‘There is an art in lighting a fire’: A report on the Dublin James Joyce Summer School 2023.

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This year the Dublin James Joyce Summer School (DJJSS) returned to its traditional week-long programme in UCD Newman House, 85–86 St. Stephen’s Green. In the mornings, summer school speakers presented their papers in the elegant Old Physics Theatre of Richard Castle’s no. 85 (1735-40), the room in which Stephen taught the dean of studies the meaning of that good Lower Drumcondra word ‘tundish’. After lunch in the Saloon, attendees either joined Sam Slote for the *Ulysses* seminar or Christine O’Niell for *Dubliners*. There was a variety social activities in the evenings and weekends, including a reception in the National Library of Ireland, Kildare Street, with a welcome address in the Reading Room by the Director of the Library, Audrey Whitty; a trip to the Gate Theatre, Parnell Square East, to see a production of the musical *Fun Home* based on a graphical novel by Alison Bechdel; a walking tour of Joyce’s Dublin led by Monica Galindo Gonzalez, and a visit to the Omphalos in Sandycove led by Anne Fogarty; and a convivial closing dinner in Baggot Street.

Since 2019, Newman House has been home to the new Museum of Literature Ireland (‘MoLI’ for short, pronounced ‘Molly’ after herself), a joint venture between the National Library of Ireland and University College Dublin. MoLI hosts a significant permanent Joyce exhibition which includes important *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* manuscripts, interactive audio-visual exhibits, and a first edition and a complete braille edition of *Ulysses*, among much else. Summer school attendees were given a tour of the Museum and addressed by its Director, Simon O’Connor. The welcome presence of MoLI in

Newman House strengthens and solidifies the connection between Joyce and that beautiful complex of buildings nestled on the Green.

There were ten excellent presentations by speakers over the course of the week. **Anne Fogarty's (University College Dublin)** opening lecture '"I cannot write without offending people": The Composition and Reception of *Dubliners*' encouraged us to remember that *Dubliners* is a radical and innovative work in its own right, and not merely an initial staging-post in Joyce's artistic development. Fogarty began by highlighting Joyce's conception of *Dubliners* as a political gesture, intended by Joyce to reflect the stagnation of Irish politics in the mid-1900s. She also described Joyce's struggle to secure a publisher for the book, highlighting his 'performative literary' correspondence with publisher Grant Richards concerning its content. Finally, she demonstrated the radical modernism of the stories that compose *Dubliners*, which as she showed, set the template for the modernist short story and continue to be read anew.

Niall Ó Cuileagáin's (University College London) talk '"All his Blather about Home Rule and the Land League": The Legacies of the Land War in Joyce' argued that the 'Land Question' occupies a more central role in Joyce's work than has previously been appreciated. Ó Cuileagáin began by describing the history of the Land War, a period of agrarian agitation in Ireland from the late 1870s to the 1900s. He traced the connection of the Land War to Joyce's family and formative experiences, and then to Joyce's work, from his 1907 essay 'Irlanda all sbara' through *A Portrait* and *Ulysses*. He also highlighted the thread of the Land Question as it runs through *Ulysses*, in particular through Bloom's youthful dedication to land reform, the theme of Parnell and his fall, and Joyce's use of expressions such as 'Boycott', 'gombeen man', and 'grazier'.

Niels Caul's (University College Dublin) talk 'Joyce's Irish *Bildungsroman*: From *Stephen Hero* to *A Portrait*' opened the second day with a comparison of the different

modes that Joyce used in *Stephen Hero* and *A Portrait* to express the struggle of the artist to express their individuality in the face of cultural and societal norms. Caul highlighted the features of the 'classic' *Bildungsroman* typified by Goethe's work and the contrasting features of the Modernist and colonial *Bildungsroman*, showing how Joyce's transformation of *Stephen Hero* into *A Portrait* by means of the use of free indirect discourse, fragmentary narrative details, and the omission of specific local details produced in *A Portrait* 'the canonical example' of the Irish Modernist form of the genre. Caul also provided fascinating new evidence for the origin of Stephen's "Non serviam!" in a now largely forgotten Irish *Bildungsroman*.

Luca Crispi's (University College Dublin) talk 'Joyce 1915: Emerging "from the crowd of unknowns"' provided a granular snapshot of Joyce's life as a writer, focussed on Joyce's entry into the modernist literary marketplace in 1915. Crispi highlighted the importance of 1915 to Joyce's literary career as a whole, a period during which Joyce has 'three intertwined preoccupations: the physical and financial security of his family, getting his novel [*A Portrait*] published, and seeing his play [*Exiles*] performed on stage and then published.' Crispi's account wove together correspondence, biography, and historical context to locate Joyce within the network of friends, supporters, publishers, intermediaries, and agents that made his literary career possible. In doing so, Crispi demonstrated the sheer contingency of Joyce's success, undermining the idea of Joyce as destined by his natural gifts to succeed as an artist.

Opening day three, **Cleo Hanaway-Oakley's (University of Bristol)** talk ' "You're blinder nor I am": James Joyce and Non-normative Vision' focussed on Joyce's treatment of non-normative vision, and in particular of visual impairment, in *Ulysses*. Hanaway-Oakley began with a discussion of the Blind Stripling, arguing that whilst he is not a protagonist, he nevertheless generates a breakdown of stereotypes in his complex interaction with Leopold

Bloom. She then focussed on two books concerning blindness – De La Sizeranne's (1896) *The Blind As Seen Through Blind Eyes* and Javal's (1904) *The Blind Man's World* – which Joyce may have read, and which align surprisingly closely with some of the discussions of visual impairment in *Ulysses*. Finally, Hanaway-Oakley provided a fascinating history of braille editions of *Ulysses*, pointing out that the history of *Ulysses* in braille is yet to be written.

Paul Saint-Amour's (University of Pennsylvania) talk 'Joyce, Ross, and Hannaham: The Mythical Method Revisited' argued *contra* Eliot that Joyce's use of the Homeric parallel in *Ulysses* should not be understood as a form that constrains the work, but rather as a source of its stylistic and narrative complexity. In doing so, Saint-Amour drew attention to two recent works that also make use of the mythical method: Francis Ross' novel *Oreo* (1974) and James Hannaham's novel *Didn't Nobody Give a Shit What Happened to Carlotta* (2023). As Saint-Amour argued, both works demonstrate the emancipatory and ironising potential of the mythical parallel – and indeed, a *Joycean* parallel – by using it to open a space for multiple racial, sexual, and gender identities within a multi-layered and pluralised plot.

Alberto Tondello's (University of Edinburgh/University of Bern) lecture on day four, 'Affective Hospitality in James Joyce's "The Dead"', applied and expanded Jacques Derrida's notion of *hospitality* to 'The Dead', contrasting the 'conditional hospitality' of the Morkans' party to the 'unconditional hospitality' of Gabriel's acceptance of the 'presence' of Michael Furey's ghost in the hotel room. Following a close analysis of Gabriel's role as both guest and host in 'The Dead' – with a particular focus on the final scene in the hotel room – Tondello argued that in Gabriel's act of hospitality towards Michael Furey's ghost, he is made open to an act of empathy that destabilises his previous mood and attempted mastery of

Greta, and engages in an uncanny act of 'affective hospitality' that depends only in part on his own actions.

Tamara Radak's (University of Vienna) talk ' "Tobecontinued's Tale" (*FW* 626,18)?: Joycean Endgames and Closural Modernism' argued that new and unexpected viewpoints on Joyce's work could be gained by focussing on the notion of *narrative closure*. Radak began by providing an illuminating overview of the concept as it has been applied in different literary contexts, from poetry to realist and modernist literature. She then discussed closural and anti-closural themes and patterns in Joyce's work, including the relationship between closure and biography. Finally, she provided a close analysis of the role of narrative closure in 'Penelope' and Chapter 8 of *Finnegans Wake*.

Vincent Deane's (Independent Scholar, Dublin) Friday-morning lecture 'Sewing a Dream Together, 1923–4' focussed on Joyce's compositional movement toward *Finnegans Wake* from 1923 to 1924, providing fresh inferences about Joyce's state of mind and his approach to the composition of the book. Deane began with a discussion of ten 'epiclets' composed by Joyce in 1923 and which prefigure some of the themes of the *Wake*. Deane argued that these writings, which are all modelled on pre-existing texts, were written in an 'attempt to spur on the writing process' and constituted a textual experiment on Joyce's part. However, Deane argued that they lack any real conceptual framework, which only began to develop (along other things) with the emergence of HCE from the *Ward Lock & Co Guide to Bognor*; the re-emergence of the theme of metempsychosis (mentioned in a letter from Joyce to Harriet Weaver in 1924); Joyce's interest, through reading Irish newspapers and journals, in the political context of the early years of the Irish Free State; and the emergence of Shem and Shaun from the tale of Cain and Abel.

Sam Slote's (Trinity College Dublin) closing talk 'The Word Known to all Men Actually' argued that Joyce's works are ideally read *bifocally*: with an eye (or eyes) both on

the meaning(s) of the text and on the history of the text itself. Slote provided some key examples of the fruitful interaction between literary and textual considerations. For example, Slote argued that the answer to the vexed question of whether the 'word known to all men' should be included in *Ulysses* (as in Gabler's edition) is underdetermined by both the literary and the textual-historical evidence; neither sort of consideration provides a definitive answer. What we *can* say is that Joyce intended to include it, and therefore it belongs in the *synoptic text*. But it does not appear in the reading text, whether by accident or design. As Slote argued, for the 'bifocal' reader the answer to Stephen's demand has an 'ambiguous, quasi-spectral presence' in the text.

Under its long-standing co-directors Luca Crispi and Anne Fogarty, the DJJSS has been characterised by its commitment to combining the highest standards of Joyce scholarship with the encouragement and development of new generations of Joyceans. This year was no exception: of the ten speakers giving talks, half were early-career scholars, and four were presenting papers at the school for the first time having attended as graduate students. The question-and-answer sessions following the morning presentations and afternoon seminars were friendly, open, and egalitarian, with lively discussion between well-seasoned Joyceans, young scholars from Ireland and abroad, and a large and diverse group of international attendees. There is no doubt that fires were lit.