

James Joyce e il tema dell'eroe

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Abstract

James Joyce and the Theme of the Hero

The present paper investigates the resonance and reshaping of “the Theme of the Hero” in the works of James Joyce, from A Portrait of the Artist (1904) to Ulysses. The artist at twenty intends to “try [himself] against the powers of the world”, following, “in his own way”, the model of the heresiarchs in order to resolve the enigma of his intellectual position; Trinitarian intricacies are evoked in the detached rewriting of A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, against the dogma of the Church. Hidden in the well-known formula “uncreated conscience”, we may recognize a trace of the increatus from the Arian controversy. This model will be decentered during the writing of Ulysses. Bloom appears as the modern translation of a Ulyssean hero, opposing with his wits the Iliadic, violent Citizen. Joyce is revising at last his original position about the hero’s figure and translating his own marginality into a new heroism: the real hero of Ulysses will be his skeptical reader, well versed in the ambiguities of human language.

Keywords: hero; Ulysses; Catholicism; heresy; reader.