

# *Ulysses, Capitalism, and Colonialism*

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*Reading Joyce after the Cold War*

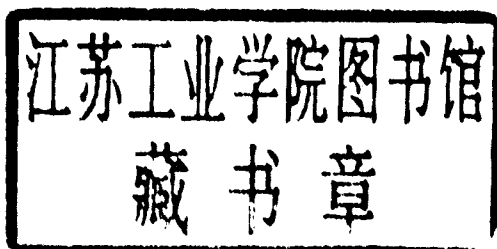
M. Keith Booker

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*Reading Joyce after the Cold War*

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# Introduction: How Joyce Became a Postcolonial Writer

In a recent essay, Fredric Jameson argues that the formal and structural properties of British modernist literature often reflect the crucial presence of imperialism as a fact of British political life during the modernist period, even when imperialism is not a major object of inquiry in the text at hand. "The traces of imperialism," Jameson concludes, "can ... be detected in Western modernism, and are indeed constitutive of it; but we must not look for them in the obvious places, in content or in representation" ("Modernism" 64). But Jameson notes that Joyce's *Ulysses*, rooted itself in a colonial society, is an exception to this observation. Not only is imperialism an obvious subject of Joyce's book, but the peculiar structural features of *Ulysses* provide for Jameson crucial evidence of the importance of imperialism for modernism in general. These features of *Ulysses*, according to Jameson, arise from the unique circumstances of Joyce's Dublin, which bears a surface similarity to the "First-World" cities of England and Western Europe, while resembling in its "underlying structure" the reality of "Third World or of colonized daily life" (60).<sup>1</sup>

To Jameson's suggestion that the dual reality of life in Dublin makes *Ulysses* uniquely fertile territory for an exploration of the role of imperialism to British modernism one might add a reminder of the dual status of Joyce's work itself. After all, despite his perceived position at the center of the canon of "British" modernism, Joyce himself was a colonial, and later postcolonial, writer. The British imperial domination of Ireland is therefore understandably one of the important subtexts of Joyce's work. In fact, a close examination shows that imperialism may be far more central as a political focus of Joyce's writing than critics have generally appreciated until very recently. In *Ulysses*, the locus classicus of this observation is Stephen Dedalus's bitter complaint to the visiting English scholar Haines that he (and presumably the Irish in general) is "a

servant of two masters, ... an English and an Italian" (1.638).<sup>2</sup> Stephen then explains that by this answer he means "the imperial British state ... and the holy Roman catholic and apostolic church" (1.643-4). Stephen thus succinctly diagnoses the two major sources of oppression in Ireland, an identification that will remain crucial throughout *Ulysses*.

Of these two sources, British imperialism and Roman Catholicism, the second is clearly more prominent as an object of overt criticism throughout Joyce's writing. At first glance, this aspect of Joyce's work would seem to compromise its effectiveness as anticolonial critique, Catholicism having played a central role in the ability of the Irish to maintain a cultural identity distinct from that of their English rulers, even through hundreds of years of colonial domination.<sup>3</sup> It is clear that the assimilation of Ireland into the British Union was greatly impeded by the religious differences between strongly Catholic Ireland and strongly anti-Catholic England. On the other hand, this opposition (like most things in Ireland) was not simple. While it is true that Protestantism was roughly associated in the Irish mind with English domination and that Catholicism was often aligned with Irish nationalism, many prominent anticolonial leaders (including Yeats and Parnell) had Protestant backgrounds. Moreover, the nationalist movement (from the United Irishmen onward) often espoused unity between Irish Catholics and Protestants as crucial to the independence movement. Meanwhile, the official quietism of the Catholic hierarchy worked directly in the interest of the continuation of English rule in Ireland.

Stephen's reply to Haines identifies Catholicism as a foreign force that exerts dominance over the Irish from abroad, a suggestion that is central to Joyce's critique of the Catholic Church throughout his work. In particular, Joyce's work suggests that the ideologies of the British Empire and the Catholic Church did not present clearly opposed alternatives for Ireland. As Seamus Deane points out, Joyce—in his vision of Stephen's "two masters"—seems to have regarded English political rule and Catholic religious rule as two parallel forms of imperial domination in Ireland ("Joyce the Irishman" 34-5).

Terry Eagleton, even while arguing that the Catholic Church was historically the principal obstacle to the establishment of Protestant (and thus British) hegemony in Ireland,<sup>4</sup> admits that the Church in Ireland often colluded with the British-dominated civil authorities "for the purpose of advancing its own interests" (*Heathcliff* 79). And one of the crucial strategies used by Joyce in his assault on Catholicism throughout *Ulysses* involves the suggestion that the Catholic Church operates in complicity with the Protestant British Empire, each helping the other to maintain its power in Ireland. For example, in one of the most important segments of the virtuoso exercise in style that makes up the "Oxen of the Sun" chapter of *Ulysses*, Joyce relates, through the conversation of Stephen Dedalus

and his medical-student pals, a brief history of the origins of British rule in Ireland. After the manner of Swift, this history is presented as an ironic allegory, literalizing the punning potential of the various meanings of the word "bull" to turn a discussion that ostensibly deals with the tending of livestock to a comment on the British treatment of the Irish as cattle. In particular, much of the conversation centers on Nicholas Breakspear, who, in 1154, became Adrian IV, the first and only English pope. It was apparently Breakspear (whose name inevitably echoes the importance of Shakespeare's work in the British imperial enterprise) who, in 1155, granted political authority over Ireland to King Henry II of England. Breakspear also supposedly gave Henry II an emerald ring as a token of this authority, and Joyce's placement of this ring in the nose of the Irish bull suggests both the domination of the Irish by the English and the domination of Henry II by Adrian IV. The conversation of Joyce's medicals continues, complete with Swiftian suggestions of sexual motivations behind the British rule of Ireland, but the major effect of the episode is to indicate a clear complicity between Catholic religious authority and English political authority in their parallel control of Irish society. Indeed, Adrian IV apparently authorized the English to invade Ireland largely so that they could impose proper Catholic values on the unruly Irish.

Such suggestions, which are sprinkled throughout Joyce's work, should effectively disarm any critical arguments that Joyce's lack of enthusiasm for the Catholic-dominated Irish nationalist movement showed a lack of concern with the question of British rule in Ireland. Indeed, from this point of view, imperialism thus becomes *the* major political focus of Joyce's work. This focus, of course, should come as no surprise given the particularly vexed colonial history of his native Ireland. British imperialism is a constant presence in Joyce's work, from the awe of European technological superiority expressed by the "gratefully oppressed" Irish in the *Dubliners* story "After the Race" (42), to Stephen Dedalus's recognition of the imperial resonances of the English language in his encounter with the dean of studies in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (189), to the direct confrontation with those resonances in Joyce's radical guerrilla assault on that language throughout *Finnegans Wake*.<sup>5</sup> *Ulysses* is particularly rich in its engagement with imperialism and colonialism, from Stephen's early intellectual confrontation with the Englishman Haines, to his later and more violent encounter with the guardsman Private Carr, to Molly Bloom's memories late in the book of British soldiers marching off to the Boer War.

Such considerations have been crucial to numerous recent critical attempts to characterize Joyce's work as politically powerful and subversive. This project, of course, is part of a general movement toward the serious consideration of historical and political issues by literary critics in

recent years, a trend that seeks, among other things, to overcome the legacy of the New Criticism, in which the consideration of history and politics was essentially forbidden as an improper undertaking for critics of literature. Still, Joyce may be a special case in that his work seems to be able to respond particularly well to changes in critical fashion.

Patrick McGee thus notes the ability of Joyce's work to respond to various trends in criticism: "At every phase in the development of recent literary theory, Joyce appears as an example and an authentic symptom of his and our historical moment" (2). Initially reviled by all but a small intellectual/artistic elite, which attempted to appropriate his work for their own (often right-wing) purposes, Joyce was canonized in the 1950s when it was discovered that the technical brilliance and formal sophistication of his writing provided perfect material for New Critical-style formalist critics, who could concentrate on his language and technique while ignoring any potentially anticolonial, anticapitalist content. When the hegemony of the New Criticism finally began to give way to new styles of reading following the heady days of the antiauthoritarian 1960s, Joyce remained at the very center of the modern canon. In the 1970s he was the golden boy of everybody from vestigial New Critics, to deconstructionist philosophers, to French radical feminists. The turn toward political readings in the 1980s did nothing to challenge Joyce's central position as the great man of modern literature; his richly dialogic, often carnivalesque, texts were perfect for reading through Bakhtin, while the encyclopedic range of the cultural materials from which Joyce so meticulously constructed his texts begged for explication via the emerging fashion of cultural criticism.

The recent trend toward critical concentration on Joyce's status as a postcolonial writer, which participates in the broader rise of multicultural studies in the 1990s, is thus only the latest of numerous revisions of our understanding of his work.<sup>6</sup> Again, one is tempted to conclude that Joyce's work has been able to respond so well over the years to so many different kinds of criticism because of special qualities in his work that give it a unique richness and diversity. But this temptation is a dangerous one; it suggests, among other things, that we may not have gotten so far beyond the suffocating confines of New Critical aesthetics (with their great emphasis on the richness and diversity of literary language) as we might have thought. Meanwhile, it is also worth considering the proposition that, as each new school of criticism canonizes Joyce as its exemplar, he is progressively recentered and safely reinscribed within current cultural paradigms and thus denied the oppositional power that is potentially his. This is certainly the case in terms of Joyce's experimental style and technique, but even the recent political readings that emphasize his subalternity and colonial marginality to the metropolitan culture of Europe do so in a context within which it has become fashionable (in



certain Western intellectual circles) to be subaltern, colonial, and marginal.

One of the first critical essays to pay serious attention to Joyce as an anticolonial writer was a little-known piece on *Dubliners* published by Paul Delany in 1972. Delany argues that *Dubliners* is particularly clear in its "indictment" of "those institutions and classes responsible for Dublin's condition: the Catholic Church, the colonial ruling class, and the indigenous collaborators with that class" (257). Delany goes on to cite Joyce's own claims, in letters, to see the development of a genuine "Irish proletariat" as the secret to future political progress in Ireland (258). On the other hand, Delany correctly points out that Joyce had little real sympathy with Dublin's lower classes (260). This lack of sympathy (which includes not only Joyce's failure adequately to represent the Irish lower classes in his fiction but also the notorious inaccessibility of his arcane texts to all but an initiated few) is probably the greatest obstacle that must be overcome in any attempt to read Joyce as a genuinely anticolonial writer.

Among other things, Joyce, in ignoring the lower classes, was following in the grand tradition of European bourgeois literature, in which the working class is either absent or present only as local color or as a menacing evil. By the time Joyce was writing, however, there were alternative models available. For example, English novelists writing even before Joyce was writing *Dubliners* were already calling attention to the abject suffering of London's urban poor. The inhabitants of the "Jago" in Arthur Morrison's *A Child of the Jago* (1896) experience a level of poverty as abject as any achieved in Dublin or other colonial cities. Indeed, the urban slum dwellers of London even experienced some of the sense of colonial subalternity that further maims the lives of the inhabitants of colonial slums.<sup>7</sup> Margaret Harkness, William Edwards Tirebuck, and Allen Clarke presented similar scenes of English poverty (though with less emphasis on the abjection of the present than on the hope that socialism might point the way to a better future), a trend culminating in that masterpiece of working-class literature, Robert Tressell's *The Ragged-Trousered Philanthropists* (published in an expurgated version in 1914 and in an unexpurgated version in 1955, though written before Tressell's death in 1911).<sup>8</sup>

Tressell (real name, Robert Noonan) was an Irish emigrant who worked as a housepainter in England while writing his masterpiece. Other Irish emigrant writers were similarly conscious of the plight of the poor (many of whom were also Irish emigrants) in early twentieth-century England, as can be seen in Patrick MacGill's *Children of the Dead End* (1914). Indeed, the prominence of Irish workers among the lower echelons of the British working class from the beginning of the nineteenth century onward should help us to see the extent to which negative

British stereotyping of the Irish was at least as much a matter of class as of race, despite the popularity of racist arguments in recent scholarship.<sup>9</sup> And, while the urban poor may be essentially absent from Joyce's work, it is clear from the work of a writer such as Sean O'Casey that the poor did exist in Dublin. Further, it is evident from the work of a novelist such as Peadar O'Donnell, whose career overlaps that of Joyce, that the tradition of Irish radicalism initiated by labor leaders such as James Larkin and James Connolly had an impact on Irish literature, even if not on the work of Joyce.

Thus, Joyce might very well have decided, in his work, to become an advocate of the Irish working class. That he chose, beyond vague remarks made when he was in his twenties,<sup>10</sup> not to do so, poses an extremely difficult problem for critics who would see Joyce as an antiauthoritarian defender of the oppressed. It is not surprising, then, that many of the recent readings of Joyce as a political writer have had to treat the issue of class obliquely, if at all. For critics such as Colin McCabe and Richard Brown, Joyce's frank treatment of sexuality has highly political overtones that primarily involve a challenge to the hegemony of the Catholic Church but that can also be read as an attempt to flout the bourgeois morality of Ireland's English masters. For Cheryl Herr and R. Brandon Kershner, Joyce's extensive engagement with contemporary popular culture suggests a democratic orientation that might be vaguely interpreted as a sign of sympathy with the masses. And so on.

But most political readings of Joyce have ignored the issue of class almost entirely, as has the politicization of recent literary studies in general. More than one observer has noted that the recent turn toward politics in literary studies apparently has its roots in the oppositional politics of the 1960s, when most of the figures now dominant in the academy were students. The failure of sixties-style politics to overcome the hegemony of bourgeois ideology is by now rather apparent, even without reminders by figures such as Jameson that "conscious ideologies of revolt, revolution, and even negative critique are—far from merely being 'co-opted' by the system—an integral and functional part of the system's own internal strategies" (*Postmodernism* 203). Actually, Jameson is here summarizing the conclusions of Jean Baudrillard, but Jameson himself consistently argues the same view, as when he notes, specifically with regard to the 1960s, that

the values of the civil rights movement and the women's movement are thus preeminently cooptable because they are already—as ideals—inscribed in the very ideology of capitalism itself, . . . which has a fundamental interest in social equality to the degree to which it needs to transform as many [as possible] of its subjects or its citizens into identical consumers interchangeable with everybody else. (*Signatures* 36)

The ideals to which Jameson here refers are the ideals of the Enlightenment, and he is perfectly aware that Marx himself was heavily influenced by these same ideals. Jameson thus notes that the “slogans of populism and the ideals of racial justice and sexual equality” so popular in the 1960s had been used centuries earlier by the emergent bourgeoisie as an ideological critique of the ancien régime in Europe, but that these same notions are also central to the “socialist denunciation of capitalism” (*Signatures* 36). However, Jameson goes on to argue that Marxism, while including the ideals of the Enlightenment, goes beyond those ideals by grounding them in a “materialist theory of social evolution” that demonstrates the inability of the capitalist system to realize its own ideals of social justice (36–7). In short, however convenient racism and sexism might have historically been as justifications for certain capitalist practices, capitalism can comfortably absorb demands for equality on the basis of race and gender because race and gender equality are not structurally incompatible with the workings of a capitalist economy, even if racism and sexism might have historically served as effective tactical weapons in the arsenal of bourgeois ideology.<sup>11</sup> Socialism, with its emphasis on the obliteration of class distinctions, is thus the only position that cannot be co-opted by capitalism, which must maintain class inequality in order to survive.

As a result, for Jameson, the “categories of race and sex as well as the generational ones of the student movement are theoretically subordinate to the categories of social class, even where they may seem practically and politically a great deal more relevant” (*Signatures* 37). Here, Jameson is clearly responding to “post-Marxist” thinkers such as Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, and Jameson’s argument obviously deserves some serious consideration amid the post-Marxist drift away from class as the central category of social analysis and critique. Among other things, the context of Jameson’s argument identifies post-Marxism as a holdover from the 1960s, with attendant doubts as to its ultimate political power. But Jameson’s argument also has extremely serious implications for contemporary literary studies in general, which have largely heeded Jameson’s own arguments about the centrality of history and politics to any adequate understanding of culture, but have done so in a decidedly 1960s sort of way, finding topics such as race and gender far more attractive and “relevant” than that of class, the very mention of which by now has an old-fashioned (Stalinist) ring to it.

It is within this context that we need to reexamine the politicization of Joyce in recent criticism, a process that has certainly emphasized gender and ethnicity over class and that, by and large, has either bypassed Marxism altogether or simply made it one among many “political” styles of criticism in a suspiciously bourgeois movement toward a critical free market based on plurality and liberal open-mindedness. Moreover, while

I recognize, with Jameson, that this style of thought was already central to the Enlightenment, I also want to insist that it took on a special urgency in the years of the Cold War, when plurality and open-mindedness became crucial slogans in an American campaign to convince the peoples of the world (including Americans) that they were being forced (by the Soviets, of course) to make a choice between such democratic attitudes and the authoritarian dogmatism of Stalinist totalitarianism. Celebrations of Joyce as the poet of plurality, as a proponent of diversity and a respecter of the Other, are thus in serious danger merely of extending the earlier aestheticist co-optation of Joyce as an icon of Western capitalist culture during the Cold War.

Granted, the strongly non-Marxist nature of political readings of Joyce has much to do with his early (now notorious) rejection by Marxists such as Karl Radek and Georg Lukács, though, in point of fact, Joyce was never so thoroughly rejected on the Left as critics on the Right would have us believe.<sup>12</sup> In fact, there were those on the Left who found much of value in his work all along, but rejections of Joyce by critics such as Radek and Lukács were like manna from heaven for Western formalist critics who sought to divorce Joyce's work from politics altogether. Meanwhile, the leftists who defended Joyce, especially in America, tended to do so from loftily mandarin viewpoints that revealed a decidedly unsocialist horror of the unwashed masses, whom one could (thankfully) avoid by escaping into arcane texts like *Ulysses*, where the untutored rabble were unlikely to be able to follow. This point of view was especially common among the critics associated with the *Partisan Review* in the 1930s, and remained so during their later reincarnation as the New York Intellectuals of the 1950s. For example, James T. Farrell responded in 1936 to attacks like Radek's by carefully ignoring Joyce's critique of British imperialism (and thus, potentially, of capitalism) and asserting that one could not judge the political import of Joyce's work apart from a consideration of his intense antagonism toward the twin nemeses of Irish nationalism and the Irish Catholic Church. Meanwhile, Farrell showed his elitism by concluding that this opposition gives Joyce's work a definite political force, which Radek might appreciate had he not "so philistine a viewpoint" (102).

"Philistine," of course, is here a code word for anything accessible, or even sympathetic, to the masses. With friends like Farrell, what leftist needs enemies? Perhaps it is little wonder, then, that apolitical readings of Joyce triumphed in the American academy for so long. Nevertheless, such readings could not really be expected to survive the 1960s, and they did not. Spurred by the combination of Joyce's frequent references to contemporary political issues and the radically experimental nature of his writing, critics who were influenced by the oppositional politics of the 1960s came more and more to see a subversive political potential

(however vague and unprogrammable) in Joyce's work. But this politicization of Joyce took a predictable and telling course that by and large carefully avoided any association of Joyce's texts with the evils of communism. It is not surprising, for example, that early arguments about the subversive political force of Joyce's writing remained essentially formalist, as French poststructuralists adopted Joyce as an icon of radical ambiguity whose complex language undermined any and all authoritarian perspectives by refusing to submit to univocal interpretations. In such readings, *Finnegans Wake* suddenly emerged as the key text in Joyce's oeuvre, and this vision of Joyce's politics culminated in declarations like Philippe Sollers's assertion that *Finnegans Wake* is "the most formidably anti-fascist book produced between the two wars" (109).

Critics during this period who attempted to delineate the specifics of the political implications of Joyce's work tended to follow Farrell in emphasizing Joyce's opposition to Catholicism and Irish Nationalism, both relatively safe targets from a bourgeois point of view. Catholicism, after all, represents a holdover from the feudal aristocracy (historically the natural enemies of the bourgeoisie), while Irish Nationalism has been consistently depicted by outsiders as dogmatic and even fanatical (somewhat in the mode of Stalinism itself). The recent turn to postcolonial readings of Joyce adds imperialism (an important topic to Marxist critics ever since Marx's own insistence that the English working class could never be free as long as Ireland remained in subjugation) to the list of political targets. And Marxist theory has made major contributions to the postcolonialization of Joyce. Indeed, the contributions of Jameson and Terry Eagleton to the 1990 Field Day book, *Nationalism, Colonialism, and Literature* (compiled by Seamus Deane) can be taken as a defining moment in the shift to postcolonial readings of Joyce.

Such readings, of course, require a more detailed attention to Joyce's status as an Irish writer than has typically been the case in Joyce criticism, so it is probably not surprisingly that Irish-born critics such as Deane, Declan Kiberd, Enda Duffy, Emer Nolan, and David Lloyd have been the dominant figures in this movement. None of these figures (and to this list one might add the name of Vincent Cheng, whose own complex cultural background probably contributes to his recognition of Joyce's postcolonial status) are, strictly speaking, Marxists. On the other hand, all draw to some extent upon Marxist theory, though in this sense the tendency in their work is decidedly in favor of Gramscian discussions of superstructural phenomena such as ideology and culture as opposed to more basic Lukácsian studies of economics, history, and class struggle.

This trend culminates in Trevor Williams's 1997 book, *Reading Joyce Politically*, the first book-length study of Joyce's work that adopts a consciously Marxist critical strategy throughout. Significantly, however, Williams's critical approach again relies on Gramscian/Althusserian super-

structural analysis rather than a detailed engagement with class, history, or other aspects of the economic base.<sup>13</sup> In this sense, Williams participates in the recent tendency to deemphasize class in leftist critique, a tendency that takes its strongest form in the work of post-Marxists, such as Laclau and Mouffe. Williams's approach is also consistent with current trends in Joyce criticism in that, by "reading Joyce politically," he primarily means reading Joyce as a postcolonial writer, though he oddly shows little familiarity with the work of Cheng, Nolan, Duffy, and others who have done the most important work in this area in recent years.

Williams's book is a valuable contribution to the continuing evolution of political critique of Joyce's work; it illuminates a number of important aspects of Joyce's writing that most critics have chosen to ignore. Among other things, Williams includes a number of extremely useful discussions of previous political readings of Joyce, which have been largely forgotten in the contemporary rush to celebrate the "subversive" nature of Joyce's writing practice. Williams thus potentially links recent political readings of Joyce to an older tradition. Ultimately, however, Williams himself tends to locate Joyce's political power in the realm of style, while dismissing earlier leftist complaints about the inaccessibility and pretentiousness of Joyce's style as simplistic and doctrinaire. For example, he characterizes Radek's critical technique as one of "facile dismissal in catchphrases," while dismissing Radek himself with Cold-War catchphrases of his own (17).<sup>14</sup> He thus fails to take Radek seriously or genuinely to engage the questions raised by Radek's hostility to Joyce.

Williams at least has the virtue that he does not, in rejecting Radek, reject Marxism itself. He also has the virtue of couching his reading of Joyce's politics within the context of opposition to colonialism. Moreover, this combination of Marxist and anticolonial approaches is highly appropriate. From the founding work of Marx and Engels themselves, to the critiques of imperialism by Lenin and Luxemburg, to the explorations of colonialism and postcolonialism by Frantz Fanon and Aijaz Ahmad, Marxist thought has long been the most significant force in the critique of global capitalist expansion—an expansion of which colonialism was merely the first step. And Marxism remains the most potent and vital force in Third-World thought today. Indeed, Marxism and Third-World culture are, in many ways, natural allies.<sup>15</sup> Thus, if Jameson figures Marxism as the only critical approach that can escape bourgeois appropriation, he also figures Third-World culture as one of the few sources of cultural energies that can escape the domination of bourgeois ideology in the era of late capitalism.

Jameson's call for First-World scholars to pay close and careful attention to Third-World culture has been widely heeded in recent years. In addition, literary scholars, including Joyce scholars, have begun to appreciate the distinctively different issues that must be taken into account

when reading postcolonial literature, as opposed to Western literature. Given this recent trend, it seems unsurprising that Kiberd declares that "the history of independent Ireland bears a remarkable similarity ... to the phases charted by Frantz Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth*" (*Inventing* 551-52) or that Lloyd suggests that Ireland has largely conformed to the model of bourgeois nationalism presented by Fanon (*Anomalous* 7).

Yet the problematic and limited nature of the use of Marxism in postcolonial readings of Joyce (and in postcolonial theory as a whole) can perhaps be seen most clearly in the lack of emphasis placed on the work of Fanon, who was once widely regarded as the leading theorist of Third-World opposition to domination by the metropolitan center. For example, Hunt Hawkins, in a minor 1992 essay that was an early contribution to the trend toward postcolonial readings of Joyce, provides some of the most extensive comments on Fanon's work in this context when he argues the usefulness of reading Joyce as a "colonial" writer by suggesting that Fanon's observations on writers from Africa and the Caribbean "may be applied to Joyce with surprisingly little qualification" (400). Hawkins later elaborates on this statement by comparing Fanon's comments on the proper use of tradition in anticolonial nationalist movements to Joyce's apparent opposition to the nostalgic visions of the past that informed much of the rhetoric of Irish nationalism. However, the comparison is clearly intended more as a suggestion for further research than as a detailed analysis and is therefore superficial and never really pursued or interrogated. Nor does Hawkins show much appreciation for the complexity of the attitudes of both Fanon and Joyce toward the use of the past and toward nationalism as a whole.

The further research that Hawkins recommends has, indeed, been forthcoming, though it has remained superficial in its use of Fanon. Nolan, in an important and sophisticated rereading of the importance of Irish nationalism in the work of Joyce, makes surprisingly little use of Fanon, who has probably done more than anyone to establish the terms of the debate over the role of nationalism in the process of decolonization. Nolan, in fact, limits her use of Fanon to a single quotation from *The Wretched of the Earth*, which she uses to illuminate, and to some extent challenge, a passage from one of Joyce's early essays on the use of history in the Irish nationalist struggle for independence (70). Similarly, Duffy, in a reading of *Ulysses* as a "subaltern" text, refers in passing to Fanon's notorious comments on the necessity of anticolonial violence but does very little to apply Fanon's insights to Joyce, perhaps because of the opposition to such violence that seems to pervade Joyce's work.

Cheng, in *Joyce, Race, and Empire*, refers to Fanon when he argues that Joyce characters such as Little Chandler and Ignatius Gallaher in *Dubliners* are figures of a prematurely decadent postcolonial bourgeoisie who have simply adopted the attitudes and enthusiasms of their predecessors

among the bourgeoisie of Britain. Cheng, however, does not take this insight far enough. In his readings of *Ulysses*, for example, he is unwilling (or unable) to see Leopold Bloom as a similar figure of the postcolonial bourgeois, instead reading him, in the time-honored tradition of Joyce scholarship, as a figure of resistance to colonialism through his own lovable tolerance of difference.

Of course, the underutilization of Fanon in readings of Joyce's work within the context of colonialism is, to some extent, not surprising. Despite his insistence that class is a more fundamental social category than race, Fanon's work nevertheless does deal in a central way with racial issues. In Fanon, colonialism tends to be defined primarily by class difference, but the ruling class is white and the subjected class black, so that class struggle becomes the domination of a black indigenous population by white masters from the metropolitan center. The colonial situation is, of course, somewhat different in Ireland, though not as different as might first appear. After all, as Cheng and earlier scholars, such as L. P. Curtis and Patrick O'Farrell, have demonstrated, the English, for hundreds of years, tended to view their presumed superiority to the Irish in largely racist terms.<sup>16</sup> Ireland, it is becoming clear from recent historical scholarship, served as a sort of colonial laboratory in which the English developed many of the racist stereotypes they would later use to justify their colonial domination of the nonwhite peoples of Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean.<sup>17</sup>

Fanon's prominence in postcolonial studies can to some extent be attributed to his direct influence on African postcolonial writers such as Ousmane Sembène, Ayi Kwei Armah, and Kenya's Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Fanon's work, done in the 1950s and early 1960s, obviously had no such influence on Joyce, which might also help to explain the tendency of Joyce scholars to make relatively little use of Fanon in their attempts to theorize Joyce's project within the context of colonialism. On the other hand, Caribbean novelists such as C.L.R. James and George Lamming were producing works before Fanon to which the theories of Fanon are still clearly relevant. This phenomenon should come as no surprise: Fanon himself was a native of the Caribbean and no doubt gained much of his understanding of the colonial world there. On the other hand, that Lamming and James, from the British West Indies, should have insights that so resemble those of Fanon, whose experience is of French Martinique and Algeria, tends to verify the broad applicability of Fanon's analysis of the nature of the colonial world.

The fact that Joyce worked before Fanon cannot explain the almost total absence of the latter in recent readings of the former as a postcolonial writer. However, historical placement can, in another way, help to provide such an explanation. The colonial/postcolonial nature of Joyce's project received very little attention prior to the 1990s. Moreover, this



attention has been provided primarily by Joyce scholars, who have, after the explosion in postcolonial studies in the past ten to fifteen years, become newly aware of the crucial importance of colonialism as a background to the work of Third-World writers around the globe. In short, most Joyce scholars have received their initiation into postcolonial studies only within the last few years and have thus understandably adopted a distinctively 1990s style in their approach to Joyce as a postcolonial writer. Fanon, unfortunately, has not been a favorite of the past decade's new wave of postcolonial scholars with their preference for trendy post-structuralist theorists, who bolster their almost frantic attempts to appear sophisticated.

Fanon, with his straightforward, logical arguments, does not serve the same purpose. Thus, as Epifanio San Juan so eloquently details in his recent *Beyond Postcolonial Theory*, the recent turn away from Fanon by postcolonial scholars, epitomized by the work of Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak, can be attributed largely to the "worldwide hegemony of post-structuralist ideology that valorizes the primacy of exchange, pastiche, fragmentation, textuality, and difference as touchstones of critique and understanding" (259).<sup>18</sup> Moreover, Fanon's constituency is indeed the "wretched of the earth," the poor, relatively uneducated masses who make up the vast majority of the population of the planet. But, as San Juan notes throughout his argument, most recent postcolonial scholarship has shown an aversion to the masses, opting instead for a focus on the educated postcolonial elite. Moreover, Fanon's appeal to the masses is couched specifically in terms of a Marxist conception of classes as the primary social categories and agents of history. This conception, after nearly half a century of Cold War propaganda in which any and all Marxist thought was characterized as hopelessly naïve, instantly identifies Fanon as a presumably old fashioned thinker whose work the new generation of sophisticated postcolonial scholars should surely be smart enough to get beyond.

In short, the demise of Fanon as a dominant figure in postcolonial theory in the past decade or so can be largely attributed to the horror of thinking in terms of class that has pervaded Western literary studies for the past half century. This is particularly the case in American literary studies, where Cold War hysteria was particularly extreme and where the impact of Cold War politics in establishing the terms of virtually all critical debates was particularly profound. Constance Coiner, in her introduction to the 1997 republication of Alexander Saxton's 1948 leftist novel *The Great Midland* (an introduction tragically cut short by Coiner's untimely death aboard TWA Flight 800 in July 1996), praises the book for its sophisticated handling of the issue of class in modern American society. For Coiner, Saxton, who published a total of three novels from 1943 to 1959, thus differs from most of his contemporaries among American