

**“My soul shall spurn them evermore”:  
Revivalist Nationalism and the Dialectics of Joyce’s Ideological Development**

by

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## Abstract

In this thesis I will argue that James Joyce's early ideological development and artistic trajectory were in large part guided by his fiercely agonistic relationship and dialectical engagement with the Irish cultural nationalist movement known as the Revival. Expanding upon Marjorie Howes' claim that Stephen Dedalus, in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, "inhabits the intellectual structures of the Revival even as he rejects that movement" (265), I will explore the ways in which Joyce's own agon and engagement with the Revival often led him towards a kind of double movement of "inhabiting" certain general Revivalist "intellectual structures" while heavily revising or outright repudiating their particular Revivalist contents. More specifically, I will show how Joyce followed the Revivalist example of viewing Ireland as suffering from a kind of cultural malaise after the fall of Parnell; of seeking to forge a new national identity for the modern Irish; and of creatively engaging with and trying to reclaim and repurpose Irish cultural history. I will also show how Joyce "inhabited" these general interpretive forms in ways that were often explicitly anti-Revivalist. Moreover, I will contribute to the broader critical conversation regarding Joyce's supposed nationalist and/or cosmopolitan allegiances, arguing that although the teenage Joyce may have espoused a kind of cosmopolitan aestheticism—an ideology ostensibly antithetical to Revivalist nationalism, and, thus, one that the young Joyce likely adopted, at least in part, as an act anti-Revivalist defiance—by the time Joyce wrote "The Dead," he had begun to recognize the deficiencies of his youthful ideology, to recognize the merits of Revivalism, to synthesize these ideologies within himself, and to acknowledge the formative influence the Revival had had on his development as an artist, intellectual, and cosmopolitan Irishman.

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## Introduction: Joyce and National Affiliation

The critical conversation surrounding James Joyce's relationship with Irish nationalism and its ostensible ideological antithesis, cosmopolitanism, stretches all the way back to the beginning of Joyce criticism. Early critics like Ezra Pound saw Joyce as a thoroughly cosmopolitan thinker and writer—as an artist whose literary experimentations and innovations manifested a properly modern sensibility that transcended the “local stupidity” (32) of purely national affiliations and concerns while affirming the broader modern world, as well as extra-national, cosmopolitan forms of identification and belonging. This view of Joyce as essentially a cosmopolitan aesthete stood as the nearly uncontested orthodoxy in Joyce studies for over half a century, finding proponents in figures as diverse as Hugh Kenner, Terry Eagleton, and Richard Kearney, to name only a select few.

The postcolonial turn in Joyce studies, which arguably began in the eighties, but did not really come into its own until the mid-nineties (Emer Nolan's *James Joyce and Nationalism* was published in 1995), challenged this longstanding critical orthodoxy, arguing that Joyce should be viewed as an Irish colonial intellectual more than as a cosmopolitan aesthete, and that Joyce's relationship with Irish nationalism had been, at the very least, much more complicated and ambivalent than previous scholarship had been willing to acknowledge. This turn proved incredibly fruitful for Joyce studies as a whole, as it encouraged scholars of all ideological bents to view old certainties about Joyce with critical eyes, even if only to defend such old certainties against the new, postcolonially inflected arguments. Nolan's compelling and unorthodox interpretation of

the Citizen in *Ulysses* serves as a striking illustration of just how radically longstanding critical orthodoxies about Joyce could be re-evaluated in the light of the new postcolonial paradigm: after *James Joyce and Nationalism*, scholars could no longer easily dismiss the Citizen as an intellectual lightweight with no redeeming qualities, as Nolan had convincingly shown that this aggressive and xenophobic ultra-nationalist articulates in his drunken rant many of the same views that Joyce himself espouses in his critical writings about Irish cultural history (85-96).

Some scholars took this postcolonial turn as an opportunity to finally enlist Joyce among the ranks of anti-colonial Irish nationalists (e.g. Andrew Gibson in *Joyce's Revenge: History, Politics, and Aesthetics in "Ulysses"*). Others sought to place Joyce, yet again, in the camp of cosmopolitans (e.g. Aleksander Stević in "Stephen Dedalus and Nationalism without Nationalism"), though only after having first engaged with the scholarly opposition to this timeworn position. Still other scholars influenced by this turn took more moderate approaches, and set to discerning the ways in which Joyce tried to mediate between the competing calls of the national and the international. Nels Pearson argues that Irish expatriate modernists like Joyce challenged the "presumed oppositions between national location and global dislocation, historical rootedness and temporal displacement, the familiar terrain of tradition and the strange new world of the modern" (4). Michael Spiegel follows a similar interpretive line, but proposes that Joyce not only sought to challenge such oppositions, but also ultimately "challenge[d] the assumption that the local and the global can be reconciled" (107). Perhaps most significantly for this thesis, scholars like Marjorie Howes and Gregory Castle harnessed the energy of this turn to examine the subtle nature of Joyce's complex relationship with, and critique of, the

specific form of Irish nationalism most popular in the Ireland in which Joyce lived: the Irish cultural nationalist movement known as the Revival.

Both Howes and Castle see beyond Joyce's more explicit, and, occasionally, superficial repudiations of Revivalist nationalism in order to draw out the ways in which Joyce's mature ideology was in fact deeply informed by, and inextricable from, his engagement with and critique of the Revival. Howes notes of Stephen Dedalus that "[l]ike the thinkers of the Revival, Stephen embraces the notion of the representative Irish individual" and, as such, "inhabits the intellectual structures of the Revival even as he rejects that movement" (265). Similarly, Castle claims that "[w]e cannot understand the complexity of Joyce's attitude toward Revivalism if we place him outside its influence and lose sight of the fact that Joyce and Yeats desired the same thing: the creation of an imaginary Irish nation and race" (172). Howes makes the above point about Stephen (and, by extension, about Joyce) only in passing. Castle, meanwhile, explores the impact the Revival had on Joyce's worldview more thoroughly; however, he focuses mainly on the ways in which the Revivalist ideology was structured in accordance with discourses and practices of modern ethnography, and on the ways in which Joyce's critiques of the Revival often amounted to critiques of this Revivalist ethnographical mode. What this rich critical conversation is lacking, however, is a more thorough exploration of just how central the Revival was to Joyce's early ideological development, as well as to his conceptualization of his broader project as an artist and intellectual.

In this thesis I will address this critical dearth by arguing that Joyce's early ideological development and artistic trajectory were in large part guided by his fiercely agonistic relationship and dialectical engagement with the Revival. Expanding upon



Howes' claim about Stephen in *A Portrait*, I will explore the ways in which this agon and engagement often led Joyce towards a kind of double movement of "inhabiting" some general Revivalist "intellectual structure" while heavily revising or outright repudiating its particular Revivalist contents. More specifically, I will show how Joyce followed the Revivalist example of viewing Ireland as suffering from a kind of cultural malaise after the fall of Parnell; of seeking to forge a new national identity for the modern Irish; and of creatively engaging with and trying to reclaim and repurpose Irish cultural history. I will also show how Joyce "inhabited" these general interpretive forms in ways that were often explicitly anti-Revivalist. Moreover, I will contribute to the broader critical conversation regarding Joyce's supposed nationalist and/or cosmopolitan allegiances, arguing that although the teenage Joyce may have espoused a kind of cosmopolitan aestheticism—an ideology ostensibly antithetical to Revivalist nationalism, and, thus, one that the young Joyce likely adopted, at least in part, as an act anti-Revivalist defiance—by the time Joyce wrote "The Dead," he had begun to recognize the deficiencies of his youthful ideology, to recognize the merits of Revivalism, to synthesize these ideologies within himself, and to acknowledge the formative influence the Revival had had on his development as an artist, intellectual, and cosmopolitan Irishman.

### **Revivalist Nationalism and Joyce's Agon**

The fall of Charles Stewart Parnell in 1890, and the subsequent split of the Irish Parliamentary Party into Parnellite and anti-Parnellite factions, brought parliamentary progress towards Irish independence to a screeching halt. This paralysed political nationalism left behind it a vacuum in Irish society that a number of movements tried to fill, each seeking some means by which to unify the Irish, if not behind a political party

then behind the banner of a kind of pan-Irish national culture. In “The Literary Movement in Ireland,” W.B. Yeats, the driving force behind the Irish Literary Revival, cites the Irish Literary Society, the National Literary Society, the Irish Literary Theatre and the Gaelic League as institutions central to this multifaceted project of Irish cultural revival and national self-definition (835). As Yeats states,

All these organizations have been founded since the fall of Parnell; and all are busy in preserving, or in moulding anew, and without any thought of the politics of the hour, some utterance of the national life, and in opposing the vulgar books and the music-hall songs that keep pouring in from England. (853)

For the early Yeats, and for many of his fellow Revivalists, this cultural nationalist project involved intensely engaging with Celtic myths and folktales, as Yeats believed that this ancient tradition contained within it the true essence of Irishness and the roots of what he called the Irish “habit of mind” (857). It involved not only researching, analyzing, translating and disseminating such ancient Celtic lore, but also positioning it as the foundation upon which the Irish could build a properly Irish national literature and identity. In Yeats’ estimation, nationality and great literature are inextricable (“There is no great literature without nationality, no great nationality without great literature” (*Letters to the New Island* 103-4)). As such, for Ireland to remain truly Irish, instead of becoming a mere extension of England and its “materialist” culture, Yeats insists that the Irish must close “the flood-gates of [English] materialism...before the tide is quite upon [them]” (“Nationality and Literature” 266) and, in this relative cultural isolation, emphasize, celebrate and creatively engage with the central cultural resource he sees as capable of grounding a new national literature and identity, and of unifying the Irish *as* Irish – the ancient tradition of Celtic myth and folklore.

Gaelic Leaguers similarly sought to revive those elements of ancient Irish culture they saw as essential to Irishness, and to set them up as bulwarks against the creeping influence of English culture in Ireland. In “The Necessity for de-Anglicising Ireland,” Douglas Hyde laments the rapidity with which the Irish have “Anglicised” themselves, “neglecting what is Irish, and hastening to adopt, pell-mell, and indiscriminately, everything that is English” (117). Hyde emphasises the importance of the Irish reclaiming many of their historical traditions and customs. He wishes to see the return of Irish surnames, Irish “topographical nomenclature” (153), Irish music, “Irish ideas and Celtic modes of thought” (156), Irish sports, Irish clothing and, in line with Yeats, Irish literature. Most significantly, he is concerned with reviving the Gaelic language, the use of which had declined precipitously in Ireland over the course of the nineteenth century.

On an essentialist level, Hyde, like Yeats, believes it is the “Gaelic past which, though the Irish race does not recognize it just at present, is really at the bottom of the Irish heart” (119). More pragmatically, Hyde claims that in order to be recognized by the world “as a separate nationality” (118), the Irish must “build up the Irish nation on Irish lines” (119): they “must strive to cultivate everything that is most racial, most smacking of the soil, most Gaelic, most Irish” (159), and “create a strong feeling against West-Britonism” wherever and whenever possible. If they don’t, he cautions, using imagery similar to Yeats’, English culture will “overwhelm [them] like a flood” (159).

There are many ways in which James Joyce’s work stands in stark contrast with such romantic, revivalist nationalisms. With regard to the particular ideological contents of their respective views on Ireland’s past and future, Irish nationalism, the “true” spirit of the Irish people, and the ideal relationship between Ireland and modernity, Joyce and

the Revivalists seem to hold antipodal points of view. But although this does indicate the radical differences in their projects on one level of analysis, on another level it indicates their deep similarities. Joyce and the Revivalists may have provided different answers for nearly every question at issue, but they only answered the same questions in the first place because they were taking part in essentially the same conversation. This pattern of sharing deep similarities on the level of form (i.e. which basic issues they addressed, and the broader forms in terms of which they understood these issues) but fundamental differences on the level ideological content (i.e. the particular “solutions” they proposed to such issues) characterizes Joyce’s relationship with the broader Revivalist project to such an extent that one can read much of Joyce’s ideological development and artistic trajectory as guided and deeply informed by his sustained dialectical engagement with and response to the Revival and what it represents.

Joyce seems to understand his artistic mission in these terms, at least early on in his career. For instance, in his satirical poem “The Holy Office,” written in 1904, Joyce conceives of his duty as an artist as requiring that he stand in complete dialectical opposition to the Revival and its practitioners. In “The Holy Office,” Joyce groups Yeats, Russell, Lady Gregory and their acolytes together, calling them a “mumming company” and cautioning that he “must not accounted be” among their numbers. He designates himself “Katharsis-Purgative,” and the poem’s main conceit is that Joyce’s own “holy office” will involve purging these Revivalists of their highfalutin pretensions, not only by criticising them, their presuppositions, and their art, but also by creating an art of his own that will deal with everything that they take for granted, suppress, and leave out. While the lofty, romantic, pseudo-mystical Anglo-Irish Revivalists continue to “dream their dreamy

dreams,” Joyce, the lapsed Irish Catholic and sceptical realist, grounded in and attentive to the material world, promises to “carry off their filthy streams” (151).

Joyce ends “The Holy Office” by forcefully asserting his complete independence from this Revivalist clique. However, it is worth noting the parasitically comparative terms with which he figures this independence:

Where they have crouched and crawled and prayed  
I stand the self-doomed, unafraid,  
Unfellowed, friendless and alone,  
Indifferent as the herring-bone,  
Firm as the mountain-ridges where  
I flash my antlers on the air.  
Let them continue as is meet  
To adequate the balance sheet.  
Though they may labour to the grave  
My spirit shall they never have  
Nor make my soul with theirs as one  
Till the Mahamanvantara be done:  
And though they spurn me from their door  
My soul shall spurn them evermore. (152)

Joyce here defines himself primarily through relation and negation. Instead of positively asserting his own values and artistic mission on his own terms, he positions himself most fundamentally as “other than the Revivalists,” as essentially “anything but them.” In other words, even when he most explicitly proclaims his absolute spiritual and artistic autonomy from this “mumming company,” Joyce cannot help but do so relative to them, what they do, and what they stand for.

One can question the extent to which Joyce was actually as “Indifferent as the herring-bone” when he wrote “The Holy Office.” After all, such indifference hardly seems compatible with composing such a brutal broadside in the first place, let alone with having one’s brother print copies of it and deliver them to the objects of the poem’s scorn, as Joyce had Stanislaus do with “The Holy Office” (*Critical Writings* 149). What

seems less dubitable, however, is the earnestness with which the last two lines are written. They tremble with the wounded pride of a young artist who has been rejected by his nation's literati. Of course, Joyce places himself in an agonistic relationship with the Revivalists throughout "The Holy Office"; however, when he bitterly asserts at the end of the poem that he will retain this agonistic position "evermore," there are many reasons to take him at his word.

Indeed, this subtle dialectical parasitism continues to inform and inflect Joyce's work long after the close of this poem, with Joyce regularly taking up some Revivalist concern only to reinterpret and engage with it in a radically different, oftentimes specifically anti-Revivalist way. To begin with, both Joyce and the Revivalists saw Ireland as suffering from a kind of cultural affliction, especially after the fall of Parnell. However, while the Revivalists ascribed this affliction to the growing influence in Ireland of British materialist culture, or what Yeats referred to as "the spread of towns and their ways of thought" (Mikhail 18), Joyce, who conceived of this affliction in terms of paralysis, held the Catholic Church and English colonialism primarily responsible. Second, both Joyce and the Revivalists sought to cure the Irish of their cultural affliction by providing them with a new, properly Irish, ideological construct. The Revivalists spoke of this in terms of "preserving" and "moulding anew" a national tradition and consciousness, while Joyce similarly sought to "forge in the smithy of [his] soul" the "conscience of [his] race" (*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* 235). Third, both Joyce and the Revivalists thought it necessary to engage with Irish history in order to reclaim it, as well as to determine the "true" roots of what Joyce calls "the Irish temperament" (*Critical Writings* 161) and what Yeats designates as "the Irish habit of

mind” (“The Literary Movement in Ireland” 864). But while the Revivalists saw Irishness as properly rooted in Ireland’s ancient Gaelic and Celtic traditions, and sought to bring the modern Irish back into contact with these traditions, Joyce saw the modern Irish as all but wholly disconnected from their ancient past, a fact he thought no project of reanimation or revival could possibly overcome. Contrary to the Revivalists, then, Joyce saw Catholicism and anti-colonial nationalisms as the real foundations upon which the living Irish and their “temperament” had been built. Moreover, he thought that such foundations needed not simply to be revived and ratified, but rather to be critically examined, deconstructed, and either heretically re-appropriated or dispensed with altogether. Thus, while the Revivalists searched through the rubble of a dead civilization for a way to insulate Ireland from what Yeats called the “filthy modern tide” (“The Statues” 336), Joyce turned to the historical forces that had shaped and continued to shape Ireland, searching for ways that he could help to liberate his country from their more nightmarish aspects, guide his country in accordance with their more salutary aspects, and in so doing help to usher Ireland into modernity in an authentically Irish way.

## Chapter I – Competing Cultural Histories

### Reclamation and Self-Preservation: The Revival and Irish History

On one level, the Revivalists' engagement with Irish history can be read as a genuine de-colonial effort to reclaim Irish history for the Irish—to take it back from the colonizers who had, throughout the colonial period, usurped and re-interpreted it to suit their own needs. As Fanon notes in *The Wretched of the Earth*:

Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it. (149)

The ways in which the English accomplished their version of this historical and cultural distortion, disfiguration and destruction in Ireland were manifold, taking different forms during different periods of colonization. In the main, however, it involved reductively essentializing the Irish in some way.<sup>1</sup> At one time, the English would assert that the Irish were weak, feminine, and irrational, and therefore were in need of strong, masculine, and rational English rule. When the Irish mobilized against the colonial power in ways that contradicted such judgements, the English turned to essentializing them instead as violent and dangerous, with an inherent propensity towards criminality; as such, it nevertheless remained the duty of the strict, but fundamentally benevolent, colonial power to use its superior military might to keep the Irish in line, if only to protect them from themselves.

To cite Fanon in this regard:

At the level of the unconscious...colonialism was not seeking to be perceived as a sweet, kind-hearted mother who protects her child from a hostile environment, but rather a mother who constantly prevents her basically perverse child from committing suicide or giving free reign to its malevolent instincts. The colonial

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<sup>1</sup> For an in-depth study of common anti-Irish stereotypes and their employment in Imperial England, colonial Ireland, and America, see L.P. Curtis' *Anglo-Saxons and Celts: A Study of Anti-Irish Prejudice in Victorian England* (1968) and *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature* (1971).



mother is protecting the child from itself, from its ego, its physiology, its biology, and its ontical misfortune. (149)

When the English were not treating the Irish as perverse children, they oftentimes dehumanized them outright, even simianizing them in what were effectively propaganda pieces, characterizing them as subhuman, as well as incorrigibly lazy, alcoholic, violent, and foolish (see figures 1 and 2 on the following page). The English military domination of Ireland prefigured other forms of colonial domination: just as the English military had been superior to the might of the ancient Irish tribes, so too, the imperial ideology seemed to affirm, had English civilization, culture, language and religion been superior to ancient Irish civilization, culture, language and religion. And as it had been in the past, so it would continue to be. This protracted history of humiliation and military domination, the complex nexus of disabling stereotypes and essentializing discourses that arose alongside it, and the massive material inequality between colonizer and colonized to which the colonial order had led in Ireland left the Irish seemingly consigned to two options: either they could view themselves on the colonizer's reductive and oppressive terms; or they could rage against these terms, against the supposedly just and rational colonial order, but in so doing only prove to the colonizer, at least in his estimation, that he had been right about the wild, irrational and violent Irish all along.

Instead of simply raging against the colonizer's view of the Irish and their history, the Literary Revivalists set to constructing an alternative Irish cultural and historical narrative: one that would be guided by new values as well as by an inverted version of the values the colonizer had used to denigrate and dominate the Irish. Fanon refers to a colonized population's tendency to invert its colonizer's values as "the negritude belief":



TWO FORCES.

Figure I. "Two Forces"

A man in a toga, holding a sword on which is engraved "THE LAW," protects a weak and frightened woman, whose sash says "HIBERNIA," from a violent and simianized Irishman, on whose tattered hat is written "ANARCHY."

Source: "Two Forces." *Punch: Or the London Charivari*. London, England: October 29, 1881.



Figure II. "The Usual Irish Way of Doing Things"

A simianized Irishman brandishes a bottle of rum as he sits atop a barrel of gunpowder. Behind him are written a number of caricatured Irish Catholic slogans, such as "PEACEFUL CITIZENS MUST AVENGE THE MASSACRE OF THE 12<sup>th</sup> INSTANT."

Source: Thomas Nast. "The Usual Irish Way of Doing Things." *Harper's Weekly*. New York, NY: September 2, 1871.

The concept of negritude...was the affective if not logical antithesis of that insult which the white man had levelled at the rest of humanity. This negritude, hurled against the contempt of the white man, has alone proved capable in some sectors of lifting taboos and maledictions. (150)

In essence, negritude involves re-evaluating colonial binaries such that “everything associated with the coloniser is viewed as deplorable while the past inferiorities of the colonized are now seen as superior” (Bryan 75). By effecting this kind of inversion, a colonized population is able to maintain its charged position of binary opposition to its colonizer, but can now engage as an active participant in the cultural dialectic instead of as a passive recipient of the colonizer’s stereotypes and judgements, and can do so, moreover, with a sense of holding the moral and cultural high ground.

The Literary Revivalists reinterpreted Irish history and culture along such negritudinal lines. On the one hand, they positioned English culture as the spiritual, intellectual, and cultural enemy of Ireland and the Irish. Yeats speaks disparagingly about “the good citizen” of modern England as essentially “vulgar” and “insincere” (“The Literary Movement in Ireland” 864). George Russell sees English culture as responsible for infecting those under its sway with a kind of “moral leprosy” and a “vulgarity of mind” (“Nationality and Imperialism” 19). Both pit English “materialism” against Irish spirituality, and overextend their denigrations of Englishness to the point where “English culture” and “materialism” become pejorative bywords for industrial modernity itself, as well as for the life of material prosperity to which it had begun to lead the English middle-class. This (mis)categorization of industrialization and modernity as particularly English phenomena, as opposed to global phenomena, would continue to inform Ireland’s orientation towards modernity well into the twentieth century, and, as Joyce presciently recognized, often to the country’s detriment.

On the other hand, the Literary Revivalists appropriated and inverted the narratives, values and essentialist discourses that the English had used to justify their colonization of Ireland and subordination of the Irish. For instance, the English had viewed the presumed superstitiousness and mysticism of the ancient Irish as emblematic of Irish backwardness. Under the negritudinal gaze of the Literary Revivalists, this tradition of superstition and mysticism was transformed into a source of inspiration and pride, hence why this period saw “Ireland elevat[e] magic, ghosts, dance, and fairies to a state of prominence” (Bryan 75). Yeats’s 1897 lecture “The Celtic Element in Literature” contains a passage that exemplifies this Revivalist tendency towards negritudinal inversion, as in it Yeats frees a whole host of words and ideas from their negative, colonial connotations through sheer rhetorical brilliance, subtly transforming degrading colonial stereotypes into Irish strengths:

Matthew Arnold asks how much of the Celt one must imagine in the ideal man of genius. I prefer to say, how much of the ancient hunters and fishers and of the ecstatic dancers among the hills and woods must one imagine in the ideal man of genius. Certainly a thirst for unbounded emotion and a wild melancholy are troublesome things in the world, and do not make its life more easy or orderly, but it may be the arts are founded on the life beyond the world, and that they must cry in the ears of our penury until the world has been consumed and become a vision. (185)

Yeats here transforms the disorderliness, primitivity, impracticality, dreamy spirituality, wildness, and exuberant (which is to say irrational) emotionality with which the English had pejoratively charged the Irish into the very preconditions of artistic genius, even as elsewhere he and his fellow Revivalists asserted that such qualities were aspects of authentic Irishness and some of the defining features of the “Irish habit of mind.” It was, moreover, some of these same qualities that the literary Revivalists emphasised in their readings of the ancient Celtic histories, myths and folktales, the source materials upon

which they sought to found a new national literature and identity. In short, although the English may have interpreted Ireland's history as the inconsequential story of a poor, superstitious, and uncivilized neighbour, the Literary Revivalists reclaimed this history by inverting colonial stereotypes, and narrativizing Irish history as the glorious tale of an heroic, artistic, and deeply spiritual people—a people whose origins, according to George Russell in “Nationality and Imperialism,” were “divine” (17).

There is, however, another, more sceptical way to read the Literary Revival and its engagement with Irish culture and history. As many revisionist historians and critics argue, the Literary Revivalists, most of whom were members of the Anglo-Irish hereditary class, were just as motivated by their anxieties about the gradual collapse of the colonial order in Ireland as they were by their desires to stave off English materialism and to decolonize the Irish mind. That is, the Literary Revival can be read as a reactionary movement, the Anglo-Irish response to an Ireland that was gradually breaking free from the old colonial paradigm which the Anglo-Irish had helped to impose and from which they had benefitted for centuries. It is this sort of sceptical reading to which Platt alludes when he calls the Literary Revival “a culmination of Anglo-Irish attempts to secure for itself a remnant of the one-time hegemony it had over Ireland” (265).

Of course, Irish Catholics had contested Anglo-Irish hegemony in various ways throughout the colonial period. However, it was not until the latter half of the nineteenth century – with the growing English Liberal and Irish nationalist alliance, the first Land Acts, and the gradual movement of Ireland towards independence – that Ireland's Anglo-Irish minority began to see their long-held dominance over Ireland and its Irish Catholic majority rapidly wane. This gradual but titanic shift of power from Anglo-Irish to Irish

Catholic hands meant that the old cultural paradigm from which the Anglo-Irish had, as the dominant class, previously benefitted, would at best not benefit them in the Ireland of the future, and would at worst be used revengefully against them by the soon-to-be-dominant Irish Catholic class. In other words, if Ireland remained divided according to the same classist, racist, cultural, and sectarian lines by which it had been divided for centuries, the new balance of power would leave the Anglo-Irish on the wrong side of the scale, and with a massive debt of historical injustices for which they were liable to be called to account. If, on the other hand, the Anglo-Irish could install a new cultural paradigm, one that transcended the old divisions between Anglo-Irish and Irish Catholic, the Anglo-Irish would stand a better chance of fitting into and thriving in the independent Ireland that seemed just on the horizon. Thus, at the very moment an Irish Catholic majority began to successfully unify, mobilize, and dominate according to the divisive paradigm by which colonial Ireland had always been organized, a group of Anglo-Irish artists and intellectuals hastily set to creating a new, unifying paradigm.

By defining “true” Irishness as rooted in Ireland’s ancient, pre-colonial past, the Anglo-Irish Revivalists based what they hoped would become the new national cultural and historical narrative around a major historical omission: the long period of time between ancient and contemporary Ireland during which their class had been complicit in, and had benefitted from, colonialism and its sectarian hierarchy. In other words, by emphasizing ancient Irish history and de-emphasizing Irish colonial history, the Anglo-Irish could effectively write their involvement in Irish Catholic oppression out of the new national narrative. Moreover, by becoming the authorities over what was considered authentically Irish and what was not; the preservers and revivers of the “true” national

tradition; the architects of the new national narrative; and the burgeoning nation's artistic vanguard, presuming to speak for "the people," the Anglo-Irish Revivalists could ensure that even as their class continued to lose material and political dominance in Ireland, a large measure of cultural dominance would remain in Anglo-Irish hands. It is this kind of sceptical reading of the Literary Revival that one must keep in mind when considering Joyce's responses to it.

### **The Response of a Catholic Dispossessed: Joyce's Counterpoint**

Although irony pervades Joyce's fictional writings to such an extent that one can rarely if ever trust his characters to speak for the author himself, Joyce's Trieste lectures can be read as roughly representative of his genuine views about the history of Irish culture. After all, Joyce seriously considered publishing these lectures, and even told one prospective publisher that "though these articles have absolutely no literary value, I believe they set out the problem sincerely and objectively" (Melchiori 1). They also clearly emerge out of Joyce's agonistic relationship with the Revival, and dialectically engage with enough Revivalist conceits to constitute an indirect but devastating critique of the Revivalist version of Irish cultural history.

Len Platt reads Joyce's Trieste lectures in these terms. He argues that they "represent the response of a Catholic dispossessed writing in the context of a cultural history usurped by the Anglo-Irish" (259), as in them Joyce presents an interpretation of the history of Irish culture "in fundamental opposition to what was once a widely accepted history of Irish culture: that version propagandized by the Literary Revival in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries" (259). In a paragraph that summarizes

the central points of his argument in “Joyce and the Anglo-Irish Revival: The Triestine Lectures,” Platt claims that Joyce’s lectures

Challenge the Revivalist consensus on three main grounds. First, there is the charge that the Revival’s indifference to the achievements of the early Irish Church produces a false historiography of Irish culture. Second, Joyce makes a clear distinction between national culture and Anglo-Irish culture, thus refuting the Revival’s enunciation of its own ancestry. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, Joyce refuses to accept the view that an authentic national culture, protected and cultivated by an Anglo-Irish intelligentsia, had managed to survive and even flourish in adversity beyond the eighteenth century. (259)

Platt’s phrasing is somewhat strong here, as Joyce’s “charges,” “refutations” and “refusals” of Revivalism throughout the Triestine lectures are, for the most part, indirect. However, Platt’s article is persuasive, as throughout it he carefully juxtaposes Joyce’s version of Irish cultural history against the Revivalist version, and shows many of the most salient ways in which the former indirectly undermines the latter. To begin with Joyce’s and Yeats’ respective estimations of the importance of the early Irish Church to ancient Ireland, Platt notes that

In more than two hundred articles written during the heyday of Celtic propaganda, Yeats addressed every conceivable aspect of ancient Irish culture from Irish fairies to the tribes of Danu, and yet this huge production contains virtually no reference to the early Irish Church. (260)

This telling omission is perfectly in line with the reactionary and self-preservational impulses of the Anglo-Irish Revivalists. The Anglo-Irish would be excluded from a new national narrative to the extent that it took adequate account of the enormous, and in many ways positive, influence Catholicism had exercised in ancient Ireland. Joyce counterbalances this “false historiography” in his lecture “Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages,” first, by hardly mentioning the mystical and mythological Celtic tradition on which the Literary Revivalists so incessantly brooded, and, second, by discussing at



length the ways in which the early Irish Church played a pivotal role in shaping the culture of ancient Ireland, in making “the island a true focus of sanctity and intellect” (154). After listing in chronological order a number of artistic, scientific, and cultural achievements of a number of early Irish Church figures, Joyce summarizes ancient Irish history, from “the first century of the Christian era” to “the invasion of the Scandinavian tribes in the eighth century,” as “nothing but an unbroken record of apostleships, and missions, and martyrdoms” (159). Here, the phrase “nothing but” emphasizes just how antithetical Joyce’s version of the history of ancient Irish culture was to the Revivalist version. While the Literary Revivalists hardly deigned to mention the early Church, Joyce claims that the history of ancient Ireland is “nothing but” a record of the works and deeds of early Church figures. Moreover, Joyce argues that although the “three centuries that precede[d] the coming of the English” were rife with conflict, causing this ancient culture to languish, this pre-colonial period nevertheless produced “the three great heresiarchs John Duns Scotus, Macarius, and Vergilius Solivagus,” about whom Joyce speaks with enthusiasm and pride:

Vergilius was appointed by the French king to the abbey at Salzburg and later was made bishop of that diocese, where he built a cathedral. He was a philosopher, mathematician, and translator of the writings of Ptolemy. In his tract on geography, he held the theory, which was subversive at that time, that the earth was round, and for such audacity was declared a sower of heresy by Popes Boniface and Zacharias. Macarius lived in France, and the monastery of St. Eligius still preserves his tract *De Anima*, in which he taught the doctrine later known as Averroism, of which Ernest Renan, himself a Breton Celt, has left us a masterful examination. (160)

According to legend, John Duns Scotus, of whom I have spoken before, the founder of the school of Scotists, listened to the arguments of all the Doctors of the University of Paris for three whole days, then rose and, speaking from memory, refuted them one by one. (161)

It was not until the English invasion, according to Joyce, that this ancient cultural line of Irish saints, sages, philosophers, scientists, artists, and mathematicians, a line which stretched all the way back to the first century, was definitively broken:

From the time of the English invasion to our time, there is an interval of almost eight centuries, and if I have dwelt rather at length on the preceding period in order to make you understand the roots of the Irish temperament, I do not intend to detain you by recounting the vicissitudes of Ireland under foreign occupation. I especially will not do so because at that time Ireland ceased to be an intellectual force in Europe. The decorative arts, at which the ancient Irish excelled, were abandoned, and the sacred and profane culture fell into disuse. (161)

Thus, for Joyce, the “roots of the Irish temperament” grew out of early Catholicism, as opposed to the Literary Revivalists, for whom the “Irish habit of mind” was rooted almost exclusively in the ancient Celtic tradition of mythology, folklore, and fairy faith, and the characteristics this tradition exemplified and valorized. Moreover, the history of Ireland for Joyce is a history of cultural exchange and cosmopolitanism – as in Joyce’s “list of the Irishmen who carried the torch of knowledge from country to country as pilgrims and hermits, as scholars and wisemen” (154) – as opposed to a history of cultural insularity and xenophobia. It is also a history of heresiarchs, of thinkers who broke away from the dogmatic doctrines promulgated by collectives of ideologues, as opposed to one of coterie bent on fetishizing tradition. Thus, Joyce subtly draws attention to historical precedents for his own cosmopolitan and heretical impulses, while simultaneously undercutting the xenophobic, isolationist, and traditionalist impulses of the Revivalists. Finally, according to Joyce’s version of Irish history, the ancient Irish culture, the resuscitation of which was at the heart of the Revivalist project, wholly pre-existed the Anglo-Irish presence in Ireland. That is, regardless of whether one puts a Celtic or a Catholic emphasis on one’s reading of ancient Irish history, ancient Ireland’s

authentic culture began long before the English arrived, flourished for centuries in the absence of the English, and “fell into disuse” around the time that the English colonization of Ireland began. Insofar as the Anglo-Irish played no part in the living tradition of ancient Ireland and were, moreover, in large part responsible for this tradition’s disintegration and death, the Anglo-Irish could only ever become, in Platt’s phrase, at best “a hybrid to a Celtic/Catholic root” (262). Without explicitly mentioning the Literary Revival, then, Joyce’s lectures nevertheless manage to indirectly refute the Revival’s “enunciation of its own ancestry” by highlighting the discontinuity between ancient Irish culture and the early Anglo-Irish from whom the Literary Revivalists were descended.

It is important to note, however, that Joyce does not simply undermine the legitimacy of Anglo-Irish involvement in the project of Irish cultural revival in order to pass the mantle on to Irish Catholics, as if he thought that they were the rightful inheritors of this ancient tradition and were, as such, the only class who could authentically engage in its resuscitation. Instead, Joyce sees ancient Ireland and its culture as equally dead for Anglo-Irish and Irish Catholic alike:

Ancient Ireland is dead just as ancient Egypt is dead. Its death chant has been sung, and on its gravestone has been placed the seal. The old national soul that spoke during the centuries through the mouths of fabulous seers, wandering minstrels, and Jacobite poets disappeared from the world with the death of James Clarence Mangan. With him, the long tradition of the triple order of the old Celtic bards ended; and today, other bards, animated by other ideals, have their cry. (173-4)

Joyce’s Trieste lectures thus exemplify his subtle, dialectical relationship with the Revival. Just like the Revivalists, Joyce turns to the Irish past to unearth the “roots of the Irish temperament,” emphasizing those cultural formations he sees as formative of

this temperament, while either only briskly mentioning or omitting altogether those formations he deems inessential. Yet while Joyce's critical engagement with Irish history mirrors that of the Revivalists on the level of form, it opposes the Revivalist history on the level of historical content and ideological emphasis. What they emphasize, he omits. What they omit, he emphasizes. What they claim is connected, he reveals as broken. And what they find alive and well, he finds dead and long-since buried.

The differences between Joyce's and the Revivalists' respective interpretations of Irish cultural history prefigure the differences in their analyses and appraisals of the Ireland in which they lived and about which they wrote. As I mentioned earlier, both saw modern Ireland as suffering from a kind of cultural affliction following the death of Parnell. The Revivalists thought this affliction was due to the modern Irish having been separated from their ancient cultural roots; because of this separation, the Revivalists insisted, the modern Irish had failed to form a proper national culture and consciousness. Meanwhile, just as Catholicism and colonialism were central to Joyce's interpretation of the history of Irish culture, so too were they central to his understanding of the Ireland of his day. But while Joyce read the early Irish Church as a force that had energized and inspired the ancient Irish, a force which had enabled them to cultivate a flourishing cosmopolitan culture and guided them towards important intellectual and artistic achievements, he saw the modern Catholic Church, along with the English colonial order, as responsible for modern Ireland's existential, political, and economic paralysis.

## Chapter II – Irish Paralysis and Its Agents

### g. p. i.: General Paralysis Introduction

Critics regularly note the importance the figure of paralysis plays to the meaning of *Dubliners* as a whole. After all, the word “paralysis” shows up in the first paragraph of the first story of the collection, and themes of physical, spiritual, and political paralysis continue to emerge in each subsequent story. In “Pattern of Paralysis in Joyce’s *Dubliners*: A Study of the Original Framework,” Florence Walzl argues that Joyce’s fascination with paralysis was born out of his brief but intense foray into medicine:

At the time Joyce began [*Dubliners*], he was much interested in medicine. In 1902 he entered medical school in Dublin, later went to Paris intending to study medicine, and after his return in 1903 associated with medical students. During this period he tended to use medical terms in conversation. Like most beginning medical students he was fascinated with diagnosis. (221)

Joyce’s letters indicate that he was indeed keen on diagnosing Dublin as paralysed. To his brother Stanislaus he wrote that Dublin was “suffering from hemiplegia of the will” (*My Brother’s Keeper* 247) and, when summarizing his intentions for *Dubliners* as a whole after having completed only one of its stories, he wrote, “I am writing a series of epicleti – ten – for a paper...I call the series *Dubliners* to betray the soul of that hemiplegia or paralysis which many consider a city” (*Letters of James Joyce* 55).

Zack Bowen follows a similar interpretive line to Walzl in “Joyce’s Prophylactic Paralysis: Exposure in *Dubliners*,” though he takes Walzl’s reading one step further, arguing that the young Joyce’s newfound medical knowledge, coupled with his obsessive interest in and concern about the spread of syphilis throughout Continental Europe, led him to organize the governing themes of *Dubliners* around metaphors of protection from, and exposure to, syphilitic paralysis:

Exposure of all kinds, emotional, physical and intellectual, is a source of paralysis [in *Dubliners*], but the protective cloak itself is an even greater source. The characters in these stories have sought to cloak themselves from exposure to weather, sex and emotion in insulation, waterproof coverings, and institutions through which they may survive. Like its prophylactic counterpart, the covering severely limits sensation, pleasure and the creative force. (259)

These interpretations of Joyce's interest in and use of "paralysis" as a material illness and trope make biographical sense. They also provide both Walzl and Bowen with foundations for their ingenious interpretations of the overarching architecture of Joyce's collection. More pertinent to this study, however, is Douglas Kanter's argument in "Joyce, Irish Paralysis, and Cultural Nationalist Anticlericalism," in which Kanter argues that Joyce's use of "paralysis" to describe a spiritual or psychological malady by which a whole city or nation could be afflicted was likely born out of his familiarity with discourses of cultural nationalist anticlericalism that were ubiquitous in Ireland before and during the time that Joyce was writing. Kanter notes that throughout the early 1860s, the Anglo-Irish historian W. E. H. Lecky frequently employed the word "paralysis" to describe the pernicious effects he thought religion had had on the Irish in their march towards Irish independence. Lecky argued that sectarian animosities and the Catholic clergy were principally responsible for the paralysis in Irish nationalist politics and the failure of the Irish to attain Home Rule (382), and he argued, moreover, that Catholic religious dogmatism had led to "a complete paralysis of the speculative faculties" in the predominately Catholic Irish. While most of Europe, influenced by rationalist philosophy, had managed to transcend the paralyzing influences of religious dogmatism, and in so doing had become rational and nationalist, Ireland, claimed Lecky, had not, and continued to suffer as a result.

There is no evidence that Joyce ever read Leckey's influential anticlerical essay "Clerical Influences," or his book *Rationalism*, which featured anticlerical arguments and recurrently employed the figure of paralysis to describe Irish culture and politics; however, following the fall of Parnell, some three decades after Leckey's works had been published, there was, as Kanter argues, an "efflorescence of Irish anticlericalism, and Leckey's work helped to provide the language and framework for this critique" (384). Two nationalist organs, *The United Irishman* and *Dana*, took part in this resurgence of nationalist anticlericalism, and, from 1900 to 1906, featured a number of pieces in which "paralysis" was used in Leckey's particular nationalist and anticlerical sense. Given that Joyce knew the editors of *The United Irishman* and *Dana*, and even contributed works of his own to these papers, it seems reasonable to assume, as Kanter does, that Joyce would have been familiar with this usage of "paralysis." But though Joyce's conception of Irish paralysis was likely informed by such national and anticlerical discourses, I argue that it was also more capacious than Kanter acknowledges. That is, I argue that Joyce saw Ireland's existential, economic, and political paralysis as not just attributable to the influence of the Catholic Church, but rather as attributable to the intersecting influences of the Church and the English colonial order in Ireland.

In "Ireland: Island of Saints and Sages," Joyce claims that

The economic and intellectual conditions that prevail [in Ireland] do not permit the development of individuality. The soul of the country is weakened by centuries of useless struggle and broken treaties, and individual initiative is paralysed by the influence and admonitions of the church, while its body is manacled by the police, the tax office, and the garrison. (171)

Here, Joyce describes Ireland as having a weakened soul and a manacled body, both of which he implicitly attributes to the Irish having lived for centuries under Catholic

influence and British colonial rule. These figures of manacles and a weakened spirit intersect with Irish paralysis as a theme, highlighting, like the figure of paralysis itself, immobility and a decreased capacity for independent thought and successful political action. Clearly, Joyce saw English colonialism as in large part responsible for Irish paralysis in the most general sense. It is nevertheless worth emphasizing that he uses the word “paralysis” here to refer specifically to the effects he believed the “influence and admonitions” of the Catholic Church had had on the Irish people.

### **Paralysis and the Catholic Church**

*Dubliners* features a number of stories in which the paralysis by which the central character or group is afflicted is directly related to the Catholic Church. “The Sisters” is perhaps the most obvious example, as it features Father Flynn, a Catholic priest who dies from a stroke after having suffered from a literal, physical paralysis. “The Sisters” also illuminates some of the ways in which Joyce saw the Catholic Church as a paralyzing force in Irish society. The story can be read as a description of the inauthenticity of the role of the Catholic priest and the existential limits placed upon those who enter the priesthood.

By the time the story begins, Father Flynn, the priest with whom the story’s unnamed narrator used to spend a great deal of time, is dead. From the narrator’s memories of Flynn, as well as from disjointed snatches of dialogue, oftentimes pregnant with ambiguous yet sinister implication, Joyce sketches out the life of the Catholic priest as a life of disappointment and existential paralysis – as a life of dull routine, immobility, and isolation. For instance, the narrator claims that, had Flynn not died, he would have known exactly where to find him (in a “little dark room behind the [umbrella] shop”



(10)), and would, moreover, have known exactly what he would have been doing (“sitting in his arm-chair by the fire, nearly smothered in his great-coat”). The existential limits by which the role of the priest confined Father Flynn’s spirit are mirrored by the physical limits by which his body is confined during the last years of his life. Not only did Flynn spend most of his time sitting alone in a little dark room, but even his modest desire to “go out for a drive one fine day just to see the old house again” (16), his desire, in other words, to roam beyond the limits of his shrunken world, goes pitifully unrealized. The wooden box in which his body ends up can be read as a visual representation of the logical conclusion of this theme. The life of a priest is a life circumscribed by constricting limits, both physical and spiritual, which only grow more constricting as the priest progresses through life towards complete paralysis and, ultimately, death.

In the house of mourning where Flynn lies coffined, his sister claims that the “duties of the priesthood were too much for him” (16). This gestures towards just how inauthentically Joyce thought one could occupy a clerical office for the bulk of one’s life. James Flynn, the card left on the front door of his residence indicates, lived to the age of sixty-five; yet, as his sister claims, and his eventual madness corroborates, he was ill-suited to the role. His sister also says that Flynn’s “life was, you might say, crossed.” This quote functions magnificently to imbue the central symbol of Christianity, the crucifix, with the significance of a tension Joyce saw as inherent to Catholicism—one which he explored throughout his fiction, but immanently and with the greatest rigor in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.

Throughout *A Portrait*, Joyce shows how Catholicism, as a dogmatic and delimiting world-interpreting schema, puts the self of the Catholic at cross purposes with

itself, dividing a whole host of their natural feelings, desires, and possibilities not only into what is acceptable and what is not, as any system of morality does, but also into what is virtuous and worthy of eternal reward, and what is sinful and worthy of eternal punishment. As Father Arnall puts it in *A Portrait*:

[Christ] promised that if men would obey the word of His church they would still enter into eternal life but if, after all that had been done for them, they still persisted in their wickedness there remained for them an eternity of torment: hell. (109)

Joyce reveals how this model contributed to the existential paralysis not just of Irish priests but also of Irish Catholics as a whole. To begin with, this model cultivated in the Irish a general attitude of obedience to authority. After all, obedience to the authoritative “word” of the Church led to “eternal life,” while disobedience led to “an eternity of torment.” This is part of what made the Church, in Joyce’s estimation, “an effective instrument of subjugation” (*Critical Writings* 166) for the British Empire. The Irishman’s submission in the spiritual realm primed him for submission in the political realm, and *vice versa*. Church and Empire operated in tandem, constituting what Joyce called a “double yoke” which wore “groove[s] in the tamed neck[s]” (172) of the spiritually and economically dominated Irish.

Like Leckey, Joyce was alert to the ways in which this Catholic stress on obedience, and the corresponding fear of disobedience, led to a paralysis of the Irish intellect, as it stymied free, independent thought. Later in the abovementioned sermon, Father Arnall stresses that the first sin was “a rebellion of the intellect” (114): a “sinful thought conceived in an instant” (107). Joyce shows throughout his works how this stress on intellectual obedience created an environment in which natural intellectual curiosity was curtailed, as new, different, or “incorrect” thoughts were liable to be characterized as

sinful or heretical. His most explicit treatment of this theme appears in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, in which a young Stephen Dedalus is made a public example of by his teacher for accidentally including a heresy in his school essay. Stephen is later bullied and beaten by his classmates, not only for having written this heresy, but also for preferring the poetry of Byron to the poetry of Tennyson. Byron, his schoolfellows insist, was “a heretic and immoral”; meanwhile, “Everyone knows that Tennyson is the greatest poet” (72). Here, Joyce demonstrates how Catholicism, which shames and even punishes people for having thoughts or ideas that do not align perfectly with official Church doctrine, creates a climate of strict intellectual conformity that extends far beyond theological matters—a climate in which one is encouraged to parrot what “everyone knows,” and in which idiosyncratic or unconventional thoughts, beliefs, and preferences are met with hostility and even punishment. As Walkowitz points out, this scene also has implications for Joyce’s broader view of the effect this Catholic stress on obedience and conformity had on Irish anti-colonial politics. By enforcing the status quo in this instance, Stephen’s classmates are effectively “capitulating to British imperialism,” as Tennyson was the British poet laureate and “the poet of Britannia” (67). Joyce thus uses this particular interaction to gesture towards a larger social and political problematic: just as the Church primes Stephen’s classmates to instinctively advocate for colonial values and the status quo in matters of poetical taste, so too, Joyce implies, did it prime the Irish to advocate for, or at least more willingly submit to, the status quo in matters of politics.

The Church’s strict interpretation of the body and the so-called “sins of the flesh” also left those who genuinely tried to “obey the word of [the] church” alienated from their bodies, paralysed in the face of their desires, and riddled with various kinds of

repressions. Joyce explores the paralytic effect the Catholic Church's obsessive sexual puritanism had on Irish society in a number of stories in *Dubliners*. In "Araby," the reader quickly learns that the recently deceased tenant of the narrator's house was, not unlike Father Flynn, a priest who had lived and died alone, and in a "musty" "back drawing-room" (29). During his description of the personal effects the priest left behind after passing away, the narrator mentions the "wild garden behind the house [that] contained a central apple-tree and a few straggling bushes under one of which [he] found the late tenant's rusty bicycle pump" (29). On one level, this rusty and abandoned pump figures paralysis in terms of immobility. The pump has been abandoned for so long that it has grown rusty, indicating that the priest had not used his bicycle for many years before his death. More significantly, the wild garden with its central apple-tree alludes to the Eden of *Genesis*, and can be seen to represent the natural, prelapsarian freedom of a life lived in the absence of the repressive sexual morality of the Catholic Church. Juxtaposed with this wild garden, the late priest's "rusty bicycle pump" functions as a phallic symbol, and gestures towards the corrosive effects the Catholic Church, which mandated celibacy for its priests, and heavily policed sexuality in general, had on its clergy as well as on Irish Catholics as a whole. Joyce highlights the process by which young Dubliners are interpellated into this repressive ideology at the end of the story, by having the story's protagonist, after failing to buy anything at the Araby bazaar, reinterpret his youthful desire to impress Mangan's sister in punishing theological terms. The implication is that this youth, who, as a result of his slight romantic failure, comes to see himself as "a creature, driven and derided by vanity," has exchanged his capitalistic interpretation of his affections, which drove him to try to act on his feelings by participating in a system of

commodity exchange, for a Catholic interpretation, and one which may very well drive him to become like the priest who died in his back drawing-room: paralyzed and alone, with the “bicycle pump” of his sexuality grown rusty from abandonment and disuse.

This atmosphere of sexual repression was so pervasive in Catholic Ireland that even those who managed to liberate themselves from some of the other strictures of the Catholic Church remained unable to liberate themselves from its strict interpretation of the body and sexuality. James Duffy of “A Painful Case,” for instance, is mock-heroically described as a man who lives “without church or creed” (121). Yet despite being a reader of Nietzsche, that paradigmatic figure of intellectual and spiritual freedom, and despite his own melodramatic justifications for his spiritual isolation and celibacy (“every bond, he said, is a bond to sorrow” (124)), the text implies that Duffy’s principled glorifications of his loneliness might actually serve to mask his repressed homosexuality: “Love between man and man is impossible,” he laments, “because there must not be sexual intercourse and friendship between man and woman is impossible because there must be sexual intercourse” (125). In other words, the sexual morality and gendered expectations of Catholic Ireland have condemned Duffy to a life of sexual paralysis and isolation, as he is not allowed to love men the way he wants to, and he cannot maintain a friendship with a woman, like the friendship he had with Mrs Sinico, without her socially-conditioned expectations about men leading her to misinterpret his intentions.

In “A Painful Case,” James Duffy rejects Mrs Sinico because of her romantic advances, and ultimately comes to blame himself for her subsequent deterioration and death. However, it is really the whole paralyzing atmosphere of sexual repression, predicated on a Catholic sexual morality as well as on strict, religiously-grounded

marriage laws that leads Mrs Sinico down the path of alcoholism, and, as the text implies, suicide. One imagines that in a cultural milieu where Mrs Sinico could simply have divorced her husband, a husband who “had dismissed his wife so sincerely from his gallery of pleasures that he did not suspect anyone else would take an interest in her” (122), her failure to secure Duffy as a romantic partner would not have led her so deeply into despair. Moreover, in a sexually liberated Dublin, one imagines that Duffy and Mrs Sinico could have made much more explicit what it was that they were seeking from one another from the start, thereby basing any relationship they might nevertheless have had on transparent foundations. As it stands, even someone as bent on being free from the dictates of “church or creed” as Duffy cannot but live a life of lonely repression in Catholic Ireland, ever at a “distance from his body” (120) and his true desires.

Joyce, then, was alert to the ways in which this atmosphere of sexual puritanism contributed to various forms of paralysis at the individual level. But he was also alert to the ways in which it contributed to paralysis at the national, political level. In “Shocking the Reader in James Joyce’s “A Painful Case,” ” Margot Norris entertains the possibility that Duffy is a homosexual; however, she focuses more of her attention on reading the story in the light of Charles Stewart Parnell’s adulterous affair, his fall from political prominence, and the decades-long paralysis in Irish nationalist politics that followed his fall and death.

After having led the Land League agitations to some success (i.e. the Land Act of 1881 and the Kilmainham Treaty), founded the National League, and unified huge numbers of the Irish behind the Irish Parliamentary Party, Parnell brought the Irish as close to home rule as they had come since the Act of Union. Despite being a Protestant,

Parnell had managed to secure the support of Irish Catholics as well as the Catholic hierarchy itself, and stood, moreover, in alliance with William Gladstone, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, and thus also in alliance with the Liberal party of which Gladstone was the head. Although Gladstone's first Home Rule Bill was defeated, the support and influence Parnell had amassed throughout his career made it seem inevitable that he would lead the Irish to Home Rule, and likely before the close of the century.

The revelations of Parnell's adulterous relationship with Katherine O'Shea, the estranged wife of a fellow MP, immediately curbed this momentum, and sent shockwaves through the nationalist ranks, splitting Parnell's party in two. Home Rule, which had seemed imminent, suddenly looked yet again like an outright impossibility, at least for the time being. But even though the English Liberals were primarily responsible for the initial split, with Gladstone and his party refusing to ally with any Irish party of which the adulterous Parnell was a member, the Catholic Church soon followed the Liberal example, officially condemning Parnell and any of the Irish who remained loyal to him.

Margot Norris argues that Joyce invites the reader to imagine Duffy as a more socially conformist and sexually repressed version of Parnell—as Parnell if Parnell had lived his life more in accordance with the sexual mores of Catholic Ireland. Just as Duffy meets and gradually grows close to Emily Sinico, the wife of one Captain Sinico, after the Captain had “dismissed his wife...from his gallery of pleasures,” so too did Parnell meet and gradually grow close to Katherine O'Shea, the wife of one Captain O'Shea, after the Captain had similarly “dismissed his wife...from his gallery of pleasures.” The difference between the two men, of course, is that while Parnell ultimately chose to flout Irish Catholic mores and pursue a romantic relationship with Katherine O'Shea, Duffy

pursues an emotionally intimate relationship with Emily Sinico right up to the point that she seeks to get physically intimate, at which point Duffy breaks the relationship off, and justifies his decision to do so in terms that reveal he places a greater value on conforming to social mores than on love: “He asked himself what else he could have done. He could not have carried on a comedy of deception with her; he could not have lived with her openly” (130). Joyce here subtly invokes the Parnell scandal, as Parnell, with much more to lose than Duffy, did indeed choose to live somewhat openly with Katherine O’Shea. Joyce thereby encourages the reader to compare the two men, and in so doing to confront the absurdity of the Irish moral paradigm—a paradigm in which the repressed Duffy, who drives the lonely Mrs Sinico to suicide, would be praised as morally upstanding for terminating a relationship before it became adulterous, while the passionate Parnell, who genuinely pursued his love interest, even though doing so was technically adulterous, was publicly disgraced, and hounded out of Irish political life, for doing so. As Norris claims, Joyce “made James Duffy—a man who flirts with politics, literature, philosophy, and women with no willingness to give, commit, or risk—the absolute antithesis of Charles Stewart Parnell, who wholeheartedly gave, committed, and risked everything for both a country and a woman” (70). Joyce thus highlights yet again how Irish Catholicism, with its emphasis on conformity to social mores, encourages the development of repressed conformists; he shows how Catholic Ireland is much more likely to produce men like Duffy, who ultimately submit to the status quo, in personal as well as political matters, than men like Parnell, whose decision to pursue an affair with Katherine O’Shea was, as Norris argues, born out of the same strong will and passionate temperament out of which was born his energetic, anti-colonial struggle against the political status quo.



Joyce explores the role the Catholic Church played in Parnell's fall more explicitly in the Christmas dinner scene of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Both the Parnellites Simon Dedalus and Mr Casey, as well as the Catholic, anti-Parnellite Dante Riordan, agree that after Parnell's fall the Catholic priests and bishops began to "preach politics from the altar" (26) in an attempt to turn their congregations against Parnell. Simon and Mr Casey see this as clerical overreaching ("Let them leave politics alone" (26)), while Dante sees it as not only acceptable but as the expected behaviour of the clergy ("It is a question of public morality. A priest would not be a priest if he did not tell his flock what to do" (26)). What is most important to emphasise here is how Dante (and, by extension, the anti-Parnellite majority whom she represents) figures Catholic sexual morality as wholly superordinate to Irish politics:

--And can we not love our country then? asked Mr Casey. Are we not to follow the man that was born to lead us?

--A traitor to his country! replied Dante. A traitor, an adulterer! The priests were right to abandon him. The priests were always the true friends of Ireland. (32)

Dante renders the words "traitor" and "adulterer" essentially equivalent here, completely conflating the spheres of politics and Catholic sexual morality. Although a conflation of this sort may be implicit in her earlier claim that Parnell's adultery made him "unfit to lead," it is in fact a bolder claim. It is not simply that Parnell's moral transgression revealed him as constitutionally unfit to lead the Irish; it is rather that his violation of Catholic sexual morality constituted a violation of Ireland itself. To someone like Dante, it is not the Church that is traitorous for thwarting Ireland in its march towards Home Rule; it is rather Parnell, the man leading the march, who is traitorous for having transgressed Catholic mores. Dante's anti-Parnellite nationalism is thus essentially theocratic: to sin against the mores of the Church is to sin against the nation.

Parnell's adultery was not the first event that brought the Catholic Church into the political fray in Ireland, nor was it the first time that the Church stood between Irish nationalists and the independence they sought. Joyce draws attention to some of these other instances in the same Christmas dinner scene. Immediately after Dante claims that the "priests were always the true friends of Ireland," Mr Casey contradicts her claim by listing a number of times when the Church either did not support or directly contravened the interests of Irish nationalists:

He threw his fist on the table and, frowning angrily, protruded one finger after another.

--Didn't the bishops of Ireland betray us in the time of the union when bishop Lanigan presented an address of loyalty to the Marquess Cornwallis? Didn't the bishops and priests sell the aspirations of their country in 1829 in return for catholic emancipation? Didn't they denounce the fenian movement from the pulpit and in the confession box? And didn't they dishonour the ashes of Terrence Bellew MacManus? (32)

In "Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages," Joyce says of England that "She persecuted the Roman church when it was rebellious and stopped when it became an effective instrument of subjugation" (166). With respect to the Church being wielded as an instrument of the colonial power, it is doubtless such instances as these that Joyce has in mind. Indeed, as Mr Casey, in his essentially accurate but obviously selective and ideologically inflected version of modern Irish history, points out, the Church was in large part responsible for the very existence and passing of the Act of Union, the central article of law that had made Ireland a part of the United Kingdom and thus rendered the country *not* independent. But in order to understand why it matters that the Church played significant roles in the Ireland's colonization and in Irish political paralysis, one must understand why Irish nationalists so desperately wanted independence in the first place. That is, if Joyce thought the Catholic Church and its ideology had contributed to

the existential, intellectual, sexual, and political paralysis of the Irish, in what ways did he see the Irish as also paralyzed by the English colonial order?

### **Paralysis and the Colonial Order**

In “Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages,” Joyce notes that in “the national calendar, two days, according to patriots, must be marked as ill-omened – that of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman invasion, and that, a century ago, of the union of the two parliaments” (162). It is reasonable to question the extent to which the label “patriot” applies to Joyce himself, given his complex relationship with Ireland and Irish nationalism; however, his critical works and fiction demonstrate that he, like such patriots, thought that English imperialism had been disastrous for the Irish. In classic Joycean anticlerical form, he blames the Catholic Church for encouraging the English to invade Ireland in the first place (162), and ever with a critical eye kept on his own country and countrymen, he emphasizes the fact that the English were initially reticent to enter Ireland in any formal capacity, and ultimately did so only after having received repeated invitations from the Irish themselves (162). Yet despite his clear-sighted redistribution of the blame for the presence of the English in Ireland, Joyce nevertheless holds that the English have “many crimes to expiate in Ireland” (163). Moreover, in the final analysis, he sees those Irish seeking independence as fundamentally in the right: “When a victorious country tyrannizes over another, it cannot logically be considered wrong for that other to rebel” (163).

Before turning to Joyce’s fictional representations of the ways in which he saw the Irish as paralyzed by English colonial rule, it is worth sketching out in brief Joyce’s macro-level view of English colonialism in Ireland, highlighting its most prominent

historical, material, and socio-political coordinates. To begin with, Joyce sees colonialism as intimately linked with economy on a number of levels. He also sees the economic impetus and features of colonialism as inextricably imbricated with other colonial features. Referring to the arrival of the English colonizers, Joyce notes of England that “She enkindled [Ireland’s] factions and took over its treasury. By the introduction of a new system of agriculture, she reduced the power of the native leaders and gave great estates to her soldiers” (166). Joyce here directly links the colonial tactics of imposing factional divisions, introducing new systems of material ownership and production, and installing a militarily enforced, proto-political hierarchy in which English settlers would dominate, with the more general English seizures of Irish capital and land. In other words, the colonial project of invasion, conquest, domination, and exploitation operated at a number of irreducible but intersecting levels concurrently and from the very beginning.

The two factions that would serve best to “keep the country divided” (166) over time were “enkindled” along cultural, racial, nativist, and, most significantly, sectarian lines. These lines divided the native Irish Catholic majority and the foreign Anglo-Protestant minority. The “new system of agriculture” to which Joyce refers involved the English claiming, re-dividing and handing out Irish land to this settler minority. The power taken from the natives was similarly handed out to these Anglo-Protestant settlers, in whose interests the new laws were written and for whom the highest positions in the burgeoning colonial civil order were reserved. The disproportionately large and legally sanctioned power and wealth Anglo-Protestants came to wield as a result of such measures is what led to them being known as the Protestant Ascendancy.

By the time Joyce was writing, many of the formal aspects of the colonial order in Ireland, which had set up legal, cultural and financial barriers to Irish Catholic flourishing, had been abolished. There were no more Penal Laws. Catholics could, and did, possess large holdings and occupy positions of political office. The Church of Ireland had been disestablished. Aside from gaining independence in 1922, perhaps the most materially significant Irish political event that took place during Joyce's lifetime was the passing of a series of Land Acts, the most transformative of which was the Land Act of 1903. This Act proved a decisive blow to an Anglo-Irish class whose influence was, by then, already on the wane, irrevocably altering the balance of Irish power in favour of the Irish Catholic majority by affording tenants not only the legal recourse but also, through government loans and subsidies, the means to purchase the plots on which they had lived and worked from their oftentimes Ascendancy-descended landlords. But parallel with this historical progression towards improved living conditions and liberation for Irish Catholics ran another, less cheery history, and one which Joyce cites in defense of the Irish against English disparagement:

The English now disparage the Irish because they are Catholic, poor and ignorant; however, it will not be so easy to justify such disparagement to some people. Ireland is poor because English laws ruined the country's industries, especially the wool industry, because the neglect of the English government during the years of the potato famine allowed the best of the population to die from hunger, and because under the present administration, while Ireland is losing its population and crimes are almost non-existent, the judges receive the salary of a king, and governing officials and those in public service receive huge sums for doing nothing. (167)

That is, despite the aforementioned victories, the past policies as well as the present, vampiric civil and economic structure of the English colonial order continued to have what Joyce saw as seriously deleterious effects on the Ireland of his day. Catholic

emancipation and the gradual transfer of land into majority hands were by no means merely cosmetic developments; however, they did little to revive an Irish economy that had long-since been crippled by colonial laws and even less to resurrect the nearly one million Irish who had died in the potato famine, the catastrophic scale of which Joyce rightly attributes to English mismanagement. Moreover, the problem was not just *that* a bloated cadre of judges, civil servants, and police were exorbitantly well-paid by the already poor Irish taxpayer, but also *what* they were paid to do: that is, to maintain the colony in accordance with orders relayed from the imperial centre. In “Home Rule Comes of Age,” Joyce notes how the English Conservatives of his day continued to openly advocate for and justify not just the ongoing maintenance of Ireland as a colony, but also Ireland’s active economic and political suppression:

[English] Conservatism, though it may be tyrannical, is a frankly and openly inimical doctrine. Its position is logical: it does not want a rival island to arise near Great Britain, or Irish factories to create competition for those in England, or tobacco and wine again to be exported from Ireland, or the great ports along the Irish coast to become enemy naval bases under a native government of a foreign protectorate. (195)

Thus, the paralysis from which Joyce’s Irish contemporaries suffered was not simply attributable to the colonial past and its lingering aftereffects. Despite English concessions and English claims of trying to “kill home rule with kindness,”<sup>2</sup> the colonial power continued to actively constrain the Irish, giving them whatever they thought was minimally necessary to keep them pacified, while still suppressing and weakening them in order to keep them under control. It is this colonial history, the aftereffects of this

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<sup>2</sup> This was the phrase Gerald Balfour, Britain’s Chief Secretary for Ireland from 1895-1900, used to summarize his government’s stance of towards Ireland. It articulated the British hope that the Irish would willingly choose British government over self-government, so long as the British began governing more fairly.

history, as well as England's continued colonial influence in Ireland that come together to inform and shape the background against which Joyce's stories in *Dubliners*, like "Counterparts," take place.

"Counterparts" charts a day in the life of a man named Farrington who works at the law office "Crosbie and Alleyne," copying out counterparts of legal documents. Farrington is by no means a sympathetic character: he is an inefficient employee and a compulsive drinker; he has severe anger problems and, as we find out at the end of the story, he beats his children. However, Joyce writes "Counterparts" in such a way that, though we do not feel sympathy for Farrington, we nevertheless manage to see him as an inevitable product of his circumstances.

David Lloyd reads Farrington in this light, and argues that his drinking functions as "an Irish mode of countermodernity" (212) to the emergent matrix of Irish modernity by which Farrington's life is otherwise determined and constrained. That is, as English colonialism and Irish nationalism were seeking to incorporate essentially all aspects of Irish life into their respective systems of cultural practice and interpretation, Irish drinking, argues Lloyd, functioned as "one element in a matrix of...historically shifting cultural differences...that prove[d] unincorporable either by colonial or nationalist modernity" (210). I treat Farrington's drinking only slightly in my reading of "Counterparts"; however, my reading is nevertheless a fitting counterpart to Lloyd's, as while Lloyd focuses on Farrington's time in the public house as well on as the significance of his drinking habits as essentially modes of resistance to the delimiting discourses of Irish modernity, I focus on the broader modern forces that hold sway over Farrington's life outside the public house, forces which seem to have otherwise

successfully incorporated Farrington. That is, I read “Counterparts” as a story that explores the internal determinism of the mutually reinforcing spheres of Irish colonial and capitalist modernity—a story that illustrates how the hierarchies that organize and operate in these spheres determine and delimit the existential, social, and economic possibilities of those, like Farrington, who are effectively trapped inside them.

Hierarchy governs the world of “Counterparts” at various levels. This is most evident in the operations of the law office in which Farrington works. Joyce represents capitalist hierarchy visually and spatially in the law office: Mr Alleyne’s office is “upstairs” (95), Farrington’s is one floor below, and one floor below that is the street, where the unemployed Irish must scheme (like Corley in “Two Gallants”) or beg (like the one-legged sailor in *Ulysses*) to survive. This spatial organization of the capitalist hierarchy reproduces the colonial hierarchy of sectarianism and class in Dublin, showing how colonialism and capitalism are similarly structured and mutually reinforcing: the Irish Catholic Farrington is subordinated to the Northern-Irishman Mr Alleyne, while Mr Alleyne seems to be subordinated to Mr Crosbie, whose surname comes first in the office’s title and is, moreover, decidedly English. Mr Crosbie, the menacing and invisible other, can thus be read as a symbol of English colonial rule. Crosbie is physically absent from the office, even as the English have relatively little physical presence in Ireland, yet Crosbie is still the ultimate authority over it, as the English are the authorities over Ireland. He is the spectral enforcer of the social order, and the punisher invoked by Mr Alleyne when he seeks to scare Farrington into working harder:

...You always have some excuse or another for shirking work. Let me tell you that if the contract is not copied before this evening I’ll lay the matter before Mr Crosbie...Do you hear me now? (96)



And again:

The man walked heavily towards the door and, as he went out of the room, he heard Mr Alleyne cry after him that if the contract was not copied by evening Mr Crosbie would hear of the matter. (97)

Mr Alleyne's threats about laying "the matter before Mr Crosbie" are ineffectual and insufficiently motivating to Farrington, yet Mr Alleyne repeats them. This repetition implies that though Farrington might not fear Mr Crosbie, Mr Alleyne himself does; to him, Mr Crosbie is genuinely threatening.

From this we can see how threats flow downwards through everyone in the colonial and capitalist hierarchy of "Counterparts." Mr Crosbie (the English capitalist and symbol of colonial rule) threatens Mr Alleyne (the intermediary and Anglo-Irishman), Mr Alleyne threatens Farrington (the lower-class Irish Catholic), and Farrington, as we see later in the story, threatens his son, and ultimately carries his threats out, thereby bringing this chain of deferred punishment to a violent close. These are the fruits of the logic of colonial and capitalist hierarchy: no one is secure in their position; everyone is subject to the whims of their superiors; and everyone is caught up in an inflexible system where orders and threats are received from above and dispensed on to those below.

Joyce brilliantly shows the displacement of affect and action this system entails. From the outside, we can see that Farrington's rage really ought to be directed all the way to the top, to his colonial and capitalist masters. However, Farrington directs this rage instead to his direct superior, Mr Alleyne, who is really only an intermediary in the larger system. After Mr Alleyne reprimands Farrington for his poor work ethic, Farrington stares at Mr Alleyne's "polished skull...gauging its fragility" (96)—that is, wanting to break it open, seeing Mr Alleyne as the appropriate object of his rage. But no matter how

fragile Mr Alleyne's skull might be, no matter whether or not he could be gotten rid of, Joyce suggests throughout this story that Mr Alleyne, like everyone else in the story, is only a symptom of a much larger problem. The hierarchy of the law office would continue to exist regardless of which employees worked in it or which employers ran it. If Mr Alleyne were gone, someone else would take his place, and this person would similarly receive threats from above and dispense them onto those below. Moreover, even if the law office as a whole were to close, another would open in its place, and it would reproduce this same hierarchy. This is all to say that Joyce shows us that the problems at the heart of "Counterparts" are systemic. The kind of hierarchy that pervades the story, which traps and paralyzes those caught within it, is built into the operations of a modernizing, colonized Ireland at the deepest levels.

Another important thing to note is that though Farrington focuses his *internal* rage on Mr Alleyne, he does not really externalize this rage on him or even externalize it in his presence. Farrington might indirectly (and, the story implies, accidentally) call his boss a fool with his quip "I don't think...that's a fair question to put to me" (101); but this kind of quipping is nothing remotely like the violence about which Farrington internally fantasizes (a form of which he ultimately unleashes on his son). Moreover, even if Farrington had not been humiliatingly made to apologize for his remark, such quipping as Farrington's will by no means disturb the rigid social order. The world of "Counterparts," then, is one in which superiors stay superiors, and subordinates stay subordinates indefinitely.

Indeed, when taken all together, this structure of threats, impotent fantasies, and punishment entailed by the colonial-capitalist hierarchy is a structure that serves to

maintain extant power relations by channelling affects (like Farrington's rage) that might lead to justifiable action against those above (violence against an unfair social order and, in its ultimate form, revolutionary violence) to those below. This structure functions just how it is meant to. Farrington directs his fantasies of rage upwards, and even at that not nearly far enough upwards, yet does not act on them, and therefore does not break the chains keeping he and the rest of the lower class Irish Catholics in bondage. Meanwhile, he inflicts actual violence on his son, thereby initiating him into the very same social order of impotently fearing one's superiors while threatening and harming one's inferiors in which Farrington himself is caught up, and which he tries to escape through alcoholism.

Moreover, the story illustrates that even though many of the formal measures that concentrated wealth, power and ownership in the hands of the Anglo-Irish had, by Farrington's time, been abolished, the material, educational, and cultural disparities to which such measures had given rise provided a template according to which Ireland continued to be structured, despite being governed by "fairer" laws. Although Farrington lives in a Dublin in which it is legally possible for him, as an Irish Catholic, to own and operate a law office, the history of systemic oppression and discrimination of which he and his environment are products makes the state of affairs the story describes, with Farrington subordinated to wealthy and powerful English and Anglo-Irish men, much more likely. The abject state to which Farrington's forebears were consigned by law is roughly the same state to which he has been consigned by extra-legal forms of socioeconomic reproduction, and it is this same state, Joyce implies, to which Farrington will consign his children.

The fact that Joyce situates this story in a law office owned and operated by English and Anglo-Irish men augments and complicates this theme. At the national level, Irish laws may, at the time the story takes place, stand for the equality of all Irish citizens, regardless of confessional allegiance or cultural background. However, at the local level of the law office, which, for the average citizen, mediates and acts as a point of entry into the law, the law remains under Anglo-Irish and English control. The story thus gestures towards how aspects of the colonial order can endure on local levels despite being dismantled on higher, national levels.

To return to the guiding trope of this section of my essay, if paralysis in the Irish colonial context means having no good existential, social, or economic possibilities available to choose from, we must ask what possibilities, if any, are legitimately available to someone like Farrington. Clearly, his current role and the subjectivity that accompanies it are paralyzingly limited: because of his place in the colonial-capitalist hierarchy, he is trapped doing alienating work in a system that seems to offer him at best social and economic stasis and at worst downward mobility into absolute poverty. Moreover, his sense of being trapped by such a limiting order leads him to rage against it in unproductive and damaging ways.

Perhaps, one might say, one option for Farrington would be to simply work harder than he currently does at his job, to be more responsible, to be grateful that he is employed while many others of his class and standing are not. However, the guiding metaphor of the story indicates that Joyce has a perceptive answer to this sort of interpretation of Farrington's situation, casting its plausibility in a dubious light and reinforcing the inescapability of Farrington's paralysis. Farrington's job in the law office

is to make counterparts—that is, exact copies of legal contracts to be signed by the various people involved in the contracts. These copies are needed to make a given contract valid and legally binding. This means that the best Farrington can do as an employee is to faithfully reproduce the contracts he has been assigned. The counterpart to this at the level of national, existential, and proletarian (un)freedom is that the best an Irish Catholic like Farrington can do is faithfully live up to the roles and the rules that English and Anglo-Irish colonial-capitalists have assigned to him and people like him. By working diligently at his job, then, by faithfully making counterparts, Farrington would be complicit in the extant social and legal orders, validating and legitimating them by reproducing them. Farrington's refusal to take his job seriously and make sound counterparts thus symbolizes his refusal to legitimate the exploitative and limiting colonial-capitalist order in which he is trapped. He will not copy the words of the original contracts just as he will not live according to the rules prescribed by an unfair system; and just as by failing to make a good counterpart to a contract he is preventing the contract from becoming legitimate, by refusing to live according to the rules prescribed by an unfair system he is refusing to legitimate that system. Unfortunately for Farrington, however, it is one of the very few systems on option for a Dubliner like him.

This is a paradigmatic illustration of how the colonial order functions in tandem with capitalism to paralyze the Irish. On the one hand, a lower-class Irish Catholic man like Farrington could submit to the shallow roles prescribed for him by English and Anglo-Irish capitalists, put all his energy into fulfilling these roles, and all for a little bit of money (hardly even enough to get drunk on). By doing this he would be actively participating in his own exploitation, and further legitimating the colonial order through

his efforts. On the other hand, he could choose freedom, exclaim *non serviam*, and break out of the narrow roles the colonizer and capitalists have prescribed for him. In so doing, he would be refusing to legitimate the social order, refusing to be its living counterpart, and refusing to dwell in a paralyzing socioeconomic sphere. However, this would leave him susceptible to a different and arguably worse kind of paralysis, and in an even more limited sphere—the sphere of the Irish *lumpenproletariat*, from whose limited confines he would have access to roles like thief, schemer, or outright pauper, roaming the streets of Dublin, rattling a cup in people’s faces for change.

“Counterparts” ends with a frustrated and half-drunk Farrington returning home, seeking some outlet for the rage he has built up throughout the day. He calls for his wife Ada, only to be told by his son Tom that she is “out at the chapel.” One suspects that Ada, who “was bullied by [her husband] when he was drunk” (108), predicted the state in which Farrington would return home after a night out drinking, and so pre-emptively fled to the chapel, thereby leaving her children to receive Farrington’s abuse in her stead. Whether or not this was her intention, this is exactly what happens. After Tom informs his father of Ada’s whereabouts, and then says he is going to cook his dinner, Farrington explodes: “--On that fire! You let the fire out! By God, I’ll teach you to do that again!” Farrington grabs his walking stick, chases after Tom, catches him, and “strick[es] at him viciously with the stick” (109). As Farrington beats his son for having let the fire burn down, the boy squeals in pain, and pleads with his father:

—Oh, pa! he cried. Don’t beat me, pa! And I’ll...I’ll say a *Hail Mary* for you...I’ll say a *Hail Mary* for you, pa, if you don’t beat me... I’ll say a *Hail Mary*... (109)

“Counterparts” thus concludes by revealing how Catholicism actually functions in the lives of lower-class Irish Catholics like Farrington and his family. The Church offers Ada a temporary escape from her husband’s abuse. She can spend the evening at the chapel, praying and receiving counsel from the clergy – who might advocate that she and her husband have more children, despite being impoverished, but who would certainly not advocate that they get a divorce – all while her children remain at home to be physically abused by her husband. Catholicism offers Farrington a sense of moral righteousness. He feels justified invoking the name and authority of God before beating his son, as if he, as the family patriarch, believes his violence is religiously justified (“By God, I’ll teach you to do that again!”). For Tom, Catholicism serves as an impotent bargaining tool. He vainly offers to pray for his father in exchange for not being beaten. But none of these “uses” of Catholicism do anything to disrupt the oppressive system in which these characters are trapped. They do nothing to improve the social or material conditions in which these characters live. Joyce thus further reveals how Catholicism functions as an agent of paralysis insofar as it directs energies that might otherwise be mobilized against the paralytic order of colonized Ireland away from their proper objects. It mystifies these objects, and covers over the real issues and contradictions that inhere in the colonial-capitalist order in Ireland, thereby enabling this order to reproduce itself without major resistance.

## **Chapter III – Antithetical Ideologies**

### **Joyce's Critique of Revivalism**

Joyce clearly saw Catholicism as directly responsible for certain forms of modern Irish paralysis. He also saw how it functioned in various ways to help maintain the Irish colonial status quo. It is not surprising, then, that he viewed the Anglo-Irish Revivalists' attempts to overcome Irish paralysis as inadequate insofar as they refused to face up to and deal with Catholicism, its role in Irish history, and its ubiquity and influence in modern Ireland. But Joyce critiques the Revival for more than just its evasions of the issues surrounding Irish Catholicism. Indeed, there are a number of other reasons why he saw Revivalist nationalism as ideologically ill-suited to properly address, let alone solve, the problem of Irish paralysis.

To begin with, Joyce saw how Revivalist nationalism subtly reproduced some of Catholicism's most problematic features, as it, just like the Church, was hierarchically structured, cultivated an attitude of obedience to authority among its adherents, and promulgated mystifying interpretations of complex social phenomena and material conditions. In contrast to the fundamentally horizontal ideological construction of the liberal, democratic individualism by which Joyce was most inspired, the Revival was inherently vertical, as it was created, curated, and disseminated by an economic and cultural elite who deemed themselves (at the very least, culturally) superior to the vast majority of those whom they sought to interpellate into their movement and ideology. The Revivalists sought to act as the gatekeepers to, and arbiters of, Irish national culture just as the Catholic clergy acted as the gatekeepers to, and arbiters of, Irish moral and spiritual concerns. This inclination towards a sense of hierarchy and authority that guided the Revivalist project in some guise or another from the outset finds its purest and most



explicit articulations and defenses in Yeats. As Michael North notes, Yeats was already bemoaning throughout the first decade of the twentieth century the “commonness” of “the new class which is rising in Ireland,” and praising, with an aristocratic flair, “those few scattered people who have the right to call themselves Irish” (34-36). That Yeats counted himself among this privileged group of “true” Irishmen only became more evident as his career progressed. As he writes in 1931: “The Few are those who through the possession of hereditary wealth, or great personal gifts, have come to identity their lives with the State, whereas the lives and ambitions of the Many are private” (*Explorations* 351). For Yeats, it was only the new Irish aristocracy, of which he counted himself a key member, who could “rightfully represent the whole of which it [was] only a tiny part” (North 37).

Joyce was alert to, and critical of, this elitist and expressly hierarchical feature of Revivalism, and moreover implies that some of his criticisms of Irish Catholicism are applicable to Revivalist nationalism as an ideology and pseudo-institution. He draws this connection most explicitly in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, when he has Stephen characterize the “young fenian” Mat Davin’s relationship to Revivalist tropes, myths, and concerns as “worshipful” and characterized by a kind of naïve faith. That is, according to Stephen, the “young peasant” Davin not only “worshipped the sorrowful legend of Ireland,” but also

Stood toward [Irish myth] upon which no individual mind had ever drawn out a line of beauty and to its unwieldy tales that divided themselves as they moved down the cycles in the same attitude as towards the Roman catholic religion, the attitude of a dullwitted loyal serf. (167)

Joyce here reveals that he thought Revivalism preyed upon the same instincts towards submission and thoughtless but fervent obedience to mystifying narratives that the

Catholic Church and its clergy had cultivated and preyed upon in the Irish for centuries—the major difference being that with the Revival, instead of an elite group of priests trying to control the thoughts and public discourse of the obedient Irish, often enough for the benefit of the priests themselves, it was an elite group of nationalist artists and intellectuals, many of whom were Anglo-Irish.

To return to a related critique, and one that I touched on earlier, Joyce sceptically viewed the Revival as to some extent reactionary—that is, as an Anglo-Irish attempt to preserve and reassert some of its dwindling power in a rapidly changing Ireland. As with Joyce’s tacitly anti-revivalist version of Irish cultural history, many of Joyce’s critiques on this score are essentially indirect, manifesting in his fiction at the level of the unsaid and at the level of form. For instance, Joyce never explicitly claims that he sees the Revivalists’ romantic and idealizing portrayals of the Irish peasantry as sublimations of Anglo-Irish anxieties about the collapse of the landlord system. Nor does he even claim outright that such mystifying portrayals bear little resemblance to the conditions in which most of his Irish compatriots actually live. Instead, his counterpoints manifest themselves in the alternative classes of people that Joyce chooses to represent in his fiction, and in the de-mystifying realism with which he represents them. As Castle claims,

Joyce’s choice of subjects – the urban proletariat, the lower classes, the petite bourgeoisie, the unemployed, single men and women, children – [u]nderscored the double injustice done by the misrepresentation of both nationalists and Revivalists, for not only did they idealize or mystify the peasant, but the figure of the peasant had come to stand for *all* Irish people, regardless of the fact that many were increasingly residing in cities. (181)

Joyce touches on the appeal as well as on the mystifying ineffectuality of Revivalism in “A Little Cloud,” a story in which he also indirectly challenges the Revivalist conception of the representative Irishman insofar as he centers the story on an educated urbanite

instead of a romanticized peasant. The story's protagonist, Little Chandler, is trapped in a passionless life of dull routine. He works as a clerk, a job which does not seem particularly financially remunerating: despite being careful with his money, and not having wasteful vices (for instance, he drinks "very little as a rule"), Little Chandler cannot afford a full-time maid to take care of his home while his wife watches over their infant son; nor, the text implies, can he even comfortably afford to spend "ten and elevenpence" on a "pretty and stylish" blouse for his wife. Though newly wed, Little Chandler already seems unhappily married. His wife is cold, passionless and distant. He is uncomfortable around her, blushing and stammering in her presence. Meanwhile, she seems perfectly comfortable nagging and berating him on a regular basis.

The Revival seems to offer Little Chandler a means by which he can escape the oppressive circumstances by which he feels trapped. He fantasizes about becoming, and marketing himself as, a Revivalist poet, as he believes that "If he could only write a book and get it published, that might open the way for him" (92). He also fantasizes about how English critics would receive and review his poetry.

The English critics, perhaps, would recognize him as one of the Celtic school by reason of the melancholy tone of his poems; besides that, he would put in allusions. He began to invent sentences and phrases from the notices which his book would get. *Mr Chandler has the gift of easy and graceful verse...A wistful sadness pervades these poems...The Celtic note.* It was a pity his name was not more Irish-looking. Perhaps it would be better to insert his mother's name before the surname: Thomas Malone Chandler, or better still: T. Malone Chandler. (80)

For all of his fantasies about playing up his Irishness and participating in the Literary Revival, by the end of the story Little Chandler has not written any poems, nor has he even determined, in any concrete sense, the themes and subjects about which he would write were he to pursue his aspirations in earnest. In typical Joycean form, the Revival is

thus shown to function as a romantic dream that, like a little cloud, floats impotently above reality. It offers Little Chandler the comforting illusion that escape from his dull and dissatisfying life is possible, but nothing more tangible, actionable, or insightful than this mere, mystifying illusion.

As he walks through Dublin on his way to meet his old friend Gallaher, Little Chandler “pursue[s] his revery [about becoming a respected Revivalist poet] so ardently that he passe[s] his street and ha[s] to turn back” (80). In other words, the very moment Little Chandler considers embracing Revivalism he becomes so absent-minded and detached from reality that he cannot even navigate the streets of Dublin. The implication of this little joke is clear: while the Revival might furnish its adherents, like Little Chandler, with empowering fantasies, such fantasies only serve to distract them from reality, and to alienate them from Ireland as it actually is.

“A Little Cloud” further highlights a number of ways in which Revivalism ultimately amounts to a kind of rejection of Ireland, despite being a “pro-Irish” and “nationalist” movement. The Revivalists painted an idealized portrait of Ireland, the Irish people, and Irish life. As Little Chandler shows, however, affirming this Irish ideal goes hand in hand with rejecting Irish actuality. It is no coincidence that Little Chandler’s Revivalist fantasies follow hard upon his sensation of feeling “superior to the people he passe[s]” on Capel Street. The elitism of Revivalists like Russell and Yeats seems here inextricable from Revivalism as such, as it evidently rubs off on even the lowliest of their acolytes.

The true motives behind Little Chandler’s shallow but enthusiastic embrace of Revivalism reveal his underlying antipathy towards Ireland. They have nothing to do

with his desire to aid in the creation of an authentic national tradition and identity.

Rather, Little Chandler hopes that by participating in the Revival he will be able to get a poem “into some London paper,” to impress English art critics, and, eventually, to move to what he refers to as “the great city London” (76):

“Could he not escape from his little house? Was it too late for him to try to live bravely like Gallaher? Could he go to London? There was only the furniture still to be paid for. If he could only write a book and get it published, that might open the way for him.” (91-92)

The inauthenticity of Revivalism and its inadequacies as a mass movement are here on full display. While its more serious practitioners might genuinely believe in the movement’s potential for unifying and culturally-enriching the Irish, Joyce reveals that the everyday Irishman like Little Chandler sees only its potential to be exploited for individual gain. This dovetails with Joyce’s related critique of the Revival’s lack of efficacy in de-colonizing Irish subjectivity. Little Chandler’s familiarity with the movement and its rhetoric has not spurred in him a desire to come to terms with Ireland, to authentically affirm his own Irishness, to combat the colonial order, or to revive Irish culture in order to protect Ireland from the “filthy modern tide” of English culture. Instead, it has taught him that there is money to be made by becoming a living caricature of Irishness in order to pander to an English audience. Perhaps the story’s bitterest irony is that Little Chandler sees the anti-colonial, Irish nationalist Revival as little more than a vehicle he can take to London, the metropolitan centre of the colonial order and the “materialist” culture the Revival was ostensibly intended to combat. His internalized sense of Irish inferiority and English superiority remains undisturbed, if not strengthened, by his flirtation with Revivalist ideology.

For all of his ridiculous qualities, Little Chandler's instinctive inclination to market his poetry to an English audience actually makes practical sense. There was a market for such allusive, melancholic, Celtic-Twilight-inspired poetry in England. Indeed, some of Joyce's scepticism about the Revival stems from his awareness of the energetic interest the English were taking in Revivalist projects and concerns, as during the movement's heyday many English artists and intellectuals were following in the footsteps of, and even working alongside, Revivalist folklorists, linguists, and artists, both in Ireland and across the channel. One can imagine why the Irish Catholic Joyce, already wary of the disproportionate representation of Anglo-Irish men and women in the Revival, would view this English connection in a dubious light.

Joyce works through his concerns with this English connection to Revivalism most directly in the "Telemachus" episode of *Ulysses*. "Telemachus" features Haines, the English folklorist; Buck Mulligan, the cynically-opportunist Revivalist; and Stephen Dedalus, the Revivalist critic and aspiring Irish artist. The "ponderous Saxon" Haines is boarding with Stephen and Mulligan in the Martello Tower during his sojourn in Ireland. His reason for visiting Ireland appears to be academic. After all, as Howes notes, Haines "goes to the National Library to do folkloric research, buys Douglas Hyde's Revivalist classic, *Lovesongs of Connacht*, and appears to be working on a book about Irish folklore" (263). Although the actual words are elided from the text, Haines is also the only character in the novel who speaks full sentences in Gaelic. In short, the character in *Ulysses* with the most explicit investment in, and mastery of, the ancient Irish cultural and linguistic forms that the Revival sought to revive is a wealthy English imperialist.

In his conversation with Stephen, Haines acknowledges that the English have treated the Irish “rather unfairly”; however, he shifts the blame for colonialism away from England and onto the impersonal forces of history, musing to Stephen that, ultimately, “history is to blame” (17). Yet Haines is in Ireland to participate in the study of the very Irish history, culture, and language that the Revivalists were trying to reinterpret and reclaim for explicitly anti-English and anti-colonial ends. In other words, although Haines might claim that history is to blame for Ireland’s colonization, he nevertheless seeks to influence and control how that history gets narrativized. Moreover, given the attitudes of Mulligan and other Revivalist intellectuals towards Haines throughout *Ulysses*, it seems the Revivalists themselves are perfectly willing to assist Haines in this neo-colonial endeavour.

Stephen and Buck Mulligan have different ideas about how they should view and treat Haines, which reflect their respective attitudes towards Revivalism. Mulligan is more of an active participant in Revivalist circles than is Stephen, as is evidenced in “Scylla and Charybdis” by the fact that Mulligan has been invited to George Moore’s soiree for Irish writers while Stephen has not (177). Yet despite being a part of this Revivalist clique, Mulligan does not seem to take the Revival very seriously on its own terms. He is, in a certain sense, simply a more talented and self-aware opportunist than Little Chandler. Just as Buck Mulligan can capably employ Catholic discourse to blasphemous ends without experiencing any guilt or psychological incongruence in so doing, he can also manoeuvre through Revivalist social circles and articulate Revivalist concerns while remaining internally unmoved and unconvinced by the Revivalist project. He talks down to the milkwoman, who is as strong a representation of the Irish “folk” as

any that appears in *Ulysses*. He mocks Irish folklore, and mocks those who take it seriously, as in the anecdote about “old mother Gorgan” he performs for Haines:

—When I makes tea I makes tea, as old mother Gorgan said. And when I makes water I makes water. [...] *So I do, Mrs Cahill*, says she. *Begob, ma'am*, says Mrs Cahill, *God send you don't make them in the one pot*. [...] That's folk, he said very earnestly, for your book, Haines. Five lines of text and ten pages of notes about the folk and the fishgods of Dundrum. (11)

Buck Mulligan shows here that he is acutely aware that Haines' work amounts to a kind of intellectual colonialism. He is aware, in other words, of what Spiegel observes, that while “the notes themselves reflect the revivalist aim of disseminating Irish culture for a wider audience unfamiliar with it, the ten pages of notes for five lines of lyric illustrates how this process of dissemination shapes meaning, effectively colonizing the text” (93). But Mulligan does not feel the bite of conscience for his complicity in this neo-colonial enterprise. He is perfectly happy to assist Haines, to play as his “local informant,” to act as Ireland's “gay betrayer,” so long as he can wheedle a few guineas out of Haines in the process. The golden-mouthed Mulligan admits as much to Stephen, and wonders why Stephen will not behave similarly: “Why don't you play them as I do?” he asks. In short, Buck Mulligan sees those with Revivalist commitments as exploitable, while he seems to view the Revival itself as seriously as he claims to view mortality: “it's all mockery and beastly” (7).

Stephen, meanwhile, is hypersensitive to the ideological, cultural, and power dynamics operative around him. He also takes them quite seriously, always viewing such micro-dialectics in terms of their broader implications for the nation. His reluctance to follow Mulligan's advice – to tell Haines about his symbol for Irish art so that he can “touch him for a guinea” – is born out of more than just his dislike of Haines as a person.



Stephen sees that marketing and selling his anti-colonial art to Haines, the usurper of the Martello Tower and the chapter's personification of the colonial usurper of Ireland, would be, at best, an act of bad faith. In Kantian language, Stephen sees his individual actions in terms of the maxims such actions would enact, and if all Irish artists were willing to sell out to the English, as Mulligan would have Stephen do, it would render anti-colonial Irish art entirely inauthentic and hypocritical, not to mention tacitly influenced by and under the control of the colonial power it is ostensibly meant to combat.

According to Mulligan, Haines's family fortune comes from his father having "made his tin selling jalap to Zulus or some bloody swindle or other" (6). Joyce's critique of imperialism in "Telemachus" thus extends beyond a critique of imperialism in Ireland to one of imperialism as a global phenomenon. After all, Mulligan's comment indicates that Haines' family fortune is derived from his father having used medically ineffective products made in the colonized Americas (jalap is a purgative made from jalapenos) to swindle South Africans during the nineteenth century scramble for Africa. Haines' money is tainted with colonial exploitation through and through. Thus, Stephen's refusal to touch Haines for guineas symbolizes more than just his refusal, as an Irishman, to beg at the feet of an Englishman. It symbolizes his refusal to legitimate imperialism as such by refusing to benefit from any of its spoils.

Stephen suspects that Haines views the Irish, including Stephen himself, through the reductive and essentializing lens provided by the Revivalist ideology. He suspects that Haines sees the Irish as a monolith, and as objects of study rather than as individual subjects. When Haines claims that he wants to make a book of Stephen's sayings, one

gets the impression that Haines thinks of Stephen as a particularly witty native to whom he, as an ethnographer, happens to have access. At the very least, Haines does not seem to see Stephen as Stephen would like to be seen: that is, as an aspiring Irish artist who is perfectly capable of writing his own poeticisms down. When Haines questions Stephen about his religious beliefs, he similarly betrays his detachment from, and sense of superiority to, the Irish objects of his academic gaze. Indeed, Haines' conversation with Stephen looks less like an exchange of ideas between intellectual peers than Haines' attempt to use Stephen to gain insight into something like the essence of "the Irish mind." Stephen's sarcastic retort to Haines' probing shows that he is aware of this dynamic, but refuses to play along:

—Yes, of course, [Haines] said, as they went on again. Either you believe or you don't, isn't it? Personally I couldn't stomach that idea of a personal God. You don't stand for that, I suppose?

—You behold in me, Stephen said with grim displeasure, a horrible example of free thought. (17)

It is as if Stephen were here saying, "If you really want to know what 'we Irish' believe, go ask some other Irishman." One can imagine the book Haines might have written had Stephen been more cooperative: *Apothegms of a Young Irishman*, by Haines—a book in which ten pages of explanatory notes about Irish history, religion, and folklore would surround and smother every five of Stephen's witty and poetical phrases.

Joyce uses subtle symbolism in this chapter to reinforce this dynamic between Stephen and Haines. Haines evidently keeps a gun about him, a fact which disconcerts Stephen, as Haines has loud and disruptive nightmares about shooting black panthers:

—He was raving all night about a black panther, Stephen said. Where is his guncase?

—A woeful lunatic! Mulligan said. Were you in a funk?

—I was, Stephen said with energy and growing fear. Out here in the dark with a man I don't know raving and moaning to himself about shooting a black panther. You saved men from drowning. I'm not a hero, however. If he stays here I am off.  
(4)

Given that Haines' father made his fortune in South Africa, that Haines owns a gun, and that he dreams about shooting black panthers, the text implies that one of Haines' hobbies is trophy hunting for exotic game. Joyce thus provides the reader with another interpretive window onto Haines' academic work in Ireland: his Revivalist project of collecting, analyzing, and writing about Irish folklore, of studying the Irish, and, ideally, of compiling a book of Stephen's phrases, are all intellectualized forms of trophy hunting to Haines. Stephen, who wears only black clothing, risks becoming a symbolic version of the black panther Haines dreams of killing. That is, not only might Haines literally shoot Stephen one night in a noctambulant frenzy, but he also seems bent on treating Stephen, his ideas, his phrases, and, indeed, his fellow Irish and their culture, as trophies—as things he can hunt down, master and possess. Through the character Haines, then, Joyce shows how the Revival afforded English academics the ability to influence the new, and supposedly authentic, Irish national narrative; provided them with yet another reductive, essentializing lens through which to view the Irish; and, in Haines' case, encouraged them to treat the Irish and Irish culture as kinds of exotic game, eminently suitable for intellectual trophy hunting—as objects of study about which they could write books to then show off to their friends back in England, books that would function, to extend the metaphor, like the high-cultural equivalents of black panther hides. As Spiegel puts it, “The interaction between Haines, Buck Mulligan, and Stephen seems to suggest that the Revival represents another phase...of colonization rather than a resistance against it” (93).

Joyce, then, clearly saw Revivalism as fatally flawed for a number of significant reasons. But his ultimate project of forging a conscience for the Irish race required him to do more than simply critique and reject the Revivalist brand of Irish cultural nationalism. It also required him to explore and critique other ideological frameworks on option, and to determine whether they outlined more promising “solutions” to Irish paralysis than Revivalism did. This initially led the young Joyce, as if in an act of anti-Revivalist defiance, to embrace an ideology that stood in complete dialectical opposition to Revivalism: cosmopolitan aestheticism.

### **Cosmopolitanism, Aestheticism, and Stephen’s Development**

There is a long critical tradition of reading Joyce as fundamentally a cosmopolitan aesthete. This tradition begins at the beginning of Joyce criticism, with Joyce’s promoter and early critic, Ezra Pound. Pound believed that even Joyce’s earliest work clearly manifested his thoroughgoing cosmopolitanism. He viewed *Dubliners* as the literary extension of Joyce’s self-imposed exile from “the local stupidity” of Ireland (“Joyce has fled to Trieste and into the modern world” (32)), and said of the collection:

Erase the local names and a few specifically local allusions, and a few historic events of the past, and substitute a few different local names, allusions and events, and these stories could be told of any town. (29)

This interpretation of Joyce as primarily a cosmopolitan thinker and modernist literary experimenter – as a writer concerned above all with writing European, rather than Irish, literature, who chose Ireland as his subject as if simply because it was ready-to-hand while he focused the bulk of his energy on his ultimate goal of radically innovating and inventing new literary and aesthetic forms – dominated Joyce criticism long after Pound.

For instance, Terry Eagleton, in “Nationalism: Irony and Commitment,” almost echoes Pound when speaking about Joyce’s cosmopolitan aims with *Ulysses*:

Joyce’s compliment to Ireland, in inscribing it on the cosmopolitan map, is in this sense distinctly backhanded. [*Ulysses*] celebrates and undermines the Irish national formation at a stroke, deploying the full battery of cosmopolitan modernist techniques to re-create it while suggesting with its every breath just how easily it could have done the same for Bradford or the Bronx. (36)

This interpretive tradition is still in force today, having been lent a new energy by the recent turn to cosmopolitan theory in modernist studies in general (e.g. in Rebecca Walkowitz’s *Cosmopolitan Style*) and in Joyce studies in particular (e.g. in the work of Paul Kintzele and Benjamin Boyson). Indeed, as recently as 2017, Aleksander Stević contributed to this critical tradition by reaffirming it in the face of the alternative orthodoxy that has grown among postcolonial Joyceans like Emer Nolan, Enda Duffy, and Marjorie Howes over the last two decades. While such postcolonial Joyceans read Joyce’s cosmopolitanism and aestheticism as invariably tempered with some measures of anti-colonialism and even Irish nationalism, Stević reads *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* as a text in which Joyce systematically repudiates “nationalist tropes from the position of liberal cosmopolitanism” (40), and in which he deconstructs “the project of nation building *in toto*.” Moreover, Stević reads *A Portrait* as representative of “Joycean politics” (49) as such, and claims that

After twenty years in which Joyce studies have been dominated by attempts to displace the once-prevalent vision of Joyce as an apolitical and internationalist aesthete with a version of Joyce as, above all, a colonial Irish intellectual, it is time to once again take his commitment to aestheticism and cosmopolitanism more seriously. (40)

There is a great deal of evidence that appears to support Stević’s reading of Joyce as an apolitical cosmopolitan aesthete, especially if one reads Stephen Dedalus’ thoughts and

declamations in *A Portrait* as representative of the mature Joyce's own politics and ideology. The formalist aesthetic philosophy that Stephen propounds to his classmate Lynch stands loftily above questions of nationalism, politics and the world of becoming in which such questions gain significance. Despite the fact that Stephen and Lynch are, Stephen agrees, both "animals," with needs and bodily appetites, embroiled in certain material and political circumstances, questions of aesthetics are, for Stephen, confined exclusively to the "mental world" of formal relations. Moreover, art, according to Stephen, does not serve moral, political, or ideological ends; instead, art is "the human disposition of sensible and intelligible matter for an esthetic end." Insofar as Stephen chooses to be an aesthete and an artist, he chooses to stand above and beyond nationalism and politics. As Stević argues:

Aesthetic disinterestedness, with its investment in the principle of universality, thus emerges as a form of resistance to the demands of nationalism, and indeed, as a vital tool of Joycean politics. For Stephen Dedalus, aestheticism amounts to a dissenting political stance. (49)

Stephen's formalist aesthetics, which puts art at a distance from political and ideological concerns, mirrors the distancing terms in which Stephen figures his aspirations as an artist and Irishman throughout the novel. "Flight" from worldly, non-aesthetic constraints and the "freedom" to which such flight leads become the themes that structure Stephen's burgeoning artistic and existential self-understanding. When the director of his college offers Stephen the opportunity to join the Jesuit order as a prospective priest, Stephen sees accepting this offer as "a definite and irrevocable act" that would threaten "to end forever, in time and eternity, his freedom" (149); moreover, he conceives of his rejection of this offer as an "instant of wild flight" (157). When discussing nationalist concerns with Stephen, the Irish nationalist Davin tries to convince

him that “a man’s country comes first. Ireland first, Stevie.” Stephen subordinates Davin’s nationalist concerns to universal concerns regarding the soul, and from this height neutralizes Davin’s arguments, again using the figure of “flight”:

The soul is born, [Stephen] said vaguely, first in those moments I told you of. It has a slow and dark birth, more mysterious than the birth of the body. When the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I will try to fly by those nets. (188)

Stephen seeks to fly by such nets not only to attain spiritual freedom for its own sake; he also sees attaining such freedom as a necessary precondition to creating the kind of art he wants to create. He implies as much in his conversation with his friend and confidant Cranly, juxtaposing commitments to “church” and “fatherland” with his own commitment to artistic and existential freedom.

I will not serve that in which I no longer believe whether it call itself my home, my fatherland or my church; and I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my defence the only arms I allow myself—silence, exile and cunning. (229)

Thus, instead of remaining a Catholic and instead of becoming an Irish nationalist, Stephen chooses “exile” from these ideological orders, as well as exile from Ireland itself. He chooses the liberated life of the cosmopolitan aesthete and artist, a choice that will impel him to leave Ireland for continental Europe, where he will

Create proudly out of the freedom and power of his soul, as the great artificer whose name he bore, a living thing, new and soaring and beautiful, impalpable, imperishable. (157)

I do not disagree with the interpretive tradition that reads Stephen as, to a large extent, Joyce’s fictional representation of his younger self. After all, Joyce, like Stephen, similarly chose to “exile” himself from Ireland, leaving his homeland for continental Europe, in whose cosmopolitan metropolises he would spend the rest of his life realizing

Stephen's aspirations to create "new and soaring and beautiful" works of art. I do disagree, however, with those, like Stević, who interpret Stephen's views as reflective not only of the young Joyce's views but also of the mature Joyce's views, as if the fact that Joyce ultimately realized some of his youthful aspirations constitutes evidence that he never re-evaluated his youthful ideology. Regardless of how educated, intelligent, and, even, wise, Stephen might appear at certain moments in the latter chapters of *A Portrait*, he is only a teenager, just as Joyce himself was only a teenager when he attended University College, Dublin. In other words, Stephen's apolitical cosmopolitan aestheticism might in large part reflect the young James Joyce's own ideology; however, this does not mean that Joyce did not continue to refine and develop his ideological position after he left University College, Dublin. Indeed, there is evidence that Stephen begins to modify his views by the end of *A Portrait*, a change which, I will argue, reflects the young Joyce's modification of his own ideology.

In his final diary entry, Stephen writes that he will go "to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of [his] soul the uncreated conscience of [his] race" (235). Stević interprets this assertion in line with his reading of the rest of *A Portrait*. That is, while it may seem to indicate a development in Stephen's orientation towards Ireland, from one of disdainful repudiation to one of national concern and engagement, according to Stević it actually represents Stephen's final rejection of Ireland, and is therefore consistent with the views that Stephen holds at earlier points in the novel:

When Stephen announces that he will create a national conscience, after declaring that he will not serve, such an announcement can only be taken as yet another form of the hero's self-assertion in the face of an Ireland he rejects... With his critique of nationalism so extensive, his distantiation from all tenets of national



identity so far-reaching, Stephen's vacuous promise of "forging" an Irish identity is primarily an expression of disdain toward the extant Ireland. As he is preparing to go into self-imposed exile, it is a final gesture of severance and rejection. (51)

Although some aspects of this reading hold, in the larger analysis it is an instance of the text disappearing under the interpretation. Stević is so bent on demonstrating that Stephen's aesthetic cosmopolitanism remains constant throughout *A Portrait* that he misinterprets the very evidence that demonstrates the contrary: Stephen's ideology is in process. In other words, while Stephen surely still rejects many of the tenets of Revivalist nationalism by the end of the novel, his change from seeking to fly away from Ireland, avoiding all the nets it casts, in order to create art in uninhibited freedom, to seeking to forge a national conscience, marks a decisive shift in his orientation towards Ireland, aestheticism and nationalism.

As Gregory Castle argues, the Celtic Revival ultimately "proved inadequate for the articulation of an "authentic" Irish identity" (173). However, as he goes on to note,

While it is clear that Yeats and Synge succeeded in awakening the Irish people to a deeper sense of their national aspirations and identities – and their right to represent these things – it is not clear that this awakening has led to the invention of a "soul." Perhaps the most we can say is that the Revival succeeded primarily, and not insignificantly, in awakening the Irish to the need for such an invention.

Stephen's final diary entry implies that he is one such person in whom the Revival awakened this need. By the end of *A Portrait*, Stephen has begun to see the potential in and the importance of the project of creating a national conscience for the Irish. Even if he will ultimately disagree with the Revivalists about what this national conscience should look like, he nevertheless seeks to participate in its creation. Thus, what Stević calls Stephen's extensive "critique of nationalism" does not leave him nearly so far removed from "all tenets of national identity" as Stević claims. As Marjorie Howes states

in “Joyce, Colonialism and Nationalism,” and as I have been arguing throughout this thesis, “Stephen inhabits the structures of the Revival, even as he rejects that movement” (265). Stephen adopts the nationalist forms while dispensing with the bulk of their Revivalist contents.

Of course, the “conscience of a race” could (but certainly need not) be viewed as an apolitical formation. As such, it could be argued that by the end of the novel, Stephen’s supposed apoliticality remains intact. However, Stephen’s affirmation of the Irish as a distinct group of people, characterized by some irreducible quality that differentiates them from the non-Irish, goes against a reading of him as a cosmopolitan proper. By the end of the novel, Stephen does not see the Irish merely as latent citizens of the world: he sees and affirms them as the Irish; as a “race” with their own particular cultural, political, and material history and makeup; and as a people in need of their own “conscience” that will do justice to this particularity while helping them to overcome their current cultural, political, and economic paralysis. This may not make Stephen a nationalist in the narrowest sense. After all, he is not an uncritically zealous patriot who is ready and willing to be mobilized by the state on the basis of his imagined unity with some mystifying, mythological Irish essence. However, his affirmation of some form of Irishness at the end of the novel makes his ideological stance more complex and nationally inflected than Stević admits. That Joyce himself similarly viewed the Irish as Stephen does – that is, as a real “entity,” united by something irreducibly Irish – is made evident throughout his writings. As he poses the question rhetorically in “Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages”: “Do we not see that in Ireland the Danes, the Firbolgs, the Milesians from Spain, the Norman invaders, and the Anglo-Saxon settlers have united to

form a new entity, one might say under the influence of a local deity?” To the mature Joyce, the answer to this question, albeit with certain qualifications, is “yes.”

Moreover, Stephen’s desire to create a “conscience” for the Irish through his art flies in the face of Stević’s reading of him as having remained a pure aesthete through to the end of the novel, and thus complicates his reading of such aestheticism as central to “Joycean politics.” Creating a conscience is more morally and ideologically inflected than simply creating “new and soaring and beautiful, impalpable, imperishable” art. Instead of reading Stephen’s final assertion as “vacuous,” then, it should be taken seriously, and read as evidence that Stephen’s ideology is not static throughout *A Portrait*, but develops, moving gradually farther away from pure aestheticism and closer towards the more nuanced ideological position of Stephen’s creator.

Of course, Joyce himself was never simply moralizing or didactic in his fiction. However, he also clearly held, *contra* the young Stephen, that art served more than just “an esthetic end.” This is evident in Joyce’s letters to Grant Richards, with whom Joyce fought to have *Dubliners* published for a number of years. Richards refused to publish *Dubliners* until Joyce agreed to remove a number of passages from his stories that Richards and the printer deemed offensive. Joyce explains his reluctance to alter his stories in terms that show that he viewed his art as having the power to have real, salutary effects on the Irish people:

I fight to retain [the passages] because I believe that in composing [*Dubliners*] I have taken the first step toward the spiritual liberation of my country. (Scholes 270)

And, in another letter:

I seriously believe that you will retard the course of civilization in Ireland by preventing the Irish people from having one good look at themselves in my nicely polished looking-glass. (Scholes 277).

These are not the words of a man who sees art in exclusively aesthetic terms. They voice the distresses of an author who is decidedly concerned with the state of his nation, and who believes that through his art he can help to change this state and liberate his nation's inhabitants.

It is this sort of reading of a more nationally engaged Joyce that postcolonial Joyceans have championed over the last two decades, pitting their view of the author as an Irishman, deeply concerned with his country's political, moral, and anti-colonial struggles against the once-dominant view, resurrected in relatively pure form by Stević, of Joyce as an apolitical cosmopolitan aesthete. Indeed, a great deal of contemporary scholarly work takes place on or between these two poles of interpretation. However, while some scholars go so far in the opposite direction as to characterize Joyce as a vengefully anti-colonial Irish nationalist (a position Andrew Gibson advances in *Joyce's Revenge: History, Politics, and Aesthetics in "Ulysses"*), the most compelling trend that characterizes Joyce scholarship today regarding this constellation of concerns attempts to tease out the ways in which Joyce tried to mediate between the national and the international, between nationalism and cosmopolitanism.

In *Cosmopolitan Style*, Rebecca Walkowitz argues that Joyce approaches this ideological dichotomy with an eye towards disruption and deconstruction. She draws attention to Joyce's employment of "trivia" in his fiction, and argues that it manifests "the double imperative of Joyce's project: the affirmation of distinctive cultures in the service of Irish liberation and the rejection of cultural distinctiveness in the service of

antiracism, democratic individualism, and transnational community” (56). In other words, Walkowitz argues that by emphasising cultural “trivia,” especially in his later fiction, Joyce seeks to “disrupt” the “philosophical abstractions” that pit ideologies like nationalism and cosmopolitanism against one another as wholly irreconcilable. By inserting inassimilable units of local culture into his fictional examinations of general ideological paradigms, Joyce loosens up these paradigms, and thereby makes space for the generation of more flexible and inclusive forms of modern community and belonging. Meanwhile, Nels Pearson, whose *Irish Cosmopolitanism* is titled so as to immediately evoke the paradoxes, contradictions, and tensions that inevitably arise in any attempt to reconcile the national and transnational, argues that Irish expatriate modernists like Joyce did “not so much ingeniously deconstruct, as much as express and make evident, the intellectually and psychologically demanding relationship between colonial and international identity” (4). That is, Pearson sees Joyce’s project as primarily one of representing Irish colonial subjectivity in its struggle to become simultaneously national and transnational, rather than one of attempting to deconstruct or undermine the paradigms that provide the foundation for such a struggle in the first place. Of course, there are substantive differences between these approaches to Joyce; however, Walkowitz and Pearson are alike in that they both represent a contemporary turn in the critical conversation away from reductively enlisting Joyce among the ranks of nationalists or cosmopolitans and towards discerning the subtle ways in which Joyce negotiated the competing calls of these ideologies in a tumultuous and transformative period of Irish and world history. Yet while scholars in this vein have focused their energies on determining whether Joyce’s mature work (which Walkowitz and Pearson focus on almost

exclusively) should be characterized as deconstructive, reconciliatory, or representative, and on discerning what, specifically, Joyce's mature ideology amounts to (and whether such a thing can even be discerned), I believe they have paid insufficient attention, first, to the process by which Joyce came to his mature ideology, and, second, to Joyce's representation of his early ideological development in his fiction. Of course, I have attempted to address the former critical dearth throughout this thesis. But it is with the aim of addressing latter that I shall now turn to "The Dead," an early story in which Joyce not only further examines and critiques Revivalist nationalism, cosmopolitanism and aestheticism, but in which he also represents his own early ideological development through the development of the story's protagonist, Gabriel Conroy.

## Chapter IV - Critique, Dialectic and Synthesis in “The Dead”

### Cosmopolitan Aestheticism: A Vote for the Status Quo

Nowhere in his early fiction does Joyce interrogate and attempt to mediate between Irish nationalism, cosmopolitanism and aestheticism more robustly than in “The Dead.” Indeed, “The Dead” can be read as Joyce’s sustained self-critique of his early apolitical cosmopolitan aestheticism, as in this story Joyce shows how this ideology is predicated on insecurity, resentment, and naivety; alienates its adherents from themselves, others, and the conditions in which they live; and functions to enforce and maintain the status quo. Given that Joyce sees Ireland’s status quo as existentially, socially, politically, and economically paralyzing, it follows that he sees this ideology as incapable of solving the problem of Irish paralysis, and thus as unsuitable for grounding the new national conscience and identity he will ultimately seek to outline and make manifest in his later fiction.

The protagonist of “The Dead” is Gabriel Conroy, a teacher and occasional writer of literary reviews. The bulk of the story takes place at a dinner and dance that his elderly aunts, the Misses Morkan, hold every year around Christmas time. Gabriel Conroy is gainfully employed. He is well educated, well spoken, and reasonably well liked. He can afford to dress well, and to go on a cycling tour every year in continental Europe. He is depended upon by his aunts, and acts as the *de facto* patriarch of their annual party, sitting at the head of their dinner table; carving and serving the turkey when it is time to eat; and giving a rhetorically strong, albeit emotionally stilted, after-dinner speech. He is also married to a woman from Connacht, named Gretta, with whom he has two young children. In short, when compared with the lives of many other characters in *Dubliners*, Gabriel’s life seems, and is, quite enviable. Yet the text makes it clear that beneath this

veneer of success and respectability, Gabriel is paralyzed with insecurity, and desperately tries to hold his fragile self-conception together, and to guard himself from the external forces that threaten to disturb this self-conception, by keeping the more difficult, emotionally charged, and uncomfortable aspects of reality at a distance.

Through Gabriel, Joyce reveals aestheticism to be as much an existential orientation as it is a philosophy of art. Gabriel is an aesthete insofar as he believes, not unlike Stephen throughout most of *A Portrait*, that “art is above politics”; however, his aestheticism informs and reflects the way he views and comports himself in his life. Just as the aesthete brackets the historical, material, and political energies in and implications of works of art, seeking to find in art only the manifestations of eternally true laws and formally beautiful relations, so too does Gabriel bracket the real energies that arise from contradictions in the social fabric into which he is woven – so too does he bracket the real conditions and concerns of those around him, even those closest to him, like his wife – in order to aestheticize reality from a safe and comfortable distance. The most striking example of this tendency takes place near the end of the Misses Morkan’s party, when Gabriel baldly aestheticizes Gretta from a distance.

A woman was standing near the top of the first flight, in the shadow also. He could not see her face but he could see the terracotta and salmonpink panels of her skirt which the shadow made appear black and white. It was his wife. She was leaning on the banisters, listening to something. Gabriel was surprised at her stillness and strained his ear to listen also. But he could hear little save the noise of laughter and dispute on the front steps, a few chords struck on the piano and a few notes of a man's voice singing.

He stood still in the gloom of the hall, trying to catch the air that the voice was singing and gazing up at his wife. There was a grace and mystery in her attitude as if she were a symbol of something. He asked himself what is a woman standing on the stairs in the shadow, listening to distant music, a symbol of. If he were a painter he would paint her in that attitude. Her blue felt hat would show off the bronze of her hair against the darkness and the dark panels of her skirt would



show off the light ones. *Distant Music* he would call the picture if he were a painter. (239-240)

Here Gabriel projects with his aestheticizing gaze upon Gretta, effectively objectifying her, reducing her to an image. It is worth noting that Gretta is referred to here as "a woman," and also as "his wife," but is never mentioned by name, illustrating the tendency of the aesthetic gaze to neutralize the particular otherness of the Other by encapsulating that Other in a general term ("woman"), or in a term indicating possession ("his wife") relative to the one who gazes. In other words, Gretta becomes an object whose meaning is dependent on her subsumption under a general category, or on her relation to the man possessively gazing upon her—what she herself thinks or experiences do not factor into the equation. This aestheticization reaches its dehumanizing pitch when Gabriel attempts to make "his wife" into "a symbol of something," and, failing in this endeavour, expands the sphere of generality further, turning her into a representation of "woman" as such, as when he asks himself: "what is a woman standing on the stairs in the shadow, listening to distance music, a symbol of?"

Gabriel benefits from this mode of aestheticizing others because it allows him to "overmaster" (248) their otherness from a safe distance. It allows him to project whatever he wants to upon them, and thus to avoid having to make contact with the messy, complex, and emotionally charged realities that lie beneath such projections. In this way, Gabriel's mode of relation exemplifies what Emmanuel Levinas calls the "I's identification, its marvellous autarchy" ("Philosophy and the Idea of Infinity" 49-50): Gabriel preserves his ego by overmastering alterity and by making his solipsistic self the "crucible of [the] transmutation of the other into the same":

The I of knowledge is at once the Same par excellence, the very event of identification and the melting pot where every Other is transmuted into the Same... This identification constitutes its freedom, since the I returns to itself despite any other that it may encounter such that no other can restrict or impede it. ("Transcendence and Height" 13)

The deficiencies of this mode of relation, however, become strikingly apparent throughout the story. With respect to Gretta, Gabriel is ultimately confronted with the fact that his understanding of her mood in the above sequence, of the very particular meaning of her relationship with the "distant music," and, most significantly, of the nature of their relationship as a whole, is predicated on misunderstandings, ignorance, and naivety. So much of what Gabriel thinks he knows about his wife will turn out to be little more than what his aestheticizing projections upon her have reflected back to him.

Through Gabriel, Joyce also reveals that this tendency to aestheticize reality has political ramifications. There are three politically charged monuments referenced in "The Dead": the Wellington Monument, the equestrian statue of King William III, and the statue of Daniel O'Connell. Yet despite the different political valances with which these three monuments are charged, Gabriel instinctively brackets their respective political meanings and treats them equally as politically neutral, aesthetic objects. After his encounter with Molly Ivors, when Gabriel "retire[s] into the embrasure of the window," he fantasizes about

How pleasant it would be to walk out alone, first along the river and then through the park! The snow would be lying on the branches and forming a bright cap on the top of the Wellington Monument. How much more pleasant it would be there than at the supper table. (219)

Then, after the party has concluded, Gabriel, Gretta, Miss O'Callaghan and Mr Bartell D'Arcy take a cab to their respective destinations together. As the cab drives across O'Connell bridge, Miss O'Callaghan says:

--They say you never cross O'Connell Bridge without seeing a white horse.  
--I see a white man this time, said Gabriel.  
--Where? asked Mr Bartell D'Arcy.  
Gabriel pointed to the statue [of Daniel O'Connell], on which lay patches of snow. Then he nodded familiarly to it and waved his hand.  
--Good-night, Dan, he said gaily. (245)

Joyce encourages the reader to set these two moments alongside one another, as they each involve Gabriel drawing attention to a politically charged Dublin monument represented as covered in snow. One imagines a citizen with some measure of active political sensitivity and partisanship would feel differently about either monument. After all, though the Anglo-Irish Wellington did play a crucial role in Catholic Emancipation during his time as British prime minister, he was, unlike O'Connell, a Protestant and a Unionist, and thus was, unlike O'Connell, no great Irish nationalist hero. Gabriel the aesthete, however, brackets the political, and as such views both as purely aesthetic artefacts, contributing to the ambiance of his fantasy in the first instance, and to the cab conversation in the second. In his fantasy, he thought about how "pleasant" it would be to be in the presence of the Wellington Monument; when he passes by the O'Connell statue, he waves and speaks to it "gaily." That is, his aestheticism encourages him to regard two objects expressly constructed to represent disparate political ideologies in an apolitical light, such that his encounter with either is equally as pleasant, equally as stimulating of gaiety.

The most striking illustration of Gabriel's neutralizing aestheticism in the face what ought to be viewed with political sensitivity occurs in his story about "The never-to-be-forgotten Johnny" (237). Johnny is the horse of Gabriel's late grandfather Patrick Morkan, whom Gabriel initially calls a "glue-boiler" but who in fact ran a starch mill.

Gabriel tells this story with especial gaiety, even miming parts of it out. The story goes that Johnny the horse used to work in Patrick Morkan's starch mill, "walking round and round in order to drive the mill." One day, Patrick Morkan rode Johnny out "to a military review in the park" with his starch, in hopes of selling it.

"And everything went on beautifully until Johnny came in sight of King Billy's statue: and whether he fell in love with the horse King Billy sits on or whether he thought he was back again in the mill, anyhow he began to walk round the statue."

Gabriel paced in a circle round the hall in his goloshes amid the laughter of the others.

--Round and round he went, said Gabriel, and the old gentleman, who was a very pompous old gentleman, was highly indignant. *Go on, sir! What do you mean, sir? Johnny! Johnny! Most extraordinary conduct! Can't understand the horse!* (237-8)

This story is rich with colonial significance, which Gabriel seems to not even register, let alone view as significant to his story as an aesthetic performance and production. To begin with, Patrick Morkan himself is directly implicated in the maintenance of Irish colonial subjugation insofar as he sells his products to the English military, the representation of the past violence and the threat of future violence upon which Irish subjugation is ultimately predicated. Thus, Johnny's labour in the mill, unbeknownst to Johnny (Johnny is a horse, after all), functions to maintain English colonial hegemony. Moreover, the equestrian statue of King William III stood as a clear testament to British imperialism and protestant hegemony in Ireland, as well as to Irish Catholic oppression and Irish-nationalist suppression. After all, it was erected to commemorate the protestant King William's victory over the Catholic James II at the Battle of the Boyne, and, as Kelleher notes, it "was the centre of the annual Orange celebration of the Battle of the Boyne, a ceremony designed as much to insult the Catholics and provoke their impotent rage as to honour the memory of the king who "saved us from Popery and the Pretender,

from brass money and wooden shoes”” (427). This means that Johnny’s instinctive circling around King Billy’s statue, an acknowledged symbol of Irish and Irish Catholic oppression, simply makes symbolically manifest what was already materially entailed by Johnny’s circling in the mill: Johnny has always been labouring in mindless subservience to the English colonial power.

By having Gabriel pace in a circle when he tells the story, miming as Johnny, Joyce invites the reader to substitute Gabriel for the horse, and thus to see Gabriel as the real subject of the scene’s critical commentary. As a teacher as well as an occasional writer, albeit "only" of literary reviews, Gabriel works in the centres of ideological production and reproduction. As such, he is constantly at work interpellating his students and readers, the present and future citizens and educated class of Ireland, into an ideology of aestheticism. This ideology masquerades as being above politics, but it in fact amounts to the politics of the status quo. Minimally, this is because it encourages its adherents to subordinate politics to art, and to see political phenomena (i.e., the aforementioned statues and monument) as neutral, aesthetic phenomena. By flying above politics, just as a young Stephen Dedalus sought to do, the aesthete does nothing to change the extant political order, which effectively amounts to a vote *in absentia* for that order. This ideological orientation also serves to justify, in the name of art, actions that directly reinforce the status quo. For instance, Gabriel writes his literary reviews for *The Daily Express*, a newspaper with decidedly pro-Unionist sympathies. He uses his aestheticism to justify this work, as when he says he sees “nothing political in writing reviews of books” (214); however, by contributing sound pieces to this paper (even Molly Ivors admits that “she liked” his most recent review “immensely”), he legitimizes the paper,

and thus legitimizes the ideology for which it stands. Gabriel seems as ignorant of the fact that his labour contributes to the reproduction of the status quo, to the continued political submission of Ireland to colonial England, as is the mindless Johnny. Even as Gabriel wears his Continental goloshes and tells a political parable from an apolitical point of view, he is oblivious to the fact that he, at that very moment, just as in his work, is neutralizing political energies, and is thus generating a "glue" that will help to hold the colonial order together.

It is worth drawing attention here to how Gabriel's mistaken belief that Patrick Morkan was a "glue-boiler" adds further significance to this scene. To begin with, it highlights Gabriel's concern with aesthetics over reality: he is perfectly willing to revise history, to speak inaccurately about the material conditions his story claims to reflect, so long as the story is formally well-constructed and succeeds as an aesthetic production. More significantly, one must remember that glue at the time was made from dead horses. The implication thus becomes that the story Gabriel would have told, had he not been corrected, would have had Johnny mindlessly labouring to create a product for the English military (glue) that would literally as well as metaphorically hold the colonial system imposed upon Ireland together, and a product, moreover, made out of the bodies of Johnny's own kin and kind. In other words, Johnny would have been a horse unwittingly forming the bodies of his fellow horses into a product by means of which the colonial order could be maintained. Similarly, as a teacher and writer, Gabriel educates his students and readers to become aesthetes, to separate art and politics, and to put the former above the latter. He also uses his aestheticism to justify doing work that bolsters the authority of a Unionist newspaper. As such, Gabriel, like Johnny, is unwittingly

bound to the colonial wheel, and the product of his labour will be a generation of aesthetes and Unionists, a product made out of his fellow Irish men and women, whose ideologies will act as the glue that keeps the extant colonial status quo intact.

The above examples reveal how “apolitical aestheticism” actually amounts to the politics of the status quo insofar as it encourages its adherents to neutralize and ignore political energies and phenomena. However, there are also ways in which this ideology leads Gabriel to become an active enforcer of the political and cultural status quo. In his after-dinner speech, Gabriel extols the virtues of past generations of Irish men and women, and criticizes the “new generation coming up in our midst, a generation actuated by new ideas and new principles” (232). The old generations, personified by Gabriel’s elderly aunts, represent the status quo. After all, the Misses Morkan host the same event, year after year, to which the same people are invited, to which the same people “turn up screwed,” and at which the same dances are featured. Moreover, the dances themselves, at the centre of “the Misses Morkan’s annual dance,” can be seen to represent the status quo insofar as they are comprised of sets of unchanging steps and “figures” – that is, of completely static underlying structures – in accordance with which the dancers move, having already participated in the same dances enough times to know their steps and figures by heart. This ties in with the theme of Irish paralysis, as the dances and indeed the party as a whole can be read to symbolize the situation of the Irish in colonial Ireland: the Irish continue to live in accordance with, and to reproduce, year after year, the same colonial order, whose static underlying structure governs their lives, rigorously delimiting what is and is not possible for them to do or achieve. The colonized Irish are like the

party's dancers in that their seemingly lively and free movements belie the dead and delimiting structures that govern these movements, just as they have for generations.

The new generation, whom Gabriel criticizes in his speech, is the generation of Revivalist nationalists, personified by Molly Ivors. Molly Ivors disrupts the status quo of the party in a number of ways, though most explicitly by very publicly arguing with Gabriel about his lack of nationalist sympathies. It is symbolically significant that this argument occurs in the middle of one of the scheduled dances, as this means that Molly Ivors' disruption strikes right at the figurative heart of the story's nested symbols of the status quo (the status quo of the dance at the heart of the status quo of the party, which stands for the status quo of colonial Ireland as a whole). The success of her disruption is evidenced by the fact that their neighbouring dancers break with their dance routines to turn "to listen to [her] cross examination" of Gabriel. When extended to the level of national concern, Molly Ivors' disruption of the dance's status quo symbolizes the disruption of Revivalist Irish nationalism to the status quo of colonial Ireland, a disruption which similarly caused the colonized Irish to turn from their habitual thoughts and behaviours in order to listen to and engage in the new, anti-colonial and nationalist conversation.

Gabriel actively tries to neutralize the nationalist energies with which Molly Ivors disrupted the status quos of the party and his self-conception. In his speech he calls the generation of nationalists whom she represents "misdirected" and "hypereducated," and implies that this generation lacks "those qualities of humanity, of hospitality, of kindly humour which belonged to an older day" (232). Of course, all of these criticisms are just as applicable to Gabriel himself as they are to nationalists like Molly Ivors, and while



they may move Gabriel's audience to applaud, they ring hollowly to the careful reader, who suspects that Gabriel has other reasons for seeking to undermine this new generation and what it represents. Indeed, Gabriel's real issue with nationalists like Molly Ivors is that they force him to face up to aspects of reality that he would much rather keep at a distance. He does not want to have come down from the heights of aesthetic appreciation to engage with the messy material, cultural, and political conditions in which his compatriots live. Insofar as that is what the new generation and the new political and cultural order they hope to install will require of him, he tries to neutralize this generation and to enforce the status quo.

This highlights how Gabriel's cosmopolitanism and his aestheticism are two sides of the same ideological coin, equally superficial, and both born out of his desires to distance himself from reality and to maintain the status quo. His preference for Continental languages, art, modes of dress, and vacation destinations over their Irish correlates is predicated less on his desire to authentically embrace other cultures than on his repudiation of, and desire to fly from, the "Catholic, poor, and ignorant" Ireland which he seems embarrassed to have to call home. As he exclaims to Molly Ivors, "O, to tell you the truth...I'm sick of my own country, sick of it!" (216) To come to terms with Ireland and its history, instead of bracketing them, would be as painful and existentially compromising for Gabriel as coming to terms with the real inner life and history of his wife. As such, he remains at a distance from both, passively going along with the status quo of his nation and his marriage whenever he can, actively reasserting the status quo whenever something threatens to disturb it, and leaving his wife and Ireland behind to vacation in continental Europe when he needs a break from them and their Irishness.

To some extent, Gabriel manages to restore order, to the party and to his destabilized self-conception, through his after-dinner speech. However, the issues and energies that he has ignored, repressed, and held at a distance over the course of the party, and over the course of his adult life, not only break through but also break down his ideological and existential defenses by the end of the story, causing him to recognize the deficiencies in his ideology and, in a movement similar to Stephen's at the end of *A Portrait*, to change. The catalyst of this breakdown comes in the form of the memory of the late Michael Furey, the young man whom Gretta used to date when she lived in Connaught, and who used to sing to her *The Lass of Aughrim*, the song that brought tears to her eyes at the Misses Morkan's residence.

Michael Furey, as memory, symbol, and ghost, proves to be the first force that Gabriel is unable to sufficiently "overmaster" in "The Dead." Gabriel could buy the loyalty of "Lily, the caretaker's daughter" by giving her money, and could justify his social failure with her as necessitated by his superior "grade of culture" (203). He could neutralize the threats Molly Ivors and her nationalism had presented to the party and to Gabriel's identity through his speech. He could justify his work for *The Daily Express* with his aestheticism, and his repudiation of Ireland with his shallow cosmopolitanism. And he could maintain his marital status quo by aestheticizing his wife, by projecting upon her, and by keeping at a distance from her complex inner life. But the ghost of Michael Furey crosses over the distance that Gabriel has put between himself and reality; it breaches Gabriel's existential and ideological defenses, and leads the other forces that Gabriel has tried to keep at bay to rush in through the breach after it:

A vague terror seized Gabriel...as if, at that hour when he had hoped to triumph, some impalpable and vindictive being was coming against him, gathering forces against him in its vague world. (252)

Gretta's evocation of Michael Furey ultimately forces Gabriel to face up directly to many of his own existential, interpersonal, and ideological deficiencies. The figure of Michael Furey highlights to Gabriel the inauthenticity and shallowness of his own relationship with Gretta. It causes him to re-evaluate the image of himself he has tried meticulously to cultivate and project, both at the party and throughout his life. It even forces Gabriel to question his very capacity for genuine love and human connection. Most significantly for this thesis, however, Michael Furey destabilizes Gabriel's hitherto inflexible identity and ideological orientation, ultimately spurring him to progress, existentially and ideologically, from aestheticism to ethics, and from shallow cosmopolitanism to some degree of national affirmation and engagement.

To begin with, it is only after having brooded upon Michael Furey for quite some time that, for the first time in the story, the defensive and detached Gabriel becomes empathically open to alterity. Levinas describes the phenomenology of this kind of movement in his essay "Transcendence and Height":

Instead of seizing the Other through comprehension and thereby assuming all the risks that this comprehension presupposes, prolongs, and concludes, the I loses its hold before the absolutely Other, before the human Other (*Autrui*), and, unjustified, can no longer be powerful. (17)

This new mode of relation is so radically opposite to Gabriel's previous mode – a closed, solipsistic mode that involved aestheticizing and "comprehending" alterity – that it brings him in empathic proximity not only with Gretta as a human Other, and with Michael Furey as a more emotionally capacious human than himself, but also with that most alien form of otherness, the Other as death and the dead:

Generous tears filled Gabriel's eyes. He had never felt like that himself towards any woman but he knew that such a feeling must be love. The tears gathered more thickly in his eyes and in the partial darkness he imagined he saw the form of a young man standing under a dripping tree. Other forms were near. His soul had approached that region where dwell the vast hosts of the dead. He was conscious of, but could not apprehend, their wayward and flickering existence. (255)

These "generous tears" signal Gabriel's transition from aesthetics to ethics, from distance to emotional engagement, and from being "all palaver and what he can get out of" people to being authentically open and giving. Moreover, it is significant that Gabriel's pseudo-vision of "the dead" comes filtered through these "generous tears." Just as the thick layers of tears literally mediate between Gabriel's eyes and the outside world, they symbolize how different existential and ideological orientations mediate one's perception and interpretation of reality, allowing reality to "show up" differently depending on one's fundamental orientation—depending, in other words, on the "lens" through which one views the world. It is only with an orientation of openness and empathy, looking through a layer of generous tears, that Gabriel begins to see the dead, and begins to realize that they still exist, inside yet outside the world, haunting the present, if not as literal ghosts, then at least as potent memories and as history.

As the boundaries between the living and the dead continue to break down and blur, so too do the remaining boundaries of Gabriel's identity, along with the boundaries that separate him, others, this world and "that other world":

His own identity was fading out into a grey impalpable world: the solid world itself which these dead had one time reared and lived in was dissolving and dwindling. (255)

It is only after this ultimate disintegration of his identity that Gabriel is able to change his orientation towards Ireland. After all, though Michael Furey represents passion and love, as well as death and the dead, he also represents Ireland and Irishness. The young man

whose family was from Oughterard, who lived in Galway, and who sang Irish songs about lasses from Aughrim represents the west of Ireland, which itself stood for traditional and authentic Irishness in the Irish cultural imaginary (Kiberd 32-33). As such, Michael Furey ties in with, reinforces, and signifies the whole nexus of Irish themes, concerns, and symbols that permeates “The Dead.”

At the end of the story, the ghost of Michael Furey taps upon the west-facing window of Gabriel’s room, like the gravel that once tapped upon a young Gretta’s window, causing Gabriel to turn and face the window. Looking west from the Gresham hotel, with all of Ireland laid out before him – the Gresham hotel is, after all, located on the eastern edge of Ireland – Gabriel finally embraces his country:

A few light taps upon the pane made him turn to the window. It had begun to snow again. He watched sleepily the flakes, silver and dark, falling obliquely against the lamplight. The time had come for him to set out on his journey westward. Yes, the newspapers were right: snow was general all over Ireland. It was falling on every part of the dark central plain, on the treeless hills, falling softly upon the Bog of Allen and, farther westward, softly falling into the dark mutinous Shannon waves. It was falling, too, upon every part of the lonely churchyard on the hill where Michael Furey lay buried. It lay thickly drifted on the crooked crosses and headstones, on the spears of the little gate, on the barren thorns. His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead. (255-6)

As the snow covers all of Ireland, uniting its land mass, its living inhabitants, and its dead in one common Irish condition, Gabriel determines that the “time ha[s] come for him to set out on his journey westward.” At the most basic level, this means that Gabriel has decided that he will, despite his earlier protestations, visit Galway with Gretta. As Ellmann puts it: “The context and phrasing of the sentence suggest that Gabriel is on the edge of sleep, and half-consciously accepts what he has hitherto scorned, the possibility of an actual trip to Connacht” (*James Joyce* 206). But the context and phrasing indicate

more than just this. After all, “The time had come for him to set out on his journey westward” is much more portentous than “He was finally ready to take a trip to Connacht.”

The “west,” as many critics have noted, is a traditional trope for death, as the sun sets in the west. In a state of heightened death-consciousness, then, after having confronted “the dead,” Gabriel is acutely aware of his own mortality, of the fact that “one by one,” he and everyone else “were all becoming shades.” As such, he reinterprets his life along these lines as a journey westward, as a gradual journey towards his inevitable death. But just as Michael Furey represents both death and Irishness, so too does the west. Having just faced up to the inauthenticity and hollowness of his previous worldview, and with his old identity faded into impalpability, Gabriel decides, in a half-conscious instant, that he will make a change. Instead of rebuilding his old identity as an anti-Irish aesthete, he will no longer turn his back on Ireland. He will rather mediate his cosmopolitan awareness and aspirations with an empathic awareness and affirmation of those aspects of his native land that he previously ignored and fled, and will make what remains of his journey west to death a journey west to authentic modern Irishness.

## Conclusion

### Gabriel's Transformation as Joyce's Synthesis

Critics routinely note that Gabriel Conroy shares many characteristics with Joyce himself. As Munich observes, “Not only does he resemble Joyce with his “glossy black hair, parted in the middle and brushed in a long curve behind his ears” and his “delicate and restless eyes” covered by gilt-rimmed glasses, but also, like Joyce in 1907, he is a teacher who writes occasional literary reviews” (175). Gabriel is also married to a woman from Connaught, just as Joyce was married to the Galway-born Nora Barnacle. Moreover, Gabriel and Gretta have two children, a boy and a girl, just as Joyce and Nora did. Such similarities have thus led critics to read Gabriel as the man Joyce might have become had he not emigrated from Ireland. Munich takes this route, and further reads “The Dead” as a story in which Joyce represents and works through his own “fierce attachment to his past life and his commitment to exile: his intense inner struggle to overcome the past without giving it up” (174). More specifically, Munich reads “The Dead” with an eye towards Joyce’s uses warfare language and imagery throughout the story, and ultimately argues that the story is “an allegory of a mental battle” (175) Joyce himself underwent around the time he was writing “The Dead”—a battle to become a truly liberated and properly modern artist. Although questions of Joyce’s general artistic development exceed the scope of this study, Munich’s reading of “The Dead” as a kind of “modernist *psychomachia*” (175) in which Joyce allegorizes some aspect of his own internal struggle and development provides a strong interpretive frame for my reading of “The Dead.” That is, insofar as Gabriel is, throughout most of the story, a cosmopolitan aesthete in the mode of the teenage Stephen Dedalus, and thus, by extension, in the mode of the teenage James Joyce, Gabriel can be read as the man Joyce might have become had

he not tempered and outgrown his youthful ideology earlier in his life. In this light, one can read Joyce's treatment of Gabriel's aesthetic cosmopolitanism throughout "The Dead" as a sustained critique of his own teenage ideology, and Gabriel's ideological transformation at the end of the story as representative of a young Joyce's own transformation.

One can also read Gabriel's relationship with Molly Ivors and Michael Furey in the light of Joyce's agon with Revivalist nationalism. Miss Ivors is Gabriel's uncanny double and ideological antipode, just as Revivalist nationalism was Joyce's, especially early in his career. Both Gabriel and Molly Ivors are teachers, cultural critics, and essentially ideologues. Moreover, both intentionally act, dress, and speak in ways that clearly signal their ideological allegiances. Gabriel's clothing manifests his aestheticism and, in the case of his goloshes, signals his cosmopolitanism. He dresses to distinguish himself from the other party guests, who are "all too Irish" for him. Miss Ivors similarly dresses to distinguish herself from the other guests, though her issue with them is the opposite: for her, it seems, the other guests are not Irish enough. Not only does she "not wear a low-cut bodice," perhaps gesturing towards her feminism, but she also wears a "large brooch" which bears "an Irish device" (213), clearly signalling her Irish nationalist sympathies—after all, this is just the style of clothing that Gaelic Leaguers regularly donned. Moreover, while Gabriel gravitates towards the fussy language of an exceedingly cultured aesthete and man of letters, as when he "retire[s] into the embrasure of the window," Miss Ivors deploys blunt Irish idioms in her conversation with Gabriel, as when she says, "I have a crow to pluck with you," and ultimately departs from the party by bidding Gretta farewell in Gaelic, saying "*Beannacht libh*" (223), which literally



means “blessing to you,” but was used as the Gaelic way to say “Goodbye.” Finally, while Gabriel repudiates Ireland almost wholesale, Molly Ivors acts as if any Irishman who does not vacation in Connacht, speak Gaelic, and obsess over traditional Irish culture is a “West Briton.”

As ideologues, neither Gabriel nor Molly Ivors represent sound or authentic orientations toward Ireland and Irishness, or toward the broader world and cosmopolitanism. Their respective positions would each have certain merits if they were not so immoderate; however, throughout most of the story, both Molly and Gabriel refuse to temper their worldviews with the more salutary aspects of their adversary’s worldview. Gabriel’s relationship with Molly Ivors thus mirrors the young James Joyce’s relationship with the Revival, as exemplified by his poem “The Holy Office,” in which Joyce positions himself in complete dialectical opposition to the Literary Revivalists and everything they represent.

Gabriel’s transformation at the end of “The Dead” constitutes a dialectical synthesis of these ideological antitheses. Gabriel may never learn Gaelic, ornament himself with Irish brooches, or accost cosmopolites at parties, but the story implies that he will start affirmatively engaging with Ireland, and stop defensively repressing his and his wife’s Irishness. This mirrors the young Joyce’s own ideological transformation and synthesis, for though Joyce would never learn Gaelic and would live outside of Ireland for all of his adult life, he would nevertheless give up his absolute repudiation of Ireland in order to perpetually “journey westward” to Ireland through his fiction, analyzing his native country’s issues, criticizing its faults, celebrating its virtues, and seeking to forge a conscience for its people.

The fact that Joyce chose to make one side of the story's ideological dialectic so representative of Revivalist nationalism also sheds light on Joyce's more mature appraisal of the Revival and the formative impact it had on him (more mature, that is, than his appraisal in "The Holy Office"). Not only is Molly Ivors quite obviously a Gaelic Leaguer, but Michael Furey is just the kind of romantic figure the Literary Revivalists would laud as properly Irish: a boy from Connaught who sings Irish airs and whose profound melancholy, passion, early death, and posthumous ghostliness reverberate with the "Celtic note." By including these Revivalist concerns and motifs in his story, and by making the ghost of Michael Furey the catalyst of Gabriel's transformation, Joyce nods at the importance the Revival had on his own ideological development and transformation, while simultaneously showing that, by the time he is writing "The Dead," he has absorbed the Revival, has synthesized it with his own youthful ideology, and in so doing has gone beyond both ideologies, just as Gabriel's transformation amounts to a kind of synthesis of his aesthetic cosmopolitanism and Molly Ivors' extreme nationalism—a synthesis which leaves Gabriel beyond both superficial ideologies, an internationalist nevertheless ready to embark upon an authentically Irish "journey westward." It is just this kind of mediation between the national and the cosmopolitan, this attempt to "think globally about Irishness," that characterizes the mature Joyce's hard-won ideological orientation, and that Pearson identifies as "the generative locus of Irish expatriate modernism":

A modernism that derives not from choosing between national and cosmopolitan sympathies, but from the need to somehow make these concurrent principles...to create a moral sensibility based in transnational humanity while simultaneously incarnating an abstract sense of racial or cultural origins. (8)

One can also read Joyce's treatment of Revivalist tropes and themes in "The Dead" as his attempt to show, through his fiction, that he has overcome what Harold Bloom would call his influence anxiety. That is, though Joyce has gained insight and inspiration from the Revival, just as Gabriel has from the figure of Michael Furey, he shows in "The Dead" that he has nevertheless worked through its ideology, adopted some of its meritorious aspects, and transcended its limitations to such an extent that he can now contain and deploy it within the confines of his fiction.

As I discussed in some detail earlier in this thesis, one of the aspects of the Revivalist project by which Joyce was inspired, in form if not in content and execution, was the Revivalist turn to, and engagement with, Irish history. The Revivalists sought to work through and reclaim Irish history, and to use their version of this history as the foundation for a new national tradition and identity. Joyce's treatment of Michael Furey indicates that Joyce was similarly concerned with Irish history when he was writing "The Dead," and this treatment can be read as Joyce's critique of the Revivalist mode of Irish historical engagement. The story suggests that a part of the reason why Gretta and Gabriel have been unable to cultivate a transparent and healthy relationship in the present is because Gretta has clung to a romanticized version of the past by keeping the image of Michael Furey "locked in her heart for so many years" (255). Joyce's Revivalist critique by analogy, then, is that "Ancient Ireland is dead just as ancient Egypt is dead" – just as Michael Furey is dead – and as long as the modern Irish nostalgically cling to a romanticized image of their ancient past, as the Revivalists would have them do, they will not be able to cultivate an appropriate attitude in the present toward Irish modernity. But if neither Gabriel's obliviousness to Gretta's history, nor Gretta's melancholic

romanticization of her history, symbolize healthy, authentic ways for the Irish to relate to Irish history, what might a better mode of relation look like?

Joyce gestures toward one possibility in “The Dead.” It is not until Gabriel confronts Gretta’s history honestly and transparently that he is able to see the influence it continues to have on her and on their marriage, and is able to begin working through this hitherto hidden influence by reorienting himself toward Ireland and toward Gretta. It is only because Gabriel faced up to this painful history that he accedes to a trip to Connacht, a trip which may actually allow Gretta to properly mourn her old boyfriend, and in so doing disenchant the land in her mind, and exorcise the powerful ghost of Michael Furey from her memory. Of course, there is no guarantee that Gretta and Gabriel will be able to work through the fundamental problems the evocation of Michael Furey brought to light about their marriage; however, at least they are no longer in the dark, as Gabriel was before, gazing upon Gretta from “a dark part of the hall” as she listened to “distant music.” The implication for the Irish as a whole is that instead of remaining paralyzed by a national form of Freudian melancholy, clinging to a romanticized and mystifying idealization of ancient Ireland, the Irish must confront their history without mystifying it, determine the ways in which it continues to perniciously affect and paralyze their present, and work through these lingering historical influences and inherited social forms.

In a sense, Joyce’s entire *corpus* manifests this mode of Irish historical engagement. His demystifications, demythologizations, and rigorous immanent critiques of Irish Catholicism, Irish nationalism, and the colonial order in Ireland were all extensions of his unrelenting drive to understand the subtle ways in which such formations continued to influence the modern Irish. For he knew that having such an

understanding was a necessary precondition to forging a conscience for the Irish race, to creating the properly modern conception of Irishness that his later fiction exemplifies: one that is global in scope and ambition, yet always alert to the specific material and historical formations that characterize being Irish. However, as I hope to have shown throughout this essay, Joyce did not hold this nuanced position from the outset of his career, and did not develop it in cultural, ideological, or intellectual isolation. Rather, Joyce's mature ideological position emerged over time, and in large part out of his constant dialectical engagement with Revivalist nationalism, a mass movement which provided him not only with a romantic and traditionalist collective against which he could rebel, and with particular ideological contents that he could critique, and either improve upon or dispense with, but also with a set of general interpretive forms in terms of which he could understand and orient his own project as an artist, intellectual, and cosmopolitan Irishman.

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