

DUBLINERS AND THE JOYCEAN EPIPHANY

A Thesis by

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B.A., Wichita State University, 2003

Submitted to the Department of English
and the faculty of the Graduate School of
Wichita State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

May 2006

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I have examined the final copy of this Thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts with a major in Literature.

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The Roman Catholic Church was an important and prominent aspect of Irish life in the early twentieth century. Where most of Western Europe had become secularized during the nineteenth century, Ireland remained steadfast in its faith, be it Roman Catholic or Protestant. However, at the time, more than ninety percent of the Irish population was Roman Catholic with the numbers of Protestants belonging to the Church of Ireland or Presbyterian and Methodist Churches falling from eight percent in the second half of the nineteenth century to less than three percent in 1981 (Inglis 63). As a result of the growth of the Roman Catholic Church, much of Irish politics and society was infused with starkly Catholic tones—so much that individual citizens and the nation as a whole began to understand their inherent identity through their association with the Roman Catholic faith (59).

James Joyce habitually wrote within and around the conventions of the Roman Catholic Church. His use of religious doctrines in his works demonstrates not only the importance of the Catholic faith in Ireland, but also how that importance manifests itself in his characters, his view of the politics of the time, and in Joyce's own interpretations of the Church's doctrines and practices. The best known presentation of Catholic conventions in Joyce's writings is the "Ithaca" chapter of *Ulysses*, in which the entire action between Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom is presented in the question-answer format of a catechism. Dedalus—Joyce's literary self in *Ulysses*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and *Stephen Hero*, the earlier draft of *Portrait*—voices the consciousness of Joyce and his own moral dilemmas with regards to his faith. Young

Dedalus comes from an avid Roman Catholic family and, in *Portrait*, begins to question the meanings of his faith and the Church; he grows eventually into the Dedalus of *Ulysses* who puts as much of his family and their traditions as possible, including their faith, behind him and replaces it with his indulgence in the arts and worldly pleasures.

In the later pages of *Stephen Hero*, Stephen Dedalus contemplates his life as being torn between his passion as an artist and his consciousness as a Catholic:

He desired for himself the life of an artist. Well! And he feared that the Church would obstruct his desire. But, during the formulation of his artistic creed, had he not found item after item upheld for him in advance by the greatest and most orthodox doctor of the Church and was it anything but vanity which urged him to seek out the thorny crown of the heretic while the entire theory, in accordance with which his entire artistic life was shaped, arose most conveniently for his purpose out of the mass of Catholic theology? . . . Could he assert that his own aristocratic intelligence and passion for a supremely satisfying order in all the fervors of artistic creation were not purely Catholic qualities? (204-05)

This struggle continued throughout the understanding of Stephen in both *Portrait* and *Ulysses*, but it is a struggle that affected Joyce through his life, a struggle the artist finally won. At Joyce's death, a Catholic priest offered a religious service, but Nora Joyce said, "I couldn't do that to him" (Ellmann 742). But until Joyce put his religious background behind him as best he could, faith lived on with the artistic nature. These two forces dwelt so strongly within Joyce that the result was constant opposition, hardly the

symbiosis of art and religion found in the works of fellow Irishmen William Butler Yeats and C.S. Lewis.

For his writings and artistic endeavors, Joyce adopted the concept of the epiphany from Catholic doctrines but amended its meaning for artistic purposes. (Particularly for the epiphany, but also for other religious concepts used in his fiction, Joyce received some criticism for secularizing the doctrines of the church—for to use a part of God or the church outside its divine purpose does not glorify the secular, but bastardizes the religious.) In the context of the Roman Catholic Church, the epiphany refers to the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6, which commemorates the manifestation of Christ's divinity. The word literally means "apparition" (Fagnoli and Gillespie 66). The critically accepted genesis of the Joycean epiphany occurs in *Stephen Hero* within the mind of Dedalus following an artificially constructed epiphany:

A young lady was standing on the steps of one of those brown brick houses which seem the very incarnation of Irish paralysis. A young gentleman was leaning on the rusty railings of the area. Stephen as he passed on his quest heard the following fragment of colloquy out of which he received an impression keen enough to afflict his sensitiveness very severely.

The Young Lady — (drawing discreetly) . . . O, yes . . . I was . . . at the . . . cha . . . pel . . .

The Young Gentleman — (inaudibly) . . . I . . . (again inaudibly) . . . I . . .

The Young Lady— (softly) . . . O . . . but you're . . . ve . . . ry . . .
wick . . . ed . . .

This triviality made him think of collecting many such moments together in a book of epiphanies. By an epiphany he meant a sudden spiritual manifestation, whether in the vulgarity of speech or of gesture or in a memorable phase of the mind itself. He believed that it was for the man of letters to record these epiphanies with extreme care, seeing that they themselves are the most delicate and evanescent of moments. (211)

In *Epiphany in the Modern Novel*, Morris Beja limits the definition of the epiphany to a “sudden spiritual manifestation,” stating that this manifestation is “out of proportion to the significance or strictly logical relevance of whatever produces it” (18). He also emphasizes the distinction between the epiphany and the revelation, which are logical, rational realizations achieved by the characters or author, such as the discoveries at the end of *Oedipus Rex*, *Othello*, and *Tom Jones*, which lack the spirituality to be called epiphanies. Wayne Grudem provides a theological definition for doctrine and practice of the matter of a divine revelation based on the Apostle Paul’s first epistle to the church in Corinth:

Paul is simply referring to something that God may suddenly bring to mind, or something that God may impress on someone’s consciousness in such a way that the person has a sense that it is from God. It may be that the thought brought to mind is surprisingly distinct from the person’s own train of thought, or that it is accompanied by a sense of urgency or

persistence, or in some other way gives the person a rather clear sense that it is from the Lord. (413)

This distinction in the epiphany and the revelation—though both contain marks of spontaneity—is that the revelation is received directly from a divine source to a receptacle, a person, who then communicates the will of God; the epiphany is far more internalized and relies on the individual’s spiritual understandings, giving the epiphany a unique manifestation in each person. The epiphany, then, is not a matter of logical reasoning based on evidence or intuitive reception from divine speech, but internal realizations that come “dramatically from indirect suggestions” (Beja, *Epiphany* 15-16); this manifestation signals an important paradigm shift in a character’s understanding of his situation or in a reader’s understanding of the character. However, Beja’s definition does not account for what will be called the “dialogue epiphanies,” a “fragment of colloquy” (73), instances where an internal epiphany is not directly related to the reader, but where the dialogue is presented by itself in what could be considered a purer form of the epiphany. Since the epiphany is circumstantial for the individual character, it may be more appropriate for the epiphany to remain with the character, as will be seen dominantly in *Dubliners*, especially in “The Dead.” For our purposes however, how these dialogue epiphanies affect the internal thought of characters—as well as the reader—will be imbued with as much weight and importance as the manifestations of thought.

Joyce wrote seventy-one epiphanies through his life, only forty of which survive in print (Beja, “Epiphany and the Epiphanies” 709). Each of these can be traced to specific moments in the texts of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Ulysses*,

Stephen Hero and *Finnegans Wake*, with fewer references in *Exiles* and *Dubliners*.

However, the relationship between *Dubliners*, Joyce's first book, and the Joycean epiphany has been mostly overlooked. It has not been until recently that the epiphany has been studied with respect to the stories in *Dubliners*—yet the articles have not received as much attention as the study of Joyce's Dedalus novels. The critical understanding of the Joycean epiphany has developed primarily through *Ulysses*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and *Stephen Hero*. Each of these texts exemplifies the moments of revelation through thought or language which Joyce sought to preserve in order to adequately, and accurately, portray Irish life. With each text, instances are preserved from earlier writings of Joyce, called "Epiphanies," and integrated into the story lines. These instances are real moments from Joyce's understanding of Irish life and his reporting of the instances as accurately as possible to recreate Dublin and its inhabitants. Early in the pages of *Portrait*, Joyce adapts the first epiphany into a conversation between Stephen's mother and Dante:

[Bray: in the parlour of the house in
Martello Terrace]

Mr Vance—(*comes in with a stick*). . . O, you know, he'll have to
apologise, Mrs Joyce.

Mrs Joyce—O yes . . . Do you hear that, Jim?

Mr Vance—Or else—if he doesn't—the eagles'll come and pull out his
eyes.

Mrs Joyce—O, but I'm sure he will apologise.

Joyce—(*under the table, to himself*)

—Pull out his eyes,
Apologise,
Apologise,
Pull out his eyes.

Apologise,
Pull out his eyes,
Pull out his eyes,
Apologise. (Scholes and Kain 11)

Thus far, any studies in the combination of the epiphany and *Dubliners* have been gratuitous applications of an authorial convention to works by that author. Francesca Valente and Alain Blayac have both examined the epiphany within specific stories of *Dubliners*; Valente even goes far enough to pinpoint the moment of epiphany within the stories as a synesthetic fusion of senses for the characters, usually the visual with the aural. Morris Beja only touches on six of the *Dubliners* stories for his book *Epiphany in the Modern Novel*—all in one paragraph, since the book is concerned with the novel—but he cites Joyce as primarily responsible for bringing the epiphany to the forefront of the modern western novel. While well-argued, these studies have yet to broach the true reasoning for studying all of *Dubliners* and the concept of the Joycean epiphany together.

The time during which Joyce recorded his epiphanies in writing, mostly between 1900 and 1903 (Scholes and Kain 5), directly preceded the period in which he wrote the fifteen stories in *Dubliners* between 1904 and 1907 (Fargnoli and Gillespie 60). Though only one of these written epiphanies makes a slight appearance within the stories (Beja,

“Epiphany” 712-13), each story hinges on the epiphany and its meaning for the characters involved as well as the reader. While Beja’s chapter in *A Companion to Joyce Studies* provides a comprehensive chart which maps out the instances in his works which real-life epiphanies appear in the novels, there is a marked scarcity of actual epiphanies in *Dubliners*. In letters, Joyce expressed his intention to present his epiphanies as a manuscript, but they eventually were woven into the novels and not collected until long after Joyce’s death. So for the stories of *Dubliners*, Joyce had to draw from other sources to create the epiphany—primarily from synthetic sources, such as the one used in *Stephen Hero* for the cause of the epiphanic collection.

The first three stories of *Dubliners* provide moments of epiphany in childhood. Joyce uses each first-person narrative to present Dublin through the experiences of children in matters of religion, schooling and the city streets. Each epiphany in the stories proves a momentary coming-of-age for the boys as well as the readers, and each epiphany is brought on by experiences with members of another social group: the older women and the dead priest in “The Sisters,” an older perverted man in “An Encounter,” and an adolescent girl in “Araby.” Though the experiences are important to the central narrator, the epiphanies belong to the boys and never to other characters.

“The Sisters” starts the collection on a dismal tone with its opening sentence: “There was no hope for him this time” (19), referring to the dying Father Flynn. This somber setting carries throughout the story and underlies every story which follows, much the same way the opening four-note theme of Beethoven’s fifth symphony dictates the mood for the remainder of the piece. But the opening also reveals the first epiphany of many found in the book:

He had often said to me: *I am not long for this world*, and I had thought his words idle. Now I knew they were true. Every night as I gazed up at the window I said softly to myself the word *paralysis*. It had always sounded strangely in my ears, like the word *gnomon* in the Euclid and the word *simony* in the Catechism. But now it sounded to me like the name of some maleficent and sinful being. It filled me with fear, and yet I longed to be nearer to it and to look upon its deadly work. (19)

This instance, though distinctly different from Joyce's recorded epiphanies, conveys the spirit with which the epiphanies are intended. Most of the epiphanies either record bits of dialogue, such as the piece above, with all breaks and pauses in speech intact, or are external observations of the author. Epiphany number two, "A Story of Alsace," is a notable exception as an external source, a book, inspires an internal reaction in the author:

No school tomorrow: it is Saturday night in winter: I sit by the fire. Soon they will be returning with provisions, meat and vegetables, tea and bread and butter, and white pudding that makes a noise on the pan I sit reading a story of Alsace, turning over the yellow pages, watching the men and women in their strange dresses. It pleases me to read of their ways; through them I seem to touch the life of a land beyond them to enter into communion with the German people. Dearest illusion, friend of my youth! In him I have imaged myself. Our lives are still sacred in their intimate sympathies. I am with him at night when he reads the books of the philosophers or some tale of ancient times. I am with him when he

wanders alone or with one whom he has never seen, that young girl who puts around him arms that have no malice in them, offering her simple, abundant love, hearing and answering his soul he knows not how.

(Scholes and Kain 12)

In the case of the first-person child's voice of "The Sisters," whatever epiphanies occur come across as an internalized reaction by the narrator to external stimulus. Since part of the Joycean epiphany involves the use of language, it is entirely appropriate for the narrator to keep specific words in his mind and associate them with others, in a self-contained word game. But one of the words that has stuck with him, "paralysis," involves the state of the Father Flynn—who, because of this opening, becomes as much a major part of the story as the narrator even though the only interaction the reader has with the priest is with his corpse. This emphasis on the paralysis of Flynn also provides a paralysis within the story. Since the epiphany is known from the beginning along with the cause of it, this information paralyzes the story into its epiphanic stasis—the reader has as much vital information at the beginning as is available at the end.

The still unnamed narrators of "An Encounter" and "Araby" take a slightly more proactive stance in their actions. While the narrator of "The Sisters" functions only as an observer, the later two narrators take much more initiative: the narrator of "An Encounter" is the one who makes a conscious decision to embark on the Wild West adventure. Unlike the narrative structure of "The Sisters" where the mood stays in paralysis from the first paragraph, each part of "An Encounter" is introduced from the first sentence, "It was Joe Dillon who introduced the Wild West to us" (29). From that

point, every piece of information builds on the previous one to construct a story that begins in childhood wonderment and ends with a disturbing old man.

The narrator of “An Encounter” yearns for more than his routine in a Catholic school offers, and is enthralled with other boys at Joe Dillon’s magazines of the West. The magazines “opened the doors of escape” for the boys, yet left them unsatisfied because “real adventures . . . do not happen to people who remain at home: they must be sought abroad” (30-31). On a day adventure of the narrator and Mahony, the epiphany, brought on by the words of the old perverted man, alters the perception of the narrator in an instant of which he is not entirely certain. A conversation between the boys and the old man reflects briefly on epiphany 38, “Is Mabie Your Sweetheart?” which is more fully translated into the “Nausicaa” section of *Ulysses*. The old man inquires of the boys who are their sweethearts, Mahony claims to have several and the narrator claims to have none, which the old man does not believe. The start of the epiphany comes afterwards, when Mahony questions the old man:

—Tell us, said Mahony pertly to the man, how many have you yourself?

The man smiled as before and said that when he was our age he had lots of sweethearts.

—Every boy, he said, has a little sweetheart.

His attitude on this point struck me as strangely liberal in a man of his age. In my heart I thought that what he said about boys and sweethearts was reasonable. But I disliked the words in his mouth and I wondered why he shivered once or twice as if he feared something or felt a sudden chill. (36)

Yet the old man forgets this “liberalism” later when he threatens punishment for boys talking to girls or having a sweetheart by describing the best way to whip a young boy on the behind, expressing ecstatic emotion at the thought. “He would love that, he said, better than anything in this world” (38). Though disturbed by the old man, the narrator seems to conjure a second, almost uncalled-for, epiphany at Mahony: “He ran as if to bring me aid. And I was penitent; for in my heart I had always despised him a little” (38). Chester G. Anderson opens his brief book on Joyce with this exact story, but as it happened to young James Joyce and his brother Stanislaus. The two skipped school for a day, went on a ferry, and encountered this “queer old jossler” who went off into the field and “did something that frightened the boys” (5-6). While this instance and “An Encounter” greatly resemble each other, displaying Joyce’s desire to portray Dublin accurately, the thought at the end is missing. This epiphany is more for the reader than the narrator; for him, this is a natural emotion which has always been there. However, for the reader, this is an abrupt change—starkly out of proportion, which happens again at the end of the next story, “Araby”—from the descriptions of the boys’ day by taking a subtext and stating it plainly, placing it at the forefront of the reader’s attention..

Scholes and Kain note the similarity in attitude between “A Story of Alsace” and “Araby,” particularly in the motif of idealistic love, that which the narrator brandishes for Mangan’s older sister, who first furnishes him with the idea of going to Araby, a bazaar in Dublin. The epiphany at the end of “Araby” enlightens both the narrator and the reader: “Gazing up into the darkness I saw myself as a creature driven and derided by vanity; and my eyes burned with anguish and anger” (46). The narrator, after having been at the bazaar until the lights went out, expresses again emotions only subtly hinted

at in the story. It is unclear at whom his anguish and anger burns—be it himself, his uncle or the adolescent girl he is trying to impress—nevertheless, the fact that he has these emotions seems more important than their specific origins. Seeing himself as the creature in the first half of the sentence shows that brief glimpse of divine revelation as he sees himself in a metaphysical and poetic fashion.

Only shortly before, the narrator overhears a conversation by a young English woman and two men at a booth in the bazaar which imitates the arrangement of Joyce's dialogue epiphanies:

—O, I never said such a thing!

—O, but you did!

—O, but I didn't!

—Didn't she say that?

—Yes. I heard her.

—O, there's a . . . fib! (45)

This scene, although simplistic in structure, imitates the patterns of a number of speech patterns found in the epiphanies. Epiphany number nineteen, "The Hole in Georgie's Stomach," later worked into *Stephen Hero*, displays the same searching for a word and settling on a lesser word. Where this young Englishwoman certainly has more colorful words at her disposal than "fib," the choice is an odd one to be shouted. Similarly, in the numbered epiphany, Joyce's mother apparently searches for the word "bellybutton," but is forced to settle on the hole in the stomach—"The hole we all have. . . .here" (Scholes and Kain 29). In both the epiphany and *Stephen Hero*, the speaker who misses the word "bellybutton" is in a frantic, terrified state, contributing to not finding the right word.

However a word is missed or substituted in mimetic dialogue, the search and settlement on another word betray the thought consciousness of the character, employed extensively in *Ulysses*.

Where the first stories of the collection display a child's perspective of *Dubliners*, the next four stories deal with adolescence of a Dublin native and the epiphanies which accompany. We have received the first kind of epiphany involving adolescence when Mangan's sister is involved in "Araby," but the epiphany for an Irish adolescent is about to be defined, first for the adolescent woman, Eveline. Hers is the first female epiphany, and hardly deserves designation as such. The first external narrative of the book delves intimately into the thoughts of Eveline as she is to leave with her lover, Frank, for his home in Buenos Ayres. Her train of thought shifts within each paragraph, and sometimes within a paragraph, to think of Frank, her father, and the home she leaves behind. For most of the rather short story, Eveline thinks about what has led up to her leaving, and in doing so gives the reader enough background to understand her apprehension about leaving Ireland. The epiphany, or the closest thing to it, comes when Frank is taking her aboard the boat: "All the seas of the world tumbled about her heart. He was drawing her into them; he would drown her" (51). Up until this point in Eveline's short life, she has lived within a relatively small area of Ireland and had become accustomed to her way of life. For Frank to take her away from that would, metaphorically, have the same effect as drowning her; the sea and the outside world carried the same associations of the unknown and posed a threat to her comfort.

Robert M. Adams, however, points out a matter often overlooked which could be considered an epiphany of dialogue:

The dying words of Eveline's mother, "Derevaun Seraun," look very much as if they ought to have a symbolic meaning, but they don't, or at least it has so far proved undiscoverable. They make no sense in any known language or dialect, and are in no sense useful to the story in any corruption of any language known to man. They are a perfect dead end.

(69)

Where many epiphanies deal with small bits of thought and dialogue which award meaning to life, some are utterly meaningless, such as this instance. In this case, the reader likely will make some religious association to the words or consider them an inside understanding between mother and daughter. This false association gives the reader a chance to obtain his own epiphany based on a perceived Divine meaning of gibberish, establishing an ironic epiphany, but an epiphany nonetheless as it is derived out of proportion of that which sparked it.

Although Joyce considered "After the Race" one of the two worst stories of his collection (Stanislaus Joyce 199), it shows remarkable foreshadowing into themes and techniques in later works. Adams makes extensive note of the *Wake*-like meanings of the protagonist's name, Jimmy Doyle, associating it on many levels with the author—first name the same, last name has all the vowels in place—and with Christ—the meaning of "Christ" is "anointed one," or "oiled," which rhymes with Doyle (65-66). Alain Blayac makes similar associations with names of other characters, particularly Routh, the Englishman, whose name carries meanings of abundance and plenty (119), a stark contrast to the condition of the Irish. Joyce would continue to contrast the English to the Irish as he employs Haines in the opening of *Ulysses* to provide for Stephen Dedalus—

the pen name under which “After the Race” was initially published—a sense of Irish identity. That sense of Irish identity associates Jimmy Doyle with most of Joyce’s protagonists and provides a moment of epiphany remarkably hidden in the text.

Unlike many of the characters thus far in the collection, Jimmy Doyle is not hard up for money or attention. At school, he was very well-off and popular with the others and was constantly around for all-night parties like the one which happens “after the race”; but he is only around. His restrained and passive nature is in stark contrast to the others of the party, most of whom are from Europe or the Americas. By sitting back and allowing the continentals to have complete control over the direction the party takes, Doyle sacrifices a part of his Irish identity in his homeland; his only penance comes when he takes action and makes a toast to Ireland, which goes on for a while and which he apparently does not remember (58). The epiphany comes over Jimmy as the cause for him to be less passive in his evening: “Jimmy, under generous influences, felt the buried zeal of his father wake to life within him” (56). This one instance dictates the actions of Jimmy for the rest of the evening, even though, as he started out, he is only along for the ride.

Though “Two Gallants” has hardly been met with the same outpouring of critical response that “Araby” and “The Dead” have, Joyce defended the story and others when publishers wanted him to remove them from the book or change them for decency’s sake:

It is one of the most important stories in the book. I would rather sacrifice five of the other stories (which I could name) than this one. It is the story (after ‘Ivy Day in the Committee-Room’) which pleases me

most. I have shown you that I can concede something to your fears. But you cannot really expect me to mutilate my work!

The points on which I have not yielded are the points which rivet the book together. If I eliminate them what becomes of the chapter of moral history of my country? I fight to retain them because I believe that in composing my chapter of moral history in exactly the way I have composed it I have taken the first step towards the spiritual liberation of my country. (*Letters* 88)

Joyce later wrote to Stanislaus that “Two Gallants”—“with the Sunday crowds and the harp in Kildare street and Lenehan—is an Irish landscape” (110). By the time Joyce wrote “Two Gallants”—it was thirteenth in order of composition (Farglioni and Gillespie 219)—he had incorporated a number of synthetically produced epiphanies into his works and had a ready grasp of its usage. As a result, “Two Gallants” is almost overridden with re-creations of the dialogue epiphanies, these presented between two young men, Lenehan and Corley (both of whom make appearances in *Ulysses*) as they travel the streets of Dublin in search of women. The story, along with “Ivy Day in the Committee Room” and “Grace,” boasts perhaps the most externalized narrative structure in the collection, including the descriptions of the characters. Brief moments of introspection occur on the part of Lenehan, but they come rarely and only when he is alone. Joyce’s penchant for mimetic dialogue—complete with all its pauses and stutters—shows through in this story far more than any other story in *Dubliners*.

The epiphany of “The Boarding House” is entirely the reader’s, as none of the characters have any kind of sudden revelation, either in thought or in dialogue.

Throughout the story, the characters remain very much the same with no real desire to reach some point of realization. The story focuses on the efforts of a Dublin landlady to get one of her male lodgers to marry her daughter; the two have already slept together. In this last story of adolescence in *Dubliners*, Joyce focuses on the problems two adolescents bring the parent, and the parent's efforts to rectify the situation. Through the entirety of the story, none of the characters come by any kind of epiphany; the manifestation is left to the reader. In much the same way as "The Sisters" started, the first sentence of "The Boarding House" provides the reader a great deal of information which will set the mood for the remainder of the story: "Mrs Mooney was a butcher's daughter" (71). From this plain statement, the reader has a sense of the backdrop of the story, which is Dublin's working class. Fagnoli and Gillespie say of the story that "one cannot understand 'The Boarding House' without remaining clearly attentive to the influence of social strictures and expectations upon the characters" (21). The epiphany comes in the understanding of the story as a microcosm of the larger scale social conventions of Ireland—class and monetary struggles, political interests, and matters of mature faith and morality—and prepares the reader for the rest of the collection. While the stories thus far have dealt with Irish social matters, the second half of the book deals with them more realistically. This is the last story in the section of adolescence—children and adolescents do not deal with the harshness of social structures as adults. The next two sections, the four stories of maturity and the three of public life, focus on the groups of Dublin affected far more than children by the turn-of-the-century Irish status quo.

Thomas Chandler, known to his friends and to the narrator of “A Little Cloud” as Little Chandler, fits into this format of the Irish status quo—a passive player in the domestic role he came into after his schooling. The first section of the story imparts the account of Little Chandler’s reunion with Ignatius Gallaher, an old acquaintance to whom the narrator refers by both first and last names at all times. In contrast to Little Chandler’s remaining in Dublin and pursuing the family life, Ignatius Gallaher has become an established journalist in London and lives the life of a bawdy bachelor with no intentions of settling down. Ignatius Gallaher’s mention of London and other European cities he has visited brings an aura of awe to his stories and envy on the part of Little Chandler. In fact the entire meeting is principally taken up with Ignatius Gallaher’s tales of Europe, which apparently does not bother Little Chandler since it is Ignatius Gallaher who asks about Chandler’s wife and family. The dialogue, bookended at the beginning and the end of the section with poignant free indirect discourse, reveals the thoughts of Little Chandler who wonders if he is melancholy enough, as he weighs his soul, to be a poet.

This section with Ignatius Gallaher is largely dialogue, interrupted frequently by awkward pauses between the two, and much of it takes cues from the patterns of Joyce’s dialogue epiphanies. The reality of the pauses in dialogue is used most effectively in this story in order not only to convey typical speech patterns, but also to accentuate the awkwardness in conversation of two old friends who have now become very different people. The epiphanic reality of the exchange imbues the sporadic tendencies of uncomfortable conversation with meaning. But not to be overshadowed by the synthesis of the dialogue epiphanies in the first section, Joyce uses an intimate evening in Little

Chandler's home to produce an epiphany for him as well as the reader. Little Chandler sits at home that same evening holding his sleeping son in his arms and scrutinizing a photograph of Annie, his wife. Left alone in pensive melancholy, he considers his conversation with Ignatius Gallaher and awards it an application to his choices in life:

He looked coldly into the eyes of the photograph and they answered coldly. Certainly they were pretty and the face itself was pretty. But he found something mean in it. Why was it so unconscious and lady-like? The composure of the eyes irritated him. They repelled him and defied him: there was no passion in them, no rapture. He thought of what Gallaher had said about rich Jewesses. Those dark Oriental eyes, he thought, how full they are of passion, of voluptuous longing! . . . Why had he married the eyes in the photograph? (94)

At the end of the scene, after the baby awakens screaming, we see Little Chandler's unfit nature for his domestic role. He is displaced from his family as his wife calms the infant: "My little man! My little mannie!" (96). In this final scene, Joyce shows the confinement of Little Chandler in an emasculating domestic situation, bringing closure for the reader to the sense of his domestic ineptitude. While it is closure for the reader, it is a bitter epiphanic revelation for Little Chandler as the story closes with his silent tears replacing the dwindling cries of his son. As the last of the first fourteen stories to be written, Joyce incorporates a great deal of thematic elements from the rest of the collection here, such as the Irish social structure, melancholy, and multiple epiphanies which work on different levels at the same time. The shift in time for the two main characters from adolescence to maturity transitions the collection easily, with the aid of

“The Boarding House,” into the later years of Dublin life and brings the focus on not school and family, as the first three stories did, but on the combination of work with family from a parental perspective.

The coexistence of the domestic life and the workplace comes into bloom in the next story, “Counterparts.” Farrington, the scrivener, is central to the story and, like Little Chandler, he receives epiphany, though it is much more subdued and is secondary to the epiphany provided the reader. The epiphany of Farrington comes at the end of the story while he waits for a tram for home after a night drinking in the form of a summing up of all the night’s activities which ended badly, namely losing an arm wrestling match to an Englishman and not feeling drunk for all the money he spent. Waiting at the Bridge, “He was full of smouldering anger and revengefulness” (108); this had started at work and only built as the night progressed. Other than these realizations of his mood and that “He loathed returning home” (108), Farrington’s epiphany goes unnoticed by him or the reader and Farrington continues home to the final scene. Situationally, the last scene mirrors the environment Farrington left at work. At the beginning of the story, Farrington is berated by his employer, somewhat justifiably, for failing to finish his tasks on time. Farrington left this environment five times to have a glass of beer during the day which caused his excessive drinking that night. Upon returning home, the final epiphany for the reader is realized: the point when Farrington beats his son for letting the hearth fire die. Farrington becomes a counterpart with Mr Alleyne as the perpetrator of the abuse, and is counterpart with his son as the recipient. By this implication, Joyce infers that as Farrington started as the abused and became the abuser, the cycle is destined to continue with Farrington’s son as the abuser to whomever he eventually has authority

over. This epiphany is unlike Joyce's other epiphanies in that it is inferred; Farrington does not see the vicious cycle in which he is taking part, and there is nobody to speak such a thing. This new kind of epiphany requires the reader to make connections based on patterns already established in the text.

In stark contrast to the violence portrayed at the end of "Counterparts," "Clay" is surprisingly ambiguous and docile, focusing on the mundane life of Maria, a scullery maid in the Dublin by Lamplight laundry. This story paints a portrait of the life of a career servant: she dwells on the small details of her occupation and exists in quiet submission to her employers. Maria seems to travel through the story without any proactive attitude, except for when speaking to Joe, the host. When bringing up Joe's brother, from whom he has been estranged for a number of years, Maria quickly apologizes for mentioning the matter. In Maria, it is difficult to see any kind of epiphany which moves her, like other female characters in *Dubliners*, to make a choice concerning her own life. The only action which could be considered epiphanic is her "mistake" at the end when she sings "I Dreamt that I Dwelt," a popular Irish piece from Michael William Balfe's 1843 opera *The Bohemian Girl*. The first verse of the song is appropriately autobiographical for Maria:

I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls

With vassals and serfs at my side

And of all who assembled within those walls

That I was the hope and pride.

I had riches too great to count, could boast

*Of a high ancestral name,
But I also dreamt, which pleased me most,
That you love me still the same. (117)*

This is the kind of life of which Maria could only dream. As a career servant, she could never possess any of the stately ideals dreamt in the song. However, in singing the song, she forgets the second verse and sings the first verse twice; “But no one tried to show her her mistake” (117). In his afterword of a 1993 edition of *Dubliners*, John S. Kelly questions whether or not the mistake truly was a mistake. He brings the content of the second verse into question and refers to it as “a dream of fulfilled and reciprocal love” (264). Florence Walzl points out that the second verse’s dealings with marriage “remind[s] us of the sterility of her life” (108). It also makes references to chivalric love and may conjure up the image of the “colonel-looking gentleman” on the tram earlier in the evening (114). If the omission of the second verse is indeed an epiphany, then Joyce is asking much more of his reader than he has in other stories: a familiarity of Irish folk songs which may not have been such an ordeal for Joyce’s intended audience of 1914 Dublin, the year in which the book was first published. This kind of expectation from the reader partners well with the previous story as the reader must understand the patterns of human behavior. Those same patterns must also be applied here in conjunction with the song, thereby giving the epiphany, which is primarily for the reader’s understanding of Maria, a psychological depth not otherwise seen in her.

The final story of maturity, “A Painful Case,” places the epiphany back into the realization of the character’s way of life, such as was the case for “A Little Cloud.” This time, however, no familial attachments exist for the protagonist, Mr Duffy, and a family

is replaced with a friendship, something that can be abandoned more quickly than the ties of a family. After pursuing an intellectual friendship with Mrs Emily Sinico, Duffy breaks it off abruptly when she makes a physical advance. Following this episode, Duffy returns to his previous way of life which led him down the same streets and into the same restaurants that have become his habit. Duffy's life before and after his relationship with Mrs Sinico is nearly identical, save for the death of his father and different books prominent on his bookshelf (123). To the reader, Duffy's decision to break off the relationship may seem justifiable; he protected both his own emotions and protected her marital fidelity. Duffy came to the conclusion that "Love between man and man is impossible because there must not be sexual intercourse and friendship between man and woman is impossible because there must be sexual intercourse" (123). This epiphany for Duffy, while it provides him closure in the matter, is unsatisfying for the reader as it lacks decisive finality. It does not force Duffy to reexamine his way of life; rather, it justifies his commitment to it. The final epiphany occurs after Duffy reads that Mrs Sinico has been "knocked down by the engine of the ten o'clock slow train from Kingstown, thereby sustaining injuries of the head and right side which led to her death" (125). After telling of her recent indulgences in alcohol, the article ends with the statement that no blame was attached to anyone (126). The impact the incident has on Duffy is not one of remorse over his former friend, but of disgust that he had once associated with her:

What an end! The whole narrative of her death revolted him and it revolted him to think that he had ever spoken to her of what he held sacred. . . . Just God, what an end! Evidently she had been unfit to live, without any strength of purpose, an easy prey to habits, one of the wrecks

on which civilization has been reared. But that she could have sunk so low! . . . He had no difficulty now in approving of the course he had taken. (126-27)

Though he uses her death as further justification for his breaking off the relationship, it does force him eventually to reevaluate his life of solitude. The end of the story ironically depicts the first time in his adult life that he has felt loneliness (129). Such a realization of self-imposed isolation is far more satisfying to the reader as an epiphany. While no decision is made, the character comes to the realization—through the death of his former friend—of his situation that the reader has known all along.

The first of the next three stories, which make up the stories of public life, changes the concept of the personal epiphany to the epiphany of the group. “Ivy Day in the Committee Room” centers on a group of professional campaign workers working for candidate “Tricky Dickie” Tierney. Rather than use the time in the story to work on the campaign or establish political platform, they, like good Irishmen, sit and drink and wax nostalgic of the glory days of Irish nationalist Charles Stewart Parnell and his Home Rule Movement. As is the custom on Ivy Day—October sixth, the anniversary of Parnell’s death—all the men wear the appropriate ivy leaves as a reminder of Parnell’s fight for Irish independence and the spirit he embodied. The men are brought together at the beginning of the story and are dressed appropriately for the anniversary of Parnell’s death, so they have not forgotten. Yet, in a sense, they have. Up until that point, the men spoke casually of the politics in which they were engaged. They never seem to solve anything related to the campaign—except for how to uncork a bottle of stout without a corkscrew—and only seem vaguely interested in the campaign. Only Henchy keeps his

head on the immediate political endeavors by calling up the votes gained during the day and the best way to go about raising revenue during the English King's visit to Ireland, only to be interrupted by the unrealistic notions of Parnell's Ireland:

—Listen to me, said Mr. Henchy. What we want in this country . . . is capital. The King's coming here will mean an influx of money into this country. The citizens of Dublin will benefit by it. Look at all the factories down by the quays there, idle! Look at all the money there is in the country if we only worked the old industries, the mills, the shipbuilding yards and factories. It's capital we want.

—But look here, John, said Mr O'Connor. Why should we welcome the King of England? Didn't Parnell himself . . .

—Parnell, said Mr Henchy, is dead. (143-44)

Henchy's interruption takes the story from the nostalgic to the realistic and creates a similar effect as Yeats' refrain to "September 1913": "Romantic Ireland's dead and gone, / It's with O'Leary in the grave" (7-8). Joyce institutes the epiphany in this case as a minor unsettling for his characters, but primarily for the reader; however, it is not simply any reader who is on the receiving end this time. Joyce uses this instance to draw a distinction between current Irish politics (the story is set in either 1902 or 1903), and the height of Parnell's influence and leadership in the Irish Parliamentary Party. This distinction creates a political statement which means little to a reader more than a century later, but Henchy's declaration would invoke an epiphany in Joyce's contemporary Irish readers.

Attempting to decipher Joyce's epiphanic intentions in "A Mother" and "Grace" proves a much more difficult task than the other stories, mainly because of the construction of the two stories, a construction which greatly deviates from the previous forms of internalized thought from one or more characters and a change in thematic elements. Hugh Kenner points out the conspicuous absence of the prevalent theme of death in "A Mother" and "Grace," where it had been prevalent in previous stories and comments on the ability of the stories to live up to the rest of the collection: "We are in touch here with the carapace alone, public life in the boot-heel world" (50). But dealing only with the carapace in "A Mother" does not provide the reader a glimpse of his own epiphanic capability. "Grace," when set against other stories such as "Araby" and "Counterparts," does not directly divulge to the reader any new level of epiphany, but shows a group of Dubliners playing against Irish stereotype (perhaps ironically): they set out to reform a friend's drinking habits. This misconception of the stories is an easy one; they appear to be hidden as nothing more than page fillers between "Ivy Day in the Committee Room" and "The Dead," but while the stories avoid the prominent theme of death, "Grace" presents an active understanding of the middle-class and the responsibility of the church toward the common man.

"A Mother" is as externalized as any of the stories which deal primarily in dialogue—"Two Gallants," "Ivy Day in the Committee Room" and "Grace"—but lacks extensive use of dialogue and focuses on action. The narrative structure of the story is that of an outside observer with occasional free indirect discourse into participants, such as the statement of a reaction to a comment of Kathleen's: "Miss Healy had to smile" (156). For this kind of structure, an internalized epiphany of a single character is very

unlikely to happen. Fagnoli and Gillespie cite a letter of Joyce's which describes the story as a re-telling of an experience of his first public concert in which the pianist left in the middle (153)—but this shows insight more to the genesis of the story than to any synthesis of epiphany from the experience. In a group of men taking their wayward friend, Mr Kernan, to a church for hopes of reform, Joyce delves into the theme of the Irish church—which occurs in some manner in most Irish literature—and presents it as both a religious and commercial institution. As for “Grace,” Fagnoli and Gillespie note the “sharp commentary on the relationship between commerce and religion” by way of Father Purdon encouraging his congregation to set their accounts right in order to strengthen their spiritual lives (95), which may be Joyce commenting on the associations of the church and monetary gain. Robert M. Adams uses the story to extract a presentation of the social conditions:

“Grace” raises us from underwater haunts of semiderelicts and drifters into the serried ranks of Dublin’s middle-middle-classes. Elsewhere in *Dubliners*, it is exceptional for characters to have steady jobs, visible family, or tangible habitations; in “Grace,” everyone is carefully defined as to employment, prospects, and domestic status. (80)

In these instances, Joyce's expectations of the reader go beyond intellectual matters, such as familiarity with Irish customs and folk songs, and into the category of the reader's ability for epiphany; the set-up of seemingly meaningless stories best exemplifies Morris Beja's view of the nature of the literary epiphany when it is applied to the reader. If the epiphany is to come “dramatically from indirect suggestion” (*Epiphany* 16), then Joyce imparts through these two stories perhaps the most indirect suggestions in the book. By

departing from the obvious uses of forming an epiphany, Joyce allows the stories simply to reside in the reader's catalog of "Things Read" to be applied at a later time. Joyce does not force the epiphany on his characters or his reader, but allows the story to perhaps become the indirect suggestion an individual may need for the conception of an epiphany, leading to the only non-synthetic epiphany derived in all of *Dubliners*.

Many critics and historians have postulated multiple reasons for Joyce's writing of "The Dead." Written in Trieste more than a year after the completion of the fourteen other stories in *Dubliners*, "The Dead" serves as a culmination of all thematic elements which have come before in the book. The "sparse, almost meagre masterpieces describing failure, frustration and a kind of moral paralysis" (Riggs and Vance 259) with the prominent theme of death which has been prominent from "The Sisters" come wrapped up with the Irish nationalism of "Ivy Day in the Committee Room"—as Joyce often wrestled with the concept of "authentic 'Irishness'" (Nolan 165)—and Irish art and music of "Clay":

[Joyce] celebrated traditions of Irish hospitality which appealed to him as generous and happy qualities, and which he often exemplified. He dealt also with deep ambivalences in his own nature—including love of his country and hatred for it, love of his art and loathing of it, worship of his wife and inferiority before her. (Adams 83)

But these recurrent elements from the previous stories also bring forth new developments, a "mitigation of the punishment of the enclosed and paralyzed" (Ghiselin 80). For the first time, "The Dead" deliberately places contrary binaries in direct opposition to each other, clear until the story's last phrase—"all the living and the dead"

(242). This opposition also serves as a complement to the two, which is how the epiphany draws its strongest meaning in this story, through direct opposition.

The principal action of “The Dead” occurs at an annual Christmas party thrown by sisters Kate and Julia Moran. It is on their nephew Gabriel Conroy, a teacher and book reviewer who is called on to give a toast at the party every year, which the action of the story centers. Gabriel is constantly set apart from the other men at the party as most of his interaction is with the women present, but he fails to make a social or spiritual connection to any woman, from his initial encounter with Lily, the caretaker’s daughter, to Miss Molly Ivors, to his wife, Gretta. His role at the party—much like every other person present—is primarily one of tradition and semiotic importance, a role which he politely adheres to with false manners (Adams 83-84). Mary Jane, niece to the hostesses, has come into the host role herself, as well as her traditional role providing high musical entertainment with Bartell D’Arcy, an accomplished singer who has caught a cold and only sings at this year’s party at the close when nobody else is in the room. While these roles require artistic presentation, Gabriel’s role of toastmaster places him outside his professional zone and outside the functions of the other party guests. Gabriel spends much time worrying about his toast, mostly going back and forth between a Shakespeare and a Browning quote—not for artistic purposes, but concerned whether the Browning will go over the other guests’ collective heads.

During the party, while dancing with Miss Molly Ivors, a staunch Irish nationalist, Gabriel’s nationalism is teasingly called into question. Before the exchange, Gabriel had been cited as an expert on the fashion of goloshes in continental Europe; he mentions to Miss Ivors his annual bicycle tour on the mainland, “partly to keep in touch with the

languages and partly for a change” (205), to which she suggests a tour through his homeland—namely Galway, a county on the coast of Ireland directly west of Dublin—to keep in touch with Irish, his own language, in a challenge to his “Irishness”; he retorts with the argument of practicality that Irish is not his language. She also criticizes him for writing book reviews for *The Daily Express*, a very pro-British newspaper and calls him a “West Briton,” one of the meaner political insults available to turn-of-the-century Irish nationalists. By her half-joking insult, Gabriel is again set apart from the rest of the party in whatever political associations he might have, even though they are never called into question again, but he rouses the nationalism in the other guests with his speech at dinner. He speaks to the importance and magnitude of Irish hospitality, of which he and all the other guests are willing “victims” (220). He also refuses to linger on the sorrowful past and the dead as the other guests have done all evening—music is prominently discussed as how it had once been and, as Hugh Kenner points out, the most living influence in the story is the memory, enclosed in music, of a dead peasant boy” (51)—thereby creating for himself a further separation from the populace. The chasm Gabriel creates between himself and the other guests grows wider until it reaches its furthest expanse with his wife at their hotel room. Gabriel’s senses are tuned to the moment, while Gretta’s thoughts wander to a boy from her youth who had died very young. It is through this last emergence of a ghost that Gabriel’s epiphany and its opposite, the “apiphany,” is manifested.

The opposite of an epiphanic experience cannot be a form of anti-epiphany or antipiphany; that usage of the prefix implies a personal experience moving away from any kind of divine expression, which is a form of epiphany itself if we adhere to the

Bejan definition that a “sudden spiritual manifestation” has occurred. By that matter, all Joycean epiphanies could be considered anti-epiphanies since their focus is on the corporeal and secular instead of the divine. An ironic epiphany, as seen in “Eveline,” is also still an epiphany. However, the apiphany connotes a complete absence of manifestation or revelation in the part of the character or reader. A manifestation moving away from the typical perceived direction of epiphany—towards enlightenment—is still a manner of epiphany; the only opposite of this movement is stasis. The sentence “The time had come for him to set out on his journey westward” (242) has been picked out by critics for a variety of reasons as Gabriel Conroy’s moment of epiphany—a seemingly obscure fragment of conscious thought unearned by the paragraph around it which describes the snow in the streets and all over Ireland. Richard Ellmann writes that the sentence

is somewhat resigned. It suggests a concession, a relinquishment, and Gabriel is conceding and relinquishing a good deal—his sense of the importance of civilized thinking, of continental tastes, of all those tepid but nice distinctions on which he has prided himself. The bubble of his self-possession is pricked; he no longer possesses himself, and not to possess oneself is in a way a kind of death. (249).

While Gabriel is not dying, the indication that something abstract within him is dying is strong. Jack Foran considers the “constellation of related meanings” this statement includes, such as the west of Ireland (County Galway), an internal death, and the direction Joyce will pursue with his own writing—“an alternative reading of the strange

sentence in plainer, less poetic language would be: ‘I, James Joyce, am now going to write a book called *Ulysses*’” (1151).

This single epiphany reached at the end of the lengthy story is bound to bring up multiple meanings, particularly with its hinting at an internal death after the story’s predominant theme of physical death. This epiphany is not only a result of his final conversation with Gretta concerning Michael Furey, but also a culmination of every mention of death and Irish nationalism in the preceding pages. Gabriel’s new understanding of the Irish attitudes toward death and country at the party may be considered minor epiphanies leading up to the final one, but function as revelations as he is provided the necessary information to come to certain logical conclusions. That Gabriel experiences the epiphany here and nobody else at the party does signifies the unmatched privacy of the epiphany—the privacy of how one’s mind gains sudden spiritual understanding seemingly from thin air. This final epiphany is less derived from the “vulgarity of language” as others and is, in fact, in danger of not being an epiphany because it is closely related to the various factors which produced it—from his conversation with Molly Ivors to his wife’s memory of Michael Furey—but only steps out of range with the multiple meanings in the single epiphanic sentence.

At this point in Joyce’s writings, he did not rely specifically on his recorded epiphanies, perhaps because he intended to publish them separately. Later, the epiphany would play only a minor role in the overall construction. *Stephen Hero, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses* contain a reworking in one way or another of thirty of the forty written epiphanies, with some used in more than one work; even *Finnegans Wake* contains the epiphany “She Comes at Night” and strong resemblances to two others

(Beja, “Epiphany” 712-13). Stephen Dedalus has in *Stephen Hero* a version of “Two Mourners,” which Bloom also expresses at Paddy Dignam’s funeral in *Ulysses*. While these works do not hinge upon the literary use of the epiphany to draw their critical meaning, the epiphany is important to the works in that they depict the internal thoughts of characters and the “fragment[s] of colloquy” which happen in everyday life—and the epiphany can only be brought out from everyday life. The Dedalus of *Stephen Hero* had the epiphany to collect epiphanies in a volume because of the “triviality” of the scene he had witnessed in the street (211), which laid the groundwork for the further manifestations of the Joycean epiphany. Out of these trivial instances, a personal meaning for the character and reader is formed: a specific spiritual meaning that could only be reached by the singular character or reader.

The first significant mention of epiphanies in Morris Beja’s biography of Joyce only imparts the basic background information: the passage in *Stephen Hero*, Joyce’s recorded epiphanies, and their incorporation into the novels. Richard Ellmann spent time explaining the epiphanies and their symbolism in Joyce’s writing, and peppered his biography of Joyce with instances in which the epiphanies came into play. His exposition of the epiphany transcends into the deeply personal and commonplace:

The artist, [Joyce] felt, . . . must look for them not among gods but among men, in casual, unostentatious, even unpleasant moments. . . . Sometimes the epiphanies are ‘eucharistic,’ another term . . . borrowed by Joyce from Christianity and invested with secular meaning. These are moments of fullness or passion. Sometimes the epiphanies are rewarding for another reason, that they convey precisely the flavor of unpalatable experiences.

The unpalatable nature of Joyce's epiphanies contrasts directly with those of his contemporary Virginia Woolf who tried to construct the same stream of consciousness as Joyce, but through the use of more genteel language. The frankness of the Joycean epiphany posits its origins in the commonplace and vulgar mimesis Joyce infused in all his works.

Joyce's written epiphanies never were a large part of the body of his works, nor were they an overpowering theme in his traditional canon, but their presence is vital to the understanding of the spiritual development of Joyce and his works. That only forty of seventy-one epiphanies survive is still a mystery. Perhaps the ones that survive were rescued from the fire which destroyed much of Stephen Hero; perhaps Joyce, wanting to keep his works separate of each other, destroyed epiphanies after he used them in the stories of *Dubliners*, thereby negating the synthesis produced throughout the book; or, he may at the time of writing the epiphanies simply kept sloppy records. By whatever means only forty survived, the pattern synthesized in *Dubliners* shows Joyce at a high point in his writing of understanding how an extraordinary divine experience comes from the vulgarity of the ordinary.

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