Following Joyce's wish, we have at last rearrivèd in Denmark, but I have chosen to begin a discussion of the ideology of modernism with these words from Joyce's Roman period not to direct attention to this fine city but to notice the authority Joyce gives for his desire. The mediator of this desire is Guglielmo Ferrero, whose book, L'Europa giovane (Young Europe) Joyce was reading in 1906 (he lists it as next to Mercredy's Map of Ireland on Shelf J, back, among his books in Trieste). Joyce was much taken at this time with Ferrero, whose study of European culture, published in 1897, is subtitled 'studies and voyages in the countries of the north.' In September of 1906, Joyce found a picture postcard of Ferrero in Rome, and wrote to his brother about it:

By the way, talking of faces I will send you a picture postcard of Guglielmo Ferrero and you will admit there is some hope for me. You would think he was a terrified Y.M.C.A. man with an inaudible voice. He wears spectacles, is delicate-looking and, altogether, is the type you would expect to find in some quiet nook in the Coffee-Palace nibbling a bun hastily and apologetically between the hours of half-past twelve and one. (Letters II 159)

Among other things, these remarks suggest that Joyce saw some parallels between Ferrero and himself.

One day in November of 1906 Joyce wrote to Stanislaus that he was thinking of beginning his story Ulysses but felt too oppressed with cares. In the next sentence he turned to a discussion of Ferrero's views of Jews and anti-Semitism, noting that 'The most arrogant statement made by Israel so far, he says, not excluding the gospel of Jesus, is Marx's proclamation that socialism is the fulfillment of a natural law' (Letters II 190). In the reference to this letter in the
index to Richard Ellmann’s edition of the letters, what should be “Ferrero on Marx” unaccountably appears as “Ferrero on Mary.” This tiny change, the Freudian slip of a pious compositor, no doubt, is effected by simply cutting off a bit of Marx’s X (a bit off the bottom, so to speak), turning Marx into Mary with a minimum of fuss. How Joyce would have loved this error! Roland Barthes would also no doubt have found this emblematic castration of Marx both amusing and significant.

For me it also symbolizes the tension between Christianity and socialism that constitutes one of the structuring polarities of modernist ideology. The movement of W H. Auden, for instance, from one end of this polarity to the other over the decade 1929–1939 is emblematic of this dimension of modernism. One can also find the two opposites dangerously conflated in a typical thirties poem like C. Day Lewis’s *Magnetic Mountain*, as in the following lines from the well-known section that begins, “‘You that love England...’”

You who go out alone, on tandem or on pillion,
Down arterial roads riding in April,
Or sad beside lakes where hill-slopes are reflected
Making fires of leaves, your high hopes fallen:
Cyclists and hikers in company, day excursionists,
Refugees from cursed towns and devastated areas:
Know you seek a new world, a saviour to establish
Long-lost kinship and restore the blood’s fulfilment.
...We can tell you a secret, offer a tonic; only
Submit to the visiting angel, the strange new healer.

...You shall be leaders when zero hour is signalled,
Wielders of power and welders of a new world.

( *Magnetic Mountain*, Poem 32)

This poem, which first appeared in the tendentious collection, *New Country*, in 1933, is a communist manifesto, written by a committed party member, but the rhetoric of saviour and angel is thoroughly imbued with Christian connotations, as if Day Lewis could express his hopes convincingly only through discursive features that he should have repudiated. The poem is also full of a deeply felt sense of place that is just a step from nationalism: “‘You that love England, who have an ear for her music...’” Similarly, “the visiting angel, the strange new healer” may refer to your local CP recruiter, but it exudes disturbing connotations of the *Führer Prinzip*. One of the other structuring polarities of modernism is defined by the opposition
between equality and hierarchy or, in more purely political terms, between democratic and authoritarian notions of government. This is a polarity that existed within the socialist movement, for instance, and not simply as a difference between socialism and conservative or reactionary parties.

Let \( x/y \), then, symbolize the whole set of polarities that shape the ideology of modernism as it emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. To describe these polarities fully is both theoretically and practically impossible, since each description would itself enter the play of ideological discourse. On an occasion such as this, one can only begin to sketch certain dimensions of this field. I propose, then, to examine some interactions between literature and politics, as we can trace them in the lives of a few young men of Joyce's generation, including of course, Joyce himself. We can begin with a brief summary of a paradigmatic life story of such a young man.

He was born in the early 1880s into a family with little money which managed nonetheless to send him away to religious boarding schools. A biographer describes his father as one who "like his son after him nurtured a mixture of contradictory ideals" (Mack Smith 2). The father's carelessness about money made life a struggle for the family. At school the young man was troubled by illness and was punished by the authorities. He preferred reading to playing with the other children. At one point he led a revolt against the quality of the food. He refused to go to mass and once had to be dragged to church by force. In his second school his interest in music flourished and he was asked to give a speech at a local theatre in honor of Giuseppe Verdi. At the age of 17 he was known as a hermit and misanthrope, but he made regular visits to a local brothel. He received his diploma shortly after the turn of the century, at which time his biographer describes him in this way: "there was already much of the intellectual bohemian about him. He was writing poems and trying, if unsuccessfully, to get them published. He knew long passages of Dante by heart and was a voracious reader of novels and political tracts" (Mack Smith 5).

After a brief job as a substitute teacher, borrowing money from a number of people, he went into self-imposed exile, leaving behind debts and unpaid rent. In his adopted country he drifted from one job to another. He was a socialist but he had (his biographer tells us) "little patience with sentimental reformist socialism or with dem-
ocratic and parliamentary methods; instead he preached revolution to expropriate a ruling class that would never voluntarily renounce power and possessions” (Mack Smith 7). He spent some time in Paris in 1904 but did not settle there. He worked on foreign languages and practiced translating books from both French and German. He taught school briefly but had trouble keeping order. His biographer tells us that “his mother’s death at the age of forty-six caused him great grief and perhaps some feelings of guilt for having been so inattentive a son” (Mack Smith 9). He spent hours in a university library “on a somewhat rambling and random course of reading that later stood him in good stead” (Mack Smith 8). He set up housekeeping and started a family in a one-room apartment in the Italian part of Austria with a woman he later married, who is described as taking no interest in his writing or in politics and having “no intellectual pursuits of her own” (Mack Smith 16). A knowledgeable observer has described his political views while in his early self-imposed exile as follows:

...more the reflection of his early environment than the product of understanding and conviction; his hatred of oppression was not that impersonal hatred of a system shared by all revolutionaries; it sprang rather from his own sense of indignity and frustration, from a passion to assert his own ego... (Angelica Balabanoff, in Mack Smith 11)

He tried his hand at both journalism and fiction but had trouble finding a publisher for his fiction.

Whose early life is described in this brief sketch? It is much like that of James Augustine Aloysius Joyce, is it not, this early life of the man christened Benito Andrea Amilcare Mussolini? Joyce, of course, was named after three saints and Mussolini after three left-wing revolutionaries, but the patterns of their early lives are strikingly similar. In describing Mussolini’s youth I have carefully followed Denis Mack Smith’s biography, only I have suppressed the repeated incidents of physical violence and brutality that distinguished the personality of the young Mussolini from that of the young Joyce. Mussolini was quick to rape a reluctant female or stab an antagonistic male, actions that situate him at an enormous distance from the essentially gentle and monogamous Joyce. This violence led to a number of imprisonments that also distinguish the youth of Mussolini from that of Joyce. There are other differences as well, in class background for instance, but these very differences emphasize the strikingly similar
patterns in the lives of these two young men who were born a year apart in two troubled countries.

Joyce seems to have abandoned socialism—and all political commitment—some time before war broke out in 1914, though I believe his socialistic views were entirely serious in the days when he was reading *Avanti!* and describing himself as a socialistic artist. Mussolini, of course, was fervent enough as a socialist to become the editor of *Avanti!* in 1912, at which time he also tried to establish another journal named *Utopia* in honor of St. Thomas More, whom he admired as the first socialist. For two years at *Avanti!* Mussolini upheld the international socialist line, but as the war approached he became more nationalistic, to the point where he was expelled from his editorship in November of 1914 and by December had founded the first *fascio d'azione rivoluzionaria*. In November 1906, at the height of his interest in socialism, Joyce had expressed his admiration for Arthur Griffith and said in a letter to his brother, "If the Irish programme did not insist on the Irish language I suppose I could call myself a nationalist" (*Letters II* 187). Both Joyce and Mussolini were responding to similar nationalistic feelings. One of the polarities that shape the modernist dialectic for several decades is this tension between nationalism and internationalism, which in extreme forms turns into a struggle between socialism and fascism. The Stalinist move to "socialism in one country," preserving the Russian revolution by sacrificing a number of others, is a response to the same nationalistic surge in the ideology of modern Europe felt by Joyce and Mussolini a decade or so earlier. For Mussolini, fascism was the answer to his disillusionment with international socialism. As his fascist party developed after the war, gaining more and more power, he gradually discarded the socialist elements of his program, abandoning both his anticlericalism and his sympathy for the proletariat. What he kept was his attitude toward parliamentary forms of government, an attitude highly visible in the *Avanti!* of 1906, for instance, which Joyce read and discussed regularly.

The view of parliamentary government that Joyce found most appropriate in the latter part of 1906 was that expressed by the syndicalist Arturo Labriola. Joyce explained this in a letter to Stanislaus which is worth quoting at some length:

I am following with interest the struggle between the various socialist parties here at the Congress. Labriola spoke yesterday, the paper says, with extraordinarily rapid eloquence for two hours and a half. He reminds me somewhat of Griffith. He attacked
the intellectuals and the parliamentary socialists. He belongs or is leader of the sindicalists.... They assert that they are the true socialists because they wish the future social order to proceed equally from the overthrow of the entire present social organization and from the automatic emergence of the proletariat in trades-unions and guilds and the like. Their objection to parliamentarianism seems to me well-founded.... Of course the sindicalists are anti-militarists but I don’t see how that saves them from the conclusion of revolution in a conscriptive country like this. (*Letters II* 173–74)

We should notice a number of things in Joyce’s analysis, including his lack of faith in parliamentary government (which we Americans usually refer to as democracy), a position which he also takes in other letters of this period. The evidence suggests that he accepted the socialist critique of parliaments as tools of the bourgeois oligarchy for maintaining their own power and wealth. Certainly his hatred for what he called “the stupid, dishonest, tyrannical, and cowardly burgher class (*Letters II* 158) and “these insolent whores of the bureaucracy” (*Letters II* 164) is well documented.

Joyce’s connection of Arturo Labriola to Arthur Griffith is also interesting, but the truly devastating point of his commentary on the syndicalists is his dismissal of any possibility of obtaining power for the proletariat other than revolution. He is quick to reject (in another part of the passage from which I have already quoted at length) the syndicalist dream of a general strike. The most damning thing he says against the syndicalists is that they have come to resemble the English socialists. They repress the necessity for revolution because they ignore the fact that “the Italian army is not directed against the Austrian army so much as against the Italian people.” In the years when Joyce gave his serious attention to politics, he favored a revolution that would suppress parliamentary government, expropriate the vast wealth of the Catholic Church (*Letters II* 165–66), punish the bourgeoisie, and emancipate the proletariat (*Letters II* 198). This became, in fact, the program of Mussolini’s fascists, until he abandoned the genuinely socialist elements of it in 1921, retaining only its antiparlamentarity.

I do not wish to suggest that Joyce was a proto-fascist in 1906, but to point out that he had attended carefully enough to the dialogue of the Italian socialists for several years to see the overwhelming problems facing the socialist enterprise in Italy, which boiled down to the question, How do pacifist internationalists make
a national revolution in a country with a standing army? It took a world war to answer that question, and even in Russia after 1917 it finally took the authoritarian nationalism of Stalin to sustain that revolution. Joyce's turn away from politics, which took place around the time we have been examining, was no doubt determined by many things, among them the impossible contradictions he could see in the political position he found most congenial. But there is more to the story of Joyce's socialism than this, and we must examine certain features of it more thoroughly to discover some of what he learned during his political years.

For the space of about a year, in 1906 and 1907, when he was finishing *Dubliners* and planning *A Portrait* and his "story" *Ulysses*, Joyce thought of himself—frequently and earnestly—as a socialist. After that period he certainly took less interest in politics, but he neither repudiated his earlier views nor adopted any of the alternatives that were so visible and insistent around him. We are generally less aware than we should be of Joyce's socialism, mainly because Ellmann, who has been in most respects an exemplary steward of the Joycean oeuvre, adopted a view of Joyce that did not admit of a serious commitment of this sort, at one point in the biography observing, "At least Joyce can scarcely have been a Nietzschean any more than he was a socialist" (*JII* 147), and at another arguing that any interest Joyce took in socialism was motivated by a petty hope for personal gain, believing that "the triumph of socialism might make for some sort of state subsidy of artists like himself" (204).

It is a wise biographer who knows the heart of his subject, but Ellmann is not seeing into a heart, of course; he is constructing a portrait of a writer as a young man. His young man frequently returned to the theme of socialism in letters to his brother. Ellmann's way of acknowledging this is to say that Joyce "labored to make socialism an integral part of his personality," the implication clearly being that such labor was in vain; but producing an integrated personality is more the biographer's problem than his subject's. Consider, for a moment the passage Ellmann introduced in the biography as an example of Joyce's vain labor:

It is a mistake for you to imagine that my political opinions are those of a universal lover: but they are those of a socialistic artist. I cannot tell you how strange I feel sometimes in my attempt to lead a more civilized life than my contemporaries. But why should I have brought Nora to a priest or a lawyer to
make her swear away her life to me? And why should I superimpose on my child the very troublesome burden of belief which my father and mother superimposed on me. Some people would answer that while professing to be a socialist I am trying to make money: but this is not quite true at least as they mean it. (205)

The passage goes on for some distance. What it reveals, among other things, is that for Joyce his rejections of church and state in his own life—as represented by rejection of formal marriage and baptism or religious instruction for children—are aspects of what he calls his socialism. Ellmann's comment on all this is a laconic put-down: "socialism has rarely been defended so tortuously" (205). Unfortunately, however, socialism has been rarely defended in any way other than tortuously, as a little reading in Marx, Adorno, or Lukács would quickly demonstrate—and there are overwhelming reasons why this must be so. One cannot argue for a new way of thinking from within an old way of thinking except with the kind of self-conscious complexity that is all too easily dismissed as "tortuous." My purpose here, however, is not to defend socialistic discourse but to explore the ways in which socialism and other ideological currents merge and diverge during the period we call modernist. In particular I am interested in the ways in which European culture shaped the minds of those individuals who later helped to change the literary and political map of Europe.

In the case of Joyce, we have never, for instance, properly appreciated the contribution of Guglielmo Ferrero to his thinking. The only serious attempt I know of to accomplish this is Dominic Manganiello's, in his useful book, *Joyce's Politics*, but the book has not received the attention it deserves, and even Manganiello, who treats Joyce's debt to Ferrero at some length, ignores some small but extremely interesting matters.

One of these is the fact that the immediate source of Joyce's often repeated characterization of the style in which he had written the stories of *Dubliners* is certainly to be found in Ferrero's *L'Europe giovane*. Joyce alluded to Ferrero in a letter to Grant Richards defending his stories "Counterparts" and "Two Gallants," in which he went on to say that he had written *Dubliners* "for the most part in a style of scrupulous meanness" (*Letters II* 133-34). This expression is Joyce's translation of a phrase Ferrero applies to the treatment of sensual love in French novels: "Che cosa si trova in Balzac, in Zola,
in Flaubert, in De Goncourt? Descrizione dell’amore sensuale, fatte bene o fatte male, fatte con scrupulosa esatezza di analista." (175). Ferrero goes on to condemn the lack of attention to the mental and moral dimensions of sexual psychology in the French novelists. These are commonplaces of the period. One can find them, for instance, in Henry James’s criticisms of Flaubert; but for our purposes that striking phrase, "scrupulosa esatezza di analista," is more important. In Italian, as in English, the idea of exaction has connotations of the sort of meanness one associates with the exaction of taxes, for the cognate of esatezza, esatore, means tax collector.

Stanislaus Joyce, in My Brother’s Keeper (204) has claimed that "scrupulous meanness" is simply a revision of the phrase "studiously mean" which Joyce used in a 1902 review of William Rooney’s Poems and Ballads that appeared in Dublin’s Daily Express (and has been reprinted in Joyce’s Critical Writings, 84–86). We should pause and examine this claim. Joyce wrote of Rooney’s verses that little is achieved in them "because the writing is so careless and yet is so studiously mean. For, if carelessness is carried very far, it is like to become a positive virtue, but an ordinary carelessness is nothing but a false and mean expression of a false and mean idea” (85, emphasis added). Stanislaus argues that his brother should have said (and must have meant) that Rooney’s poems "are the false and mean expression of a false and mean idea, but that studious (that is, careful) meanness can become a positive virtue” (204). He adds that he raised this objection in a letter to his brother at this time, thus laying the groundwork for Joyce’s use of "scrupulous meanness" four years later. This may indeed be the case, but usage is often overdetermined, and I would argue that Ferrero’s phrase was a more immediate stimulus, providing the key word, "scrupulous," that had previously been lacking. After all, Ferrero was so much on Joyce’s mind that he was mentioned in the very same letter, and Joyce’s phrase is in exactly the same vein as Ferrero’s, connecting Joyce to the French naturalists Ferrero was discussing: “I have written it for the most part in a style of scrupulous meanness and with the conviction that he is a very bold man who dares to alter in the presentment, still more to deform, whatever he has seen and heard.”

Ellmann’s note on Ferrero in his edition of the letters describes him as an “Italian historian and antifascist social critic,” which is true enough but doesn’t really locate him politically; moreover, Ellmann’s description of what Joyce learned from Ferrero is bizarre:
“Ferrero finds a secret alliance between Puritanism, sexual aberration, and military destructiveness, using Bismarck as his example” (133). In the passage Ellmann cites, Ferrero speaks of Bismarck’s hatred of France and his desire to destroy Paris by cannon fire as the action of a puritan, not an ascetic, describing Bismarck as “un rude monogamo” who detested the city of “aesthetic vice.” If Ellmann is right, we must add “rude monogamy” to the list of sexual aberrations, but I doubt if Ferrero would approve.

Ferrero was in fact a classic liberal humanist, a true child of the Enlightenment. It is also the case that he was infected by nineteenth-century racialism to some extent. His explanations according to racial characteristics appear ludicrous now, but there is much in L’Europa giovane that is still interesting. Joyce’s “tortuous” defense of his socialism no doubt owes something to passages like this one:

A man can become a socialist through class interest; that is, because he sees in the socialist party the best defense of his own interest. But a man can also become a socialist against the interest of his class, for moral reasons, because the numerous defects and the many vices of modern society have disgusted him; and that is the case of many bourgeois socialists, independent professionals, scientists, rich people, who in many countries of Europe, and especially in Italy, participate in one way or another in the socialist movement. (361, my translation)

That is not so bad for 1897. Ferrero was friendly to socialism, and accepted much of Marx’s criticism of bourgeois society as justified, but he thought that when it came to the crucial matter of the future, Marx had substituted Semitic religiosity for the science he claimed to profess. Joyce told Stanislaus in a letter of November 1906 that he had just finished reading Ferrero’s Young Europe:

He has a fine chapter on Antisemitism. By the way Brandes is a Jew. He [Ferrero] says that Karl Marx has the apocalyptic imagination and makes Armageddon a war between capital and labour. The most arrogant statement made by Israel so far, he says, not excluding the gospel of Jesus is Marx’s proclamation that socialism is the fulfilment of a natural law. In considering Jews he slips in Jesus between Lassalle and Lombroso: the latter too (Ferrero’s father in law) is a Jew. (Letters II 190)

This passage is Joyce’s own conflation of many pages in Ferrero’s book. (Ellmann’s note on the passage cites many sections, but they are simply taken from the “Indice” and are not accurate.) Joyce learned about Brandes’s Jewishness, for instance, from Ferrero’s report
on an interview with Brandes in this city of Copenhagen. In Ferrero's book Joyce's interest in Jews and this interest in socialism were both fed. Here are excerpts from a crucial passage:

The great men of the Hebrews have almost all had a transcendent consciousness of their own missions...; they have all felt themselves, more or less lucidly, to be Messiahs. The old popular legend has become a living sentiment, a reality, in the consciousness of the great representatives of the race. Every great Hebraic man is persuaded, even if he does not say so, of having a mandate to inaugurate a new era for the world; to make, in the abyss of darkness in which humanity lives, the opening through which will enter for the first time, and forever, the light of truth. Of course this consciousness may be more or less clear, take one form or another, have a greater or lesser amplitude according to the times and the individuals, but it is there in all of them; it is in the ancient prophets who were precursors of the Messiah, it is in Jesus come to announce the heavenly kingdom; it is in Marx come to announce the proletarian revolution; it is in Lombroso, come to deliver the true scales of justice, after so many ages in which men through ignorance and malice have adopted the false. (366, my translation)

This passage obviously made an impact on Joyce, providing much of what he reported to his brother in the letter already cited, but it also provided something else: a verbal formula that came in handy when he sought a ringing phrase for the conclusion of his first novel. Listen to it again, this time in the Italian: “La vecchia leggenda del popolo è diventata sentimento vivo e realtà nella coscienza dei grandi rappresentanti della razza.” For years we have wondered where that curious phrase “conscience of my race” came from. Now we know: “nella coscienza... della razza.” Ferrero contributed something to the creation of both Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom (as Dominic Manganiello noted in Joyce’s Politics). It is supremely ironic, then, that when Joyce and Ferrero met it was at a PEN meeting at Paris in 1937, where a virtually blind Joyce listened to the exiled Ferrero lecture passionately on the burning of Joyce’s books by the fascists, thinking all the time only of the infringement of his copyrights and afterwards complaining bitterly that politics had spoiled the meeting (see W Potts, Portraits of the Artist in Exile, 155–56). Ferrero died the year after Joyce, also in Switzerland, where he was teaching at the University of Geneva.

We do not know exactly when the apolitical Joyce whom Ferrero encountered in 1937 displaced the political Joyce of 1906, with his
syndicalism and revolutionary fervor, but it may be that Ferrero, by directing Joyce's attention to a religious element in Marxism, helped to disillusion him. We can no longer ignore the fact, however, that certainly in *Dubliners* and probably in much of his other work, Joyce felt himself to be engaged in a bringing to consciousness the social problems that beset his nation, or in his own language, in a style of scrupulous meanness creating a conscience for his race. We know enough about his thinking in those years to attempt a summary of his literary and political attitudes.

He was antibourgeois, anticlerical, antiparliamentary, antimilitaristic, antibureaucratic, an Irish nationalist, and definitely not an anti-Semite, though extremely interested in Jews. In literature he admired Ibsen, Hauptmann, Tolstoy, Maupassant. In particular he liked the "scrupolosa esatezza di analista" that he found in these writers. What he did not like is well expressed in his comments on George Gissing in a letter of November 1906:

> I have read Gissing's *Demos: A Story of English Socialism*. Why are English novels so terribly boring? I think G has little merit. The socialist in this is first a worker and then inherits a fortune, jilts his first girl, marries a lady, becomes a big employer and takes to drink. You know the kind of story. There is a clergyman in it with searching eyes and a deep voice who makes all the socialists wince under his firm gaze. (*Letters IV* 186)

In this critique Joyce's socialism and anticlericalism are inextricably bound up with his sense of realities and his aesthetic judgment. He is judging by a standard in which realism and aestheticism are allied rather than antagonistic.

Certainly one of the polarities that structure modernist ideology is that between naturalism and aestheticism. That particular division of what had been in the nineteenth century a unified realism is one of the decisive breaks that constitutes modernism as a cultural hegemony. Joyce in 1906 was poised right on that break, seeking a way of extending realism without its fragmenting into aesthetic and naturalistic poles. Certainly, the stories of *Dubliners* can be usefully seen in exactly that light. It will be helpful in appreciating his position to look carefully at his thoughts on a writer whom most critics would see as tending toward the naturalistic pole to a greater extent than Tolstoy, Maupassant, or Ibsen may be said to do. I refer to Gerhard Hauptmann, whose *Rosa Bernd* Joyce acquired, though he could scarcely afford it, at a time in the autumn of 1906, when
he was also taking Danish lessons to read Ibsen more easily in the original. Joyce had admired Hauptmann for some years but his appraisal of Hauptmann’s drama was this side idolatry:

I finished Hauptmann’s *Rosa Bernd* on Sunday. I wonder if he acts well. His plays, when read, leave an unsatisfying impression on the reader. Yet he must have the sense of the stage well developed in him by now. He never, in his later plays at least, tries for a curtain so that the ends of his acts seem ruptures of a scene. His characters appear to be more highly vivified by their creator than Ibsen’s but also they are less under control. He has a difficulty in subordinating them to the action of his drama. He deals with life quite differently, more frankly in certain points . . . but also so broadly that my personal conscience is seldom touched. His way of treating such types as Arnold Kramer and Rosa Bernd is, however, altogether to my taste. His temperament has a little of Rimbaud in it. Like him, too, I suppose somebody else will be his future. But, after all, he has written two or three masterpieces—“a little immortal thing” like *The Weavers*, for example. I have found nothing of the charlatan in him yet. (*Letters II* 173)

Joyce’s praise of Hauptmann’s vividness of characterization, his frankness, and his freedom from charlatantry is balanced by a dissatisfaction that is partly aesthetic (a disparity between characters and actions) and partly ethical: he deals with life “so broadly that my personal conscience is not touched.” The immediate contrast, only partly explicit here, is with Ibsen, whose control and balance brings him near the top of Joyce’s aesthetic scale. The young Joyce’s reactions to Gissing and Hauptmann can help us to locate his own position with respect to naturalism. He rejects the sentimentalized naturalism of Gissing and prefers the harsher, franker naturalism of Hauptmann. But he is troubled by two features of Hauptmann’s work, a certain lack of aesthetic “control” (which Ibsen so obviously had) and a crudity or broadness that left his “personal conscience” untouched—a criticism similar to Ferrero’s critique of the French novelists. The need to reconcile the naturalistic presentation of life with an aesthetic control that would affect the personal conscience merges from these critiques as the central problem for Joyce as a writer. It is the paradigmatic problem for the modernist writer of plays or stories, a problem that other modernists, such as Hemingway and Lawrence, would also have to solve.

This problem became central in the work of another young man of Joyce’s generation, whose experience will serve to close this little
excursion into modernist ideology. He was born in the 1880s in a city on the edge of Europe. Though raised in a bourgeois family he rebelled against bourgeois manners and values. He was a bright student in school: outwardly conforming but inwardly rebellious. One of the earliest literary works to impress him was Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare*. At a later age he discovered "Baudelaire, Verlaine, Swinburne, Zola, Ibsen, and Tolstoy as leaders and guides" (*Record of a Life* 147). As he matured, he continued to admire the radicalism of Scandinavian and Russian literature. Years later he recalled his relationship with his family in this way:

I was completely estranged from my family, or at least from a part of it. I did not have any relationship with the family at all. . . . My mother was a shrewd woman who soon saw what was happening. She fell seriously ill and died of cancer of the breast. Under pressure from other members of the family, I wrote her a letter. When she received it she said, "I must be very ill for [my son] to write me a letter." (35)

Rejecting marriage as a bourgeois convention, he went into self-imposed exile. Looking back on his twenty-third year, he wrote, "In my case. . . .absolute independence in order to produce, and for that reason silent rejection" (151). This was his version of the Joycean "silence, exile, and cunning." He came to admire the work of a poet who expressed his own values, seeing in this poet in 1906, as he later recalled, "a revolutionary who regarded the revolution as indispensable for his own self-realization" (39). He had ambitions to write a treatise on aesthetics and to be a dramatist. "I started to write plays in the manner of Hauptmann and Ibsen" (31), he later recalled, and he translated *The Wild Duck* into his native language (34). Writing about Hauptmann some time after his youthful enthusiasm, he praised in particular the dramatists "great and beautiful honesty." Living in Italy in his twenty-sixth year he began a major work on aesthetic theory but set it aside the following year. When he was about twenty-five he discovered French syndicalism, which, he says, "at the time I regarded as the only oppositional socialist movement that could be taken seriously" (41). He condemned conditions in his own country, which he seriously hoped to change through his own work, but, as he has said, "this did not mean that I was prepared to accept English Parliamentarianism as an alternative ideal."
The young man I have been describing, as you have no doubt realized was Georg Lukács, the Hungarian Jew who became Europe's leading Marxist literary critic and theoretician. Considering the fact that he came to be a major opponent of the kind of modernism he felt to be manifested in Joyce's work, it is useful to see how much the two writers shared in the cultural matrix from which modernism emerged. But at the point where Joyce turned from politics to art, Lukács turned in the opposite direction. At the end of his life an interviewer asked him about shift of interest:

*Int:* You said you gave up aesthetics because you had begun to be interested in ethical problems. What works resulted from this interest?

*G.L.:* At that time it did not result in any written works. My interest in ethics led me to the revolution. (53)

Both of these young men reached a similar point of decision and made their choices, living the lives that followed from them. They had also made other choices, Joyce abandoning criticism as Lukács abandoned drama, but these were more personal, matters of talent primarily. Perhaps the ideological choices stem as much from personality as anything else, but there is a lot we do not know about these things. In the case of Joyce, for instance, what may have been a crucial year of intellectual decision, 1908, is simply a blank on the biographical record. For the first eleven months of that year we have five lines of correspondence and precious little else. We know a lot about what Joyce was in 1906 and what he later became. About the transition itself, we are ignorant.

We know, however, that Georg Lukács became the most articulate critical opponent of modernism in literature (with the possible exception of Wyndham Lewis). Lukács's critique of modernism has a philosophical basis that allows him to set modernism against realism, in fact to see modernism as a perverse negation of realism. For Lukács realism is based on the view of man as a *zoon politikon*, a political animal. Modernism, on the other hand, is based on a view of human existence as, in Heidegger's expression, a *Geworfenheit ins Dasein*, a "thrownness into being." Realism, says Lukács, depends upon perspective and norms of human behavior, whereas modernism destroys perspective and glorifies the abnormal. Realism assumes the objectivity of time and modernism assumes time's subjectivity. For Lukács, Joyce acquired the proportions of the arch-modernist, whose works displayed an exaggerated concern with form, style, and tech-
nique in general, along with an excessive attention to sense-data, combined with a comparative neglect of ideas and emotions.

Lukács's unfavorable comparison of Joyce to Thomas Mann, however, has affinities with Joyce's comparison of Hauptmann to Ibsen. It should also be noted that Lukács does not trivialize Joyce's enterprise. He is perfectly ready to call Ulysses a masterpiece, as he does in the following passage:

A gifted writer, however extreme his theoretical modernism, will in practice have to compromise with the demands of historicity and of social environment. Joyce uses Dublin, Kafka, and Musil the Hapsburg Monarchy, as the locus of their masterpieces. But the locus they lovingly depict is little more than a backdrop; it is not basic to their artistic intention. (Realism in Our Time 21)

Lukács particularly criticized Joyce's use of the stream of consciousness, in which, as he argued, "the perpetually oscillating patterns of sense and memory-data, their powerfully charged—but aimless and directionless—fields of force, give rise to an epic structure which is static, reflecting a belief in the basically static character of events" (18). This is by no means a trivial or inaccurate description of Joyce's major enterprise, though I think the Joycean stream of consciousness is more directed and purposeful than Lukács gives it credit for being. Lukács is surely right, however, when he borrows Walter Benjamin's description of Romantic and Baroque art to characterize the allegorical tendencies of modernism: "Every person, every object, every relationship can stand for something else." (42). It is surely this, and the Joycean sense that history is an endless repetition of such transformations that make Joyce a fearful object to Lukács, whose faith in progressive possibilities could only abhor what he called the "religious atheism" that animated Joyce's modernism.

For all their differences, however, they were products of very similar cultural interests and pressures. To emphasize that, I shall close by presenting to you some excerpts from one of the last things Lukács wrote, his Gelebtes Denken or preliminary notes for an autobiography that he did not live to finish. To my ears they connect him across time, across politics, across experiences, across Europe, with the writer who most symbolized for him the mistaken ways of modernist prose. Listen:

Objectivity: the correct historicity. Memory: tendency to relocate in time. Check against the facts. Youth...
No poet. Only a philosopher. Abstractions. Memory, too, organized to that end. Danger: premature generalization of spontaneous experience. But poets: able to recall concrete feelings... That already means at the right place at the right time. Especially: childhood...

Live here: over 80—subjective interest in reality maintained—at a time when the contact with early youth often lost. Long and even now, an undeniably industrious life—my right to attempt to justify this posture...

Thus an old Hungarian Jew, back from exile, planning to justify his life, lapses into a prose somewhere between an outline and a stream of consciousness. He wants to fight the tendency of memory to relocate in subjective time, seeks the objective, the facts, but also says "No poet, Only a philosopher. Abstractions." He fought to the end the tendency of his own discourse toward modernism and the power of his own subjectivity, which had been formed in the same European crucible as that of those he criticized. Sometimes, at some levels, $x = y$.

WORKS CITED


