

CSEN7021: THE SHOCK OF THE NEW

Joyce, *Dubliners* 1914 (contemporary with both the war & *Cathay*)

- sense of isolation from previous texts which are clearly written from the cultural centre – Joyce comments on Ireland not on ‘Western civilisation’.
- Seeks a flight from one place to another but remains fascinated by the point of origin. A version of the unconscious of place and its unerring formulation of the individual
- Destabilises the dominant form of the Realist novel, the *Bildungsroman*.

The *Bildungsroman* is a narrative of individual development marking move from:

- child to adult;
- infant impotence to adult potency
- the ability to say 'I' (occupy a subject position)
- unmarried to married
- family dependency to family responsibility

Differences within the narrative of *Dubliners*

- is a narrative of a city's development through fragments of the lives of some of its inhabitants who are all growing up under its paralysing influence (so not an individual development and not autonomous unit)
- individual stories move from youth to maturity but this does not give access to power
- as they enter puberty the characters in the stories are marked by loss of, rather than an access to, agency ('Araby' is the last to use the personal pronoun 'I')
- stories marked by failure of relationships (family, friends, romantic), by the ruin of hopes, the disappointment of careers and the intrusion of manipulative relationships into religion and politics successively
- in 'Araby' (collapse of belief in the oriental other and a simultaneous sense of individual inadequacy); 'Eveline' (a female voice equally marked by the collapse of belief in romantic love and the family – parents as damaging to children (compare *The Wasteland*)
- the social world takes up stories 12-14
- questions about how to read the conclusion of 'The Dead'