

## Free Indirect Joyce: Authorial, Figural, Parodic? (*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*)

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In Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* the technique of free indirect style comprises an entire sliding scale, a speech transmission continuum, ranging from imitating (simulating) voices to imitating (copying) texts, which represent the movement from psychological presentation to parody. Thus, although much of the charm of this novel resides in the play of free indirect style and of subtle intertwinements of the authorial and figural idiom, this text also functions as Joyce's warning against literal reading. *A Portrait* is not just a novel about an author learning to write; it is also a novel learning to write itself. Its free indirect discourse goes beyond the juxtaposition of individual idiolects, entering broader stylistic areas which disdain figural mimeticism and come close to the fictional norms of *Ulysses*.

Investigating the occurrence of free indirect style in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) and *Ulysses* (1922) the critic is faced with a problem of boundaries. Joyce's novels invite a host of questions relating to speech/thought transmission. How does one establish the borderlines between the narrator's discourse and the characters' speech/thought in these two novels? Moreover, how does one distinguish between speech and thought, and, more narrowly, between silent speech/thought on the one hand and the remaining "mind stuff" on the other? Furthermore, aware that some of this mind stuff cannot be incorporated into free indirect style, how far can we go in accommodating at least part of it within the convention of verbal consciousness representation which is the designated province of free indirect style? And finally, which are the limits of free indirect style with respect to mimesis/realism, both in determining the verisimilitude of the figural idiom and the consistency (or lack of it) of the authorial discourse?

All these borderlines are somewhat arbitrary, which does not mean, however, that they cannot be discerned within the works, formulated and included in a critical (theoretical) framework. Within the formalist-structuralist system, which relies on (narrative) grammar, the only (relatively) strict borderline between author's discourse and character's speech exists in texts delimited by quotation marks and often introduced by verbs of speaking (loud or silent). As soon as this is abandoned, and in free indirect

style it is abandoned twice over as it were, the borderlines become more or less problematic. The only possible course for the critic dealing with this narrative mode is to be aware of the problems and allow for much leeway, without however forgetting the rules of speech representation which govern the system chosen.

The least problematic, classical representative form of free indirect style is the one in which the linguistic criteria are synonymous with the semantic/stylistic ones: a sentence or series of sentences which can be attributed to the speaking/thinking character (more or less) in their entirety, and are marked, apart from the suppression of verbs of speaking/thinking, by obligatory changes of tense and person, also by deictic words, exclamatory and interrogative sentence structures, and various other signs of direct speech. In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, which is commonly regarded as one of the most representative modernist FIS-novels, a profusion of rather clear and simple “classical” examples of this technique are found side by side with various ambiguous and complex variants.

In the first part of the novel the “classical” forms seem at their most transparent and typical, as if the device at its simplest (infant) stage was used to present the infancy of the character!

Wells said:

– I didn't mean to, honour bright. It was only for cod. I'm sorry.

The face and the voice went away. *Sorry because he was afraid. Afraid that it was some disease* (21).

Here free indirect style is indexed by shift of tense. Then, a little later:

It was not Wells's face, it was the prefect's. *He was not foxing. No, no: he was sick really. He was not foxing..* (22).

In this example there is also a shift of pronoun, which along with the affective repetitions and the colloquial “foxing” all indicate that these are little Stephen's thoughts, although some of them might also have been his spoken answers or even modified repetitions of the prefect's questions. These uncertainties are, as we know, built into the very essence of this mode, even into its simplest forms:

Fleming said:

– Are you not well?

*He did not know:* and Fleming said:

– Get back into bed. (21, all italics added).

In spite of its simplicity, this last example already indicates “vast deserts” of complexity inherent in the strategy of free indirect style, which has of course been infinitely compounded by Joyce as its practitioner. “He did not know” could be: spoken by Stephen, thought by Stephen, or felt by Stephen and then taken over by the narratorial grammar. Of course, it could also be straight narration! Thus even in these simple examples we can find proof that Joyce is problematic in everything he touches. Even in his one book where free indirect style is the supreme device and perhaps even a metaphysical category (who is giving us the Word?), he rises to degrees of uncertainty which are quite uncommon, even though the device is in itself a problematic one.

In these early pages of *A Portrait of the Artist* the narrative context of the segments in free indirect style is clearly “sensational” and strictly focalized through Stephen. Thus the immediacy of free indirect style (the boy's reference to the “fellows” and his use of

cricket terminology) is compounded by the narrator's use of "experiential" sound effects:

The fellows were practising long shies and bowling lobs and slow twisters. In the soft grey silence he could hear the bump of the balls: and from here and from there through the quiet air the sound of the cricket bats: pick, pack, pock, puck: like drops of water in a fountain falling softly in the brimming bowl (59).

For the most part the narrative in this part of *A Portrait* involves the reader with the character and renders his inner life in unified consonant narration and style. However, the passage we have just quoted is an almost verbatim repetition with small variations of an earlier description (p 41), and is therefore also an index of literariness. Just as these early pages of *A Portrait* also contain at least one early warning of other stylistic things to come: a rather playful coupling of the active and passive voice, perhaps closer to the experience of an English teacher in Trieste than an Irish schoolboy! ("The fellows cheered... Cheer after cheer after cheer. *Through Clane they drove, cheering and cheered*, p 20, italics added).

The second part of *A Portrait* brings a medley of different styles. The authorial narratives are often quite realistic, but as often peppered with phrases from a more "elevated" or antiquated style: Stephen "chose to remain unadorned", rode a "tractable mare", "feigned indifference". Some passages are also marked by very formal rhetoric:

This spirit of quarrelsome comradeship which he had observed lately in his rival had not seduced Stephen from his habits of quiet obedience. He mistrusted the turbulence and doubted the sincerity of such comradeship which seemed to him a sorry anticipation of manhood. The question of honour here raised was, like all such questions, trivial to him. While his mind had been pursuing its intangible phantoms and turning in irresolution from such pursuit he had heard about him the constant voices of his father and of his masters, urging him to be a gentleman above all things and urging him to be a good catholic above all things (83).

This is a key passage in the book, enumerating all the outside claims on Stephen's commitment: family, nation, class, religion, which at this point have "come to be hollowsounding" in his ears. This is very clearly focalized through Stephen, very empathetic, but *told* by the narrator. The passage presents the early "prise de conscience" of an artist who by the end of the novel will have rejected all these claims. The seriousness of this central theme is never questioned in this serious novel. In the above passage it is rendered discursively – a manner which will be masterfully elaborated upon later in this novel in Stephen's extensively argued opinions and theories articulated by him in the first person. Regardless of their theoretical value – strictly speaking they are Stephen's, and not Joyce's after all – Joyce certainly wants us to take them seriously, involving us in them by dint of theme and intellectual content.

Another, equally involving but still firmly narrated manner is *not* discursive, however. Rather, it is expressive, poetic, metaphorical:

Without waiting for his father's questions he ran across the road and began to walk at breakneck speed down the hill. He hardly knew where he was walking. Pride and hope and desire like crushed herbs in his heart sent up vapours of maddening incense before the eyes of his mind. He strode down the hill amid the tumult of suddenrisen vapours of wounded pride and fallen hope and baffled desire. They streamed upwards before his anguished eyes in dense and maddening fumes... (86).

Many passages of this kind occur later on in the novel, particularly in the third part – passages (partly) focalized through Stephen and charged with his passion and agony,

but spoken in the narrator's discourse. This is a good example of what Cohn calls consonant (psycho)narration: expressive narration figural in two senses: representing the figural perspective and using figures (of speech). This is the author recreating rather than the character verbalizing his psychological condition (this text would be stylistically and psychologically unconvincing in first-person transposition).

J. P. Riquelme does not seem to realize this (vital) difference when offering the following passage as an example of free indirect style:

... his mood of embittered silence did not leave him. The causes of his embitterment were many, remote and near. He was angry with himself for being young and the prey of restless, foolish impulses, angry also with the change of fortune which was reshaping the world about him into a vision of squalor and insincerity. Yet his anger lent nothing to the vision. He chronicled with patience what he saw, detaching himself from it and tasting its mortifying flavour in secret (67).<sup>1</sup>

Although the term "foolish" probably matches Stephen's view of himself, Joyce's paragraph is not only far from free indirect style, it is not even firmly focalized.<sup>2</sup> Stephen is simply too young to be aware of all these things, let alone to be able to verbalize them. Even at a much later age such self-analysis would make us see him as an insufferable prig, and Joyce never makes him that in spite of his arrogance. Towards the end of this (second) chapter, however, quite unaccountably, (as if Stephen had matured in the space of 30 pages) we find passages which are both focalized and rendered in free indirect style, although the style is still above the cognitive/linguistic level we are ready to grant him. During his visit to Cork, for example, Stephen

watched the three glasses being raised from the counter as his father and his two cronies drank to the memory of their past. An abyss of fortune or of temperament sundered him from them. His mind seemed older than theirs: it shone coldly on their strifes and happiness and regrets like a moon upon a younger earth. No life or youth stirred in him as it had stirred in them. He had known neither the pleasure of companionship with others nor the vigour of rude male health nor filial piety. Nothing stirred within his soul but a cold and cruel and loveless lust. His childhood was dead or lost and with it his soul capable of simple joys and he was drifting amid life like the barren shell of the moon (95–96).

Feelings are expressed here that we can imagine Stephen being aware of; the more so as they are feelings so extreme that they *must* be Stephen's. Here we touch upon an extraordinarily important aspect of the use of free indirect style in *A Portrait* which has made this novel a critical battlefield where ghosts still walk. Free indirect style, namely, involves "a mode of expression perceived as incompatible with the narrator's voice" (McHale p 270). Thus, if the feelings in the passage above are obviously not shared by the author, we must attribute them to Stephen. However, Joyce so often confuses us by using sentences which are incompatible with the figural voice as well. This brings the ball back into the authorial court, forcing us to reconsider the notion of authorial voice.

1. One should also note that this is the exact point at which Joyce inserts – suddenly and without preparation – three short episodes of remembered visits with his mother. These three vignettes can be seen as a discreet tribute to his earlier theory of the epiphany, each of which also strangely begins with the same phrase: "He was sitting".

2. Here one can also apply the division into authorial and figural situations (applied by Stanzel and Cohn). Both these passages are "figural" although they are not in free indirect style in the proper sense of the term.

And this reconsideration in turn leads us to the realization that in *A Portrait* the authorial (narratorial) discourse is not one and uniform.

In this passage some images are too striking to be Stephen's: the younger earth, the barren shell of the moon? We wonder and waver and finally probably remain closer to the sphere of free indirect style mainly owing to the presence of strong figural awareness, and especially the absence of narratorial consent: the narrator does not want us to think, for example, that "nothing is stirring in Stephen's soul", because he consistently *shows* it to be in permanent turmoil.

On numerous other occasions in the second part of *A Portrait of the Artist* we encounter a panoply of "diffuse" and "coloured" modal variants ranging from narration to free indirect style passing through authorial/figural mergers particularly difficult to unravel:

He turned to appease the fierce longings of his heart before which everything else was idle and alien. He cared little that he was in mortal sin, that his life had grown to be a tissue of subterfuge and falsehood ... Such moments passed and the wasting fires of lust sprang up again. The verses passed from his lips and the inarticulate cries and the unspoken brutal words rushed forth from his brain to force a passage. His blood was in revolt ... He moaned to himself ... (98–99).

Unlike the preceding example, this one confuses us even with respect to focalization. It is shot through with the awareness of this precocious and highly intelligent protagonist: his awareness that "everything else was idle and alien" ... that he was in mortal sin (does the author/narrator share this view?) ... that what he feels is "lust" reminiscent of "oozing urinals". This is "consonant psycho-narration". One notes, however, that it is figural, but not consistently focalized – and realizes the imprecision of Cohn's term. This is a dream example of expressive narration which tries to use language as an "experiential" activity, and "present" in the Poundian sense. This particular passage, although entirely involved with Stephen, transposes some of his thought in free indirect style, but even more than that, poetically recreates his extreme emotions in hyperbolic language. This is figurative rather than figural language; an attempt not to imitate Stephen's (silent) speech, but to express his emotions. Such passages in *A Portrait* evoke, represent Stephen's emotions as perceived by the narrator, rather than his speech/thought resulting from his awareness.<sup>3</sup>

An added complication is the degree of involvement required from the reader. The stylistic "consonance" with Stephen's emotions is complete – but what is the attitude of the narrator? Like everything else in Joyce the answer to this must remain ambiguous. There is obvious sympathy for the young adolescent wrestling with his hormones and his genius, but there is also ironic distance carefully built into the text (prevailing in the later episodes where Stephen is older, more mature and much more disciplined in behaviour and expression). In the context of the preceding example the irony is implied by a complete change of emotional key, e.g. in the clear anti-climax of the opening paragraph of Part IV, where Stephen is anticipating his dinner. ("He hoped there would

3. I sometimes use the term "represent" for suggestive, expressive, often metaphoric rendering, although I am aware of Genette's reservations: "... j'emploie *information* pour ne pas employer *représentation*, qui me semble, malgré son succès, un terme hypocrite, compromis batard entre *information* et *imitation*". *Nouveau récit du discours*, p. 29.

be stew for dinner, turnips and carrots and bruised potatoes and fat mutton pieces ... 102”).

Here a reminder concerning focalization is in order. In focalized narrative the question “who sees?” makes us ask: “see what?”. *Vision avec* often implies seeing what is outside us instead of looking inside us. The intense innerness which is often achieved by looking in from the outside is not automatically a sign of focalization (which is in turn a prerequisite of free indirect style.) The passage above is perhaps an example of the author looking in, forswearing description and “analysis” and endeavouring to “show” his subject without, however, registering his thoughts and perceptions.

Focalization in *A Portrait* is often rather more obvious when Stephen is “looking out”. At such moments Joyce taps another modernist device: singling out instants of awareness which are focalized and which often (but by no means always) involve free indirect style. Joyce’s *A Portrait* has wonderful examples of modernist zooming in on the moment, which is a legacy of the impressionist insistence on the act of perceiving:

From the theatre opposite came the muffled noise of the audience and sudden brazen clashes of the soldiers’ band. The light spread upwards from the glass roof making the theatre seem a festive ark ... A sidedoor of the theatre opened suddenly and a shaft of light flew across the grassplots. A sudden burst of music issued from the ark ... (74–75).

This is as good an example as one can find of “narrated perception”, the strategy placed by most theorists in some kind of limbo, between narration and free indirect discourse. This strategy seems particularly adapted to creating the effect of immediacy, greater directness, *en route* to the mimesis of consciousness within which some critics see the “stream of perceptions” as a separate strategy.

To sum up: neither of the two examples cited above are classical free indirect style, but they are heavily coloured by it. It is extremely important, however, to be aware of their different starting points and different effects {a) being expressive and b) transposing speech}, as well as their coexistence in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.

By the end of Part II of *A Portrait*, Joyce’s “uncertainty principle” has already been firmly established. The reader is forced to move to and fro, in and out, not only from the figural to the authorial (narratorial) mode but, within both modes, from one style to another. The differences of the various styles are much less striking than in *Ulysses*, but they are there. One of the reader’s perilous journeys can be traced along the line of focalization and its relationship with free indirect discourse. However, even when focalization (or its lack) have been established, and the figure has been eliminated or relegated to the background as a source of speaking and/or seeing, a new obstacle arises which must be negotiated. This obstacle, which is perhaps the principal reason why it is so difficult to pin down free indirect style in this novel, resides in the fact that we do not have one unified dominant authorial discourse that could be matched against Stephen’s language. Like every modernist worthy of the name Joyce’s narrator, of course, generally refuses to offer comments and opinions, and is in this respect impersonal. This greatly reduces his authority and confuses the reader. Furthermore, as early as *A Portrait of the Artist* this confusion is much increased by the author’s use of different literary styles: hyperbolic, poetic/expressive, stilted, apocalyptic (in the sermons) or circumstantially realistic. A rhetoric is thus imposed on the text which belongs neither to the (personal)

author nor to the figure (which is personal by definition), but to a literary matrix, giving us a foretaste of *Ulysses*. As Stephen matures and his own (fictional) writing begins to pervade the novel, Joyce slowly moves from the convention having the author speak for or with the figure (which is Stephen) to the convention which has Stephen speaking as an author (who is not Joyce)!

This leads us to the much vexed question of Joyce's relationship to Stephen and even more to the way and degree in which the various styles are related to Stephen as a character. Riquelme suggests they are styles Stephen knew from his reading and also may have used in his early writing.<sup>4</sup> Stephen may indeed have known these styles from his reading (they were a part of his culture), but we can also see them as styles which Joyce knew from his reading and wanted to use in his writing! In Joyce's *Portrait* there are many places which should alert the critic to the danger of automatically seeing these styles as an aspect of Stephen's psychology, his own tone or idiom represented in free indirect style (a mimicry of his mind). Rather, there are times when they had better be seen as a deliberate, writerly choice, psychologically arbitrary, contributing only obliquely to our understanding of Stephen's character. This kind of style becomes intertextual and not directly relevant to characterization. Or, let us put it differently: this is perhaps the style of Stephen's reading or of Joyce's remembered reading (we cannot be sure because the author does not tell us), and it may therefore also relate to the way Stephen is writing his essays at this point of his development. The relation however is oblique: the writing before us is as much an imitation of texts as it is a mimesis (simulation) of the character's mind.

Here I wish to stress the imperative need to see Joyce's uses of free indirect style as both mimetic (readerly) and non-mimetic (writerly). On the level of mimetic psychological criticism, we find many instances of the style of *A Portrait* changing from part to part in accordance with Stephen's growing, maturing and developing into a writer. The content and vocabulary tend to become more complex and at the same time are distilled to a mature clarity. This is one type of change, a mimetic development, that critics have sufficiently stressed. However, there are changes in style which do not (directly) reflect either Stephen's mind or even a stage in his development as a writer. They are not necessarily used by him or seen as "passing through his mind". Rather, they are a part of Stephen's fictional cultural context, and thus also a part of Joyce's real historical and cultural background. These styles may indirectly characterize Stephen the fictional author, but they also directly characterize Joyce the real author who likes to "flaunt his devices" – from the starkest "objective" realism to the lushest aestheticist elaboration. Indeed, there is a subtle and "penumbral" sliding scale of presence between Joyce the actual author of *A Portrait*, the he/it of the fictional narrator of Stephen's story and Stephen the character. Joyce obviously deliberately obfuscated the distinction between the narrator of Stephen's story and Stephen as its focal point. Joyce could easily have fused them if he had chosen to write the novel in the first person (either as fiction or as autobiography), but he did not choose to do so, and we must respect his choice. Both the narrator and Stephen are (related to) Joyce. However, the narrator is a function of the author performing the act of narrating, and Stephen as a fictional hero

4. "Styles the character has heard or read and that the narrator has adopted in his written mimicry of the character's mind." Riquelme, p. 59.

is a function of the text. Performing his narratorial function Joyce plays a double role, but Stephen as a fictional character can only play one role! Although it is sometimes difficult to keep Stephen apart from Joyce (who identifies with him in so many ways), we must endeavour to do so, and thus respect the manifest intention of the novel to present itself as fiction.

For example, selecting rather at random, at one point in *Portrait* one encounters several rhetorical structures in a row. They are all composed of a noun preceded by two attributes: “the plump bald sergeant-major ... the lean young man in a long overcoat ... a stout old lady ... amind her copious black skirts” (73–74). One can ask: Is this a structure that Stephen at this point is using in his weekly essays? The answer will be: Perhaps, but this is not certain because on this particular page Joyce does not *show* Stephen thinking or speaking these phrases. The only thing which is certain is that *Joyce* has written these phrases. We *can* perhaps consider them as some kind of (readerly) figural indicator, but we *must* see them as a writerly mark left by the author.

In Part III of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* free indirect style remains in many places overlaid with authorial hyperbolic expressive rendering found in Part II, which is in turn overlaid by the dominant literary influence of this section of the novel: the vocabulary and ideology of official religious instruction and of the sermon. The unique structural characteristics of this chapter is that its bulk carries three sermons reported verbatim (placed in inverted commas) and inserted into the text. In addition, one sermon is presumably transposed in free indirect style.<sup>5</sup> The latter is a very special type of free indirect style insofar as it is a long text, presumably spoken by the preacher, refracted by Stephen’s mind and only then taken over by the narration. When compared to the quoted sermons, Stephen’s rendering is coloured by more emotional language (the author’s, reflecting the emotion of Stephen?). At one point it even takes us a step before the preacher and already imagines doomsday in a kind of “poetic” rendering not found in the quoted sermons: “The last day had come. The doomsday was at hand. The stars of heaven were falling upon the earth like the figs cast by the fig-tree which the wind had shaken... The moon was bloodred. The firmament was as a scroll rolled away...” (113). This “FIS-sermon” is immediately followed by the more personal variant of the strategy prevailing in the novel: “Every word of it was for him ... The wind of the last day blew through his mind; his sins, the jewel-eyed harlots of his imagination, fled before the hurricane, squeaking like mice in their terror and huddled under a mane of hair” (115). Is it putting too fine a point on it to say that the first sentence is classical FIS, and the second is a combination of Stephen’s emotions and words with a new type of literary, (written-text) quality?

Again and again we are confronted by great complexities of merging visions and voices which formally are such a far cry from Emma’s ruminations about Mr Elton and Harriet! There is (fond) irony coupled with great formal elaboration (both authorial): “Stephen’s heart began slowly to fold and fade with fear like a withering flower ...” (121); “Stephen’s heart had withered up like a flower of the desert that feels the simoom coming from afar” (108). There are simpler ironical authorial statements where the

5. The rector pp 109–111, the preacher pp 117–124 on the next morning in chapel, and in the afternoon pp 127–135; the transposed sermon, p. 112–115.



irony is less direct: “Sunday was dedicated to the mystery of the Holy Trinity, Monday to the Holy Ghost, Tuesday... (147).” Often there is great consonance with the passionate budding author, evident in many examples which have been over-exploited by critics (“To love, to err, to fall, to triumph, to recreate life out of life! 172). On the whole, the ambiguity of mode and voice prevents us from pinning down the author’s relationship to Stephen (the uncertainty of *Dubliners* transformed and revived!), the narrator covertly negotiating an ever changing, chameleonic attitude: establishing a relation with his reader above the head of the character, then again immersing himself in the character and refusing guidance.

This has led to great critical discord in assessing Stephen as man and artist. How seriously is one to take this struggling young artist with his coldness, pride and indifference, which he later formulates himself as “silence, exile and cunning”? Are we to pity him because he was forced to use them as the only kind of self-defence available to him, or criticize him for displaying an egocentric self (in which Joyce recognizes his own? and dislikes this aspect of himself or secretly offers excuses for it?). Arousing emotional reactions to a character, whether positive or negative, is a readerly quality, one that does not directly concern us in this study. What concerns us, however, is that Joyce frustrates (subverts) our attempt at either, distancing us from this kind of identification altogether, forcing us to read him differently: to de-anthropologize our reading on the level of its content (stop “analyzing” characters), and concentrate on the writerly aspect of the text (be aware of the interplay of its codes and functions).

One writerly aspect of *A Portrait* has been discussed by David Hayman in his text on the “Joycean inset”. Hayman defines insets as “passages of significant length and striking form readily isolated from their contrasted setting, apparent interpolations” (137). His principal examples of this are the Christmas dinner in Part I, the retreat sermons which constitute the bulk of Part III and the diary entries of Part V. The notion of an interpolation seen as an indicator that *A Portrait of the Artist* already contains the structural principles of *Ulysses* is very useful. These insets are moreover very helpfully seen by Hayman as pointing towards a system of “textual arrangement” variously “gratuitous and functional”, constituting a “subversion” of the narrative (149). However, beyond pointing towards the “writerly” quality of Joyce’s *Portrait* in itself, the inset is not a very useful critical term, because it refers to individual types of texts, each one performing a different function.

For example, the Christmas dinner can be psychologically motivated as a memory. As already noted, it works on the associative principle; seeing the fire “rise and fall” on the wall, the boy phantasizes or dreams about Parnell and Dante – then the entire twelve-page inset of the dinner scene is interpolated, simple in style and dramatic in effect, like a story from *Dubliners*. The function of the story is to present the politics and religion that Stephen will later reject, the trauma of the dead popular leader, the fanaticism of religion, the family Christmas fire, “banked high and red”, tarnished by a bitter and violent “political” dispute.

The Christmas dinner episode is rendered in strictly focalized third person narration with periodic recourse to free indirect style. It is interesting to notice parallel strategies in the Benjy section of *The Sound and the Fury* which can hardly be accidental. For example, the scenes rendered mainly in dialogues presumably remembered by the child, the lack of introduction and explanation, the text concentrating on experiential

details – even the quaint childishness of “The face and the voice went away” (21) echoed by Benjy in the remark “Father went away” when he turns off the light in the nursery!

The second set of insets according to Hayman – the sermons – also motivate an important phase of Stephen’s *Bildung* – but they are not narratives. Formally they are literal imitations of a specific genre: the sermon, a first-person address. The third type of inset is Stephen’s diary, another genre again, and also first-person narrative. In its directness and simplicity this diary brings an entirely new style. (“13 April: That tundish has been on my mind for a long time. I looked it up and find it English ... 251”, or “15 April: Met her today pointblank in Grafton Street ... We both stopped ... 252”). If some of these clipped, simply narrated perceptions were not prefixed by a date, indicating their status as a diary text, could we not mistake them for interior monologues? “Went to library. Tried to read three reviews. Useless. She is not out yet. Am I alarmed? About what? (249) ... Wild spring. Scudding clouds. O life! (250).”

The notion of the inset is a useful general reminder of the writerly structure of *A Portrait*. However, Hayman does not sufficiently elaborate it: a notion which can be applied equally to a psychological aspect (memory of an event) and formal aspect (the interpolation of a new genre) cannot be made workable in any systematic way. Generally speaking *A Portrait* abounds in stylistic variations. Some are dissonant, sharply juxtaposed; some are closely attuned (such as the description of the sound of cricket bats on p 41 and 59). Apart from (re)creating the fictional world, both types of variations seem to remind us that someone (Stephen, the author/narrator) is returning in memory to certain more memorable impressions but also trying out, superposing or juxtaposing different ways of expressing them in language.

Apart from the modes and styles already described in the first three chapters of *A Portrait of the Artist*, we also encounter, in snippets, very simply rendered sense impressions, vivid visual images, the naturalist-impressionist heritage pruned down to a kind of hyper-realism which becomes a prominent but never dominant feature of Parts IV and V. At the beginning of Part III, there is for example the very vivid description of the coarse food ladled out in thick peppered flour-fattened sauce, followed immediately by images of the prostitutes settling hairpins in their hair:

his senses ... would note keenly ... the ring of porter froth on a clothless table or a photograph of two soldiers standing to attention or a gaudy playbill (102).

This is the realistic zooming-in on sense impressions, a strategy upheld throughout the novel, and becoming more economical, also disenchanting as the story proceeds. For example (in Part IV) the description of the “shrine of the Blessed Virgin which stood fowlwise on a pole in the middle of a hamshaped encampment of poor cottages (162)” or the matchless close-up of the kitchen table at home: “Discarded crusts and lumps of sugared bread, turned brown by the tea which had been poured over them ... and a knife with a broken ivory handle was stuck through the pith of a ravaged turnover” (163).

This occasional simplicity of objective description (always focalized through Stephen!) is matched in the later sections of the novel by a variant of simple free indirect style, which can be seen as a “mature” variant of the childish simple early specimens: “His (Cranly’s, SB) hat had come down on his forehead ... Yes. His face was handsome ... He had spoken of a mother’s love ... Away then: it is time to go ... Yes; he would go” (245). In the last two parts of *A Portrait* there is also considerably more dialogue,

bantering and drily trivial, or elaborately discursive and expository, including Stephen's long theoretical and existential tirades. (To be compared respectively to "Telemachus" and "Scylla and Charybdis", where this kind of dialogue is prominent, although it was to be nearly completely discarded by Joyce in the later *Ulysses* episodes).

"Psycho-narration" and FIS-coloured contaminations rendered in "expressive" styles remain a constant throughout *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. The most ecstatic example of the "expressive" style is the recreation of Stephen's vision of his artistic calling in Part IV. This vision is also a very obvious and unmistakably symbolic rendering of the Daedalian theme, in spite of interpolated passages of trivial dialogue, "straight" free indirect style and equally straight "objective" narration: "His heart trembled; his breath came faster and a wild spirit passed over his limbs as though he was soaring sunward. His heart trembled in an ecstasy of fear and his soul was in flight ... (169) – which is modulated towards free indirect style: "His throat ached with a desire to cry aloud, the cry of a hawk or eagle on high ... This was the call of life to his soul not the dull gross voice of the world of duties and despair, not the inhuman voice that had called him to the altar ... (169) – and ending in unmistakable free indirect style": Yes! Yes! Yes! He would create proudly out of the freedom and power of his soul ... (170).

More and more, however in passages of this kind (practically suppressed in *Ulysses*), we are already confronted not so much with mergers of two (simulated) human voices, but with mergers of two written texts. Now that Stephen has also become a writer (our one tangible proof is the villanelle), we are never sure whether he is "just" feeling and thinking, or already "composing" in his mind:

Her bosom was as a bird's, soft and slight, slight and soft... The first faint noise of gently moving water broke the silence, low and faint and whispering ... hither and thither, hither and thither ... (171).

This description is obviously crafted. After using all those stylistic and narrative disguises, the elusive chameleonic narrator leaves us completely in the dark as to whether this is "he/it" or "the other", or both. The text could thus be authorial/figural in several senses at once (Joyce as both real author and as a figure insofar as the novel is autobiographical – and Stephen as both fictional figure and fictional author – *never* narrator, however, as Riquelme suggests!) It can also be seen as involving/distancing in several senses. Thus it is possible that Joyce wrote the description of the bird-girl as a deliberate purple passage, with his tongue in his cheek. In such juxtapositions there is multiple mirroring and reduplication of narrative and stylistic possibilities with the result that we are increasingly aware of the text as text.

More and more, meaning and form in the text turn back upon themselves as if mirroring the creative process, blending thinking and writing, psychology and the literary artifice. Free indirect style thus seems to transgress its initial figural genesis (expressing the feelings of Stephen) without ever forsaking it completely. (Writing after all does begin in an author's mind and the genesis of a text is also partly the result of a psychological process!)

Here narrator and figure (character) often seem to reverse their roles. Instead of the author bringing the figure alive, it is the figure helping the author to continue. Thus Stephen is first shown as drawing forth "a phrase from his treasure" and speaking it to himself: "A day of dappled seaborne clouds" (166). The phrase is then taken over by the narrator, "borrowing" the remembered text: "Disheartened, he raised his eyes

towards the slow-drifting clouds, dappled and seaborne” (167). Perhaps we find embodied here the old dilemma of Life vs Book. Joyce *reverses the order and begins* with Literature. First Stephen uses his cherished sentence – then Joyce proceeds to use it in a description of Stephen’s “reality”.

In a formal analysis we must ask: Who says the second sentence? The author is “taking over” the words of the figure, but these words are a formulated cherished writer’s phrase, a part of a text, a quotation which takes it outside the realm of free indirect style. McHale stresses that free indirect style somehow seems to stick quite stubbornly to a measure of “spokenness ... constituted by markers of colloquialism in general ... lexical fillers ... evaluative expressions” (269) – and this quality stops short of the citational.

This brings us to the villanelle, which is classified by Dorrit Cohn as quoted (interior) monologue. The ten pages in *Portrait* devoted to the composition of the villanelle are the most successful step by step rendering of the “creative process” that I know, although they need not by any means be taken as a very literal (realistic) description of the process. Unlike James’ prefaces where we are offered often very trivial technicalities and crumbs of language and life out of which a novel is partly born, this is obviously a poetic reconstruction of the process, in fact quite romantic, in which Stephen’s poem seems to spring out of pure emotion or even out of a sexual act. (“O! In the virgin womb of the imagination the word was made flesh” (217) – could anything be more Coleridgean than this?), but is also seen as a scribbling of finished verses on rough cigarette-packet cardboard while feeling the lumps of the old pillow under one’s head. We do not follow individual lines and metaphors being put into lines, but are offered finished stanzas interspersed with memories of the girl who inspired them. It is amusing to notice that the individual stanzas, which one can more easily accept as interior monologue – staying whole in memory, are not indicated as coming from Stephen’s mind; by being written out in poem form on the page they are juxtaposed to the FIS-centered text that surrounds them. At the conclusion of the section, the process of interior monologue is nevertheless clearly described as happening to the protagonist: “and like a cloud of vapour or like waters circumfluent in space the liquid letters of speech, symbols of the element of mystery, flowed forth over his brain!!” (223).

After this comes the entire poem, printed in italics, typographically set as a poem, and something in the reader is alerted. What is alerted I think is our conventional response to the form of a printed text, especially a printed poem. There is a degree of formality in a poem which prevents us from accepting that this is the exact text which “flowed over his brain”. We have no guarantee that other monologic texts are “really” flowing over the figural brain, but we do not mind because we accept the convention which indicates that they do. Here, however, one convention (interior monologue) clashes with another (quoting a poem in writing). A text which is 1. uninterrupted by any other “mind stuff”, and 2. written out on the page as a formal poem, seems to transgress the mimetic boundaries set by the techniques of presenting consciousness, although the writer may expressly tell us the contrary.

All this leads to a conclusion which is of primary importance for the understanding of Joyce’s narrative: that the “modulating between drastically different styles in a single work” (Riquelme 87), is at variance with the primary purpose of free indirect style which,

if we want it to remain workable, must be seen as that kind of mixture or merging of authorial and figural idiom where 1. the figural representation is mimetic and immediate stylistically, although mediated grammatically, creating the illusion that the character is speaking although we know that it is the writer writing, in other words, that we are getting parts of the character's idiom although we are only getting a narrator's discourse; and 2. that the narratorial idiom is sufficiently consistent to allow for the illusion that we have before us the mixture of voices of two speakers: the (personal) narrator (who may sound bookish, but not too bookish and certainly must keep a measure of transparency) on the one hand, and the character (who must stick to a measure of spokenness) on the other. In *A Portrait of the Artist* free indirect style is still a dominant technique. In it the relation between author and figure is particularly relevant and subtle because this is a semiautobiographical *Künstlerroman*. If Stephen were a painter his paintings could be described in the text. Being a writer, his artifacts are often indistinguishable from the text and therefore a part of the text, merged and lost in it, undifferentiated from the authorial writing. The authorial and figural idiom are often inseparable also because, as we have pointed out already, seen in the biographical perspective, Joyce and Stephen are in many ways one person and – one writer.

We face the same problem in Proust, as Genette has demonstrated. However, in Proust the meditations, both discursive and poetic, and the analyses, reminiscences and discussions often help us to distinguish between the older writer and his young (remembered) self. In Joyce's *Portrait* although narratorial irony in certain FIS-passages cannot be denied, past and present seem indistinguishable, and every moment is intensely actual. Paradoxically (and Joyce is all paradox, as we know), in Proustian first-person narration it seems easier to distinguish between narrator and figure (although they are formally the same person), than in Joycean free indirect style which is by definition written in the third person and therefore a dual mode. With a narrator so close to Stephen on the one hand, and yet so destabilized by the various discourses on the other, free indirect style is *the last* technique we need if we wish to distinguish between the two. And yet we must distinguish between the two in order to diagnose free indirect style – which bring us to a kind of *impasse*.

Along with excellent recent insights into the development and functioning of free indirect style as the "dual voice", what we seem to lack in most critical approaches to *A Portrait of the Artist* and *Ulysses* is an awareness that free indirect style, as we have stressed in the first two chapters of this book, depends on the notion of a personal narrator and that Joyce subverts this notion by depersonalizing the narrator, and accordingly subverting the very foundation of free indirect style, preventing us from finding out who speaks, showing us that the speech of "the other" is always problematic.<sup>6</sup> In *Ulysses* it is obvious that the narrator functions as a place generating texts written in

6. Discussing works by Ann Jefferson and others Brian McHale says: "Jefferson's point about FID is that even in conventional realistic fiction it is subversive of the mimetic intentions that presumably motivated its introduction in the first place. As 'language on the loose' ... FID is irreducibly ambiguous both in respect of its origin (Who speaks?) and in respect of its object of representation (speech or thought?)... Thus though in conventional fiction it is no doubt used with a view to heightening psychological immediacy and realism, in fact it only makes mimesis that much more obscure and problematic." "Writing about postmodern writing", *Poetics Today*, Vol. 3, No 3, 1982, p. 216.

different styles, subduing the mimetic effect of personal voices (of narrator and figure), and highlighting the device as such; the author's ideology (the textual point of view) is covered up, camouflaged by the hypertextual (parodic) and metatextual pattern. The careful reader will find all of these carefully embedded in *A Portrait* as well.

Commenting on the multiplicity of Joyce's discourses in this novel, Dorrit Cohn believes that "he persistently adapts his style to the age and mood of his hero, coloring it with baby-talk in the beginning section, with the bathos of the budding artist-in-revolt at the end, and in between with a spectrum of psychological states and developmental stages" (30). As I have tried to show, this frequently voiced opinion needs emendation; namely, Joyce's "chameleonic" quality is much more radical than that, very often abandoning the conventions of mimetic (psychological or moral) motivation, roaming and borrowing freely from the fields of literature.

In the unravelling of the sources of speech in the free indirect style of *A Portrait* we might venture to say that the interest of Part II and III lies in the discrepancy between Stephen's emotions and thoughts and much of the language they are couched in. With some exceptions, particularly in Part I, the language is not toned down to his childish adolescent capacities as in James's *What Maisie Knew*, but variously appropriated by Joyce hiding behind the different discourses (derived from Stephen's or/and his own reading!). In Parts IV and V the style can often be accepted as stemming from Stephen (the ideal condition for free indirect style), but here the ambiguities derive from the uncertainty as to whether we are introduced to Stephen's feelings and thoughts, or to a recitation of a text he has composed in his mind. This would put his emotion at two removes from us (Joyce representing Stephen's representation).

Both in the free indirect style and the narration of *A Portrait*, the reader is often in a quandary when assigning a text (or part of it) to the narrator. The quandary only partly stems from the inherently problematic nature of free indirect style. Another more important source is the typical Joycean modernist juxtaposition of discourses. The author seems unable to quite claim possession of the narrative because he has destabilized the authorial stylistic norm and accordingly the authority of his (one) recognizable voice. Doing this, he refuses to tell us where he stands. In spite of its autobiographical roots, in this sense *Portrait* is an impersonal novel.

Concluding our analysis of Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, we should be aware that within the mode of free indirect style this novel comprises an entire sliding scale, a speech transmission continuum, ranging from imitating voices to imitating (copying) texts, which represent the movement from psychological presentation to parody. Parody (hypertextuality) can be attributed only to the author (narrator), simply because there is nobody else we can attribute it to. We cannot attribute stylistic intentionality to the character; the character never stands on an equal footing with the author, even when the author pretends he is letting him tell his story himself.<sup>7</sup> I have already criticized Riquelme for claiming that Stephen narrates his own story. He could

7. Cf Genette in *Narrative Discourse* on the use of extradiegetic and intradiegetic narrator in Proust.

do that only if he stepped outside the book, like Woody Allen's hero in *The Purple Rose of Cairo*, and switched to telling the story in the first person. As all the biographical facts and materials indicate, Stephen's life corresponds very closely to Joyce's. As things stand in literature, however, even if Stephen is Joyce in fact, he is not Joyce in the fiction. The protagonist of *A Portrait* is named Stephen and is referred to in the third person; thus the one thing he cannot do is to narrate his own story.

Although much of the charm of this novel resides in the play of free indirect style and its subtle intertwining of authorial and figural idiom, this text also functions as Joyce's warning against literal reading. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is not just a novel about an author learning to write; it is also a novel learning to write itself, making literature out of words, images, phrases, sentences, grammatical and rhetorical structures heard in life and culled from books. As regards free indirect discourse much of the writing goes beyond the juxtaposition of individual idiolects, entering broader stylistic areas which disdain figural mimeticism and come close to the fictional norms of *Ulysses*.

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SLOBODNI NEUPRAVNI JOYCE: DISKURS PRIPOVJEDAČA,  
GOVOR LIKA, PARODIJA?  
("Portret umjetnika u mladosti")

U Joyceovu *Portretu umjetnika u mladosti* nailazimo na neobično raznolike i raznorodne načine prenošenja govora/misli. U tom romanu slobodni nepravni govor kreće se od oponašanja (simulacije) glasova do oponašanja (citiranja) tekstova, i predstavlja raspon koji ide od psihološkog prikazivanja do parodije (hipertekstualnosti).

"Portret" je zbir virtuozno razrađenih varijacija i međusobnih pretapanja i suprotstavljanja autorskog diskursa i govora/misli likova, ali je on jednako tako i Joyceovo upozorenje protiv doslovnog čitanja. "Portret" nije samo roman o autoru koji uči pisati nego i o romanu o romanu, tj. jeziku koji se oblikuje u književnu formu. Ovdje slobodni nepravni govor nadilazi razinu igre osobnih idiolekata, napušta figuralni mimesis i predstavlja zametak fikcionalnih normi koje ravnaju pripovijedanjem u *Uliksu*.