

JAMES JOYCE'S DUBLINERS: A READING

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Proem

Joyce's artistic production includes poetry: *Chamber Music*, *Poems Penyeach* and *Giacomo Joyce*; short stories: *Dubliners*, novels: *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Finnegan's Wake*, and *Ulysses*, his master piece, theater: *Exiles*.

It is a well-known fact that any contemporary writer has been one way or another, influenced by Joyce. While he was alive, he was either bitterly attacked or enthusiastically praised for his creative ability. Playwright Ibsen was the first to give Joyce credit for his critical writings. He sent 18 year-old Joyce a letter felicitating him for an article that Joyce wrote for the *Fortnightly Review*, on April 1st, 1900, analyzing one of Ibsen's plays. In Ireland, and in the Continent, other outstanding writers and men of science either praised or attacked him. Concerning James Joyce and his work, the famous Spaniard Joycean scholar, don José María Valverde points out that:

La obra de James Joyce tiene una unidad autobiográfica, que impone seguirla en su orden cronológico, pero que no excluye una gran variedad de estilos y formas, e incluso una tensión contrastada, que tardará en resolverse: al principio, el Joyce exaltador de su propia personalidad, aún antes de haber hecho nada, se contrapone al Joyce contemplador y expresador desinteresado, que se usa a sí mismo como tema para un autorretrato, (después autocaricatura, y, en definitiva, autopsia del lenguaje en sí mismo), pero ya sin apasionarse por su propia persona¹.

¹ José María Valverde. *Conocer a Joyce y su obra*. Barcelona: Dopesa 2, 1987, p. 15.

When someone reads James Joyce, there are numerous things that call his attention: first, the beauty of the language, and the creation of new terms, which oftentimes make books such as *Ulysses* and *Finnegan's Wake* very difficult to understand. Second, the large amount of autobiographical data omnipresent in them. The general plan for this article is as follows: to present a panoramic view of Dublin and its culture and tradition: there everything happens in *Dubliners*, the book. To begin, the genesis of the stories in *Dubliners*, is a must, and it includes from the order of composition for each tale to its final publication of the book in 1914. This information has been gathered from multiple sources available, to offer the reader not only a wide scope of the composition and gestation of each tale, but at hand information to follow up the development of the book. In this matter, very important credit is given to the various letters written by Joyce to his brother Stanislaus, his wife Nora and his editor in London, which have supported and widened the scope of the coming entire analysis. Besides, the explanation and use of the terms *epiphany* and *epicleti*, coined and employed by the author which are considered as key to the understanding the stories. Also there is an outstanding, and immense net of themes associated with the deepest sentiments of man: from friendship to passion, and from passion to frustration² which must be also mentioned here. Special emphasis is given to frustration, an obsessive leitmotiv

² For the aims pursued in the forthcoming reading, the writer makes his Dr. James D. Whittaker's definition of *frustration* as he states.

La frustración es el bloqueo o impedimento de la conducta dirigida hacia determinado objetivo, que da como resultado un estado de perturbación interna, conocido con el nombre de ansiedad, a tensión psicológica. Las fuentes de la frustración pueden encontrarse en el *medio externo*, ya sea en la forma de obstáculos, o dentro del individuo en forma de deficiencias a defectos (Italics ours).

James D. Whittaker *Psicología*. trad. por Vicent Agut Armer (Plexica: Nueva Editorial Interamericana, S.A., 1977), p. 532.

in James Joyce's books, as a reflection of his own life³ which is felt as a thin continuous strand linking his entire literary production. This analysis, though, has to approach only one particular book: *Dubliners*, a collection of fifteen stories. This book masterly portrays the life of the ordinary Dubliner, the citizen who lives and evolves in an empty world: the city of Dublin, where, he lives amid poverty, lack of opportunities of all sorts, and ends up in an atmosphere of total frustration in all fields. As in Anton Chekov's tales, the stories are written in such a way as to make the reader empathetic with the characters. The reader must elaborate his own conclusions from the multiple meaningful signs and clues Joyce gives in each narration.

*Plus [...] quam olim muscarrum est,
quom caletur maxime.
Plautus, Truculentas, 64⁴*

Introduction

The idea, which underlies this reading is to offer a panoramic view of *Dubliners*, seen amid its *paysage dublinesque* and its culture.⁵ The theoretical approach of this reading⁶ follows some of the principles stated by well known literary critics such as Raúl H. Castagnino with his *presencia del medio geográfico*, and *personajes y caracteres*, Gaston Bachelard's *el lenguaje y lo imaginario*, and Charles Mauron's *psychocritic*. Concerning the concept of *external world*, and *the internal life of the characters*, these authors' particular lineaments on these subjects have been taken and developed into a particular syncretic method of analysis.

The external world of the characters is analyzed, as the scenario in which the personages live and evolve. Within this external world, emotions, sexuality, self-esteem and nullified inner-selves, are either mentioned or quoted oftentimes. In addition, alcoholism, madness, and death are contemplated as progressive stages of evasion employed by the characters to elude their particular frustrations.

Very little is known about the early stages in the writing of a *Dubliners* story. No real rough draft of any story has survived. It seems likely that James Joyce worked out his stories very thoroughly in his mind before he set them down. While staying in Dublin, he wrote his wife, Nora Barnacle, a letter dated August 21, 1912, where he says that he was

[...] thinking of the book I have written [Dubliners], the child which I carried for years and years in the womb of the imagination as you carried in your womb the children you love, and of how I had fed it day after day out of my brain and memory (Letters, II, 308)⁷.

It is also a well-known fact that Joyce had the habit of writing on large green sheets of paper with no right margin but a very large left-hand margin where his corrections and additions were made. There is also a very fine division, imperceptible sometimes, between the real-real world of the author, and the real world of the characters in the book, especially when it comes to the construction of the tales and the book as a whole. It becomes then, necessary, to present a succinct genesis of the stories, to offer the reader a wider scope and a clearer panorama. This task has been successfully achieved by researching and gathering information from different sources, from the author's letters, a *sine qua non* source, to other different studies carried out by Joycean scholars such as Florence L. Walzl, Richard Ellmann et alii.⁸ On the other hand some surviving manuscripts have also offered Joycean critics many insights into the compositional process behind *Dubliners*, as well as some knowledge on Joyce's artistic methods and intentions,⁹ which indirectly have benefited this research.

There is the external world of the characters, which is presented as the real setting of all the stories, where not only the action takes place but where characters live and evolve. Related to this, a political happening for the Irish, known as the Union Act, is

³ As a man, he was annoyed in the social, religious, political, economical and conjugal fields.

⁴ *Más numerosos que las moscas, cuando el calor aumenta.*

⁵ Culture understood as a sociological term.

⁶ The word *Reading* is sometimes used in this article as a synonym of *analysis*.

⁷ James Joyce, *Letters of James Joyce*, Col. I, ed. Stuart Gilbert (New York: Viking Press, 1957); reissued with corrections in 1966. Vols. II and III, Ed. Richard Ellmann (New York: Viking Press, 1966), p. 308. All further references to these books will be to this same edition and will be indicated in parentheses in the text with the word *Letters*, followed by *volume and page numbers*.

⁸ This information is properly documented in the bibliography.

⁹ The most revised manuscripts are *The Sisters* and *A Painful Case*.

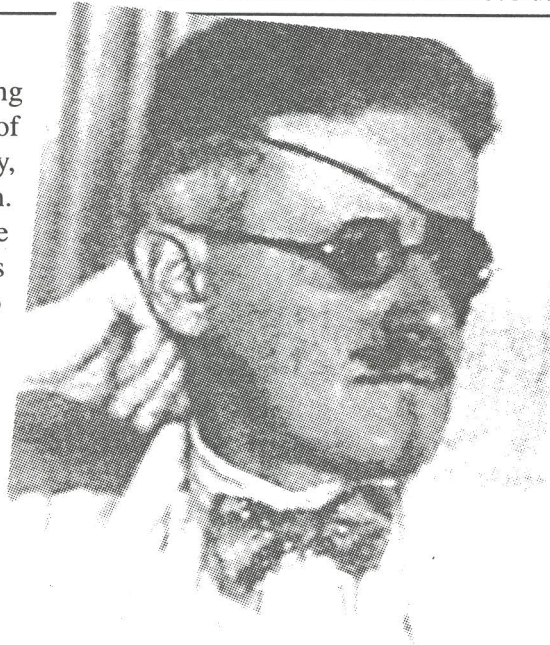
stressed as an important starting point of change in the structure of Irish life, in all aspects of society, especially the economic situation. For additional information, the political division of the city is sketched and presented, to elucidate the panorama even more. Subsequent to it, there is the writer's personal inventory of the characters of the stories, which are classified according to their social circumstances and strata. Extreme poverty in Dublin has to be considered, as almost all characters of the book are found, amid this socio political and economic situation, which is not only influenced but determined by this urban paysage. This analysis, generally speaking, also presents the treatment of these delicate issues with master touches *a lo Joyce*.

Genesis and order of the stories

In 1904, in a non datum letter written to Constantine P. Curran, Joyce mentions the idea of the book for the first time. He comments:

*I am writing a series of epicleti -ten- for a paper. I have written one. I call the series **Dubliners** (Letters, I, 55).*

As David Jones says *Dubliners* was beginning to grow in the mind of Joyce as a unified living entity, it was a tender body not to be molested.¹⁰ The stories are presented chronologically following the order of composition, not the order of publication. The first three were published in a Dublin weekly, *The Irish Homestead*. The first story, *The Sisters*, was published on August 13, 1901 and the second one, *Eveline*, on September 10, 1905. The third one was *After the Race*, published on December 17, 1904. In November of 1904, Joyce began working on a tale he called *Christmas Eve*, which he abandoned half-finished for the idea of another story, *Hallow Eve*. This one was completed and sent to Stanislaus Joyce for possible publication in *The Irish*



Homestead in January, 1905. By September, 1905, the title was changed to *Clay*, and this fourth story was revised in November, 1906, when the name of *Dublin by Lamplight Laundry* was added. *The Boarding House* was the fifth, and the manuscript is dated July 1st, 1905. The sixth story, *Counterparts*, dated July 12, 1905, was composed almost simultaneously with the seventh, *A Painful Incident*, title that was changed to *A Painful Case*, in July, 1905. Stanislaus Joyce claims that the writer was inspired by his [Stanislaus] abortive relationship with an older woman.¹¹ *Ivy Day in*

the Committee Room is the eighth story, dated August 29, 1905. By September 16, 1905, the ninth story, *An Encounter*, was completed, and by late September, 1905, *A Mother*, the tenth, was also written. The eleventh, *Araby*, was terminated by October, 1905 and *Grace* was the twelfth tale. It was called *the last* since it completed an original plan of twelve. The manuscript was sent to an editor, Grant Richards, in London, 1905. In a letter dated about September 24, 1905, James Joyce tells his brother Stanislaus:

*The order of the stories is as follows. **The Sisters**, **An Encounter**, and another story [*Araby*] which are stories of my childhood; **The Boarding House**, **After the Race** and **Eveline**, which are stories of adolescence; **The Clay**, **Counterparts**, and **A Painful Case** which are stories of my mature life; **Ivy Day in the Committee Room**, **A Mother** and the last story of the book [*Grace*] which are stories of public life in Dublin (Letters, II, 111).*

The thirteenth story, *Two Gallants*, was the one that pleased him [James] most (Letters, I, 62); it was written in the winter of 1905-1906, and the author called it *The Irish landscape* (Letters, 11, 166). The fourteenth story, *A Little Cloud*, was written in the first half of 1906.

¹⁰ James Joyce Quarterly (XV, 2, 108). Any further reference to this publication will be JJQ, followed by the volume, year and page number.

¹¹ Stanislaus Joyce. *My Brother's Keeper. James Joyce's Early Years*. New York: The Viking Press, 1958, pp. 159-160. Any further reference to this book will be *My Brother's*, followed by the page number.

Joyce said that *a page of A Little Cloud gives me more pleasure than all of my verses* (*Letters*, II, 182). The last story, *The Dead*, fifteenth in order, was planned during the author's stay in Rome, from July, 1906 to March, 1907, though he did not begin to write it until he was back in Trieste in the spring of 1907.¹² In a letter to Grant Richards, written in July, 1906, Joyce made clear that a final re-reading and review of the whole book resulted in the re-arrangement of the order of the stories. (**Letters**, 11,143-4) Professor Walzl says that:

*[...] more important to the 1906 version was the final arrangement of the stories that provided the internal chronology for **Dubliners** as a whole* (*JJQ*, XIV, 4, 40).

Together with the last three stories added to the re-arranged 1906 version, *Dubliners* was published as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. <i>The Sisters</i> | 9. <i>Counterparts</i> |
| 2. <i>An Encounter</i> | 10. <i>Clay</i> |
| 3. <i>Araby</i> | 11. <i>A Painful Case</i> |
| 4. <i>Eveline</i> | 12. <i>Ivy Day in the</i>
<i>Committee Room</i> |
| 5. <i>After the Race</i> | 13. <i>A Mother</i> |
| 6. <i>Two Gallants</i> | 14. <i>Grace</i> |
| 7. <i>The Boarding House</i> | 15. <i>The Dead</i> |
| 8. <i>A little Cloud</i> | |

Publication of the book

In publishing the book, James Joyce had to go through a great deal of difficulties. The book was initially offered to Grant Richards, in London, who was undecided about publishing it. Then, in 1909, Joyce offered it to Maunsel and Company, in Dublin. In 1910, this printing house, afraid of public and royal reaction, postponed the publication. On August 11, 1911, the author wrote to King George V, requesting permission to print certain passages related to Edward Rex, who had already died. The Imperial Attorney found no objection to the passages. The very brief answer said:

The private secretary is commanded to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. James Joyce's letter of the 1 [sic] instant and to inform him that it is inconsistent with rule for His Majesty to

express his opinion in such cases. The enclosures are returned herewith.

Buckingham Palace
11 August 1911
(*Letters*, II, 292)

The editor did not change his attitude, and the situation remained the same. In 1912, George Roberts, the Dubliner printer, decided to destroy the sheets [*Dubliners*]. Joyce later said they were destroyed by fire, and that Roberts, "*stickling for accuracy in his later accounts, insisted they were destroyed by guillotining and pulping*" (*JJ*, 346). After this, Joyce later insisted on saying they were destroyed by fire. James Joyce left Dublin forever, and, once in Trieste, wrote a poem *Gas from a Burner*, criticizing Roberts, which his brother Charlie reluctantly distributed in Dublin.

In November, 1913, Joyce received two letters, one from Ezra Pound and the other from Grant Richards. Pound, who at the time was Yeats' secretary, offered Joyce money and support to publish his writings. Pound was in very good relationship with two English magazines, *The Egoist* and *The Cerebralist*, and he also was influential in two American newspapers, *The Smart Set* and *Poetry*. They agreed to publish some of Joyce's works and on Pound's good recommendation. Grant Richards also offered to publish Joyce's book. Thus, on June 15, 1904, eight years after the book was finished, *Dubliners* was finally Published.¹³

James Joyce's letters

Joyce's letters, published in three large tomes, are invaluable as a source of information and for a more profound comprehension of all his works. Those letters referring to *Dubliners* are vital first hand documents that not only support this present analysis but provide great insight into the author's copious art. The letters are mainly written by Joyce himself, his principal correspondent being his brother Stanislaus and Grant Richards. More than twenty-five letters were written from August, 1904 to May 7, 1915 among the three of them. The central part of this correspondence is the exchange between Joyce and Richards over the alleged content, language and occasional obscenity of the book. In this dialogue, the author reveals *the wit and the care*

¹² The above information was taken from James Joyce's *Dubliners*, edited by R. Scholes et alii, pp. 462-503 and Romana Paci, pp. 108-215.

¹³ Romana Paci, p. 205.

for his art which are so scrupulously controlled in the stories themselves (Joyce Annotated, p. 257).

Epiphanies and epicleti

A very important aspect to be considered is the terms *epiphanies* and *epicleti*, frequently found in Joycean criticism as a result of the author's frequent and emphatic use of them. The word *epiphany* means revelation. He also used the terms in *Stephen Hero*, and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.¹⁴ Parallel to *epiphanies* Joyce uses the term *epiclet*. Richard Ellmann says that:

*The word epicleti, an error for epicleses (Latin) or epicleseis (Greek), referred to an invocation still found in the mass of the Eastern Church, but dropped from the Roman Ritual, in which the Holy Ghost is besought to transform the host into the body and the blood of Christ (JJ, 169).*¹⁵

Joyce explains that what he tries to do is, to give people some sort of intellectual pleasure or spiritual enjoyment by *converting the bread of everyday life into something that has a permanent artistic life of his own... for their mental, moral and spiritual uplift (Brother's, 103-104).*

The external world of the characters

The external world of the characters is that one *which corresponds to man confronting nature*. In this case nature is a synonym of *urban paysage*. Raúl H. Castagnino states that for Fr. Paulham, in *L'esthétique du paysage*, *paysage* is a picture of nature, but one that

[...] entraña una concepción del mundo, concepción sentimental y afectiva, concepción intelectual o filosófica, concepción moral o religiosa.

Castagnino states also that:

*[...] la literatura se presta especialmente para animizar la naturaleza en los paisajes, impregnándolos de alma, que es siempre la disposición anímica del escritor.*¹⁶

This is exactly what James Joyce does. He takes innumerable subtle elements from the real Dublin *paysage* and portrays them—Joycean style—into the fiction of *Dubliners*. He also reveals his own conception of the city, as a sordid world where man lives amid socio-economic, religious and political distress. His characters are part of masses in the streets, drinking beer in pubs, counting petty cash, wandering about the city searching for better opportunities or exploiting other people. Some devout citizens worship God in churches, other attend concerts or political meetings. The stories contain geographical references as the writer mentions: rivers with multiple bridges, quays and the sea. The Dublin weather—cold, rainy, very humid or snowy—affects the personages' habits as they wear heavy overcoats or warm up around fires, something that gives the stories a gloomy tone. *Dubliners* interrelate and work in public institutions or government offices such as the King's Inns or the Dublin Castle. There are other instances where these people live very poorly in houses unfit for human habitation. James Joyce speaks through one of the characters in the book [Gabriel Conroy, in *The Dead*], who says that he imagines:

*[...] geography ...gradually taking substance under [his] eyes...*¹⁷

These are certainly the eyes of his creative mind.

The Dublin scenario is neither Romanesque nor created by the author's imagination but real, with the actual names of streets, parks and public buildings. On October 15, 1905, James Joyce wrote Grant Richards, his editor in London, a letter where he explains why he chose Dublin as the setting for his stories. Joyce believed that Dublin was not only one of Europe's greatest cities but that it deserved serious artistic treatment. He states,

I do not think that any writer has yet presented Dublin to the world. It has been a capital of

¹⁴ *Stephen Hero* is the first draft of the work which was eventually to be published as *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Its survival is due to quick action of Joyce's sister, Eileen, who rescued it from the fire where it was thrown by Joyce during a crisis, James Joyce *Stephen Hero* (London: Triad Panther, 1977).

¹⁵ Mr. Ellmann makes a mistake, as the Epiphany has always been present in the Roman Catholic Rite of the Mass.

¹⁶ Raúl H. Castagnino, *El análisis literario* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Nova, 1973), p. 89.

¹⁷ James Joyce, *Dubliners*, Ed Robert Scholes and A. Walton Litz (New York: Viking Press, 1969). Any further reference to this book will be D, followed by the page number.

Europe for thousands of years, it is supposed to be the second city of the British Empire, and it is nearly three times as big as Venice. Moreover, on account of many circumstances which I cannot detail here, the expression Dubliner seems to me to have some meaning and I doubt whether the same can be said for such words as Londoner and Parisian (Letters, II, 122).

The Union Act: A new beginning for the Irish

For the purpose of this analysis it is important to present an overall picture of the city at a particular time in its history, that is, around the late 1800's and the turn of the twentieth century, when *Dubliners* was written.¹⁸ The starting point will be January 1st, 1801, when the Act of Union was signed with England. This Act was accurately described as a legislative union between Ireland and England and the Irish Courts and some Irish government departments.

This Act dissolved the Irish Parliament (by its own vote) and merged it with the British Parliament in London. The Act was engineered by a good deal of bribery and skullduggery and against the bitter opposition of much of Catholic Ireland and of many Protestant leaders.

[...] The result of the Union was a disaster in Ireland: it displaced Irish political power to London, and scores of Irish landlords moved to England to be near the new seat of political power. Meanwhile, the land and the peasants were pillaged by land agents left in charge by the absentees.¹⁹

This Union Act brought about many changes in the educational, religious, economical and political life of Ireland, especially in Dublin. In the educational and religious matters, institutions which were mainly Anglican, such as the Trinity College, opened all positions after 1873 and, except for those connected with the divinity school, were opened to all people without religious tests.

From the economic standpoint Dublin declined, relatively speaking, for it was not able to benefit greatly from the Industrial Revolution. For example, the Dublin textile trades decayed rapidly in the early decades of the nineteenth century, until the only survivor was the small, highly specialized, manufacture of poplin. But two industries, both based on Irish primary products, were flourishing in Dublin by the close of the nineteenth century; *Jacob's 'steam biscuit bakery and flour stores'* founded about 1850, developed into a large biscuit company. By 1900 the great *Guinness* brewery overshadowed all other Dublin firms, and became famous in the British Isles.

Political division of Dublin: Poverty all over Dublin²⁰

In the context of this analysis, it becomes necessary to sketch out the physical and political division of Dublin, the real setting of *Dubliners*.

Dublin, the capital city of Ireland, is situated at about the center of the east coast of the isle, at the mouth of the River Liffey. Here the ground, continuous with the great limestone plain of Central Ireland, is low and flat. The history of the city has its roots long before the year 1170 A.D., when it was occupied by the Normans.

Concerning population growth, Dublin expanded relatively slowly during the nineteenth century. In 1880, the population was about 170.000 and in 1900, it was 290.000, that is, it had an increase of seven per cent. These figures are a little misleading, for, as often happens, the administrative boundaries of the city did not always correspond to the facts of the growing urban life.

The Dublin limits were to the north, the Road, North Circular Road, which was the real boundary as it, was fixed in 1840, and to the south, the South Circular Road. To the east, the limit was the mouth of the Liffey, and to the west Phoenix Park with an area of fifteen acres. The Central Dublin area includes:

1. King's Inns,
2. Rutland Square,
3. The Rotunda,
4. Gresham Hotel,

¹⁸ This is well documented in the bibliography. The historical data has been gathered from various sources. It is appropriated here in order to lighten up this analysis.

¹⁹ *Joyce Annotated*, p. 19.

²⁰ Paraphrasing Gabriel Conroy, when he says in *The Dead*: "Snow all over Ireland."

5. The Catholic Pro-Cathedral,
6. Nelson's Pillar,
7. Statue of O'Connell,
8. O'Connell Bridge,
9. The Castle,
10. Bank of Ireland,
11. Trinity College (Dublin University),
12. College Park,
13. Westland Row Station, and
14. Kildare Street.

The Dublin environs are Glanesvin and Drumcondra to the north, on the northern side of the Tolka River, with the Royal Canal close by. The River Liffey divides the city in two parts. South of the Liffey are Stephen's Green, the Grand Canal and Donnybrook. To the east, side is the River Dodder and Irish Town, Ballbridge and Sandymount. Farther south, parallel to the ocean side, are Monkstown and Kingstown. Chapelizod is west of the city and the legend associates it with the tragic love of Tristan and Isolde.

At the turn of the century Dublin had the advantage of being a national capital which retained its local identity against which James Joyce always revolted. He despised the provincialism of his native town, its lack of cosmopolitan life and continental standards. He said that for an Irish, in order to have some redemption, he needed to escape, and head eastward, that is the Continent. Concerning this feeling, Walton Litz says:

*Dublin could epitomize Irish life in a way London or New York could not epitomize the national lives of England and America.*²¹

The 1904 Dublin of James Joyce was not an immense city. It could be known in all its mood by a single person and it was more like an overgrown town which the author knew intimately. This is reason why being in Trieste, he was able to remember in detail the names of streets, pubs, and numerous other places, sometimes with the help of Stanislaus, his brother. For James Joyce, Dublin was not only the capital or Ireland but also an adequate symbol for all capital cities of the twentieth-century Europe. It stood, in its way, for Vienna, Paris, London, Rome, Berlin, et alii. James Joyce began and ended his works with Dublin, for he

understood that Dublin was not only a microcosm for Ireland and the Western world but also for the life conditions of the modern individual.

James Joyce's portraits of his characters reveal that to one degree or another, each personage exists and acts within limits which the city imposes. Between 1850 and 1880 the Dublin-Kingstown Railway encouraged a steady building along the coast, and by the end of the seventies Dublin was linked to Kingstown by a long narrow residential belt. After 1880, the southeast segment continued to advance with moderate speed, and by the year 1910, it had reached Terenure and gone as far as Dodder. The expansion on the north side was less dramatic since as late as 1910, there was a gap between Fairview and Clontarf and some open country between the Drumcondra and Glanesvin area of the City.²² One consequence of this outward movement of the middle classes was the growth of a gigantic slum problem. The existence of a disproportionate quantity of large houses and the pressure to accommodate a large mass of skilled and unskilled workers, whose wages compelled them to seek the cheapest housing, led to the steady spread of tenement type dwellings. These houses were initially planned for a single family, but later on, they were divided and subdivided as large rooms were partitioned. These houses were rented from basement to attic in apartments or single rooms. Towards the middle of the nineteenth century Willis, a medical man and statistician, described the want of water, the deficient sewage, the crowding of families into rooms of small dimensions, and the filth and corruption of the atmosphere which characterized a large area behind the Four Courts. By 1879, there were nearly ten thousand tenement houses in Dublin, occupied by about 117.000 people, that is about forty-five per cent of the population of the city. Of these, 30.000 were said to be living in houses unfit for human habitation. In 1914, though the number of tenement houses had been reduced to five thousand, there were still 110.000 people living in them. The density of population per house had somewhat risen and the proportion of tenement unfit for occupation was greater than in 1879.

Dublin not only determines and conditions experience but also provides the criteria against which its inhabitants must measure their lives. Therefore, it is

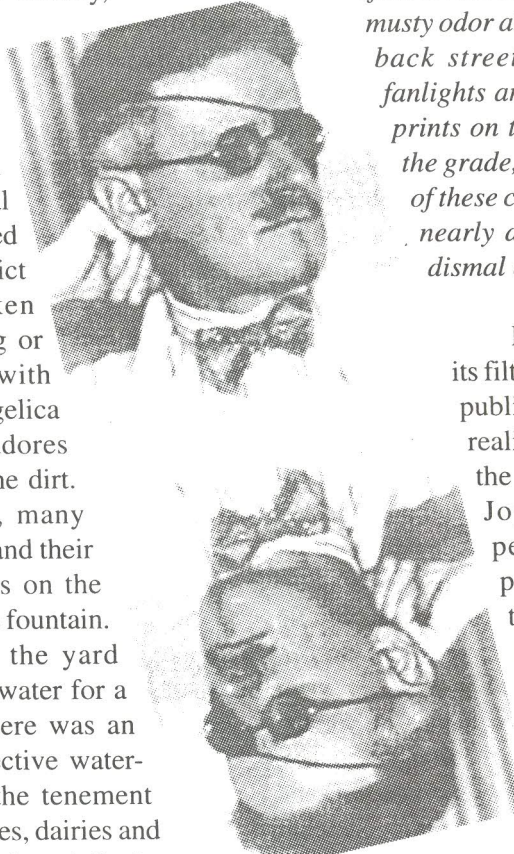
²¹ Litz, Walton, *James Joyce* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1972), p. 49.

²² Terenure, Fairview, Clontarf, Drumcondra and Glasnevin are nearby suburbs of Dublin.

important to comprehend Dublin as it was in the mid-nineteenth century in order to understand its habitat and the major socio-economical problems.

Filthy places unfit for human habitation

By the turn of the twentieth century, there was a belt of bad housing which stood east of O'Connell Bridge along the docks, and another south of Marrison Square. These areas comprised both Georgian mansions and substantial middle-class houses, they preserved their dignified proportions and strict alignment but exhibited broken fanlights, open doorways, sloping or rotten and smashed staircases, with remnants of the decorations by Angelica Kauffmann or the Italian stuccadores showing here and there through the dirt. In the early nineteenth century, many houses had still no running water, and their inhabitants depended for supplies on the possible tainted water from a public fountain. Even by 1914, a single tap in the yard generally furnished the supply of water for a whole tenement house, where there was an overflowing ash-pit and an ineffective water-closet. Sandwiched in between the tenement houses were stables, slaughterhouses, dairies and piggeries, each adding its quota of refuse, infection and smells. In this atmosphere, the death rate was high; privacy was unattainable, and cleanliness and tidiness almost impossible. Many of the Dublin poors housed in such tenements lived on a diet largely composed of bread and tea with a little bacon, cabbage, and skim milk. For clothing, they relied on the cast-off clothes markets and depended largely on the credit facilities afforded by the pawnbroker from early in the week to pay day. These conditions inspired not only James Joyce's works but other writers as well, such as Sean O'Casey's plays and Liam O'Flaherty's novels. Dublin experienced severe labor troubles which flared up in the beginning of the twentieth century.²³ Major Dermot Freyer, in a report on Dubliners written for Elkin



Mathews and published on January 20, 1908, really captures the gloomy atmosphere that pervades Joyce's work:

Most of the stories treat of a very lower-middle class Dublin life. They are never enlivening, and often sordid and even disgusting. There is a faded, musty odor about them: the scenes are in gloomy back streets, in houses with dust-stained fanlights and windows, in room with battered prints on the walls and only a coal of fire in the grate, in the bars of Public Houses. Most of these characters are too fond of drink, and nearly all are physically repulsive. It is a dismal and depressing world.²⁴

From the many-sided Dublin with its filthy places, dark streets and pubs, and public institutions, which compose the reality of the city, the reader enters into the artistic or literary world of James Joyce's Dubliners. There, the personages, as if they were real people, move and evolve in a milieu that corresponds to the same Dublin the author was born in, walked around in and lived in for many years of his life.

The motif of bad odors

Among the many leitmotivs— or *idées-mères*, as Joyce himself used to call them— (*JJ*, 62) present in *Dubliners*, odor gives the already presented spectacle of the city a dramatic overtone. While living in Trieste, on June 23, 1906, James Joyce wrote Grant Richards, in London, telling him:

*It is not my fault that the odour of ashpits and old weeds and offal hangs round my stories. Is seriously believed 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" (*Letters*, I, 63-64).*

²³ Information taken from Meana, James, and David A. Webb, eds. *A View of Ireland* (Dublin: The British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1967).

²⁴ Major Dermot Freyer, "Report on Dubliners by James Joyce", *James Joyce Quarterly*, 15, N° 4 (1973), p. 457.

The motif of odor occurs about ten times in seven of the fifteen stories.²⁵ There is a malodorous reality found in stories such as *Araby*, as the muddy lanes, ashpits stables and a dead priest are mentioned. To contrast this, there are other types of odors in the story *The Sisters*, where the flowers disguise the odor of death; as Father Fly is in his coffin, *there is a heavy odour in the room –the flowers* (D., 13). Flowers are opposites of what the priest with his strange personality and life represents. The story *Two Gallants* is another instance where flowers appear; Lenehan finds the air *heavily scented* (D., 51) by the red flowers the slavey²⁶ girl has pinned stems upwards as a symbol of transvaluation of love. Odors, whether malodorous or pleasant as that of the flowers, make the Joycean portrayal more vivid to the reader.

Classification and division of personages in *Dubliners*

For this analysis, *Dubliners'* personages have been selected and classified in two social strata: middle-middle and lower-middle classes.²⁷ They are presented in a scheme with numbers following them, which indicate the number of the story in the book. It has also been considered it important to group them according to their different jobs or doings. This social panorama is followed by an analysis of James Joyce's portrait of the City and the linkage of the apparently different separated stories into one large and well thought scheme. Following there is ad hoc inventory, which shows each name followed by a number in parenthesis, that corresponds to the chronological order of the tales in the book, being *The Sisters* number one, *An Encounter* number two, et allii.

Anthony Burgess mentions an important fact in relation to names. He states that the names in *Dubliners* match the poverty of the characters' lives, and that it is only in the final story, *The Dead*, that we meet a personage who is cut above the Lenehans and McCoys. This is Gabriel Conroy, the writer, closer to Joyce in trade, temperament and ambition than anyone else in the book.²⁸

²⁵ *JJQ*, XV, 2, 112-16.

²⁶ *Slavey*. A maid-of-all work (as against higher ranking domestics with defined job status such as downstairs maid, upstairs maid, etc.); her annual salary would be, if she lived in, as Coreley's friend does, £6 or £7. *Joyce Annotated*, p. 57.

²⁷ This is the writers own personal classification of the characters.

²⁸ Anthony Burgess. *Joysprik* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovannovich, publishers, 1975), p. 126.

All of the characters listed above, have been selected as the most relevant ones in each of the tales, as this is not an exhaustive selection.²⁹ One way or another, they show that the older life-sustaining patterns of human existence, formed through centuries of pastoral and village life, have been corrupted and set aside by forces of the modern city growing. The basic institutions of this earlier way of life such as family, church, community, and homeland have become archaic and irrelevant to the needs of those impersonal concerning this, mechanical functions demanded by the new industrial-urban order.

Joseph Davis states:

[...] *what once was creative and healthy [the city] is now destructive and perverse, for such institutions as family and church now generate, in Joyce's Dublin, hatreds and frustrations which give away to an inner sense of panic at being trapped by a dying way of life.*³⁰

Urban paysage a lo Joyce

It is very accurate when Mr. Davis says that the meaning of *Dubliners* depends upon Joyce's technique, that is, the way personage and incident function as artistic *problems* within the concentric circles, which are Dublin. In one sense, James Joyce, like a painter, employs the city of Dublin as a *field* and character and incident are *figures* within this field. The aesthetic impact, and ultimately the meaning of specific character-incident events depend upon Dublin itself and upon the relationship at a given time between character-incident and the city. This is done *par touches* along the book. In each of these fifteen tales, character-incident comprises a unit as some have stated, and cannot be satisfactorily interpreted except as an extension of the city and the order which conditions life for all who exist within its limits. The angles of view, the aspects of the whole scene, which finally refer everything to Dublin, understand the significance of these *Dubliners*. They are nothing and Dublin is everything.³¹ Robert Scholes asserts that the title of the ninth story, *Counterparts*, is a major clue to the structure of the whole book. According to Scholes,

²⁹ A number in parentheses follows every name: it corresponds to the number of the story in the book.

³⁰ *The City as Radical Order: James Joyce's Dubliners*, p. 81.

³¹ *SLI*, III, 2, 1970, p. 88.

Inventory of the Characters

TYPES OF PEOPLE:	SOCIAL CLASSES:	
	Middle-middle class	Lower-middle class
Priests:	F. James Flynn (1) F. O'Rourke (1) F. Buttler (2) F. Purdon (14)	F. Keon (14)
Housewives:	Annie Chandler (8) Emily Sinico (11) Mrs. Kearny (13)	Mrs. Donnelly (10) Mrs. Gretta Conroy (15) Mrs. Dillon (1)
Slavies-garçons:	François (8)	slavey girl (6)
Other women:	Miss Delacour (9) Misses Kate, Julia and Mary-Jane Morkan (15)	Nannie and Eliza Flynn (1) Maria (10) Eveline (4) Polly Mooney (7) Ginger Mooney (10) Lizzy Flemming (10)
Drunkards:	Mrs. Sinico (11) Mrs. Kernan (14) Freddy Mallins (215)	Mr. Farrington (9) Mr. Mooney (7) Jack's son (12)
Clerks:	Mr. Alleyne (9) Robert Doran (7) James Duffy (11) Thomas Chandler (8)	Mr. Shelley (9) Miss Parker (9)
Businessmen:		Joe Donnelly (10) Mr. Kearney (13) Mr. Cunningham (13)
Other Men:	Ignatius Gallagher (8) Captain Sinico (11) Mr. Powers (14) Gabriel Conroy (15)	Lenehan and Corely (6) Frank, the sailor (4) Old Cotter (1) Jack Mooney (7) Mr. O'Halloran (9) Nosey Flynn (9) Mr. McCoy (13) The Uncle (1-2-3)
People in politics:	Richard Tierney (12) Molly Ivors (15)	Mr. Hynes (12) Mr. Colgan (12) Mr. O'Connor (12) Mr. Lyons (12) Mr. Crofton (12) Old Jack (12) Father Keon (14)
Artists and musicians:	Mary Sinico (11) Kathleen Kearney (13) Miss Healy (13)	Mr. Bell (13) Weathers (9) Mr. Duggan (13) Bartell D'Arcy (15)

[...] *the title of the story suggests both the harmonious balance of counter pointed musical parts and the anonymous interchangeability of cogs in the great machine.*³²

In his essay, Mr. Scholes links the most relevant characters of the book as counterparts in the total plot of the stories and the book, as a well-structured unit. Mr. Alleyne bullies his employee, Mr. Farrington, and Mr. Farrington bullies his son Tom. The Farringtons are counterparts as victims, and Mr. Alleyne and Mr. Farrington are counterparts as abusers of authority. The returning of Farrington to his wifeless home and whining son, is counterposed with Little Chandler's encountering of his baby son in *A Little Cloud*; in *Two Gallants*, Corely with the slavey's gold coin in his hand is the counterpart of Lily; the caretaker's daughter in *The Dead* with Gabriel Conroy's well intended coin clutched in her hand. Gabriel cannot compensate Lily for a Dublin world full of Corelys and connections Lenehans, and that is the irony. Nonetheless, the connection of the gold coins enriches the perspective on these events and other similar ones with many shades of thought and feeling beyond simple irony. Farrington, waiting for the little Sandymount tram with twopence in his pocket, reminds us of the boy-narrator in *Araby* who has eightpence in his pocket, from which four will be for the train fare. These types of connections, multiplied many times, were the principal means by which James Joyce blended his separate stories into an imposing portrait of the city as a whole race of people. Joyce gives petty cash very important roles in his book, as well as the pettiness of Dublin, which is due to financial distress. This is even seen in the upper riches of Joyce's middle-middle classes; for instance, Mrs. Kearney, in *A Mother*, strives for an extra shilling that makes a pound a guinea, and Gabriel Conroy mentions to Gretta, his wife, amid his sexual embarrassment, that he is surprised at the returning of a pound he had lent Freddy Mallins. In *Ivy Day in the Committee Room*, Mr. O'Connor asks Mr. Henchy, concerning Father Keon *and how does he knock it about?* (D., 115). This question could be extended to all Dubliners. Another example is the trick Weathers uses by ordering Irish and Apollinaris at Farrington's expense, which makes the man, think of Weathers as a *sponge* out of his shillings. All characters count shillings

and pence. Farrington insists on six shillings for his watch instead of the crown offered (a crown is five).

James Joyce, through his art, develops an exquisite structure of interconnections, making of all of his cases in the stories a unified portrait of the city. He also presents each of these cases with a control of tone, inviting us to consider and evaluate them as he guides our responses without coercing us; he, permits us freedom of response. Characters such as Farrington, crude and simple as any other in the book, are presented in such way. Joyce gives careful attention to details in order to make him worthy of the reader's interest, and to prevent us from dismissing his brutality as too banal to require our consideration. For example, in *Araby*, the boy-protagonist hears his uncle coming home, *and he [hears] him talking to himself and [hears] the hall-stand rocking when it has received the weight of his overcoat, and he can interpret these signs* (D., 29). It is inferred from this that the man has been drinking, but the reader is not told so directly. This is how Joyce works story after story. The reader must interpret for himself, but these signs are meaningful, which make some interpretations better than others. This is the case of the writer of this article's own interpretation of *Eveline's* final destiny:

*In the afternoon, prior to her departure, she sits by the window; her eyes are like a movie camera dollying in as she as she daydreams and evade in time, looking through the glass, bringing back her childhood memories. The effect of light and time passing by so slowly reinforce the action. While all of this is taking place, Eveline [stands] up in a sudden impulse of terror. **She must escape!** (Bold letters ours) (D., 35).*

[...] That same very night, with Frank at the pier, she [catches] a glimpse of the black mass of the boat, lying in beside the quay wall, with illuminated portholes (D., 35).

She is about to escape in body and soul once and for all, but when this final decision comes:

She [grips] with both hands at the iron railing. –Come!

No! No! No! It is impossible. Her hands clutch the iron railing with frenzy... She [sets] her whit face to him, passive, like a helpless animal. Her

³² James Joyce *Dubliners: Critical Essays*. Edited by Clive Hart (New York: Faber and Faber, 1966), p. 379.

eyes [give] him so sign of live, or farewell or recognition (D., 36-37).

Joseph Folliet says that *la disparition de la vie intérieure et l'abus de l'évasion conduisent fréquemment au déséquilibre nerveux, c'est normal*. In the case of Eveline, this is true, and by a series of facts, this [could] lead to think that she lost her mind.³³

On the other hand, in *Dubliners*, the characters walk along Dublin's streets, bridges, parks and tram stations. Approximately sixty-seven streets are mentioned in the book, in addition to other well-known points of reference. As the reader advances in the text of the short stories, he becomes familiar with sites such as Trinity College, a point of reference for Lenehan and Corely in *Two Gallants*, and for Gabriel Conroy, his wife and his friends as they ride in a taxi after a party at the Misses Morkans, in *The Dead*. Stephen's Green is found in *After the Race*; the South Circular Road is the place where Corely used to spend his money on girls. Gardiner Street and the Jesuit Church is the place where Mr. Kernan and his friends go to a retreat; the Star of the Sea Church is where Mrs. Kernan enjoys the spectacle of weddings, and the bells of Saint George's Church call people to mass in *The Boarding House*. Other points of reference are The College of Surgeons, the City Hall, the City Markets, the King's Inns, the Royal Constabulary Office in Dublin Castle, the City of Dublin Hospital, and the palace of Four Courts. Different stations are mentioned, such as Westland Road, Kingstown Station, King's Bridge Station, and the trams that go from Ballbridge to the Pillar (Nelson's Pillar, blown by a bomb in 1966), and from the Pillar to Drumcondra, Sandymount Tram. Bridges are also listed all over the book: Grattan Bridge, Chapelizod Bridge. Some public houses ought to be mentioned, which are a very important part of these people's lives as all *Dubliners* enjoy alcohol. Except for Coreless's, in *A Little Cloud*, which is an expensive sophisticated place, the rest are lower-class pubs for ordinary working people. Among these, Callan's on Fownes's Street, O'Neil's, the Scotch House, and Mulligan's in *Counterparts*.

The socio-economic, religious or political frustration, cover the complete extent of the world of

Dubliners, and the theme of social frustration pervades *Dubliners*. In one way or another, the personages exemplify this trait as well as the corrupting values of modern age, which are the thematic ingredients of stories such as *After the Race*. This story presents an interesting instance of social frustration; the poverty and provincialism of Dublin along with the inferiority complex of some native butcher *nouveaux riches*, are contrasted with the power and wealth of some continental gentlemen. Jimmy Doyle, a young *Dubliners* supported by his father, longs to be accepted by a group of international sophisticates who are in town for motor races. However, Jimmy Doyle is hindered by his spiritual shallowness, his inferiority complex and social frustration, characteristics reinforced by the ostentatious magnificence of the truly rich foreigners and their flamboyant style of living. The story ends with Doyle foolishly gambling and losing too much to these continental playboys.

Conclusion

The objective of this work was to present a detailed analysis of the main characters of the stories in Joyce's *Dubliners*. Also to provide the reader with a thorough comprehension of the book, as well as some insight into the world that James Joyce lived and knew. With this intention in mind, a broad sketch of the city of Dublin in the late nineteenth and the turn of the twentieth century was offered. It is here, amid this urban paysage where the happenings of Joyce's *Dubliners* take place, and where the personages live. The characters' emotions, self-esteem and even nullified inner-selves were broadly mentioned along with some of the pathological consequences of their urban reclusion. These pathologies were contemplated as progressive stages of their evasion from their individual frustrations.

The genesis of the stories was also included and considered aiming at the understanding of the cohesion and development of the book as a whole. Other political, religious, extreme poverty and living conditions as well as geographical facts were presented, as the setting of the novel corresponds to that of a real city.

Finally, Dublin was presented, visited and, in agreement and faith to Joyce's own belief, is to be escaped, surmounted if any ordinary man, any *Dubliners* from his day intended to find some deliverance from it.

³³ Francisco Hernández Mata *The Feeling of Frustration in James Joyce's Dubliners*, p. 85.

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