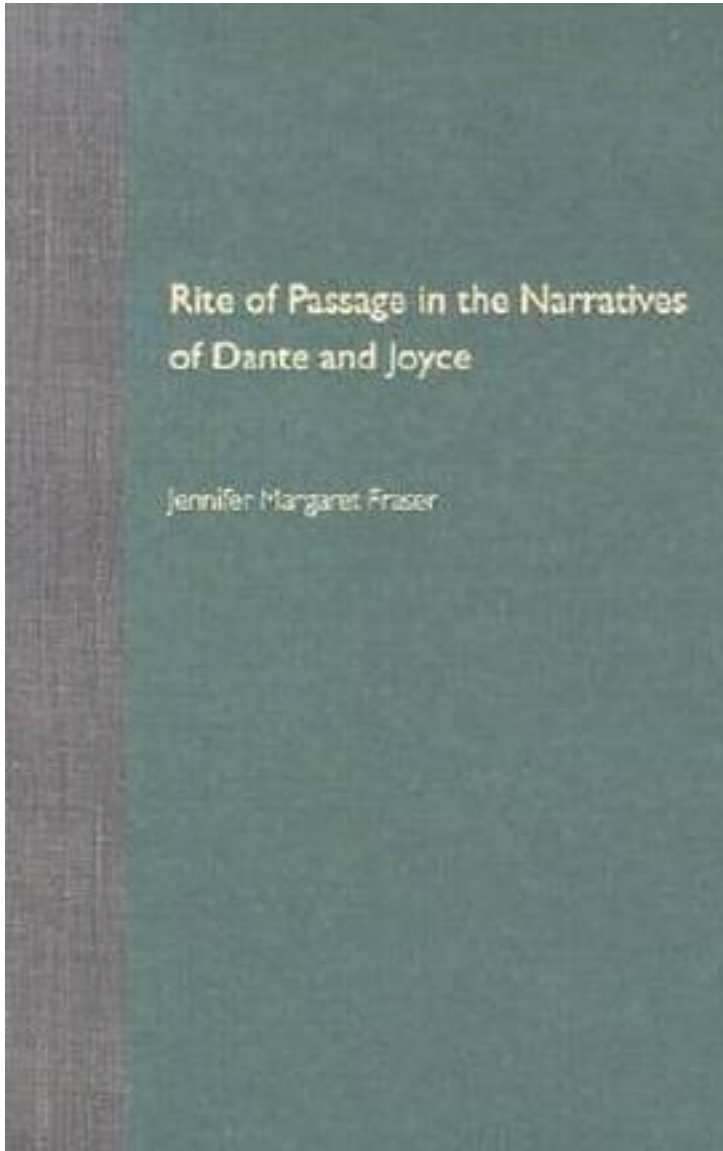


Rite of Passage in the Narratives of Dante and Joyce



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An intertextual study of Dante and Joyce, this book shows their work to be structured and restructured by an initiatory artistic experience -- in Dante's case the intertext of Virgil's Aeneid, in Joyce's that of Dante's Commedia. Jennifer Fraser presents her analysis in opposing panels of text to provide a graphic view of the intertextual impact of these writers on one another's work. Fraser offers insightful readings of Joyce's Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Ulysses, Finnegans Wake, and Dante's Commedia regarding the relationship between the two writers; the theoretical question of literary initiation, here configured as demarcating a special category of texts, contributing new perspectives for Italian studies and more particularly Dante studies; Anglo-Irish scholarship (specifically, Joyce studies); and comparative studies. Especially intriguing to Joyce scholars will be the application to Ulysses of hermeneutic principles derived from the Dantean field. Further, the book examines the intertextual relationship of the two writers from a novel perspective: rather than detail their bond as literary father and son, Fraser analyzes them according to the striking imagery in each author's works that presents the intertextual relationship as an initiatory bond between mother and son. The change that readers seek in order to transform themselves, through that act of reading, into authors is the underlying focus of the book. Fraser studies the changes Joyce undergoes during his experience of reading and writing the Commedia; the changes to Dante's poem that result from a Joycean reconfiguration of the poet's literary portrait; the changes we seek and undergo as readers when we are provoked into writing by the initiatory fiction of Dante and Joyce. She posits writing as a symbolic death, return to the womb, and rebirth that transforms the silent reader into an articulate author.

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詹姆斯·乔伊斯

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