary, who consciously followed in the footsteps of Joyce's "revolution of the word," and took cue from his exploration of the materiality of language and the aesthetic autonomy of fiction.

Joyce's *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* form a joint starting point from which genealogical lines of development are drawn and constellations of concepts are formed. The argument traces the many departures from Joyce's poetics in the post-war Anglo-American and Francophone novel, which came to be dubbed—by their adherents and detractors alike—"experimental" or

1 Also, one encounters this awareness of belatedness vis-à-vis Joyce everywhere in Joycean scholarship, which ever so often finds itself *already in the text*, coming not from the outside, but somehow generated from, solicited by, the Joyce text which always already includes, as it were, its own theory. Cf. my own *Joyce Against Theory* (Prague: Litteraria Pragensia Books, 2010), in view of whose overall argument, the criticism of Joyce appears as a discourse centred around a few governing notions and operations already "at work" in Joyce's text.

"avant-garde." The timeframe is, roughly speaking, the second half of the 20th century, with a coda on twelve writers active post-2000, bringing the entire genealogy into the present.

1. PRELIMINARY NOTES ON THE NOVEL, EXPERIMENT, AND THE AVANT-GARDE

The two adjectives used throughout—"experimental" and "avant-garde"—as well as the genre of the "novel" itself to which they apply in Joyce's case, are some of the most elusive terms of the critical discourse, their definitions as numerous as their definers, their own genealogies as complex and subjective as the present one of post-Joycean avant-garde experimentalism. Still, some preliminary notes on their understanding here, and application to *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, are in order.

In 1920, just when *The Little Review* was facing obscenity trial for publishing the masturbatory "Nausicaa" chapter and Joyce was already making "Nausicaa" pale in comparison with the chapter underway ("Circe"), Georg Lukács published his influential *Theory of the Novel*. In a not-so-rare instance of modernist telepathy (as *Ulysses*, *À la recherche du temps perdu*, and *Der Zauberberg* were still in the making, and *Finnegans Wake* was of course still a twinkle in Joyce's eye), Lukács immediately brought the genre of the novel into relation with the epic, by subtitling his study "A historico-philosophical essay on the forms of great epic literature." Yet the relation is one of contrast: to compare the modern novel with the ancient epic is like comparing a WWI tank with Achilles' shield – they "differ from one another not by their author's fundamental intentions but by the given historico-philosophical realities with which the authors were confronted."[2] Homer's epics are communal creations of a "concrete totality"; the modern novel is individualistic and made of "heterogeneous fragments." Whereas the modern novel has of necessity its beginning-middle-end,

> the way Homer's epics begin in the middle and do not finish at the end is a reflexion of the truly epic mentality's total indifference to any form of architectural construction [...] everything in the epic has a life of its own and derives its completeness from its own inner significance.[3]

If, in Homer's *Iliad*, "a rounded universe blossoms into all-embracing life," then the modern novel depicts a world where "the extensive totality of life

2 Georg Lukács, *The Theory of the Novel*, trans. Anna Bostock (orig. 1920; Cambridge: MIT, 1971) 56.
3 Lukács, *The Theory of the Novel*, 67–8.

is no longer directly given, in which the immanence of meaning in life has become a problem, yet which still thinks in totality." [4] So far so melancholy and nostalgic, but Lukács is perceptive enough to note that the very consummated character of Homer's epics was a hindrance to any further development of the Greek epic as a form. They were memorised for centuries and memorialised when written down—an unmovable boulder in the middle of the road. Whereas the sheer fragmentariness and incompletion of the novel as genre in the modern times is not only a crisis, but a chance: the genre remains open for constant innovation and redefinition, which is the only way of keeping it alive and relevant.

It is not difficult to see how Joyce's *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* fit the bill of "a concrete totality" of a "rounded universe with no beginning and no end" of the epic while also composed of the modern-novelistic "heterogenous fragments" and busily engaging with the "immanence of meaning in life." And so it does not surprise that when surveying, from the opposite end of the century, the development of the modern novel that Lukács could only divine, Harold Bloom went so as far as to pronounce the *Wake* the central text of our (Viconian) "age of chaos," at least as regards its aesthetic merit: "The *Wake*, like Proust's *Search*, would be as close as our chaos could come to the heights of Shakespeare and Dante."[5] Where Bloom's *Western Canon* culminates and stops,[6] this book seeks to begin. Just as Lukács was hopeful about the fragmented novel's future potential, so will the genealogy mapped here of the post-war writing in the wake of Joyce's revolution of language show that for all its epic completeness, it provided experimentalists-to-come with enough stuff to dream on.

The adjective "experimental" will be understood here as pertaining to what, around the time Lukács was postulating his theory of the novel, philosopher John Dewey identified as the chief principle of the development of modern science:

> The development of modern science began when there was recognized in certain technical fields a power to utilize variations as the starting points of new observations, hypotheses and experiments. The growth of the experimental as distinct from the dogmatic habit of mind is due to increased ability to utilize variations for constructive ends instead of suppressing them.[7]

4 Ibid, 56.

5 Harold Bloom, *The Western Canon—The Books and School of the Ages* (New York: Harcourt, 1994) 422.

6 "Joyce's Agon with Shakespeare" is Chapter 18 out of 23, accompanied by chapters on Woolf, Kafka, Borges, the only "follower" after Joyce (of sorts) in Bloom's genealogy being Beckett.

7 John Dewey, *Experience and Nature* (La Salle: Open Court, 1925) xiv.

Replacing the "modern science" in Dewey's argument with the concept of "revolution of language," an understanding of experimentalism arises that is conditioned by "a power to utilise variations as the starting points of new observations" and the "ability to utilize variations for constructive ends instead of suppressing them." Experimentation, thus, is less a question of programme than a "habit of mind," a mode of experiencing.

To say this is to commit an etymological pleonasm, as the word "experiment" came into English from the Old French *esperment, meaning "practical knowledge" and consequently "trial, proof, example, lesson," derived from the Latin experimentum* ("a trial, test, proof, experiment"), a verbal noun of action stemming from *experiri*, "to test, try." And out of this verbal root grows the word *experientia*, denoting "knowledge gained by repeated trials." In turn, the structure of the verb entails the prefix *ex-*, "out of," *peritus*, "tested, passed over."[8] Stemming from experience, thus experiment is the process of departing from what has been tested, of gaining knowledge by venturing beyond the known compass and toward the "testing ground of new literature." Hence the double focus, throughout the portraits of the writers included in this Joycean genealogy, on practice and theory of fiction as inseparable: *experimentation* always related to "bearing witness," to having "personal experience."

The meaning of "experimentalism" as conceived in this book will also come close to what, in the context of the visual arts, W. J. T. Mitchell has termed "irrealism." Departing from the conviction that all representations "are conventional in the sense that they depend upon symbol systems that might, in principle, be replaced by some other system" (and so "realism" might be nothing more than "simply the most conventional convention"),[9] the real difference between a "realist" tendency and its countertendency (by whatever name called) consists in their attitude to the cognitive and epistemological aspects of their representation. It is not, then, that realism is somehow the "standard," "familiar," or "habitual" mode of representation (were it so, no diachronic accounting for the many changes realism itself has undergone in just the last 200 years would be possible), but that it is "representation plus a belief system" regarding "the representational mode or what it represents."[10] This belief entails the following:

> Truth, certainty, and knowledge are structurally connoted in realistic representation: they constitute the ideology or automatism necessary for it to construct a reality. That

8 Cf., e.g., James Douglas, *English Etymology – A Textbook of Derivatives* (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1872) 46.

9 W. J. T. Mitchell, "Realism, Irrealism, and Ideology: A Critique of Nelson Goodman," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 25.1 (Spring 1991): 27.

10 Mitchell, "Realism, Irrealism, and Ideology," 30.

> is why realism is such an apt vehicle for spreading lies, confusion, and disinformation, for wielding power over mass publics, or for projecting fantasy.[11]

Now, Mitchell of course is not as naïve as to posit "irrealism" as a simple binary opposite to realistic representation, for their commonalities are as important as differences. Still, "irrealism," in its three-part self-representation as "utopian ideal," "scientific fact," and "historical consensus," remains—in contrast with realism's "structural connotation" of its epistemological certainties—"systematically ambivalent about its own 'certainty,' while relatively certain about its 'rightness.'"[12] Understood along the lines of Mitchell's irrealism, writing labelled experimental in this book is avant-gardist (a "utopian ideal"), invested in a non-realist mimesis of "the real" ("scientific fact"), and historically determined. This "chameleon status" of such writing, Mitchell continues, is not a weakness: on the contrary, it is precisely what gives this writing its rhetorical power as a positive, ahistorical—and yet historically determined—account of representational systems, [...] not as a philosophy that 'supplants' realism, but as a therapeutic thorn in its side, a way of keeping realism honest."[13]

This is where Mitchell's "irrealism" and this book's "experimentalism" dovetails into "avant-gardism." Writing described as "avant-garde" will here be understood—along the lines of Renato Poggioli's seminal study on *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*—as marked by its concentration on *linguistic creativity* as "a necessary reaction to the flat, opaque, and prosaic nature of our public speech, where the practical end of quantitative communication spoils the quality of expressive means," a reaction with an essentially social task in that it functions as "at once cathartic and therapeutic in respect to the degeneration afflicting common language through conventional habits."[14]

So, a therapeutic thorn in realism's side, again. Hence, avant-garde writing is one whose "cult of novelty and even of the strange" has definable historical and social causes in the "tensions of our bourgeois, capitalistic, and technological society."[15] Informed by the aesthetic expressivism of such predecessors as Benedetto Croce, Poggioli's is a morphological, trans-historical analysis (in his account, the first avant-garde is not cubism or futurism, but romanticism), which serves him well in the effort to avoid losing sight of the avant-garde forest for the idiosyncrasy of the individual movements' trees. Poggioli speaks of the avant-garde as "the dialectic of movements," a struggle for the "affir-

11 Ibid, 31.
12 Ibid, 33.
13 Ibid.
14 Renato Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde,* trans. Gerald Fitzgerald (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968) 37.
15 Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde,* 80, 107.

mation of the avant-garde spirit in all cultural fields."[16] There are chiefly four "attitudes" informing this dialectics, two of which are "immanent" to the concept of a movement, and two of which "transcend" it. *Activism*, which springs from "the sheer joy of dynamism, a taste for action, a sportive enthusiasm, and the emotional fascination of adventure"; and *antagonism,* the formation of a movement in order to "agitate against something or someone," whether "the academy, tradition" or "a master" or more generally "the public," are the immanent ones.[17] The "transcendental" antagonism, which goes beyond specific targets by "beating down barriers, razing obstacles, destroying whatever stands in its way," Poggioli dubs *nihilism;* finally, activism pushed beyond any reachable goal, which "even welcomes and accepts this self-ruin as an obscure or unknown sacrifice to the success of future movements," is called *agonism.*

An "agonistic concept par excellence," then, is the idea of transition, the sense of belonging to an intermediate stage, to "a present already distinct from the past and to a future in potentiality which will be valid only when the future is actuality," and it is at this point that the name James Joyce first enters Poggioli's argument.[18] Poggioli's avant-garde, turned thusly into an aesthetic movement and stripped of its immediate socio-historical context, comes to resemble some of the more neutral, apolitical definitions of modernism. To take but Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist*: Poggioli's tetrad of activism, antagonism, nihilism, and agonism can be found as underlying Stephen Dedalus' own rebellion against and gradual abandonment of family, Church, country, and embracing as his motto *Non serviam*, after Milton's Satan. Stephen's other creed, "the only arms I allow myself to use—silence, exile, and cunning" (*P,* 208), paves the way towards avant-garde marginality and purposeful obscurity. Futurism, however subtle, is present in Stephen's "desire to press in my arms the loveliness that has not yet come into the world" (*P,* 212); agonism underwrites his existential angst in his extrication from the strictures of religion, and courses through his most famous final invocation: "Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race" (*P,* 213).[19]

In his famous re-contextualisation of Poggioli's argument within a broader historic-philosophical framework, Peter Bürger replaces Poggioli's vague

16 Ibid, 25.

17 Ibid, 25–6.

18 "That the avant-garde spirit was conscious of what this concept leads to is proved by the fact that a literary review, written in English, brought out for years in Paris the work of expatriate and cosmopolitan writers; it commends itself greatly to us for having published fragments of *Finnegans Wake* when James Joyce's extreme experiment was still 'work in progress.' The founder and director of this review, Eugene Jolas, chose to entitle it, paradoxically with an initial minuscule, *transition*" (Ibid, 25–6).

19 For a more detailed discussion, see Robert Langbaum, "Review of Poggioli's *Theory of the Avant-garde*" in *boundary 2,* 1.1 (Autumn 1972): 234–41.

trans-historicism with an insistence on the inherence of the historical avant-garde praxis to its proper historical context:

> In a changed context, the resumption of avant-garde intentions with the means of avant-gardism can no longer even have the limited effectiveness the historical avant--gardes achieved. To the extent that the means by which the avant-gardistes hoped to bring about the sublation of art have attained the status of works of art, the claim that the praxis of life is to be renewed can no longer be legitimately connected with their employment. To formulate more pointedly: the neo-avant-garde institutionalizes the *avant-garde as art* and thus negates genuinely *avant-gardiste* intentions.[20]

The dilemma throughout this book will be whether one can limit the function of the avant-garde to merely its linguistic creativity and collective impulse as anaesthetic markers (á la Poggioli) or whether its theory and praxis need to include a specific mode of political-critical engagement.

Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* construes modernism's non-instrumental aestheticism as signifying the artistic autonomy that makes modern art the institutional collaborator of modern bourgeois ideology. Bürger's political plotting of the art of modernity has direct repercussion for his detraction of post-war neo-avant-gardes. The shared intention, on the part of the many historical avant-gardes, of "returning art to the praxis of life," argues Bürger, falls flat when revived within a context where the avant-garde itself has become institutionalised as art, "the means of avant-gardism" no longer achieving "even the limited effectiveness" of the historical avant-gardes: "Neo-avant-gardiste art is autonomous art in the full sense of the term, which means that it negates the avant-gardiste intention of returning art to the praxis of life."[21]

As will become clear, one of the advantages of basing a "Joycean avant-garde" on Joyce's close alliance with the *transition* magazine consists in sidestepping the avant-garde/neo-avant-garde dichotomy in favour of a programme of writing which serves "cathartic and therapeutic" purposes in respect to "the degeneration afflicting common language through conventional habits" (à la Poggioli), while at the same time remaining "autonomous" and "anti-institutional" in its insistence on "the disintegration of words and their subsequent reconstruction on other planes," and in its ambivalent attitude to "the plain reader"[22] (à la Bürger).

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20 Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: Minneapolis University Press, 1984) 58.

21 Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, 59.

22 Eugene Jolas, "The Revolution of Language and James Joyce," *Our Exagmination Round His Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress: A Symposium*, ed. Samuel Beckett (New York: New Directions, 1929) 79–80.

2. JOYCE THE AVANT-GARDIST: THE *WAKE* IN *TRANSITION*

The *transition* magazine, during the eleven years of its activity (1927–38), published not only seventeen instalments from Joyce's "Work in Progress" (to become *Finnegans Wake* in 1939), as well as all the twelve essays that were to form the *Our Exagmination* collection, but also numerous theoretical analyses, polemics, proclamations, and defences of the work against its detractors. Its guiding spirits were Elliot Paul and especially Eugène Jolas (1894–1952), an American raised in Alsace, whose trilingual upbringing was reflected in the cosmopolitanism of the journal, arguably the last of the great vanguard vehicles of high modernism, and definitely the only one (at least of such scale and durability) explicitly devoted to the avant-garde.

In another instance of creative telepathy, Jolas himself echoed Dewey's observations on the development of modern science when conceiving of *transition* as a "documentary organ" dedicated to presenting what he referred to later as "pan-romanticism," and in retrospect, Jolas characterised *transition* as "a workshop of the intercontinental spirit, a proving ground of the new literature, a laboratory for poetic experiment."[23] Jolas' avant-garde undertaking, too, was marked by a certain belatedness: by the launch of its first number in 1927, the historical avant-garde had been on the wane if not defunct, and so *transition* gained another, retrogressive dimension: that of the archive. There is, thus, another sense in which *transition* proves a useful starting point for the genealogical lines charted in this book: its function of a documentary organ of the historical avant-garde is applicable to those post-war avant-garde groups, schools, or movements that chose to "perpetuate [Joyce's] creation," thereby becoming documentary organs of the effects of his poetics.

As a documentary organ, *transition*'s dedication to preserving the crucial documents of the historical avant-garde was impeccable: the list of the contributors to its first issues reads like an avant-garde who's who. With Dadaism, Tristan Tzara is present, e.g., in *transition* 19–20 (June 1930) right next to Joyce in the "Revolution of the Word" section. But that is just one of his occasional cameos: when it comes to Dada, Jolas had a clear editorial preference for the Zurich branch, and so *transition* 21 (1932), the one with the section, "HOMAGE TO JAMES JOYCE," comes with a cover-design by Hans Arp, and features the work of Richard Huelsenbeck, Hugo Ball, and Kurt Schwitters, among others. In 1936, *transition* 25 celebrates the twenty years of Dada by presenting the first English translations of Ball's "Fragments from a Dada Diary" and Huelsenbeck's "Dada Lives" manifesto. Surrealism is present—through the work of Louis Aragon, Robert Desnos, Philippe Soupault, and others—from *transition*

23 *Transition Workshop*, ed. Eugene Jolas (New York: The Vanguard Press, 1949) 13.

1 onward and throughout; André Breton's *Manifeste du surréalisme* is reprinted in *transition* 2 (May 1927), the opening chapter from his *Nadja*, in *transition* 12 (March 1928). But the same *transition* issue that celebrates the twenty years of Dada also features the first English translation of Franz Kafka's "Metamorphosis" and Alfred Döblin's *Berlin Alexanderplatz*, and German expressionism is present throughout, represented by Gottfried Benn and Georg Grosz, among others. A veritable avant-garde "funferall" (*FW* 13.15)![24] Last but not least, Jolas' *transition* was "a workshop of the intercontinental spirit"—its internationalism and threefold focus on America, Britain, and France is re-enacted in the present work; it acted also as "a laboratory for poetic experiment."

Although included in *transition* from its very start, it was not until *transition* 11 (Feb 1928) that Joyce's work was drafted as part of Jolas' revolutionary programme. In "The Revolution of Language and James Joyce," Jolas presents the first notes toward literature made genuinely "new":

> The Real metaphysical problem today is the word. The epoch when the writer photographed the life about him, with the mechanics of words redolent of the daguerreotype, is happily drawing to its close. The new artist of the word has recognized the autonomy of language and, aware of the twentieth century current towards universality, attempts to hammer out a verbal vision that destroys time and space.[25]

Among other things, Jolas goes on to call for "the disintegration of words and their subsequent reconstruction on other planes," operations that "constitute some of the most important acts of our epoch."[26] This disintegration is made all the more necessary by progress in psychology and psychoanalysis, whose discovery of the subconscious "should have made it apparent that the instrument of language in its archaic condition could no longer be used."[27] And it is Joyce's "Work in Progress" on whose basis Jolas formulates the notion of aesthetic autonomy tied to the materiality of the word:

> Modern life, with its changed mythos and transmuted concepts of beauty, makes it imperative that words be given new compositions and relationships. James Joyce, in his new work published serially in *transition*, has given a body blow to the traditionalists. As he subverts the orthodox meaning of words, the upholders of the norm are seized with panic, and all those who regard the English language as a static thing, sacrosanct

24 All three principal avant-garde groupings in the post-1960 British, American, and French fiction mapped here fulfilled this function. These were: B. S. Johnson's and his circle of neo-avant-gardists, the Surfictionist group around Raymond Federman, and the ensemble of literary theorists and practitioners around the *Tel Quel* magazine, respectively.

25 Jolas, "The Revolution of Language and James Joyce," 79.

26 Ibid, 79–80.

27 Ibid, 80.

> in its position, and dogmatically defended by a crumbling hierarchy of philologists and pedagogues, are afraid.[28]

Jolas' reading of "Work in Progress" emphasises the materiality of the word as an agent of historical change and the necessity of the new aesthetics of "decreation." Axiomatic in Jolas' argument—and quite in tune with Joyce's own beliefs—is the conviction that the revolution of the word is one in which the new does not simply erase or replace the old, but where language is kept in a state of a constant flow of various sediments.

Jolas' revolution takes place not so much by replacing one regime with another, as by the new order surpassing and subsuming into itself the earlier one(s) – as Patricia Waugh has argued, Jolas espouses a kind of aesthetic Darwinism.[29] Despite the necessity of linguistic change, Joyce's creative deformation makes it easier to recover what persists through time. Jolas' version of the concept of autonomy, with its roots in Kantian ethical thought—tied with the modern idea of freedom, the capacity to follow self-determined, rationally formulated principles—was specifically intended to ease into history the linguistic macaronic of Joyce's work as a monument to the new cosmos of the scientists and philosophers. It was also meant to usher in the new self of psychoanalysis and anthropology; this concept of aesthetic autonomy, viewed by Jolas as the most radical effect of the revolution of the word, would soon become virtually definitive of cultural modernism.

However blatant in pursuing his own agenda at Joyce's expense, it is worth recalling that Jolas' theories were never disputed or opposed by Joyce.[30] On the contrary, in a few significant *Finnegans Wake* passages, Jolas is presented as Joyce's spokesman. A year after Jolas' conceptualisation of Joyce's linguistic autonomy, the June 1929 double-issue of *transition* 16/17 featured Samuel

28 Ibid, 81.

29 Patricia Waugh historicises Jolas' notion of linguistic autonomy as springing from "the 'magic idealism' of Novalis, the work of Jung and Freud, Bergsonian vitalism, and the French surrealists, abandonment of ordinary waking consciousness or of everyday language, of positivism and empiricism, as instruments of knowledge," going on to observe: "Jolas' idea of the revolutionary artistic word is borrowed from the new sciences of the mind which in turn depend upon a Darwinian understanding of evolution" (Waugh, "Introduction: Looking Back on the Modern Tradition," *Revolutions of the Word: Intellectual Contexts for the Study of Modern Literature*, ed. Patricia Waugh [London/New York: Arnold, 1997] 10–1).

30 Even Michael Finney's article in Hayman's collection, devoted to unmasking incongruities in Jolas' linguistic theory and literary practice and to stressing their foreignness to Joyce's project, ends on a lenient note: "Joyce agreed with some of the things Jolas had to say about reconstructing language, and he was indulgent of any philosophy or approach which would justify his linguistic and literary experiment. But whatever the truth, the fact remains that until its publication as *Finnegans Wake* in 1939, 'Work in Progress' was intimately associated with the Revolution of the Word—physically and ideologically—in the pages of *transition*" (Michael Finney, "Eugene Jolas, *transition*, and the Revolution of the Word," *In the Wake of the Wake*, 52).

Beckett's essay "Dante...Bruno.Vico..Joyce," which contains one of the most often-quoted observations about the language of the *Wake* in the whole critical canon:

> Here is direct expression – pages and pages of it. And if you don't understand it, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is because you are too decadent to receive it. You are not satisfied unless form is so strictly divorced from content that you can comprehend the one almost without bothering to read the other. [...] Here form *is* content, content *is* form. You complain that this stuff is not written in English. It is not written at all. It is not to be read – or rather it is not only to be read. It is to be looked at and listened to. His writing is not *about* something; *it is that something itself*.[31]

Beckett's concept of "direct expression" and his insistence on the conflation of content and form in Joyce's *Wake* were soon to become the guiding principles under which Joyce's materialist poetics would be enlisted by the various types of post-war concrete writing.

3. *TRANSITION* IN THE *WAKE*: JOYCE THE *TRANSITIONIST*

The history of "Work in Progress"/ *Finnegans Wake* in *transition* is known enough, but Joycean commentators sometimes underplay the reverse importance of Jolas for Joyce. As noted in Noel Riley Fitch's introduction to *In transition: A Paris Anthology*:

> Jolas not only helped Joyce with rewriting, revising and editing his "night world" before publication, he also provided a steady flow of essays explaining and defending the work. [...] The Jolases eventually became the major supporters and friends of the Joyce family. James Joyce reciprocated by making *transition* famous and by including in his *Work in Progress* numerous hidden references to the magazine.[32]

The history of *transition* in the *Wake*—of Joyce's "numerous hidden references to the magazine," mentioned but unspecified in Fitch's account—still remains to be told, and for obvious reasons cannot be told here.

As some dismissive commentators[33] keep stressing, there were some major differences between Joyce's project and Jolas' programme. To be sure, Jo-

31 Samuel Beckett, "Dante...Bruno. Vico..Joyce," *Our Exagmination Round His Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress: A Symposium*, ed. Samuel Beckett (New York: New Directions, 1929) 25–6.

32 Noel Riley Fitch, introduction to *In transition: A Paris Anthology – Writing and Art from transition Magazine 1927–30* (New York: Doubleday, 1990) 15.

33 See Michael Finney's article in David Hayman's collection, discussed below.

las' stress on collective subconscious and transcendental impersonalism, his notions of the "vertigral world," "chthonian mind," and various revivals of romanticism were anathema to Joyce's occupation with empirical linguistic material and history. One also wonders what Joyce could have made of some thinly veiled nationalism on Jolas' part as manifest, e.g., in his essay in *transition* 19–20, titled "The King's English is Dying—Long Live the Great American Language." It is also true that neither of Jolas' two fundamental manifestos, "The Revolution of the Word" and "Poetry is Vertical," was signed by Joyce (and there was no instalment of "Work in Progress" in the pivotal double-issue of *transition* 16–17), nor did he ever put his name down on any of Jolas' other proclamations. Still, their two major commonalities—the shared stress on the importance of linguistic experimentation and the use of dream material—as well as their lifelong friendship, collaboration, and the fact Joyce stuck with *transition* throughout its eleven-year production longer than with any other magazine, all this suggests more than just pragmatic non-involvement on Joyce's part. As none other than eye-witness Stuart Gilbert recalled:

> One sometimes hears it said that Work in Progress 'made' transition – but, in some respects, *the converse is equally true*. The fact that James Joyce's work appeared by instalments with a month's (later on, several month's) breathing space, so to speak, between them, gave the reader time to study, digest, and assimilate it to some extent.[34]

The one explicit acknowledgment of Jolas' personal and artistic importance directly from Joyce's pen is the "Versailles, 1933" limerick, marking the publication of Jolas' *Mots Déluge*, a book of poems in French:

> There's a genial young poetriarch Euge
> Who hollers with heartiness huge:
> Let sick souls sob for solace
> So the jeunes joy with Jolas!
> Book your berths! Après mot, le déluge! (Qtd. In *JJ*, 600)

"After the word, the flood." The closest historical-textual criticism has come to making sense of the sundry avant-garde references in the *Wake* on the basis of its scattered avant-garde references, to *transition* and others, is Dougald McMillan's magisterial *Transition 1927–38: The History of a Literary Era*, especially its two concluding chapters. For obvious reasons, the present account will constrict itself to highlighting McMillan's most salient points.

Joyce was always reserved and dismissive of the avant-garde movements of his time, especially the "mainstream" of futurism, Dadaism, and surreal-

34 Stuart Gilbert, "*transition* Days," *Transition Workshop*, 20 (my emphasis).

ism. Although, as always in the *Wake*, gossip and hearsay did their share in blurring Joyce's preferred dichotomies and division lines: in a famous letter to Stanislaus from September 1920, he complains of the rumour that he "founded in Zurich the Dadaist movement which is now exciting Paris" (*L* II, 22). He would parody the Dada Cabaret Voltaire in a "Salon de Espera" scene in the long "Yawn" episode of the *Wake* (III.3).

In this "salon of hopes," HCE finds himself in the company of "lodes of ores flocking fast to Mount Maximagnetic" (*FW* 497.16), a thinly veiled reference to *Les Champs Magnétiques,* Soupault and Breton's first collection of automatic writing, later on corroborated: "We are again in the magnetic field!" (*FW* 501.17). The salon is frequented, amid others, by "Merrionites," "Dumstdumbdrummers," "Cabraïsts," and " Ballymunites" (*FW* 497.17–20). As McMillan conjectures, these could very well be the followers of the futurist Marinetti, the rhythmical drummers of the Cabaret performances, and devotees of Hugo Ball, respectively, even though Ronald McHugh's authoritative *Annotations to Finnegans Wake* lists these as disguised pilgrims from the Dublin districts of Merrion, Dundrum, Cabra, and Ballybough. As usual, both are probably correct.[35] The surrealists also appear in the midst of HCE's trial in *FW* I.3, in an aside devoted to the sugar daddy: "Ack, ack, ack. With which *clap*, trap, and *soddenment, three to a loaf***,** our mutual friends the fender and the bottle at the Bate seem to be implicitly in the same *bateau***"** (FW 65.34–6, my italics), where "clap" is read by McMillan as referring to René Crevel's pronouncement—in the second edition of "La Révolution Surréaliste"—that everybody is more or less syphilitic; "soddenment," to Paul Claudel's statement that surrealism and Dada only mean one thing, "pederasty"; and "bateau" to Rimbaud's "Le Bateau ivre," considered an exemplary proto-surrealist text.[36]

To be sure, such derogatory cameos do not provide a steady rock on which to build the church of Joyce the avant-gardist. Still, although never a Dadaist or a surrealist, Joyce was decidedly a *transitionist*. From the numerous instances of either the magazine or Jolas himself receiving their respectful dues and honorary mentions, let us settle for a mere representative trio. In the *Wake*'s crucial chapter I.7, the "Shem" episode, a.k.a. "A Portrait of the Artist as an Old Man," we find Joyce's altered ego Shem living and creating, like some post-apocalyptic feral creature, in a "lair" with its "warpedflooring [...] persianly literature with" an endless (dis)array of objects real and imagined. These include:

> telltale stories, stickyback snaps [...], alphybettyformed verbage [...], ompiter dictas [...], imeffible tries at speech unasyllabled [...], fluefoul smut [...], borrowed brogues

35 For more cf. McMillan, *Transition 1927–38: The History of a Literary Era*, 210–1.
36 Cf. Ibid, 212–3.

> [...], once current puns, quashed quotatoes, messes of mottage [...], unused mill and stumpling stones [...], cans of Swiss condensed bilk [...]. (*FW* 183.11–30)

A list of items that, in the order of appearance as translated from *Wakese*, includes: fiction and photos, experimental writing, *obiter dicta* (critical pronouncements), modern poetry, erotica, literary borrowings, the *Wake* itself, pieces by Gertrude Stein, and some canned Dada from Zurich—a list that sounds very much like a table of contents of a *transition* issue.

For Shem's letter to be delivered, the figure of the postman, the letter-carrier, is required – and found in the character of Shem's brother Shaun. His eponymous chapter III.1 is replete with apostrophes directed at his many variant incarnations, such as: "Mine bruder, able Shaun [...], Winner of the gamings, primed at the studience, propredicted from the storybouts, the choice of ages wise! Spickspookspokesman of our specturesque silentiousness!" (*FW* 427.17–33). The epithet, "winner of the gamings," identifies Jolas as the Shaun figure via reference to his correct guess of the title (*Finnegans Wake*) of Joyce's book at the 1937 family Thanksgiving dinner. Here, Jolas is described as having been "propredicted from the storybouts," that is, predicted as the *Wake*'s propagator early on, a role which he fulfilled over the course of his lifelong friendship with Joyce, and as the "spickspookspokesman of our specturesque silentiousness," i.e., functioning as the spokesperson of Joyce's silence about his own work, with Joyce arguably "ghost/spook-writing" parts of Jolas' articles.[37]

As Joyce himself revealed in a letter to Harriet Weaver, "Shawn [...] is written in the form of a via crucis of 14 stations but in reality is only a barrel rolling down the river Liffey" (*L* I, 214), which Shaun the postman literally becomes in III.3 – a barrel of Guinness stout. In the final section of the *Wake,* Book Four, consisting of Anna Livia's banal and poignant leave-taking, this vehicle channelling Shem's letter receives the following invocation: "benedicted be the barrel; kilderkins, lids off; a roache, an oxmaster, a sort of heaps, a pamphilius, a vintivat niviceny, a hygiennic contrivance socalled from the editor" (FW, 596.17–9). Blessing here the barrel as a "hygiennic" contrivance of "its editor"—its off-spelling suggesting it is both salubrious and Eugenic—Joyce is gratefully saluting *transition* one final time.

And so, closer to the truth than Finney's glib dismissals of Jolas' programme as incompatible with Joyce's project is McMillan's nuanced estimation of the *Wake*'s pronouncements regarding *transition*'s instrumental role in delivering his message to the audience:

> To be involved with *transition* was to be marked as part of the zealous avant-garde and to invite misunderstandings and hostility. But it was also to enjoy the benefits of

37 Cf. Ibid, 221–2.

> a congenial, uniquely perceptive editor, open to radical experimentation and willing to provide the kind of context and explanation which defined the new modes of writing. Most of all it was to be a part of a significant literary revolution which produced some of the best literature of the century.[38]

4. JOYCEAN AVANT-GARDE: PARALLAX, METEMPSYCHOSIS, CONCRETISM, FORGERY, AND NEOLOGISM

Thus, the church of Joycean avant-garde can be erected on the rock of Joyce's lifelong preoccupation with language as material, partaking of Jolas' "revolution of the word" and the concept of aesthetic autonomy. In order to understand better Joyce's project in the *Wake*, a brief detour into *A Portrait* and especially *Ulysses* is in order, as it was on the back of the parodic subversion of the *Künstlerroman* in *A Portrait* and the ground-breaking critique of 19th-century realism in *Ulysses* that Joyce embarked on his final and most radically innovative experiment. *Finnegans Wake* also builds on *Ulysses'* structural parallax and narrative metempsychosis, and it was on the basis of the success of its 1922 publication with Shakespeare & Company and the *Ulysses* "cult" that Jolas took note of Joyce and invited him to join in *transition.* The following fast-forward through Joyce's three crucial texts is undertaken in concordance with a similar perception, on Hugh Kenner's part, of the unity in kind and variation in degree among these three:

> The progression from the *Portrait* through *Ulysses* into *Finnegans Wake* represents the dramatic action being transferred more and more thoroughly into the convolutions of the language itself. The liturgical implications are obvious; like the Mass, the linguistic actions in the later work are not merely analogous to another action: they *are* that action.[39]

Joyce's lifelong literary preoccupation was with systems of presentation. His development was toward the amplification of the verbal, the creation of autonomous forms in motion; toward the vitalised word of *Finnegans Wake*, the "collideorscape" (FW 143.28). To arrive there he was obliged to alter and recombine—destroy, according to his detractors—the existing expressive codes. En route, Joyce kept enhancing the tendency of the modernist "attention to the medium" to a principle governing the development of his oeuvre. His canon is thus marked—from the early floating signifiers of "paralysis," "gnomon," and "simony" in the first paragraph of "The Sisters" to the possibly

38 Ibid, 230.

39 Hugh Kenner, "The *Portrait* in Perspective," *The Kenyon Review* X.3 (Summer 1948): 368.

inexhaustible allusive potential of almost all "words" in *Finnegans Wake*—by a constant preoccupation with the materiality of language. Thus, the "scrupulous meanness" of the seemingly naturalist prose in *Dubliners* is complexified by means of Joyce's etymological recalls and syntactical manipulations conveying the idiosyncratic rhythms of Dubliners' speech.

In generic terms, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* exhausts and abandons the genre of the *Künstlerroman*, which had provided only "a tentative solution to the dilemma of Joyce's generation, by enabling writers to apply the methods of realism to the subject of art."[40] *A Portrait* achieves this by treating the very attitude of the novelist toward art as one of the critical questions of the novelist's subject—in other words, by staging the process of the writing of the novel as one of the subjects of the novel. That Stephen Dedalus gradually develops from Joyce's autobiographical *alter ego* into an increasingly *altered ego*, ironised, parodied, and observed from an increasingly critical distance, has been well-documented as one of *A Portrait*'s crucially innovative "perspectives." Joyce's "mythological method," though not yet as fully on display as in *Ulysses*, underwrites the theme of turning the artist's mind to "unknown arts" (as per Ovid's Daedalus), as well as the basic rhythm of the novel's five sections: flying—falling, soaring—plummeting, succeeding—failing, and such binaries as up/down, high/low, etc. In the famous final invocation, "Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead" (*P*, 213), a series of fathers is appealed to and revoked—from the biological father to the Jesuit fathers to fatherland, all these are "nets to fly by" (*P*, 171) toward the one minotaur to be wrestled with: the mystery of becoming an artist.

One of the unifying leitmotifs of *A Portrait* is its increasing self-awareness of language as material and itself as linguistic construct. Its opening scene, with its multiple shifts in perspective, repetitiveness, and verbal deformation ("*O, the wild rose blossoms*" becoming "*O the geen wothe botheth*" [*P*, 7]), portrays the individual's entry into language as charged with sociosexual tension, famously subverting such naïve "realist" autobiographies as Dickens' *David Copperfield*. In various places throughout *A Portrait*, Stephen Dedalus perceives words "silently emptied of instantaneous sense," thereby forming "heaps of dead language" (*P*, 150). Language is conceived of as material foreign and mysterious to the human subjectivity, and yet affecting it profoundly: words like "suck" and "foetus" (described as "queer"), or, later on, *les jupes* and *mulier cantat*, evoke a bodily reaction of arousal and delirium.

40 Harry Levin, *James Joyce—A Critical Introduction* (1941), revised & augmented edition (New York: New Directions, 1960) 47.

Ulysses foregrounds linguistic materiality on many various macro-levels. First of all, by means of the famous mythological method—the "metempsychosis" (*U* 4.341) its Penelope asks its Ulysses about—the constant superimposition of multiple layers of narrative and the imposition of the Homeric and Shakespearean intertexts on its encyclopaedic rendering of 16 June 1904 in the Hibernian metropolis of Dublin. This encyclopaedism, intertextuality and narratological "parallax"—the word its Ulysses wonders about on his own (*U* 8.110)—was something publicised by Joyce himself post-publication, and captured in the pioneering criticism of Frank Budgen and Stuart Gilbert.

Yet its consequences for 20th-century storytelling and the genre of the "novel" are so momentous that T.S. Eliot's famous remark in "*Ulysses,* Order, and Myth" that it is "a book to which we are all indebted, and from which none of us can escape"[41] holds true for much of 20th-century fiction. As does Harry Levin's comment that *Ulysses* "is a novel to end all novels"[42]—though one must hasten to specify just what kind of novel it is that *Ulysses* smashes to a pulp. One of the many brilliant essays on Joyce of Hugh Kenner's, "The *Ulysses* Years," brings the structuralist narratology of *Ulysses* in direct relation to its deconstruction of the 19th-century "bourgeois realism." The "realism" of the opening "Telemachus" episode is shown in Kenner's perceptive reading as one far from evoking "reality" but rather "the mannerisms of a turn-of-the-century novel, once taken by readers for 'real,' in which nothing done by anybody goes unchaperoned by a helpful adverb."[43]

As long as Joyce had picked the *Odyssey* as *the* pioneer novel of the Western culture, in rewriting it *sub specie* 1904, Joyce surveyed the art of narrative in the twenty-seven intervening centuries, concluding that it "had done little more than contrive variations on Homer." Kenner continues: "We can penetrate its tricks once we reflect that the *Odyssey*'s fantastic wanderings are optional. Its node requires just four main characters: absent father, avenging son, beset wife, usurper, and many stories are the story of these four."[44] And so this structuralist grid of these four functions can be filled with the different sets of variables that form the backbone of the European tradition: Homer's "Ulysses—Telemachus—Penelope—Suitors" can become "The Ghost—Hamlet—Queen Gertrude—King Claudius" in Shakespeare's tragedy or "Il Commendatore—Don Ottavio—Donna Anna—Don Giovanni" of Mozart's opera.

The "narrative" of *Ulysses,* then, boils down to a juxtaposition of the two crucial tetrads of "Leopold—Little Rudy—Molly—Blazes Boylan," and "Si-

41 T. S. Eliot, "*Ulysses,* Order, and Myth" (1923), *Selected Prose of T. S. Eliot*, ed. Frank Kermode (London: Harvest, 1975) 175.

42 Levin, *James Joyce*, 207.

43 Hugh Kenner, *A Colder Eye – The Modern Irish Writers* (London: Allen Lane, 1983) 192.

44 Kenner, *A Colder Eye,* 196.

mon Dedalus—Stephen—Dead Mother—Mulligan," against the backdrop of 1904 Dublin subjugated by its "two masters: the imperial British state and the holy Roman catholic and apostolic church" (*U* 1.638), and in the grip of nationalist and antisemitic sentiments. Bloom's mourning for Rudy parallels Stephen's mourning for his mother parallels Ireland's mourning of its lost freedom parallels the Jewish diaspora's mourning for the lost Israel; Bloom's fear of Boylan's amorous usurpation of Molly parallels Stephen's alertness to Mulligan's clownish mischiefs parallels the Irish wariness of the British colonial rule parallels the Jewish fear of antisemitism infecting the European sensibility at the dawn of the 20th century; Bloom's alienation from his wife parallels Stephen's alienation from his father parallels the couple's alienation from the Irish national movement and from the Catholic dogma; Stephen's thwarted search for a spiritual father intersects with Bloom's vain search for a spiritual son, paralleling their precarious search for a national and religious identity, etc. etc. etc. The "many stories" of *Ulysses* are the stories of these four functions in the many permutations of their variables.

Ultimately, the "frustrating" dénouement of Joyce's narrative lies in the thwarting of the envisaged ideal tetrad, "Bloom—Stephen—Molly/Milly—Boylan/Bannon," by Stephen's refusal to stay the night at the Blooms'. This ideal quartet, notes Kenner, has a familiar shape: the shape of "the Picaresque Novel with a Happy Ending."[45] Bloom's schema would tie many of the loose ends of 16 June but *Ulysses* prefers to leave them undone. The ultimate "antagonistic" and "futuristic" traits of Joyce's novel (as per Poggioli) lie in how it completes and abolishes all the major conventions of the great urban novel in English. "Which is the end of an era," comments Kenner, "the English Novel so comprehensively, so consummately Done that there has been (at last) no need for it to be done again."[46]

In addition to its proto-structuralist treatment of the narrative as a parallactic constellation of perspectives, the ground-breaking ways in which *Ulysses* calls our attention to its medium of language by way of exploring the materiality of the word are legion. One is the multiplicity of its styles and parodies (e.g., the "Oxen of the Sun" episode at the maternity hospital,

45 Kenner continues: "In that novel, the bourgeois dream, many thousand times rewritten for 150 years, mankind is divided, like Quixote and Sancho, into two persons, the Picaro and the Benefactor. It is the bourgeois dream because it endows Sancho Panza with money and then brings him on stage to solve everything. Sancho Panza, it turns out, was all the time Ulysses in a clown's mask" (Ibid, 197).

46 Kenner concludes: "The great urban novel in English ought to have been set in London. It is set in Dublin. Its picaro ought to be a hearty spirited youth. He is morose and unwashed [...]. Its benefactor ought to be smiling, affluent, quietly top-drawer, [...]. He is Jewish, insecure, irregularly employed, cuckolded. It ought to end with an affirmation of universal rightness [...], it ends with a lonely man going to bed, and with the sleeplessness of his lonely wife. And the whole has [...] the encyclopedic finality of a sacred book" (Ibid, 198).

staging the evolution of the entire English language, from its Anglo-Saxon prehistory to its American evangelical futures), a multiplicity which foregrounds the relativity of literary style and its textual and linguistic "self-awareness." Another is the inclusion within its covers of a vast amount of "found" or "ready-made" linguistic material (cf. the "Eumaeus" chapter, stitched together from hundreds of recycled clichés, but, e.g., also the famous recursive "Plumtree's Potted Meat" advertisement [*U* 17.560] and the subject of "the influence of gaslight [...] on the growth of adjoining paraheliotropic trees" [*U* 17.13–14], lifted from the real-life edition of the *Evening Telegraph* of 16 June 1904, sighted at the cabman's shelter). Yet another is its exploration of the visual and graphic dimensions of typography and textuality (cf. the "Aeolus" episode at the newspaper room, but also the incident in which a "POST NO BILLS" wall inscription wears off into "POST 110 PILLS" [*U* 8.93]), but also on the micro-level of the word, the signifier, or even a single letter.

Examples on the micro-level abound: the very first sentence moves from "stately" to "crossed," from the "state" to the "cross" (symbolising the Church), but also alluding to the Biblical "stations of the cross" (*U* 1.1–3). Another notorious instance is Molly Bloom's translation of *metempsychosis* as "met him pike hoses" (*U* 4.343) whereby misheard Greek is turned into the speech of an Irish housewife, just as Joyce turns the Greek epic into an Anglo-Irish novel. Another exemplary instance is the opening of "The Sirens" episode, composed of 58 phrases (57 of which are repeated later on in the episode's text) which stage the interplay of letters and words as material that resists semantic interpretation, and foregrounds meaning as context-based. On the level of the letter, there is the letter *S* for "Stately" and "Stephen," opening the "Telemachiad"; there is the *M* for "Mr" and "Molly" opening the middle Bloom section; and finally the *P* for "Preparatory" and "Poldy" that opens the final *nostos* section: "S-M-P," the subject-middle-predicate of every proper syllogism, the concluding "Yes" circling back to the opening "Stately" (through which it runs backwards).[47] In the "official" journalist account of Paddy Dignam's funeral, Leopold Bloom becomes "L. Boom," with the missing "l" nettling him "not a little" (*U* 16.1260) – but perhaps this missing "l" has wandered off the page of *Evening Telegraph* into Martha Clifford's letter Bloom read earlier in his day, which misspelled "that other word" as "that other world" (*U* 5.245), because in the paperspace of *Ulysses*, the "word" and the "world" are one. And so on, and so, encyclopaedically and materially, forth.

If the "lesson" of *Ulysses* is that written language, when departing from the erstwhile rigid narrative standard on an "Odyssey of style," can create a world out of itself, then *Finnegans Wake* takes up where *Ulysses* checks off.

47 For more see Don Gifford, *Ulysses Annotated—Notes for James Joyce's Ulysses* (University of California Press, 2008) 12.

Where *Ulysses* was concerned with "representation" of the many superstructures of the modern microcosm, *Finnegans Wake* deals with the "presentation" of the historical macrocosm, a point brought home through the contrast between the "Oxen of the Sun" episode of *Ulysses* (mentioned above) and "Anna Livia Plurabelle."[48] Over the eighty years of criticism regarding the *Wake*, few summaries of what the *Wake* can be said to be "about" have come close to the succinctness and precision of Harry Levin's fourfold, Dantesque list of its meanings: anagogical, allegorical, literal, and moral.[49]

Where *Ulyssean* superstructures are diachronic, in the *Wake*'s "presentation" everything exists in the continual present of the act of writing, whose plethora of meanings exist contemporaneously, replacing any linear sense with the larger relationships of language to its own history. Or, in Kenner's witty reversal, the *Wake* differs from *Ulysses* chiefly in that "whereas in the earlier book Bloom occupies the foreground, re-enacting unawares Odysseus' adventures, in the latter book's universe it would be just as pertinent to say that Odysseus was enacting the adventures of Bloom."[50] This contemporaneous present-ation in the present act of writing is informed by the philosophy behind the *Wake* – Giordano Bruno's doctrine of *coincidentia oppositorum*, the falling-together of opposites, the differential nature of the structuring of reality through human understanding. If in *Ulysses*, this coincidence is chiefly one of the mythological symbolic superstructure imposed upon the naturalistic present-day content, then what fall together in the coincidence of *Finnegans Wake* are the universalised past of the myth and the particularised past of history, both diachronies exposed to the same synchronic, differential workings of language: "Universality, in so far as [Joyce] can be said to have attained it, is a mosaic of particulars."[51]

Where both these pasts merge is the most private and intimate, and simultaneously the most universal and impersonal of human experiences: that of dreaming. Now, the *Wake* as text is a dream neither by narrating any single dream nor by involving any single dreamer, but by dreaming history, by subjecting historical material to the condensing and displacing

48 "When he sought words, in the hospital chapter of *Ulysses*, to reproduce the origins of life, he was foiled by the intervention of literary history, embryology, and other excrescences. Turning from representation to presentation, he allows nothing to intervene between the prose of *Finnegans Wake* and the flow of the Liffey" (Levin, *James Joyce*, 162).

49 "Anagogically, it envisages nothing less than the development of civilization, according to Vico's conceptions. Allegorically, it celebrates the topography and atmosphere of the city of Dublin and its environs. Literally, it records the misadventures—or rather the nightmares—of H.C. Earwicker, as he and his wife and three children lie in their beds above his pub, and broken slumber reiterates the events of the day before. Morally, it fuses all three symbols into a central theme, which is incidentally Milton's—the problem of evil, of original sin" (Levin, *James Joyce*, 134).

50 Kenner, *A Colder Eye*, 230.

51 Levin, *James Joyce*, 161.

processes of the dreamwork, turning historical particulars into mythological universals, presenting the content of language as that which is also its form.[52] For if words are the stuff the dreams of history in the Wake are made of, then they, too, must undergo the processes of condensation (becoming portmanteaus, e.g., "collideorscape") and displacement (performing paronomasia and punning). This is brought home in the *Wake*'s self-description, quoted in the preceding section, as "once current puns, quashed quotatoes, messes of mottage" (*FW* 183.22–3). Puns and paronomasia enact small linguistic versions of what *Ulysses* undertook on the level of narrative. Just as *Ulysses*' parallactic narrativity brings home the point that no story exists alone, but is part of a general narrative structure, then one of the larger implications of the multilingual poetics of Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* is that no language exists alone, but always in relation to others. We could think of this as an implication of community – a community based on what David Hayman has termed "the perpetuation of creation,"[53] of which the present book functions as a record.

Regarding the *Wake*'s unity of form and content, spinning one more variation on Beckett's well-worn adage of the *Wake*'s linguistic autonomy, Levin perceptively observes that its "drastic solution" to the dilemma of form and content is "to subordinate content to form," and thereby "to reduce the plot to a few platitudes that can be readily stylized, and confer complete autonomy upon words," which *"are now matter, not manner*."[54] The *Wake* explores the materiality of language at the level of the signifier via the pun and the portmanteau, foregrounding the indivisibility of meaning from its material representation. Joyce's "whorld" (*FW* 100.29) order has the merit of being based on and within language—which is human-made—rather than on incomprehensible cosmic events. Joyce thus simultaneously desacralises both religion and language by means of signifiers that no longer refer to "something" signified but are objects in their own right, the Beckettian "something *itself*."

Words become subjects of multiple intentions inviting different interpretations, their complexity making meaning not into something already accomplished, waiting to be expressed, but instead functioning as a performance of semiotic production. Joyce's use of the portmanteau word and multilingual punning in *Wakese* can be seen as variously destabilising identity – of language, history, nation, and last but not least, of its own existence as text, within the potentially infinite rewritings imposed upon it in the reading pro-

52 "No writer, not Flaubert himself, has set a more conspicuous example of the cult of style. Joyce's holy grail, la *dive bouteille*, is Shem's inkbottle" (Ibid, 146).

53 David Hayman, "Some Writers in the Wake of the *Wake*," *In the Wake of the Wake*, eds. David Hayman & Elliott Anderson (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978) 3–4.

54 Levin, *James Joyce*, 155, emphasis mine.

cess. In one of the many self-referential passages, the *Wake* describes itself as a "scherzarade of one's thousand one nightinesses" in which "that sword of certainty which would *indentifide* the body never falls" (*FW* 51.4–6, my italics). To *indentifide* is to identify with an "indentation" – for fiction functions and operates as a product of writing open to the operation of reading. Furthermore, the very same sentence indents *indentifide* as *idendifine*, performing one of the sundry internal variations and differentiations that run the whole gamut of the *Wakean* "indentity of undiscernibles" (*FW* 49.36–50.1) where the only (s)word that never falls is that of certain and unambiguous identity. The reader's identity, too, undergoes destabilisation in that every reading of the *Wake* becomes split between the eye that registers multiplicity and the voice which can sound only one text at a time.

Of the plethora of examples of the interplay between the ear and the eye let us pick one of the most obvious ones: the very last word of the Wake, which famously ends in mid-sentence with the definite article "the" (FW 628.16). However, the text of the *Wake's* last chapter repeatedly presents itself as a letter stained with tea, *thé* in French, and it may as well be that its sudden breakoff is due to a tea stain. For an example of multilingual paronomasia, one need only consider the very first word of the Wake: "riverrun" (FW 3.1). Literally, it is a reference to the river Liffey running through Dublin, but it is also a pun on Italian *riverrano*, "they will come again," referring to those Finnegans waking up in the title. In the religious context of the opening, "riverrun" also becomes paronomasia of "reverend" (the addressee of the letter), and in the dream context of the whole, of the French *rêverons*, "we will dream." The "riverrun" passage runs from English to Italian to French, all within one word, but only with the exertion of considerable interpretive effort. The important point about all these interpretive funfairs is that every one of the potentially inexhaustible readerly realisations *indents* the identity of the written: with the *Wake* more so than with any other text, to read is to rewrite, to countersign. Every reading is a performance with a difference of the textual material. *Indenting* stretches out into legal discourse not only via the contractual relation of *indenture*, but also in its denotation of *forging*, *duplicating* – and the voice's duplication, the performance of the written, is nowhere more forcefully limiting than when dealing with the *Wake*.

Finnegans Wake connects these concerns with the understanding of linguistic autonomy as its signature, the mark of its singularity. This is addressed in the famous rhetorical question, "why, pray, sign anything as long as every word, letter, penstroke, paperspace is a perfect signature of its own?" (*FW* 115.6–8). In the first of its interpretive investigations into the "original" trespass of HCE, a.k.a. Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker (*FW* 30.2), a.k.a. Here Comes Everybody (*FW* 32.18–9), one finds the following injunc-

tion: "Hesitency was clearly to be evitated. Execration as cleverly to be honnisoid" (*FW* 35.1–21). *Hesitency* as a mark of writing which over-means its own sound-realisation performs a number of functions. Most generally, it is a double figure for all reading and interpretation that forever re-realise its object, and for writing functioning as the subject's peculiarly alienated, original, and thus always to be forged, signature.[55] More specifically, Joyce uses it to refer to his own artistic *mark*, his own forgery of language in the *Wake* where so much revolves around a letter penned in order to wash away the blame sticking to HCE.

When elsewhere in the *Wake* Joyce's altered ego Shem mentions his "celebridging over the guilt of the gap in your hiscitendency" (*FW* 305.8–9), there is the unbridgeable "gap" out of which springs the notion of a "divided agency" behind any signature, behind all writing, but even more importantly, "hesitancy" becomes *hiscitendency*, the tendency toward citing. Forgery for Joyce is also a figure for literary writing, forged not only in the sense of writing as technology, but also in the sense of literature as "discourse" founded upon (mis)appropriation of the other's words, whether in the narrow sense of another writer's or in the widest sense of language itself. It is only rhetorically that Shem the penman raises the question: "Who can say how many pseudostylic shamiana, how few or how many of the most venerated public impostures, how very many piously forged palimpsests slipped in the first place by this morbid process from his pelagiarist pen?" (*FW* 181.36–182.3). Joyce's "pelagiarist pen" seems to insist, throughout his whole oeuvre but especially in the *Wake*, that literary authenticity is impossible without forgery: of the letter, of the word, of diction, of style.

Taken together, *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* bring about a change in the conception of what literary writing can do, a change predicated on their sustained examination of language as material and their avant-garde conception of aesthetic autonomy. They launch a series of effects for which the post-war (neo-)avant-garde functions as a type of "documentary organ." These effects can be roughly divided into five groups:

1) *Narrative parallax*: story-telling as concatenation of functions and variables; narrative as *thema con variazioni* or *fuga per canonem* of motifs; "story" as parodic subversion of intertext; the "plot" as little more than "a series of verbal associations and numerical correspondences."[56]

55 David Spurr's knowledgeable account in "Fatal Signatures: Forgery and Colonization in *Finnegans Wake*," *European Joyce Studies, Vol. 8: Joyce – Feminism/Post/ Colonialism*, ed. Ellen Carol Jones (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1998) ties "hesitency" to the infamous case of Richard Pigott's forgery of Charles Parnell's letters, meant to incriminate the latter in the 1882 Phoenix Park murders.

56 Levin, *James Joyce*, 126.

2) *Stylistic metempsychosis*: style as protean and always-already (self-)conscious and parodic; style as discourse, its mimicry or subversion aimed against ideology, hence style as always political; the Joycean "True Sentence"[57] always embedded in an ascertainable voice.
3) *Concrete writing*: typographical foregrounding of letters, words, even non-lexical signs as distinct objects; language as partaking of the world, "word become flesh"; the book as a material object existing in paperspace; a.k.a. "metatextuality"[58] and "liberature."[59]
4) *Writing as forgery*: Joyce's "pelagiarist pen" producing radically intertextual and citational texts; writing as an operation of emptying the "fullness" of speech through the depersonalising effects of writing; every "word, letter, penstroke" treated as a "perfect signature of its own."
5) *Neologising the logos*: plurality of meaning vs. univocity of sense; destabilisation of the conventional signifier as vehicle of univocal meaning; multilingual punning and the technique of the portmanteau; what Donald Theall has termed a Joycean "techno-poetics."[60]

These five formal traits would, then, constitute what throughout this book will be referred to as Joyce's "materialist poetics," since the common feature of all these five traits is a materialist treatment of language. Or, in other words, these five make up the Joycean avant-garde "signature" in solicitation

57 The conviction that reality "does not answer to the 'point of view,' the monocular vision, the single ascertainable tone. A tone, a voice, is somebody's, a person's, and people are confined to being themselves, are Evelines, are Croftons, are Stephens [...] The True Sentence, in Joyce's opinion, had best settle for being true to the voice that utters it, and moreover had best acknowledge that when voices commence listening to themselves they turn into styles" (Hugh Kenner, *Joyce's Voices* [London: Faber and Faber, 1978] 16).

58 Michael Kaufmann uses the term *metatextuality* for works that "'show' themselves and comment physically on their material existence in the way that metafictional works comment on their fictiveness" and whose printed form "becomes a part of the narrative," so that ultimately, "the narrative occurs not only on the 'other side' of the page but directly in front of the readers' eyes on the surface of the page itself" (Michael Kaufmann, *Textual Bodies: Modernism, Postmodernism, and Print* [London/Toronto: Associated University Press, 1994] 14–5).

59 Katarzyna Bazarnik has coined the term *liberature* pertaining to works in which "the typography and shape of the book, or its bibliographic code, becomes a peculiar stylistic device deliberately used by authors [...who] go beyond mere words, using typography, images, kind and colour of paper or other material they find more suitable for their purpose, sometimes even modifying the very form of the volume" (Katarzyna Bazarnik, *Joyce & Liberature* [Prague: Litteraria Pragensia Books, 2011] ii).

60 "Joyce wrote books that were pivotal for examining relationships between the body and poetic communication and for exploring aspects of such items on the contemporary intellectual agenda as orality and literacy; the importance of transverse communication in contemporary discourse; the role of transgression in communication; the role of practical consciousness in everyday life; and the relationship between the events of everyday life and their embodiment and materialization in the sensory nature of the contemporary interior monologue" (Donald F. Theall, *Beyond the Word: Reconstructing Sense in the Joyce Era of Technology, Culture and Communication* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995] 56).

of counter-signatures, of which this work will trace fifty most relevant in the history of post-war fiction. To be sure, this structuration of particular literary-historical narrative based on this rather *autotelic* model is a methodological fiction, but one which aims to deliver the critical mapping of the post-Joycean tradition from the sort of haphazardness and stagnation it has suffered from under the "postmodern" condition. The fifty avant-gardists covered in this book (38 in detail, 12 in a concluding survey) will be considered as both practitioners and theorists of fiction, as formulators of their own fiction programmes. Their critical work will therefore be examined as indicative of their attitude toward Joyce's materialist poetics. Explicit commentary on Joyce's treatment of language or his technical and stylistic advances will be taken as a starting point in evaluating the writers' positions within the lineage issuing from his writing.

Their fiction will be treated from two major viewpoints: the textual and the conceptual. By "textual" is meant both an overt acknowledgement of Joyce's writing in passing, an allusion or quotation, oftentimes of parodic purpose, as well as the more subtle link through a type of similarity, whether stylistic or thematic. From a "conceptual" perspective, symptomatic of a Joycean presence within the work of fiction under scrutiny will be the employment of a meta-narrative grid or scheme resulting in a multiplication of styles (as in *Ulysses*), and the enhancement of the expressive potential of language through verbal complexification, deformation, and recreation (à la *Finnegans Wake*). Throughout, however, *influence* will be understood not as mere borrowing or passive imitation, but as active transformation of the Joycean exploration of the materiality of language and the effects achieved through experimentation with the stylistic reservoir of language. A spectral Joycean presence will be found haunting a genealogy of post-war experimental writing that "countersigns Joyce's signature,"[61] of works that depart from *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* by taking account of what is singular about their materialist poetics, and re-imagining what that singularity could become in the new contexts of post-war literary production, creating wholly new singularities.

61 In conversation with Derek Attridge, Jacques Derrida spoke of a "duel of singularities": "of writing and reading, in the course of which a countersignature comes both to confirm, repeat and respect the signature of the other, of the "original" work, and to *lead it off* elsewhere, so running the risk of *betraying* it, having to betray it in a certain way so as to respect it, through the invention of another signature just as singular" (Jacques Derrida, "'This Strange Institution Called Literature': An Interview with Jacques Derrida," *Acts of Literature*, ed. Derek Attridge [New York: Routledge, 1992] 69). For more on Derrida's notion of the countersignature, cf. the Conclusion.

5. JOYCEAN (?) TRADITIONS: HAYMAN, ADAMS, WERNER, LEVITT

The only real precursor to the present project, the only book-length treatise on literary response to *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* attempting to conceptualise a tradition "in its wake," is Hayman and Anderson's co-edited work *In the Wake of the Wake*, combining critical essays with interviews and excerpts from the works representative of this tradition.

David Hayman's introduction starts by portraying how the reception of *Finnegans Wake* was also a belated one, for reasons of historical contingency: its 1939 publication on the eve of World War II, and the reaction—for most of the 1950s—against experiment in favour of a socially-oriented and politically-engaged cultural production, effectively turned Joyce's last work into a symbol of the end of an old era rather than an opening of a new one. As Hayman puts it, "after its 1939 publication, the *Wake* fell seemingly into a black hole," hiding in wait for its (belated) revisitation, calling upon future writers "to reshape the very tools of their craft, to say nothing of their means of perception." And Hayman is quick to add: "Not too many writers have answered the call, though a great many have responded and continue to respond to the less extreme challenge of *Ulysses*. Still, something else is now clear. The *Wake* belongs to a class (not a genre) of works which invite the reader to perpetuate creation."[62] In Hayman's introduction, the post-*Wake* tradition is conceptualised as "growing out of tendencies central to the *Wake* rather than directly out of the *Wake* itself," and Hayman is careful to limit his case for both influence and impact to "writers who have actually read and studied Joyce." Hence his two excellent interviews with Maurice Roche and Philippe Sollers, as well as inclusion of Haroldo de Campos' essay on "The *Wake* in Brazil and Hispanic America," documenting Hayman's conviction that "to date, most of the work in this 'tradition' has been done by writers in languages other than English."[63] Accordingly, Hayman's other examples include Hélène Cixous, Michel Butor, Raymond Queneau, the Brazilian Noigandres group of concrete poetry, and the German maverick experimentalist Arno Schmidt. Writers from the Anglo-American linguistic space include Christine Brooke-Rose, Anthony Burgess, Raymond Federman, and John Barth. Hayman's collection (and his introduction) is useful in systematising the possible modes of the *Wake*'s impact into four categories: the use of "language as a medium, the preoccupation with the process of saying as doing"; "the refusal of plot" in favour of approximating "a portable infinity" in which "meanings proliferate amid a welter of effects"; "the increased attention to

62 Hayman, "Some Writers in the Wake of the *Wake*," 3–4.
63 Ibid, 4–5.

universals, the generalizing or [...] 'epic' tendency"; and finally a tendency "to sublimate (not destroy) structure, harmony, and radiance in order to avoid the appearance, if not the fact, of aesthetic control."[64]

Despite its almost pioneering status within Joyce studies, there are issues with Hayman's collection and introduction. Hayman's book is a survey, and with the exception of its two interviews, it does not detail just how exactly these writers "have actually read and studied Joyce" – even though the degree of familiarity with Joyce's work varies greatly in such couplings as Burgess / Brooke-Rose or Butor / Federman. Moreover, Michael Finney's essay on "Eugene Jolas, *Transition* and the Revolution of the Word," fails to account for the essential points of connection between Jolas' revolutionary project and Joyce's *Wakean* poetics, settling instead for a philological critique of some of the more controversial of his linguistic theories. Failing to engage with the writers' own theories of fiction or pronouncements regarding the tradition that has come to inform their work, Hayman's tradition is one in which direct impact "inevitably mingles with fashions" and the question, "Would the same thing not have occurred without Joyce?"[65], remains unanswerable in his approach. Lastly and most importantly, Hayman's project in "The Wake of the *Wake*" entails a pinning-down of a Joycean "afterlife," in accordance with which he insists that "for a growing number of writers of 'experimental' fiction [...] Joyce's *Wake must* be a prime exemplar,"[66] presumably in order to be duly revered through emulation. Hayman's book is an exercise in "Joycean" scholarship projecting its self-image onto the "future of the novel," and in literary accountancy. But, to come back to Beckett: "literary criticism is not bookkeeping,"[67] and so this book will take a tack different from Hayman's.

Three more works of extant literary scholarship will be haunting—just as Joyce will be the writers under focus—my readings of post-war experimentalism that follow: Robert Martin Adams' *Afterjoyce: Studies in Fiction after Ulysses*, Craig Hansen Werner's *Paradoxical Resolutions: American Fiction since James Joyce*, and Morton P. Levitt's *Modernist Survivors: The Contemporary Novel in England, the United States, France, and Latin America*.

Adams is a historian of literary *influence* – and his study serves to show how "Joyce's influence worked either directly or indirectly in combination with many other influences."[68] His account is spot-on when pointing out how Joyce's idiosyncratic refashioning of extant literary techniques and

64 Ibid, 35–6.
65 Ibid, 36.
66 Ibid, 1, emphasis mine.
67 Samuel Beckett, "Dante... Bruno. Vico..Joyce," *Our Exagmination*, 19.
68 Robert Martin Adams, *Afterjoyce: Studies in Fiction after Ulysses* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977) 3.

styles grew out of his equally personal take on literary history.[69] Useful are Adams' "three thematic interludes" in which he ekes out the peculiar traits of Joyce's heritage, treating it in terms of "the main devices-patterns-structures that he applied to prose fiction and that others applied after him."[70] These interludes deal, first, with "Paradigms and Grids" – Joyce's use of Homeric exoskeleton in *Ulysses* so highly influential among his contemporaries; second, in "Surfaces, Holes, Blurs, Smears," Adams describes Joyce's transformation of surfaces "from declaratives to interrogatives," turning Joyce into an advocate for "the rejection of representation in favour of overt artifice and the rejection of artifice in favour of vision"[71]; and last but not least, Adams deals with the broad theme of "Language," Joyce's chief operation performed thereon, and its "disintegration." Authors covered in Adams' study are variegated and his readings detailed: ranging from Joyce's contemporaries—both Anglophone (Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner, and Samuel Beckett) and German (Herrmann Broch, Alfred Döblin)—to Joyce's followers across linguistic and national traditions. Adams' "After-Joyce" tradition spans authors Anglo-American (Anthony Burgess, Lawrence Durrell, Vladimir Nabokov, Thomas Pynchon), Spanish (José Lezama Lima, Severo Sarduy), and Italian (Carlo Emilio Gadda, Italo Calvino). However, Adams' approach still remains restrictive and problematic in at least three respects. The *Wake*, for him, remains "a gigantic enigma, a labyrinth more inconceivably labyrinthine [...] than anything seen in literature [...], without transcending [...] the status of a curiosity"[72] – a scandalously gross simplification, especially given the broadly comparative approach and the time of publication of his study. Second, Adams remains preoccupied with documenting particular traces of Joyce's "influence" which he fails to define (insisting throughout on its "coincidental" nature) or document with meta-literary material; Adams has no recourse to the authors' works of criticism or public pronouncements, and thus provides no substantiation of actual Joycean links. Third, and consequent to the previous two, there is no attempt on Adams' part to conceive of Joyce's experimental heritage as a genealogy running across national and linguistic borders.

The subtitle of Werner's work delineates a specific field which is charted out with precision and consistency, exploring "the diverse ways in which the

69 As Adams points out, although Joyce studied novelists, both modern and traditional, the authors who had the most profound effect on his imagination were not writers of prose fiction, and (with the notable exception of Shakespeare) not English. Joyce's one chief acknowledged precursor—and the only novelist—was Flaubert; then there were poets (Homer or Dante), dramatists (Shakespeare or Ibsen), both (Goethe), and non-literary artists/theorists (Vico, Wagner).

70 Adams, *Afterjoyce*, 36.

71 Ibid, 57.

72 Ibid, 31.

current generation has created a post-Joycean tradition in American fiction."[73] Werner openly avows that his concern is "not so much to contribute to our understanding of Joyce as to study [...] the contemporary American novel."[74] Unlike Adams' carefully painted portrait of Joyce the stylistic innovator, Werner's Joyce is the momentous synthesiser between realist observance of detail and the romanticist elevation thereof onto the level of symbol – for him Joyce is a liberator, not so much of language or literature, as of experience.[75] From this nebulous and anachronistic picture emerges an equally blurry-eyed notion of the Joycean influence within the US post-war letters. Werner is certainly correct when he claims that "different writers read different Joyces—Dublin(er)'s Joyce, Stephen Joyce, Homer's Joyce, Humphrey Chimpden Joyce—and react accordingly," or when arguing that "Joyce had no one style, yet he has influenced nearly every stylistic development in contemporary fiction,"[76] although the disjunctive "yet" seems out of place. But Werner uses this "stylelessness" as license to pronounce "Joycean" every writer who supposedly shares with him however marginal a trait – personal, artistic, stylistic, aesthetic, ideological. In Werner's overview, Joyce becomes an equally relevant point of reference for writers as unlike as John Barth and Norman Mailer (who even appear coupled together as "writer-performers") or Saul Bellow and Gilbert Sorrentino. Moreover, questions remain why writers who "consolidate his advancement on traditional forms"—whatever that might entail—should matter equally to those who "extend Joyce's technical achievement," or indeed why writers who "participate directly in their works" (another vague notion) should be as relevant to his heritage as those who "emulate Joyce's control of biographical distance."[77] To his credit, Werner does strive to construct a Joycean tradition or genealogy – although only within the borders of one national literature. To his detriment, this is a tradition so inclusive and protean as to border on meaninglessness, the adjective "Joycean" emptied of any identifiable referent. Werner's concluding aquatic metaphor fits his impressionistic approach more than is desirable: "Joyce's shadow stipples the surface of the big two-hearted river, the mainstream of American fiction. The romantic and realistic currents flow on, whirling, eddying, never quite merging, pulsing in a single rhythm."[78]

73 Craig Hansen Werner, *Paradoxical Resolutions: American Fiction after James Joyce* (Urbana, Chicago, London: University of Illinois Press, 1982) 5.

74 Werner, *Paradoxical Resolutions*, 6.

75 "Joyce battles to liberate *experience,* to admit the full range of human life into the work of art. Joyce's most important weapon in this battle is [...] his "scrupulous meanness" of observation, his refusal either to raise or lower his eyes from the concrete experience, in both its real and its dream aspects" (Ibid, 4).

76 Ibid, 33.

77 Cf. Ibid, 7–8.

78 Ibid, 195.

Levitt's work, *Modernist Survivors*, differs from both Adams and Werner in using the example of Joyce to broach the broader implications of the historical periodisation of modernism, its "survival" well after its supposed demise (with World War II) and its influential presence in what is too simply referred to as "postmodernism." The generality of Levitt's treatment of Joyce is a self-acknowledged one[79] and unlike Adams, Levitt is unafraid to posit Joyce's centrality for the modernist era – and for the era following in its wake. However, Levitt fails to detail the specificities of the "Joycean" character of the Modernist Age beyond the vague notions of Joyce's "mythopoesis"—the "recognition that in myth we may test out not only our ties with societies of the past but the present status of our own society"—and Joyce's supposed "humanism," defined as "the diminished yet central vision of man surviving, of man persisting, a revised yet still powerful humanist vision."[80] It follows that Levitt's Joyce is not so much a source of genealogy as a persona, a symbolic figure: "It is the aura of Joyce that attracts me, just as I believe it compels all those novelists who follow him."[81] What is more, Levitt's "humanist" outlook and his literary historical focus leads him to effectively disparage critical theory (so instrumental in disseminating Joyce's legacy, particularly in France) and also to overlook several truly experimental, non-mainstream writers.[82] Levitt's argument is thus replete with shocking misjudgements, as when he makes the prediction that "Robbe-Grillet will surely be remembered more as footnote than as source, more for the implications of his theory than for its elaboration in fiction, and as far less significant novelist than his compatriots Butor and Simon."[83] Levitt's is a narrow focus on Joyce the mythmaker, delimiting Joyce's legacy to that of symbolical, mythical structure imposed upon detailed realism/naturalism, without any consistent attention to Joyce's manipulation of the linguistic medium, or indeed to that of his followers. Shared with Adams (and to some extent Werner) is also his avoidance of engagement with the heritage of Joyce's *Wake*.

So, this book will draw on the fortes of its three chief avant-texts while trying to evade their weaknesses: Adams' ad-hoc, isolated series of close

79 "I have been speaking of Joyce as if his art could stand for all Modernist art. This is not to deny the very real differences—artistic, philosophic, and human differences—which exist between Joyce and Mann, or Joyce and Proust, or Joyce and Kafka. [... But] it seems indisputable to me that this is the great age of the novel. And Joyce, despite his individuality, is its eponymous hero, symbol (in part because of his individuality) of its artistic and human commitment: the Modernist Age might as tellingly be labeled the Age of Joyce" (Morton P. Levitt, *Modernist Survivors* [Columbus: Ohio University Press, 1987] 9–10).

80 Levitt, *Modernist Survivors*, 10.

81 Ibid, 11.

82 Cf. Levitt's British chapter which takes extensive effort to deplore such mainstream figures as Margaret Drabble and Kingsley Amis while completely omitting experimentalists such as Christine Brooke-Rose or Brigid Brophy.

83 Ibid, 15.

readings will here be replaced with stress on a continuous genealogy; Werner's narrow monocultural focus will be pluralised here, his subjective impressionism superseded with as much "solid" evidence and data as is available; instead of Levitt's highly-reductive "humanist" outlook and his personal biases, the present work will aim for a more inclusive, "objective" approach.

6. POST-JOYCE

None of the conceptualisations of a post-Joycean writing detailed above deals with the obvious paradox entailed in positing the centrality of James Joyce for the literature of the post-war period: a challenge to most conceptualisations of what came to be called literary "postmodernism," which in its application as a period-marker is ever so often characterised as modernism's replacement or successor. The Conclusion will parallel the Introduction's construction of a Joycean avant-garde by formulating (and challenging) a Joycean postmodernity, uniting the "avant-" and the "post-" of the title, turning Joyce the avant-gardist into Joyce the avant-postmodernist.

The genealogy mapped here begins in France, with the so-called *nouveau roman* movement. French fiction was the first to respond to Joyce and (re-) construct itself post-WW2 in the wake of *transition*'s "workshop of the intercontinental spirit"—perhaps naturally so given that *Ulysses* saw the light of print in Paris and the last words of *Finnegans Wake* are "Paris, 1922–1939." Such writers as Nathalie Sarraute and Michel Butor were reclaiming and rethinking Joyce's heritage as early as the late 40s, within years from his death. And already by the mid-1950s, some of Alain Robbe-Grillet's theorisations of the New Novel, Claude Simon's novel constructions, Robert Pinget's public pronouncements, and Claude Mauriac's diary entries, all attest to the liveliness—even though not exclusiveness—of the Joycean poetics for the first post-war French avant-garde. Two more France-oriented chapters form the backbone of the present genealogy: the one in the middle (the Oulipo Chapter 4), and the other at the end (the *Tel Quel* Chapter 7). Oulipo, begun in 1960 and channelling the talents of such pronouncedly Joycean writers as Raymond Queneau and Georges Perec presents an aesthetic-type, post-war avant-garde. Concentrating the energies of writers-thinkers like Philippe Sollers, Hélène Cixous, and Maurice Roche, *Tel Quel* is the clearest instance of a successful co-opting of the Joycean avant-garde for an engaged writing praxis, a political-type avant-garde *par excellence*.

Interposed between these are four chapters charting the post-war developments in Anglo-American experimental fiction. The two British chapters detail the development of post-Joycean experimentation in the last forty years of the 20th century. The first chapter focuses on the circle of writers

around B. S. Johnson, for whom Joyce's work provided a much-sought-after alternative to the various modes of post-Victorian or post-Edwardian novel. The other section details the careers of some of their sci-fi, feminist, post-colonial, and psychogeographic successors writing in the 1980s and 1990s, with the connecting bridge between the two being the remarkably long and variegated career of Christine Brooke-Rose, whose five decades of writing present an exceptionally productive "laboratory of the experimental spirit." The two American chapters present a reverse movement. The first one details the continuation of the Joycean impulse in the work of such maverick figures as William Burroughs, John Barth, and Donald Barthelme, in the 1950s and 60s. The other zooms in on the Joycean impulses driving the Language poetry movement and the Fiction Collective's "surfictionist" avant-garde, formed around such figures as Raymond Federman and Ronald Sukenick, in the 70s and 80s, as well as the explicitly political reworking of Joyce's legacy by such writers as Ishmael Reed and Kathy Acker. A final coda surveying the work of twelve authors writing post-2000 brings the entire genealogy into the present.

The originator of the genealogy of the fifty writers covered and mapped out in this book, Joyce is a writer whose continuous and ever-expanding examination of the materiality of language revolutionises the literary genre of the novel and challenges most of the dichotomies underlying literary vocabulary. His sublimation of structure was, in the last phase of his career, drafted in service of a specific avant-garde theory and programme, which in turn begat the following genealogy. It is within this genealogy that the avant-garde signature of Joyce's fiction (as countersigned by Jolas' theory) is preserved as valid and relevant, endowed with an importance that lingers on even in an age that claims to have succeeded modernism and postmodernism.

1.
JOYCE DE NOUVEAU: WITHIN OR BEHIND OR BEYOND OR ABOVE THE NEW NOVEL, 1947–67

Since this study is partly concerned with comparative cultural criticism, it might not be entirely inappropriate to open the account with an eye-witness report of a British poet visiting Paris in the immediate aftermath of WWII:

> France's intellectual vitality was as remarkable as ever, but it seemed to me to a large extent to be turning in a void. Whether it was the result of the shock of defeat and the humiliation of Nazi occupation, or of some deeper reason that went further back, the dominant spirit was, I thought, anti-humanistic, even nihilistic.[1]

This, to be sure, is a view of the French culture from the outside, and a British outside moreover, but what Lehman naively calls "anti-humanism" and "nihilism" might be symptoms of his amazement that the legacy of surrealism—not just its Bretonian orthodoxy but also its para- or proto-versions in the work of Raymond Roussel, Antonin Artaud, Blaise Cendrars, Jean Genet, and Raymond Queneau—was in the process of catching its second breath in France just at the time Britain's official culture was leaving modernism behind (see next chapter). Add to this the various and variable heritage of symbolism the nascent movement of the New Novel, with its critique of the notion of character, its shunning of the "myths of depth," and its promotion of literary "objectivity," and one understands why the Englishman abroad paints such a negative, bleak picture.

The first thing to make clear about the *nouveau roman* movement is that, just as the writers and artists associated with Jolas' *transition*, it is no group in any conventional sense of the term; in fact, part of the New Novelists' shared agenda was precisely to challenge the notions of literary grouping and group mentality as such. It has become a critical commonplace to stress the differences both on the basis of comparison between two or more New Novelists and within the development of their individual oeuvres. Critics oftentimes do little beyond making the usual acknowledgment that the New Novel, just as all literary-historical labels, is slippery and imprecise in terms of both the period described and authors referred to. Still, there are a few shared

1 John Lehman, *I Am My Brother* (London: Longman, 1960) 306.

traits discernible across a whole range of texts published simultaneously or within a couple of years of each other. As Laurent Le Sage observed as early as 1962, from the mid-1950s onward, the New Novel "attained a notoriety important enough to consecrate it as an authentic avant-garde phenomenon."[2] In fact, Le Sage's comment came just at the very peak of a five-year period which saw the publication of six novels by six still-unknown authors: *La Jalousie* (1957) by Alain Robbe-Grillet, *La Modification* (1957) by Michel Butor, Nathalie Sarraute's *Le Planétarium* (1959), Claude Simon's *La Route des Flandres* (1960), *La Marquise sortit à cinq heures* (1961) by Claude Mauriac, and Robert Pinget's *L'Inquisitoire* (1962). The period from 1957 to 1962 can be seen as a nucleus of the group's activity, with the preceding decade devoted to pioneering preparatory work and the subsequent two decades witnessing the group's transformations and gradual dissolution.

The term "New Novel" has its own genealogy and, just as so many other literary-historical terms, its problems. Its inception took place in the July 1958 special issue of the *Esprit* magazine devoted to novel-writing that featured the work of ten authors, including the authors discussed in this chapter (minus Claude Mauriac) plus the work of Jean Cayrol, Marguerite Duras, Kateb Yacine, and Jean Lagrolet. Although its *ad-hoc* character is best documented by the fact that the appellation of the New Novel post-dates the appearance of the first novels by no less than five years, still, the name—unlike the many other terms (Bernard Dort's 1955 *romans blancs*; Alain Bosquet re-application of Jean-Paul Sartre's notion of the *anti-roman* from 1947; Émile Henriot's notion of "École du regard"; or Ronald Barthes' *littérature objective*)[3]—did catch on and was sanctified at the beginning of the 1960s by Robbe-Grillet's *Pour un nouveau roman* (*For a New Novel*).

By the end of the 1960s, however, the troubles with its application to the above six authors (let alone the others) had begun to show. In one of the first book-length studies on the New Novel in English, John Sturrock observed in 1969 that although "responsible critics who show a keen and sympathetic understanding of the practices of the New Novelists have not abandoned the term," there have been "certain radical divergences in purpose and seriousness" between individual New Novelists (most notably Butor and Robbe-Grillet) which make it "perfectly understandable that the New Novelists themselves should have been outraged by the glib way in which their differences had been obscured."[4] Still, Sturrock's study—focusing on Robbe-Grillet, Simon, and Butor—argues for the viability and perti-

2 *The French New Novel: An Introduction*, ed. Laurent Le Sage (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1962) 1.

3 For more, see Le Sage's overview of the critical genealogy in *The French New Novel*, 2–3.

4 John Sturrock, *The French New Novel* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969) 1–3.

nence of the label, viewing the three novelists as proponents of "a central proposition about the *nouveau roman*: that these novels must *never* be read as exercises in naïve realism or naturalism, but as studied dramatizations of the creative process itself."[5] Despite its claim to "newness" and its outspokenly polemic character, Sturrock insists that the movement is "part of the tradition which insists that the novelist explain or reveal his principle of organization in the text itself" and has a point in showing that Robbe-Grillet, for all his brash exorcism of the past, "has always claimed that he was not overturning the past, but extending it in the only possible direction. His tradition of the novel extends back through Beckett, Faulkner, Kafka, Joyce, Proust, Roussel, and Flaubert, whom he values for their successive technical contributions to the form."[6]

Sturrock's study also launched the now broadly accepted periodisation of the New Novelist evolution as a movement, which it is useful to recall especially in the context of the next chapters (four and seven) detailing the development of other, subsequent groupings and movements, such as Oulipo or the group around the *Tel Quel* magazine, neither of which can be said to have supplanted or replaced the New Novel. All of the six *nouveaux romanciers* mentioned above went on to develop their novelistic output well into the 1980s and 1990s, and so the New Novel is "always there" within the context of post-World-War-II French novel. The common periodisation distinguishes three distinct phases. The first period, roughly from the mid-1950s to mid-1960s, saw Robbe-Grillet at the helm and the novelists he associated with by means of his editorial post at the Éditions de Minuit, publisher of Beckett's trilogy and *Les Gommes*, becoming the hub of the New Novel publishing. Sarraute, for her part, was committed to Gallimard (also the base for Raymond Queneau), and so markedly different were the agendas of the two publishing houses throughout the 1950s and 60s that for instance Butor's switch from Minuit to Gallimard in 1960 was meant to be taken as a gesture of active dissociation from Robbe-Grillet's New Novelist programme. Thus, the authors loosely connected by their publisher and critical proponents were oftentimes more alike in what they stood against than what they stood for.

The next decade, from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, saw the leadership of Jean Ricardou (Robbe-Grillet having withdrawn from theoretical polemics to cinema and artistic collaboration). It was Ricardou's organisation that sought to turn the New Novelists into a group of like-minded writers whose strategic participation in public events and conferences was meant to demonstrate their intent to collaborate in promoting the practice and theory of

5 Sturrock, *The French New Novel*, 3.
6 Ibid, 5.

the modern novel.[7] Ricardou's theory emphasised the self-reflexive nature of the novel and a critique of realism while limiting the active presence of writerly personality in favour of the productive power of language and critical reflection on the part of the reader.

The second phase—together with Ricardou's leading role—was brought to an end by Robbe-Grillet's return to the public forum at the 1975 Cerisy Colloquium, where he objected to the rigorously systematic character of Ricardou's analyses and interpretations which, to his mind, turned his novels into reassuringly comprehensible texts, a tendency at odds with his goal of producing meanings which were multiple and mobile. Thus, the third, post-1975 phase is marked by a turn against and away from Ricardou – its high point being the 1982 New York Colloquium, where Robbe-Grillet, Pinget, Sarraute, and Simon celebrated Ricardou's absence and placed a renewed emphasis on the novelist's expression of their personality.

The members of Robbe-Grillet's generation were deeply scarred by France's humiliating wartime occupation—in fact most of the New Novelists experienced the occupation in highly personal and sometimes traumatic terms—which had shaken the grounds of their belief in the commitment to the philosophy and ideology of literature as preached by intellectuals of the preceding generation, particularly Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir. Robbe-Grillet spoke for many when calling, in *Pour un nouveau roman*, such concepts as meaning, identity, story, and history "obsolete," positing instead the necessity of acknowledging the instability, relativity, and indeterminacy in individual perceptual and conceptual consciousness of the surrounding world.

Sarraute dubbed this tendency toward indeterminacy "suspicion" and, quoting Stendhal, turned it into the guiding principle of the post-war era. Suspicion, to her mind, was particularly directed toward the self-unity and self-identity of the staple ingredient of the traditional novel – the character:

> The character today is reduced to a shadow of his former self. Only reluctantly does the novelist endow him with attributes that could make him too easily distinguishable: his physical aspect, gestures, actions, sensations, everyday emotions, studied and understood for so long, which contribute to giving him, at the cost of so little effort, an appearance of life, and present such a convenient hold for the reader. (*AS*, 69)[8]

7 Sturrock rightly observes that "the idea of the Nouveau roman as a group of novelists served all its members by promoting interest in their work. Their novels became well-known to generations of foreign university students [...] the French Ministry of Culture sent New Novelists abroad to represent the French novel; no comparable movement arose to take its place" (Ibid, 6–7).

8 "[L]e personnage n'est plus aujourd'hui que l'ombre de lui-même. C'est à contrecœur que le romancier lui accorde tout ce qui peut le rendre trop facilement repérable : aspect physique,

Robbe-Grillet's conception of the New Novel can be viewed as a phenomenological revision of Sartre's existentialism. His early work posits the phenomenological view of consciousness, in which the world is confronted without pre-existing ordering notions, marked by what Husserl terms "intentionality": an orientation toward the world. Le Sage was among the first critics to tease out the implications of Husserl's philosophy for the practice of the New Novelists, paralleling their rejection of the analytical method of presenting characters with Husserl's rejection of ideality.[9]

In literary terms, the New Novel can best be understood as a revolt against the realist tenet of objectivity, regarding it as an illusion to be discarded together with what Robbe-Grillet calls "old myths of profundity": myths on which the novel used to be based. To be discarded together with the illusion of objectivity is Sartre's programme posited in his 1948 work, *Qu'est-ce que la littérature?*, and commonly denoted as *littérature engagée*. In his *For a New Novel*, Robbe-Grillet treats "engagement" as precisely one of the "obsolete notions" to be discarded. He rejects Sartre's call for a *moral* literature as a utopian fantasy and insists with a Jolas-like emphasis on literary "purity" that as soon as one "expresses something outside literature," literature itself "begins to disappear."[10] In the same breath, Robbe-Grillet calls for engagement to be restored to "its only sense possible for us," that is, "the full consciousness of the current problems of one's own language, the conviction of its extreme importance, and the willingness to resolve them from the inside."[11] The only engagement possible for a New Novelist, Robbe-Grillet insists elsewhere in the book, is literature rather than politics, since "political life obliges us

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gestes, actions, sensations, sentiments courants, depuis longtemps étudiés et connus, qui contribuent à lui donner à si bon compte l'apparence de la vie et offrent une prise si commode au lecteur" (*ES*, 74).

9 "The new novelists' rejection of the analytical method of presenting characters is postulated upon the same philosophic rejection of ideality that motivated Edmund Husserl in the first years of this century to reject neo-Kantism. Husserl, before Sartre or any of the new writers, had said that the world is there before it is anything. But the world to be there is not to be fully autonomous. The world is there only because it is perceived by human consciousness, which gives it its significance and its reality" (*The French New Novel*, 16).

10 "Then what remains of commitment? Sartre, who had seen the danger of this moralizing literature, advocated a moral literature, which claimed only to awaken political awareness by stating the problems of our society, but which would escape the spirit of propaganda by returning the reader to his liberty. Experience has shown that this too was a Utopia: once there appears the concern to signify something (something external to art), literature begins to retreat, to disappear" (*FNN*, 41).

11 "Let us, then, restore to the notion of commitment the only meaning it can have for us. Instead of being of a political nature, commitment is, for the writer, the full awareness of the present problems of his own language, the conviction of their extreme importance, the desire to solve them from within. Here, for him, is the only chance of remaining an artist and, doubtless too, by means of an obscure and remote consequence, of some day serving something—perhaps even the Revolution" (*FNN*, 41).

incessantly to suppose known significations," whereas art is "more modest—or more ambitious," as in it, "nothing is ever known in advance" (*NFF,* 141). It is, however, not only on the political level that Sartre's programme is to be rebuffed, from Robbe-Grillet's perspective. Despite the occasional nod of approval toward *La Nausée*'s protagonist Roquentin—in a sense a blueprint for so many New Novelist anti-heroes—Robbe-Grillet rejects the novel's perceived adherence to a "Balzacian" order of realism, i.e., the subservience of form to content or message in so much of existentialist writing. But more on Balzacian rejections later.

That the New Novelist tradition as invoked by Sarraute and Robbe-Grillet should primarily include Kafka the Prague German, Faulkner the Southern American, and the two Irishmen, Joyce and Beckett (with a 19th-century enjambment of Flaubert, in Robbe-Grillet's case, and of Dostoevsky, in Sarraute's) is symptomatic of their revolt against the so-called "Balzacian" tradition of the French novel, whose repercussions they viewed as stretching far beyond the demise of 19th-century mentality in the trenches of World War I. By comparison with these six writers, the importance of French modernists like Proust or Roussel is acknowledged much less readily, and still less so in the case of stylistically more conservative writers like Gide or Valéry.

The one major attempt at claiming the central position within the New Novelistic canon for Joyce as *the* "great predecessor" of the nouveau roman—Vivian Mercier's monumental study *The New Novel: From Queneau to Pinget*—posits as the primary impulse for the New Novel not so much Husserl as "a deep dissatisfaction with an art form now paying the penalty for the high degree of development it had achieved in the nineteenth century," which meant that a hundred years later, "it badly needed to 'retool,' following the lead of such English-language masters as Joyce, Faulkner, and Virginia Woolf."[12] It seems that in their blank refusal of the French novelistic tradition, Robbe-Grillet and Sarraute had thrown out the baby with the bath water. Proust they accepted with reservations and Roussel they valued primarily as a theorist of *Comment j'ai écrit certains de mes livres*, Gide's *Les Faux-Monnayeurs* receives an occasional nod of approval, but other modernists like Paul Valéry and surrealists like André Breton were largely ignored. What the New Novelists, at least Robbe-Grillet and Sarraute, seem to not only disavow but revolt against, is existentialism as practiced by Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus, novelists committed to humanist causes.

Given the New Novel's eclectic formation of tradition and their overt alliance with figures like Faulkner, Kafka, and Joyce, and the necessary confusion evoked by such labels as "modernism" or "postmodernism" vis-à-vis the New Novel, theorist Stephen Heath prefers to exclude these lables from

12 Mercier, *The New Novel From Queneau To Pinget* (New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 1971) 3.

his criticism of the New Novel altogether and to focus instead on the issue of its "new realism." For, if Robbe-Grillet famously claimed that "Flaubert wrote the new novel of 1860, Proust the new novel of 1910," (*FNN,* 10), then what he meant by "new" was not so much their formal or stylistic innovations as what Roland Barthes called "la connaissance du langage" and what Heath calls the "practice of writing," defined as "a radical experience of language."[13] Heath's Joycean training leads him to consider the *Wake* as precisely a text in which such a radical experience of language takes place, offering "the *space* of a work always *'in progress,'* the scene of a play of language and not, as in realist writing, the (intended) linear progression of a process of notation." [14] In this respect, Heath argues, the "situation of the nouveau roman is post-Joycean: Joyce, that is, is a major element in its situation."[15]

In its conception of constantly reworked tradition and what Heath terms "a radical experience of language," the New Novel is firmly embedded in the genealogy stretching from Stendhal and Flaubert to Joyce and Beckett. Here is perhaps as opportune a moment as any to substantiate the glaring omission of Samuel Beckett from the genealogy covered in this book. The reasons for this are chiefly twofold: its rather idiosyncratic nature and its status as one of the best-documented if contested literary intertexts in the entire Anglophone canon. The sheer fact of his singularly personal closeness to Joyce and the well-documented lifelong fascination with his acknowledged master turns Samuel Beckett into a most usual suspect of Joyce's influence in post-WWII fiction. Apart from a plethora of essays and papers, there are no fewer than four major monographs and essay collections to date devoted just to the Joyce/Beckett personal relationship and artistic intertext [16] However, his problematic personal relationship to Joyce, the multiple fresh starts and breaks with the past throughout his writing career (from English to French and from poetry to prose to drama), and last but not least the very singularity of Beckett's own poetics, all these have made the seemingly "natural" influence into something of a minefield for criticism, vastly exceeding the scope and interest of the present monograph.[17]

13 Stephen Heath, *The Nouveau Roman: A Study in the Practice of Writing* (London: Elek Books, 1972) 24.

14 Heath, *The Nouveau Roman*, 26.

15 Ibid, 29.

16 Cf. Barbara Gluck, Beckett & Joyce (New Jersey: Associated University Press, 1979); Re: Joyce 'n' Beckett, eds. Phyllis Carey & Ed Jewinski (New York: Fordham University Press, 1992); In Principle, Beckett is Joyce, ed. Friedhelm Rathjen (Norwich: Page Bros, 1994); P. J. Murphy, Beckett's Dedalus: Dialogical Engagements with Joyce in Beckett's Fiction (Toronto, Buffalo, London: Toronto University Press, 2009).

17 For a more detailed discussion and overview of extant critical work on the Joyce/Beckett intertext, cf. my own "Coincidental Opposites: A Portrait of Samuel Beckett as a Young Joyce," *Tradition and Modernity – New Essays in Irish Studies*, eds. Radvan Markus et al. (Prague: Charles University, 2014), pp. 13–25.