

unlike many purists, did not keep the original names in translation: he was fond of Italianizing not only his own name but also the names of historical/literary figures in his articles and lectures. Thus we encounter Guglielmo Gladstone and Giovanni Mitchell (*JJA* I 680), or Oliviero Cromwell and Gualtiero Lynch (*JJA* I 692). (p. 132)

*JOYCE, GIVE AND TAKE*, by Annalisa Volpone. Rome: Riverrun, Aracne Press, 2012. 104 pp. €10.00.

There is a seductive symmetry to the organization of the four essays comprising Annalisa Volpone's study of James Joyce in the context of literary influence: her first chapters explore two significant influences on Joyce's work—Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and William Blake—and her subsequent ones examine Joyce's influence on two later writers: Vladimir Nabokov and Derek Walcott. Enhancing the symmetry of this structure, Volpone limits her discussion of Joyce's work to *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* in chapters 1 and 2 and then reverses her course in chapters 3 and 4, which focus on *Finnegans Wake* and *Ulysses* respectively. This strategy makes the overall organizational principle of her intriguing, although brief, book a chiasmus on Joyce as a nexus of influence, comprising the "give" and "take" implied in her title.

After a brief introduction, in which Volpone quickly sketches the outline for three basic paradigms that will guide her analysis—"intertextuality, echoicity and plagiarism" (14)—she focuses on the "Proteus" episode of *Ulysses*. Specifically, she pinpoints a single passage from Stephen's interior monologue in which he mentions "the name of the Italian humanist Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494)" (21, *U* 3.144). Volpone uses this passage to discuss Pico's place in Stephen's philosophical education, particularly his idea that the meaning of everything could be deciphered if one could only learn the language. Subsequently, she resituates Pico's influence in shaping Joyce's conception of an encyclopedic work that could represent the totality of existence. Volpone writes, "Stephen's masterpiece has to become the *summa* of the modern world[;] precisely like Pico's doctoral thesis, it has to include *de omni re scibili*" (29). Her argument becomes overdetermined when she makes more tenuous or circumstantial claims requiring more development than a single essay can provide, such as, "[l]ike Pico, Stephen is a young intellectual, who has studied in Paris" (27). In general, though, Volpone does a fine job of arguing for the centrality of Pico's influence on Stephen and, by extension, Joyce.

In the following chapter, Volpone examines how Blake affected

Joyce's writing, particularly his idea of apocalypse as presented in *Jerusalem*—his last major text and a *summa* of his life's work—on Joyce's own literary *summa*, *Finnegans Wake*.<sup>1</sup> Much more has been written about Blake's influence on Joyce than Pico's, so Volpone does not have novelty on her side in this chapter. She does an admirable job, however, of entering the critical discussion without merely rehashing the positions of others and is able to do this not only by maintaining a relentless focus but also by grounding her analysis in compelling close readings of specific passages from the respective texts. Blake revises the Biblical notion of apocalypse as a personal revelation—an act perceived through the imagination—not unlike Joyce's own secular appropriation of epiphany. Tracing the echoes of Blake in Joyce's own ideas of apocalypse, Volpone argues, "Joyce refers to Blake not so much for his complex *cosmology*, even though the *Wake* presents some echoes of it, but rather for the prominence that Blake gives to imagination as the ultimate reality" (42). She supports this claim by tracing some of these Blakean "echoes" in the *Wake*, focusing "on the very concept of the marriage/union between mystery and 'mysttetry'" (47). Volpone is at her best when unpacking Joyce's dense portmanteau words, like "mysttetry" (*FW* 60.20), explaining the significance of the part to the whole and drawing connections back to Blake. She goes too far out on a limb occasionally, though, when she draws a speculative connection between a line from the *Wake* and a quotation from a letter that Blake wrote to George Cumberland and concludes that "[u]ndoubtedly this sentence signals Joyce's endorsement of Blake's philosophy of mind" (50). This general claim could certainly be valid, but I am skeptical about an argument that a single sentence—even in the *Wake*—could support the weight of such a claim beyond any doubt, as Volpone suggests.

Volpone turns her attention to Joyce's influence on others in her third chapter through a comparison of hypertextuality in *Finnegans Wake* and Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire*.<sup>2</sup> In a chapter that seems more thoroughly researched and footnoted than the previous two, Volpone describes how "Nabokov and Joyce extraordinarily anticipate some of the issues raised by hypertextual writing, such as originality, transparency, autonomy, linearity, finality, textual partogenesis and closure" (63). Comparing the textual and linguistic experimentation in these novels, she illustrates the way Nabokov and Joyce problematize the reader/writer relationship by creating "'literary machines,' whose exponential capacity of meaning production, once primed by the reader, is destined to a virtually inexhaustible updating" (62). Joyce, therefore, is Nabokov's model for the evolution of the novel from "readerly" to "writerly" (80)—to use the terms coined

by Roland Barthes, whose literary strategy places the reader in a more active role in the production of meaning.<sup>3</sup> There is nothing new in reading Joyce as a transitional figure between modernism and postmodernism, but, again, Volpone's close comparative readings of specific elements in *Pale Fire* and the *Wake* spark one's interest in returning again to these texts.

Volpone concludes her slender volume with a chapter "on the impact of *Ulysses* on what is generally considered one of Derek Walcott's greatest literary achievements, the epic narrative poem *Omeros*" (83).<sup>4</sup> Reading Homer through Joyce in *Omeros* and reading the postcolonial Caribbean through postcolonial Ireland, Volpone describes how Walcott, with Joyce as antecedent, uses "the epic [to open] a further (non) fictional space, in which the roles of author and character superimpose and overlap" (93). *Ulysses*—and Stephen in particular—becomes a paradigm for Walcott in revising the epic in a way that investigates postcolonial concerns of language and identity. Furthermore, geography, history, and the individual are conflated into literary text as Joyce's Ireland provides an example and analog in Walcott's conception of St. Lucia. Volpone writes, "Like St. Lucia, Ireland is a colonized land, and like St. Lucia, it has been forced to accept a foreign culture and a foreign language" (94). Walcott himself has described the influence of Irish writers, especially Joyce, on his own literary education,<sup>5</sup> and Volpone explores this influence through particular details in *Omeros* and *Ulysses*. "Joyce's legacy to Walcott," she concludes, "should be searched for in the image of the wanderer that he has so concretely embodied . . . and in his ability to describe the unceasing flux of life" (103). Appropriately, Volpone ends her essay—and book—describing how Walcott, a literary wanderer like Joyce, always returns to the sea, with its significance to inhabitants of colonized islands and wandering spirits alike.

The brevity and focus of this volume combined with the readability of Volpone's writing style make her book a pleasure to read and, like attending a good series of engaging lectures, leave one revitalized with a desire to return to the old, familiar texts with fresh perspectives to explore further the literary relationships that she elucidates. I do have reservations about the textuality of the book, as there are signs of poor editing (there are more typos than there should be in a published text); some of the footnotes are too vague or general to be of much use; the introduction is very brief and does little to establish and develop the relevant scholarly context or theoretical framework for the comparative study of influence; and there is neither an index nor bibliography. These problems are perhaps more a criticism of the Italian publishers (Riverrun is an imprint of the Aracne Press) than the author, but they add up to more than minor inconveniences because they give an impression of low editorial standards—even

conveying a sense of quick and cheap publication. Textual criticisms aside, however, Volpone's book is a worthwhile contribution to the scholarship on Joyce and literary influence.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> William Blake, *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion* (London: W. Blake, 1804).

<sup>2</sup> Vladimir Nabokov, *Pale Fire* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1962).

<sup>3</sup> See Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, trans. Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1974).

<sup>4</sup> Derek Walcott, *Omeros* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1990).

<sup>5</sup> See, for instance, Walcott, "Volcano," *Sea Grapes* (London: J. Cape, 1976), n.p., and *The Fortunate Traveller* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1981).

*JAMES JOYCE'S "DUBLINERS,"* performed and produced by Wonderland Productions Limited, Dublin, 2013. Three Audio CDs. \$21.49.

Ever since Hugh Kenner's *Joyce's Voices* and since serious attention was paid to the work of M. M. Bakhtin, there has been an awareness of the polyphonic nature of Joyce's *Dubliners* and of the multiplicity of "parts" that the work assigns, a diversity to some extent controlled by their spatial and temporal specificity.<sup>1</sup> The Dublin-based Wonderland Productions and its artistic director Alice Coghlan have thus taken a valid approach to the work by using the voices of many different actors in this "adaptation," in contrast to recordings that have just one reader throughout or even recordings assigning entire stories to different readers. What Wonderland presents here is more like a dramatization of the text than any prior recordings, so it is not directly comparable to them.

This project arose out of the audio walking guide that Wonderland produced for the James Joyce Centre in Dublin, which enabled visitors to tour the city and hear snatches of the stories at relevant locations. Following the success of that initiative, the company has now produced this "stand-alone" version of the work on three CDs.

It is in no sense a faithful rendering of the book called *Dubliners*: "Araby," "After the Race," "Clay," "Ivy Day," and "A Mother" are omitted entirely, while all the remaining stories receive cuts and even suffer the indignity of having their words altered, for instance, when pronouns are replaced by proper names or when a revision has led