JAMES JOYCE (1882-1941)

LIFE

- He was born in **Dublin** and studied at University College.
- In 1904 he met Nora Barnacle, who would become his **wife**.
- He moved to **Trieste** to work as a **language teacher** and became friends with intellectuals such as **Italo Svevo**.
- In 1914, when the war broke out, he moved to **Zurich** and met the poet **Ezra Pound**.
- In 1920 he moved to **Paris** and died in Zurich in 1941.

STYLE

- The **first part** of his production is marked by a **realistic approach**.
  - His **plots** are rather **linear, language** is **controlled** and **syntax** is **logical**.
    - He uses **powerful** symbols.
- The **second part** of his production is more **experimental**.
  - He uses the **stream of consciousness technique** to represent the **uncontrolled flux of thoughts of the human mind**.

THEMES

- **Ireland**, with whom Joyce has a **double relationship**.
  - He **abandons** it, but **he sets all of his main works there**.
  - It is represented as a country **dominated by stagnation and stasis**.
- **Paralysis** of the modern world
- **Lack of heroism in the modern world**
  - Use of **ancient myths** to draw parallels between the contemporary world and the ancient past

MAIN WORKS

Dubliners (1914)

- It is a **collection of short stories** about the people of Dublin.

THEMES

- The stories can be divided into **three groups**.
  - The city of **Dublin** is a **static and provincial town** that gives its inhabitants **no chance to grow and develop their own potential**.
  - Stories about **childhood**
    - Sense of **disillusionment** and **failure**
  - Stories about **adulthood**
    - **Impossibility to escape, frustration, lack of freedom**
  - Stories about **the relationship between the Irish people and their institutions**
    - **Paralysis** and **lack of life**
- **Paralysis**
  - It is both **physical** and **spiritual**.
    - **Physical impossibility to escape**
    - **Spiritual stagnation of the self**

STYLE

- The **narrative technique** is apparently **traditional**.
  - Use of **internal perspective**
  - **Rejection of the Victorian omniscent third-person narrator**
  - Mix of **realism** and **subjective perspective**
  - Use of **free direct thought** and **free speech**

Ulysses (1922)

- **No conventional plot**
  - The novel is set in **Dublin** on **one single day** (16 June 1904).
    - Joyce focuses on the actions of **three main characters: Stephen Dedalus, Leopold Bloom** and **Molly**, Bloom's wife.

STYLE

- It is an **epic novel** that uses **multiple styles**.
  - **Experimentation** with words, styles, techniques
- Use of the **stream of consciousness** technique
  - It **reflects** the **workings of the minds of the characters**.
    - **Thoughts** are represented freely, **without filters**.
    - **No logical or rational organisation of thoughts**, no traditional punctuation.
- Constant **references to Homer's *Odyssey***.
  - This gives **universality** to the events narrated.