



Joyce's Book of Memory: The Mnemotechnic of *Ulysses*

John S. Rickard

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For James Joyce, perhaps the most crucial of all human faculties was memory. It represented both the central thread of identity and a looking glass into the past. It served as an avenue into other minds, an essential part of the process of literary composition and narration, and the connective tissue of cultural tradition. In *Joyce's Book of Memory* John S. Rickard demonstrates how Joyce's body of work—*Ulysses* in particular—operates as a "mnemotechnic," a technique for preserving and remembering personal, social, and cultural pasts. Offering a detailed reading of Joyce and his methods of writing, Rickard investigates the uses of memory in *Ulysses* and analyzes its role in the formation of personal identity. The importance of forgetting and repression, and the deadliness of nostalgia and habit in Joyce's paralyzed Dublin are also revealed. Noting the power of spontaneous, involuntary recollection, Rickard locates Joyce's mnemotechnic within its historical and philosophical contexts. As he examines how Joyce responded to competing intellectual paradigms, Rickard explores *Ulysses'* connection to medieval, modern, and (what would become) postmodern worldviews, as well as its display of tensions between notions of subjective and universal memory. Finally, *Joyce's Book of Memory* illustrates how Joyce distilled subjectivity, history, and cultural identity into a text that offers a panoramic view of the modern period. This book will interest students and scholars of Joyce, as well as others engaged in the study of modern and postmodern literature.

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