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Bakalářská práce

Symbolismus v “*Dubliňanech*” Jamese Joyce
Symbolism in Joyce's “*Dubliners*”

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*Mo beítí gleoite, go raibh míle míle maith agat. Tá súil agam go mbeidh tú in áit sásta
(blas galanta sasanach).*

Abstract

This thesis analyses symbolism in *Dubliners* written by the influential Irish writer James Joyce. The introduction of the thesis focuses on Joyce's reception in Ireland, and his life and work. Furthermore we pay particular attention to the publishing and structure of *Dubliners*. The core of this thesis is to examine the symbolism in the following short stories: *An Encounter*, *The Boarding House*, *A Painful Case*, *A Mother*, *The Dead*. These stories were selected as the representations of the four imaginary sections in *Dubliners*: childhood, adolescence, maturity, public life. *The Dead* is a section of its own, and serves as an epilogue to the short story collection. It will be in and through the analysis of symbols that various interpretations of the stories will be explored.

Anotace

Tato bakalářská práce se soustředí na rozbor symbolů v knize *Dubliňané*, napsané významným irským spisovatelem Jamesem Joyce. V úvodu se zaměřuji na přijetí Joyce v Irsku, a na jeho život a dílo. Dále věnuji pozornost vydání a struktuře knihy. Jádrem této bakalářské práce je však rozbor symbolů v těchto následujících povídkách: *Střetnutí*, *Penzion*, *Trapný případ*, *Matka*, *Nebožtíci*. Tyto povídky jsem vybrala jako představitele čtyř pomyslných sekcí v *Dubliňanech*: dětství, dospívání, dospělost, veřejný život. *Nebožtíci* je sekce sama o sobě a v této sbírce povídek působí spíše jako doslov. Rozbor symbolů zároveň poskytuje důkladný výklad a interpretaci povídek.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	5
1 Introduction.....	6
2 An Encounter.....	12
3 The Boarding House.....	19
4 A Painful Case.....	24
5 A Mother.....	32
6 The Dead.....	36
7 Conclusion.....	44
8 Summary.....	47
9 Bibliography.....	50

1 Introduction

As many critics and readers would agree, reading Joyce is one of the most intellectually and emotionally rewarding experience in literature. James Joyce is placed amongst the most influential writers of the twentieth century and many great names of literature, such as Virginia Woolf or T. S. Eliot, who owe some aspects of their styles to his pioneering work. And yet, his work has been misrepresented. At his time James Joyce was widely misunderstood as it was being refused by several publishers for its assumed obscenity. His writing was recognized only by the few who could foresee a great potential and a revolutionary influence it would have upon literature; among them we can count W.B. Yeats or Ezra Pound.¹

Nowadays Joyce is read rather among academics as he is recognized by every English university professor. Joyce's work is currently considered a bridge between the realistic English novels of the nineteenth century and the experimental European writers. He achieved to break down boundaries between autobiography and fiction by using sketches of his life as a source for his writing. Such technique is not known to have been done before. We can observe this approach throughout his work, namely in *Ulysses*, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* or *Dubliners* (Startup: 2, 3). This thesis will focus on *Dubliners*, Joyce's work which is "both intensely local and broadly cosmopolitan"².

Dubliners can be treated as a separate piece of work, however in order to understand Joyce's unique technique it is wise to read the two aforementioned books altogether with *Dubliners* as a whole. It has been established that these three books are remarkably unified and each one of them can be seen as a continuation of the previous. The atmosphere created in *Dubliners* recurs both in *Ulysses* as well as *Portrait*; the same can be said about scenes and characters. Nearly all stories in *Dubliners* were written overseas. However, places in Dublin are portrayed with such precision that Joyce himself claimed that it would be possible for future readers to reconstruct a map of Dublin in 1904 using no other source than his books (Startup: 11, 12).

1.1 Life and Work of James Joyce

James Joyce was born in 1882 in Dublin, Ireland. He was born during time of one of the great Irish politician, Charles Stewart Parnell (1846-91). Joyce's mother, Mary "May"

¹ Startup, Frank, *A Beginner's Guide, James Joyce*, Hodder & Stoughton Educational, Great Britain, 2001, p. 1.

² Davies, Laurence, Introduction in *Dubliners*, Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1993, Great Britain, p V.

Murray (1859-1903), a shy, modest and pious Catholic woman married John Stanislaus Joyce (1849-1931) who was a Secretary of the United Liberal Club in Dublin and moreover, his loyalty belonged to Parnell. Parnell's secret affair with Katherine O'Shea, a married woman, became publicly known in 1890 and after that he lost the majority of his followers which caused the end to his leadership of the Irish Parliamentary Party. Followed by his death a year later, his supporters were quieted. John Stanislaus however remained loyal and his reputation among the Irish Catholics was damaged. He eased his deprivation in alcohol and the Joyces thus began to suffer both socially and financially. This forced the family to withdraw James from Clongowes, an exclusive Jesuit boarding school, to send him to Belvedere College. After graduating, he advanced to University College Dublin where he befriended Francis Skeffington and Hanna Sheehy, both of them feminist activists.³ During his university years, he discovered and was influenced by Henrik Ibsen, a Norwegian dramatist. He wrote poems and tried to connect with the great literary figures of that time (Startup: 7). Moreover, he was born into a century of great growth of the Irish Catholic Church. In *Dubliners* he illustrates awareness of spiritual trends and changes in Dublin of the early 20th century but also his denunciation of church.⁴

The death of his father caused a decline from a respectable middle-class into an actual squalor. Such experience contributed to James's gradual estrangement from his family, religion and eventually his country. He articulates his defiance in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*:⁵

*"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, using for my defense the only arms I allow myself to use-silence, exile, and cunning"*⁶.

Joyce graduated in 1902 from English, Italian and French and the same year he moved to Paris where he intended to support himself by teaching English while studying medicine. He had to return to Ireland the following year when his mother was dying of cancer. He remained there until 1904 while working on his autobiographical novel *Stephen Hero*

³ Wainwright, Michael, *Female Suffrage in Ireland: James Joyce's Realization of Unrealized Potential*, Trinity College Dublin (TCD) library electronic database, p. 656-659.

⁴ Frawley, Oona (ed.), *A New & Complex Sensation, Essays on Joyce's Dubliners*, The Lilliput Press, Ireland 2004, p. 133, 134.

⁵ Garrett, Peter K., *Twentieth Century Interpretations of Dubliners: A Collection of Critical Essays*, Prentice Hall, United States 1968, p. 1, 2.

⁶ Joyce, James, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, New York, The Viking Press, Inc; London: Jonathan Cape Limited, 1964, p. 246-47, referred to in Garrett, p.2.

which later became *A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man*. The same year he met Nora Barnacle, an uneducated woman from Galway, who was to become his life-long partner, and later his wife and mother to their two children, Giorgio and Lucia (Startup: 7-8). Nora also served Joyce as a basis for his perception of essential femininity in *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*. Unmarried, they moved to Pola and then Trieste where Joyce taught English. By this time he had already written three stories of *Dubliners*, *The Sisters*, *Eveline* and *After the Race*. When the remaining stories were added, Joyce began his eight-year-long struggle with the publishers. In the meantime he continued his work on *A Portrait* which was published in 1916. This success initiated an expanding recognition as a significant artist and it also drew attention of generous supporters. During World War 1 the family moved to Zurich and then to Paris where he worked on *Ulysses*, the epic complex novel, which was published in 1922. In the next seventeen years he composed his last and most ambitious piece, the multi-lingual, encyclopaedic *Finnegans Wake*, which was published in 1939 (Garrett: 2-3). The work was received with disinterest and incomprehension despite its initial ambition (Startup: 10). In 1940 the family returned to Zurich where Joyce died in 1941 (Garrett: 3) after complications following an operation of a perforated duodenal ulcer (Startup: 10).

1.2 Joyce's reception in Ireland

When analysing how Joyce was received in Ireland of his time, one needs to bear in mind that his critique was a result of cultural, religious and political traditions in Ireland. His reception thus needs to be seen in a context of Ireland's submission to Britain and its progression towards political freedom and independence. However, there have been disputes about where to place Joyce as a writer. Some overlooked him and others declared him a Revivalist writer, when others treated him as an emigrant and therefore saw his writings as overly influenced by foreign elements.⁷

Nonetheless, Joyce himself aspired to differentiate his work from the old generation of Revivalist, one of them being W.B. Yeats. Despite his ambitions to distinguish himself, his short stories, later integrated into *Dubliners*, were first published in the *Irish Homestead*, a journal commissioned by one of the senior Revivalist generation. Moreover, Yeats himself fought for Joyce's good reputation claiming that Ireland found its new talent and thus helped to secure Joyce's funding (Nash: 113, 115).

⁷ Nash, John, and Brown, Richard (ed.), *A Companion to James Joyce, In the Heart of the Hibernian Metropolis? Joyce's Reception in Ireland, 1900-1940*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2011, p. 109-110.

1.3 The Publishing and Structure of *Dubliners*

It was already mentioned that Joyce's reception before *A Portrait* and *Ulysses* was generally poor. For instance, when published in the *Homestead*, the readers appealed for the immorality of the short stories. Nash (114) argues that, however, it might not have been their symbolism which stirred up the readers, but rather it was their incompatibility with the readers' expectation, especially of the rural ones. Such knowledge invites us to speculate whether *Dubliners* is a realist (naturalist) or symbolist piece of work. As Nash (115) points out, "if it was both realistic and immoral why complain at the book and not at life?" Sonja Basic explains that this confusion is caused by both "following realist/naturalist conventions" as well as "using symbolist devices". Even Joyce's attempt to write a "moral history" of Ireland suggests realism however the obvious simplicity and transparency prompts us to treat *Dubliners* as a symbolist piece of work. This thesis will thus attempt to provide a symbolist analysis of the short story collection.

Dubliners is a collection of 15 short stories written between years 1904 and 1907. However it was only in 1914 when the collection as a whole was published. In February 1906 a version of 12 stories was accepted by Grant Richards, a London publisher. Adding the three remaining stories, "*Two Gallants*", "*Little Cloud*" and "*The Dead*" caused the delay of the publishing. Both the printer and the publisher first objected to certain passages such as occasional usage of the word "bloody" or references to obscene women (bold gaze, changing the leg position too often etc.). Nevertheless, Joyce insisted on every single detail for artistic purposes. Though he eventually agreed to some changes, Richards rejected the whole book in the end. After the rejection of several other publishers, Joyce was then able to find a Dublin publisher, Maunsel and Company, in 1909. This was only an ostensible triumph as the book was printed only to be rejected again. All of the copies were destroyed for objections of the use of real names of places in Dublin. After a few more rejections, *Dubliners* was finally accepted again by Richards and published in 1914, with eight year delay (Garrett: 1,2). All in all, Joyce repeatedly resubmitted *Dubliners* 18 times to 15 different publishers. His tenacity, dedication and well-presented clarification of the reasons that shaped *Dubliners*, gradually enabled the publishing.⁹ Here is one of Joyce's responses to a potential publisher:

"It is not my fault that the odour of ashpits and old weeds and offal hangs around my stories. I seriously believe that you will retard the

⁸ Basic, Sonja, *A Book of Many Uncertainties: Joyce's Dubliners*, Fall 91, Vol. 25, Issue 3, TCD library electronic database, p. 351.

⁹ McBride, Eimear, *The Heart of the City*, New Statesman, 30/05-05/06 2014, p.52.

*course of civilisation in Ireland by preventing the Irish people from having a good look at themselves in my nicely polished looking-glass"*¹⁰.

It was said that despite the supposed immorality of the stories, Joyce had supporters who made the effort to prove his geniality. For instance, Ezra Pound, too, wrote many letters to prominent editors and critics to promote his talent (Nash: 115). Joyce himself defended his work through many letters sent to the publishers, explaining his objective:

"My intention was to write a chapter of the moral history of my country and I choose Dublin for the scene because that city seemed to me the centre of paralysis. I have tried to present it to the indifferent public under four of its aspects: childhood, adolescence, maturity and public life. The stories are arranged in this order. I have written it for the most part in a style of scrupulous meanness and with the conviction that he is a very bold man who dares to alter in the presentment, still more to deform, whatever he has seen and heard. I cannot do more than this. I cannot alter what I have written" (Ellman: 3).

The chapters according to Joyce's division are following: childhood (*The Sisters, An Encounter, Araby*), adolescence (*Eveline, After the Race, Two Gallants, The Boarding House*), maturity (*A Little Cloud, Counterparts, Clay, A Painful Case*), and public life (*Ivy Day in the Committee Room, A Mother, Grace*). *The Dead* was added later as a "separate story in its own right".¹¹

Some reviewers of *Dubliners* objected that the stories have no connection to Dublin and that the story line could have been set in any other city or country (Nash: 114-115). To this Joyce objected:

*"I do not think that any writer has yet presented Dublin to the world. It has been a capital of 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 bear some meaning and I doubt whether the same can be said for such words as "Londoner" and "Parisian""*¹².

The motif of paralysis is introduced at the very beginning of the whole collection: "Every night as I gazed up at the window I said softly to myself the word paralysis"¹³. Garrett (4)

10 Ellman, Richard, ed., *Letters II*, The Viking Press- New York, Faber & Faber- London, 1966, p. 134, referred to in McBride, p.52.

11 Schwarz, Daniel R. (ed.), *The Dead, James Joyce*, Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 67.

12 Gorman, Herbert, *James Joyce*, New York, 1940, p. V-iv, referred to in Hugh Kenner, Peter. Garrett (ed.), p. 38.

13 Joyce, James, *Dubliners*, Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1993, Great Britain, p.1.

states that the "most frequent form of paralysis is captivity, both imposed by the deadening environment and produced by the characters' own moral weaknesses". The paralysis progresses as the stories advance. First it is perceived from a "limited, naïve point of view" of a child (childhood), then it transfers to an entrapment and "recognition of futility" (adolescence), the third group displays this entrapment and futility as a bleak life circle whether the protagonists realise it or not (maturity), and the last group presents the paralysis as a crisis of the entire community (public life). *The Dead* serves the collection "as an epilogue, summarizing and perhaps qualifying the principal themes of the entire collection" (Garrett: 5).

Furthermore, it is suggested that each story has its own epiphany in a sense that the epiphany is a sudden exposure to the paralysis. In other words, it is a recognition or self-recognition of the entrapment within the paralysis. As well as the paralysis, the epiphany is thus a link between the stories. However, most characters "are incapable of this degree of consciousness... Joyce's epiphanies are primarily revelations for the reader, rather than the characters" (Garrett: 11, 13, 14).

This thesis will analyse the symbolism in five selected short stories; each story as a representation of the aforementioned four groups altogether with the "epilogue", *The Dead*. Each story has its own symbolism through which the paralysis and the epiphany can be interpreted. The analysed short stories are following: *An Encounter*, *The Boarding House*, *A Painful Case*, *A Mother*, and *The Dead*.

2 An Encounter

An Encounter is the second story of the 'childhood section' in *Dubliners*. As with all the other stories, it contains several symbols through which it can be interpreted. Along with the other two stories in this section, *The Sisters* and *Araby*, it is written in the first person narrative which provides us the impression that the narrator, i.e. Joyce, and the main protagonist, are the same person. The story is thus told from the boy's point of view. Simply put, it focuses on a day adventure of two school boys. The breadth of themes explored in the text is wide; in only a few pages Joyce manages to allude to issues such as British colonialism, religious oppression, class discrimination, homosexuality, pederasty, paedophilia or sadomasochism. These themes will be discussed in turn of their symbols. Amongst other issues it is the sexual overtones and references to pederasty from the mouth of a deviant old man in this story which causes the whole collection a delay with publishing. The story was written in 1905 as the ninth in order of composition.¹⁴

Like each story of the collection, *An Encounter* contains its own motif of paralysis, upon which the story is based. The first noticeable theme is that the protagonists seek some sort of an escape from their everyday life. The narrator claims "the routine of school" and "mimic warfare" (*Dubliners*: 10) of the Wild West plays as the source of his boredom, however in his essay, Harry Longworth sees the text and these references to the escape as a possible parallel with Joyce's own desire to escape from Ireland and his "self-imposed exile" in Continental Europe.¹⁵ Joyce, too, lacked the "robustness" and probably appeared "studious", which is something he had in common with the narrator.¹⁶ The symbolism of the plays and the magazines about the Wild West is thus escapist in nature; "The adventures related in the literature of the Wild West were remote from my nature but, at least, they opened doors of escape" (*Dubliners*: 9). This is not the only reference to the escape in the text: "Mahony said it would be right skit to run away to sea on one of those big ships..." (*Dubliners*: 11). However, the boys' paralysis is significant a few lines above, when they are "being shouted at for [their] immobility by the drivers of groaning carts" (*Dubliners*: 11). This symbolises their inability to escape. In turn, we might ask what do the main protagonists seek the escape from. The story contains several critiques of religion and its grip on Irish society. For instance, when Joe Dillon, the main supporter of the Wild West plays, decides on career as a priest, the boys react disdainfully: "Everyone

¹⁴ Fargnoli, Nicholas A. and Gillespie, Michael P., *Critical Companion to James Joyce: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work*, Infobase Publishing, New York 2006, p. 50.

¹⁵ <http://www.aquinasenglish.com/the-reading-room/an-encounter-by-james-joyce-review-by-harry-longworth> accessed on 25/03/2016.

¹⁶ <http://www.novelguide.com/dubliners/summaries/an-encounter> accessed on 25/03/2016.

was incredulous when it was reported that he had a vocation for the priesthood... A spirit of unruliness diffused itself among us..." (*Dubliners*: 9). Joe Dillon, contrasted earlier to his parents who attend the mass every morning, 'betrayed' the boy gang by choosing the side of the adults, who are fully paralysed by church and social convention.

Not only is the phenomenon of escape aroused around the frustration caused by the Catholic Church and the everyday routine in the boys' lives, Joyce also alludes to the possibilities outside of a colonised Ireland. According to Genevieve Abravanel, *An Encounter* is the most American story of *Dubliners*. The boy's interest in American detective stories supports this claim that *An Encounter* "transform[s] fantasies of America into the lived experience of growing up in Dublin and specifically into strategic acts of resistance within their local world of home and school". In his essay he claims that the boys' illicit getaway from the school and playing and reading about Wild West symbolises a "fantasy of American freedom". Moreover, he states that the story itself is a "phantasmic escape from the experience of growing up within a British colony"¹⁷. To this Longworth adds that the boys romanticise their escape based upon their romantic conceptions of an overseas adventure which symbolise freedom and liberalism. The boys project their ideal onto their desired escape: "...I wanted real adventures to happen to myself. But real adventures, I reflected, do not happen to people who remain at home: they must be sought abroad" (*Dubliners*: 10). This re-iterates their paralysis and also Joyce's urge to leave the colonial Ireland. However, the restrictive control of the British Empire upon Ireland is above significantly evident when Father Butler scolds Leo Dillon for reading a Wild West story rather than a chapter from Roman History. This is a symbol of the greatness of the British Empire because as Abravanel (157) points out, at that time it was often compared to the Roman Empire. With this in mind, Leo Dillon's story of *The Apache Chief* provides the escape to America.¹⁸

Where Fargnoli and Gillespie (50) claim that Joe Dillon's impersonation of the American Indians "Ya! yaka, yaka, yaka!" (*Dubliners*: 9) mocks them, Abravanel (158) argues that this stereotypical Irish-English expression and the Wild West culture provide an identification "with the violent resistance of a subject people". He (158) also refers to Luke Gibbons¹⁹

17 Abravanel, Genevieve, *American Encounters in Dubliners and Ulysses*, Franklin & Marshal College, TCD library electronic database, p.157.

18 Cromer, Evelyn Baring, Earl of, *Ancient and Modern Imperialism*, Longmans, New York 1909, referred to in Genevieve Abravanel, p. 157.

19 Gibbons, Luke, *Ireland, America, and Gothic Memory: Transatlantic Terror in the Early Republic*, *Boundary 2: An International Journal of Literature and Culture* 31.1 2004. P. 25- 27, referred to in Abravanel, p. 158.

and Vincent Cheng²⁰ to argue that since the eighteenth century the Irish are commonly associated with American Indians due to their shared history of dispossession and rebellion against the British Empire. Furthermore, many of the Irish migrated to America around the period of the Great famine (1845 – 1850) and married the American Indians as a result of having comparable cultures and similar experiences as oppressed nations.²¹ Joyce thus invokes this association in *An Encounter*:

"He [Joe Dillon] looked like some kind of an Indian when he capered round the garden, an old tea-cosy on his head, beating a tin with his fist and yelling: 'Ya! yaka, yaka, yaka!'" (Dubliners: 9)

Abravanel (158) also points out at the significance of the tea-cosy on Joe's head. He suggests that this image symbolises an actual historical event, Boston Tea Party, when the white future Americans pretended to be the American Indians. To support this argument he (158) also applies T. S. Eliot's concept which proposes that such an image symbolises the boys' identification with the American Indians or the white Americans.²²

The significance of the Wild West stories and therefore the resistance against the British Empire are somewhat diminished considering the fact that, as Abravanel (157) points out, all of the boys' favourite magazines are British. R. B. Kershner (119) also discusses this paradox revealing that the magazines, namely *Pluck*, feature "the daring deeds of plucky sailors, plucky soldiers, plucky railwaymen, plucky boys and plucky girls and all sorts and conditions of British heroes'...". Also, some of the heroes are three English boys experiencing overseas adventures. Kershner (119) claims that the young protagonists picture themselves as this trio, being a "miniature paradigm of Empire". Furthermore, temporarily omitting the significance of the British magazines, Kershner (119) also suggests that the three boys of *An Encounter* can be observed as a degenerate parallel to the *Three Musketeers*, when "[t]he protagonists will furnish pluck and inspiration, Mahony the warrior's skills, and Leo Dillon comic relief. Unfortunately they are Irish and thus awkward representatives of Empire"²³. Regarding our prevailing argument, i.e. that the boys undermine their resistance against the British Empire through re-enacting the adventures of the British heroes, their fondness of the aforementioned stories thus

²⁰ Cheng, Vincent, *Joyce, Race, and Empire*, New York: Cambridge UP, 1995, referred to in Abravanel, p. 158.

²¹ <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/03/16/10-stunning-similarities-between-irish-and-native-historic-experiences-159588> accessed on 25/03/2016.

²² Eliot, T. S., and Eliot, Valerie, *The Letters of T.S. Eliot*, San Diego, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988, referred to in Genevieve Abravanel, p. 158.

²³ Kershner, R. B., and Thacker, Andrew (ed.), *'An Encounter': Boys' Magazines and the Pseudo-Literary*, Palgrave Macmillan 2005, p. 119.

symbolises the fruitless defiance of a few against a greater sovereignty. Also, being called "swaddlers" (*Dubliners*: 11) and having a badge of a cricket club, when cricket is an English national sport²⁴, clearly associate them with the British Empire (*Dubliners*: 162) which is in conflict with their effort to escape.

Another significant theme that surfaces within the story is class discrimination. Being told their superiority to the "National School boys" (*Dubliners*: 10), the narrator and his fellow classmates clearly perceive themselves to be upper-middle class. When the narrator and Mahony set out for the "day's miching" (*Dubliners*: 10), they encounter "a crowd of ragged girls" and "two ragged boys", Mahony wants to attack them "out of chivalry" (*Dubliners*: 11), despite their younger age. The sarcastic notion of chivalry might thus symbolise Joyce's contempt towards the class discrimination because there is no chivalry in discriminating the younger and the weaker. Not only are the boys contrasted to the ragged children but there are also signs of hostility between the narrator and Mahony. This is already suggested when we learn that Mahony is "dark-complexioned". This label foreshadows and thus is a symbol of Mahony's inferiority. His dark complexion, in contrast with the "white Irishness"²⁵, appears significant due to the history of race discrimination based on the skin colour but it might also refer to identifying him with the oppressed American Indians which we have discussed. The narrator participates in Mahony's degradation at the end of the story when he calls him Murphy (*Dubliners*: 14, 15). Kershner (131) sees this particular instance as a symbol of the narrator's superiority to Mahony. He furthermore claims that the name Murphy refers to a lower class and whereas by assigning himself with the Anglo-Irish higher class name Smith, the narrator clearly distinguishes himself from his friend.

Not only does he appear superior to Mahony but he is also temporarily paired with the "queer old josser" (*Dubliners*: 14) when lying about reading the books suggested by the old josser: "'Ah, I can see you are a bookworm like myself. Now,' he added, pointing to Mahony who was regarding us [the narrator and the old josser] with open eyes,' he is different; he goes in for games'" (*Dubliners*: 13). Kershner (121) states that in the story there is a clear "distinction between the boys who are active, unthinking, and lower class and those who are studious, responsible, and upper-middle class". This applies to the narrator, who admits that he is not overly fond of the Wilds West stories and plays, and to Mahony who on the other hand occurs illiterate and appears rather "active". Despite his

24 <http://www.britannica.com/sports/cricket-sport> accessed on 29/03/2016.

25 <http://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/i-m-irish-but-not-white-why-is-that-still-a-problem-100-years-after-the-easter-rising-1.2590841> accessed on 29/03/2016.

previous "fear of appearing overly studious to his classmates" (Kershner: 121), which certainly would involve studying serious literature such as Roman History, the narrator chooses the side of seemingly studious old josses. Thus this fear is transformed into a fear that the "man would think [he] was as stupid as Mahony" (*Dubliners*: 13).

However, creating the link between himself and the queer old josses in order to appeal to him appears rather unfortunate as it symbolises boy's possible inclination to perversion and homosexuality. As Kershner (124) notes, the old josses attempts to seduce the narrator by appearing scholarly. The boy in fact aspires to appear studious and therefore appreciates old josses's good accent and his literary intelligence. Entitling this as "bibliophilic seduction", Norris²⁶ agrees that the old josses exploits literary illustrations, the works of Thomas Moore, Sir Walter Scott and Lord Lytton, to seduce the narrator. His arrival thus signifies an utter change in the boys' adventure (Kershner: 123). After the completely remote introduction of the story "we might expect a *Bildungsroman*, a romantic quest, a modern fairy tale, a pastoral idyll, modern urban naturalism, escapist nostalgia, or an initiation narrative. But there is no preparation for a pornographic outcome to the adventure" (Norris: 33). There are several instances of pornography, pederasty and sadomasochism. The upcoming obscenity is already portended when old josses approaches to the boys: "He walked with one hand upon his hip and in the other hand he held a stick with which he tapped the turf lightly" (*Dubliners*: 12). Kershner (124) regards the stick as a phallic symbol which indicates the following indecency. Moreover, most of old josses's utterances and thoughts, including his references to inappropriate literature, have a sexual undertone or explicitly refer to obscenities, which is highly inappropriate in the company of children, his avid narrative about whipping a boy is one example: "And if a boy had a girl for a sweetheart and told lies about it then he would give him such a whipping as no boy ever got in this world. He [old josses] said that there was nothing in this world he would like so well as that. He described to me [the boy narrator] how he would whip such a boy as if he were unfolding some elaborate mystery. He would love that, he said, better than anything in this world..." (*Dubliners*: 15). Apart from the obscenity-free image of a man chastising a misbehaved boy, this also appears as a symbolic image of a man having sexual intercourse with a boy, using the phallic stick to indulge in sadomasochism. Norris (42) supports this claim saying that the stick transforms "into a vicious cane for lasciviously whipping young boys". Also, despite the insufficient

²⁶ Norris, Margot, *Suspicious Readings of Joyce's "Dubliners"*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003, p.37.

narrative as the old jossler leaves the boys "for a minute or so" (*Dubliners*: 14), Mahony's indignant exclamation "Look what he's doing!... He's a queer old jossler!" (*Dubliners*: 14) potentially refers to masturbation. The expression 'jossler' might mean 'fool' but it also resembles 'tossler' which means 'masturbator'. This resemblance might not be coincidental (*Dubliners*: 162).

We can argue whether *An Encounter* serves the narrator as his break out as a homosexual. Before he encounters the old jossler, his homosexuality is suggested several times through the significance of green colour. Norris (39) refers to Havelock Ellis and Oscar Wilde to prove that "green was associated with homosexuality". Ellis was a significant Victorian homosexual figure who is known for his revolutionary perceptions of homosexuality. In his *Sexual Inversion* he states that "he has a special predilection for green; it is the predominant colour in the decoration of his room, and everything green appeals to him. He finds that the love of green... is very widespread among his inverted [homosexual] friends"²⁷. As for Oscar Wilde, he is notorious "for wearing a trademark green carnation on his lapel"²⁸. It almost seems impossible to pass over the recurrent presence of green: the narrator notices the green leaves on the trees, looks if any of the sailors have green eyes, and acknowledges old jossler's greenish-black suit and his bottle-green eyes. All of these instances might symbolise homosexuality. The narrator also chews "one of those green stems on which girls tell fortunes" (*Dubliners*: 12). This supports that the reoccurring presence of green foretells a forthcoming homosexual encounter. In his essay, Stephen Esherman also suggests a certain oddity in the periodic use of green. He also states that ordinarily green would symbolise Ireland, however not so in this instance.²⁹ Moreover, Norris (36) argues that the narrator is aware of sex and perversity and that the pornographic scene the boys witness is a re-acknowledgment of "something already known". Furthermore, the narrator shows no signs of surprise when witnessing the presumably sexual act: "As I neither answered nor raised my eyes Mahony exclaimed again..." (*Dubliners*: 14). This essentially sums up what was just suggested; that the recurring presence of green foreshadows a forthcoming homosexual event which possibly might not have been a first one.

As Norris (41) concludes, the narrator disguises his sexual awareness with averted eyes and a sudden change of subject to camouflaging their names to Murphy and Smith. This

27 <http://buckisheloquence.blogspot.cz/2012/02/victorian-homosexuality-series-havelock.html> accessed on 04/04/2016.

28 http://www.slate.com/articles/life/explainer/2012/06/rainbows_and_gay_pride_how_the_rainbow_became_a_symbol_of_the_glbtc_movement_.html accessed on 31/03/2016.

29 <http://stephenesherman.com/dubliners-the-eyes-have-it/> accessed on 31/03/2016.

leads us to the significance of the eyes as such. As the old josser disguises his homosexuality by reference to girls (Kershner: 129), the narrator hides it behind the ignorance, averted eyes and fixing his shoes. Norris (43) states that the narrator's "rigid ocular control" is contrasted with Mahony's "wide open eyes" (*Dubliners*: 13). The open eyes may thus symbolise Mahony's innocence, contradiction of the ocular control and the ignorance of the sexual scene. To sum up the argument concerning the narrator's sexual awareness and his possible liking of perversity, we might ask: why does he not leave when he admits that he "dislike[s] the words in his [old josser's] mouth" (*Dubliners*: 13) and furthermore witnesses the erotic act? This thus makes him an accomplice in old josser's perversity.

In defence of the narrator, Norris (32) refer us to Eve Sedgwick who discusses the meaning of "homosexual panic"³⁰. According to Norris the term "refers the supposed uncertainty about [one's] own sexual identity...". The narrator's initial effort to appeal to the old josser might then only be a mere result of his confusion, his homosexual panic. Norris (44) thus argues that despite all of the symbols referring to narrator's possible sexual awareness and perversion, and his attempt to be superior to his friend Mahony, the narrator "confesses a change of heart" when calling out for Mahony in order to seek rescue: "And I was penitent; for in my heart I had always despised him a little" (*Dubliners*: 15). The end of the story thus signifies that he possibly surpassed the temptation of the homosexual sadistic paedophile, the old josser, and his own the homosexual panic.

Having analysed the opening story in this thesis, we learned that the first reading is not sufficient enough to provide the coveted symbolism. However an intense scrutiny reveals the hidden symbolism. We analysed some of the symbols which provided a new insight to the story. We learned that the theme of escape permeating the text is closely connected to the issues of defiance against Catholicism and British colonialism. We also discussed the subject of class discrimination as a controversy of not only the world of adults but also children. The appearance of the old josser brought up a completely unexpected subject; we considered the supposed paedophilic undertone of the story and narrator's possible inclination to perversity. Finally, we examined the homosexual aspect of the text through the significance of green. Whether we believe that the narrator is fully aware of the paralysis or not, it is not explicitly visible in the text. We, through the eyes of the young narrator, do not witness the reality as it is. However, the narrator's "change of heart" at

30 Sedgwick, Eve, Kosofsky, *Epistemology of the Closet*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990, referred to in Norris, pg. 32.

the end can somewhat be considered an epiphany, a sudden realisation of the paralysis and a first actual attempt to escape.

3 The Boarding House

The Boarding House is the last of the four stories in the 'adolescence section' and the fifth story in order of composition. It was finished in 1905, however it was not published until 1914 as part of the whole of *Dubliners*. It targets the efforts of Mrs Mooney, a landlady of her own boarding house, to secure her daughter Polly in a beneficial marriage (Fargnoli and Gillespie: 58). We will examine the issues of social status of women within the Irish society. We will also consider the futile struggles of young adults to overcome the social expectations. Thus the symbolism in *The Boarding House* suggest an utter futility of any resistance against the paralysis.

Polly, one of the heroines of this story, shares common life struggles with the heroine from another story of this section; Eveline herself. As Köseman says, "both of these stories highlight women's tendency for exploring their selfhood and free will because of the inequalities and struggles of patriarchal society of the time in which they are spiritually paralysed. Thus, James Joyce hints at women's wish for emancipation from the oppressions of patriarchal social environment in the first quarter of the twentieth century... Trapped in a web of social expectation and constraints, women intend to escape from the strict patriarchal society"³¹ However, their efforts are in vain because they are unable to overcome the social expectations.

The story consists of several symbols through which we may interpret its content. The most essential symbol of the story is the boarding house itself whose symbolism carries several meanings.

In the first paragraph of the story we learn that Mrs Mooney is a strong independent woman who is "able to keep things to herself" (*Dubliners*: 43). We see such qualities of her personality later when she, figuratively speaking, supervises the conception of her grandchild. We do not find many female characters in *Dubliners* who show such independence and leadership skills. As previously alluded to, from the feminist point of view the stories are displays of "women who are enclosed by the dominance of the rigid patriarchal society which ends up the need for emancipation from social, rigid rules" (Köseman: 587). Ultimately, the women's effort to stand against the male oppression

³¹ Köseman, Zennure, *Spiritual Paralysis and Epiphany: James Joyce's "Eveline" and "The Boarding House"*, TCD library electronic database, p. 587-600.

comes in vain. However, this is not the case of Mrs Mooney. Her former husband's own incompetence personifies a possible step forward to bringing about women's ability to provide for themselves. Here Mrs Mooney is contrasted with her male counterpart who is depicted as an abusive drunkard who ruined the business of his wife's family. As soon as Mr Mooney succumbed to alcohol and ruined the family business, she had to stand on her own feet and become a self-sustained woman.

In addition to this she puts Mr Mooney to a position of a helpless men. Not only does Mr Mooney embody the awakening of her independence and strength but also a failure of the stereotype that husbands are in charge of their families' possession. Thus it seems appropriate to imply that the boarding house she was able to establish is a symbol of her own emancipation since it is a proof of her ability to provide for herself and for her children. Köseman supports this claim by suggesting that the boarding house is a sign of patriarchy reflecting the rigid, vulgar behaviour of Mr Mooney. He also claims that "*The Boarding House* portrays the emancipation of a woman who experiences a difficult marriage and separation and who is in search for finding a partner for her daughter" (Köseman: 598, 590). However, Ehrlich seems to ignore the fact that Mrs Mooney is successful enough to be called the Madam, and claims the exact opposite. He disagrees with Köseman by stating that "Mrs Mooney is in a struggle for emancipation from being trapped at home and preoccupied only with her domestic responsibilities"³². This contradicts the possible understanding of the boarding house as a symbol of emancipation by seeing it from an opposite point of view; the boarding house with all its duties might be an obstacle which holds her back from attaining enfranchisement.

Another possible understanding of the boarding house as a symbol carries on where the previous interpretation concluded: at Mrs Mooney's success and additionally in irony of Mr Mooney's fate. If we had any sympathy for Mr Mooney at the beginning of the story, it disappears within a very short but apt description: "He was a shabby stooped little drunkard with white face and a white moustache and white eyebrows, pencilled above his little eyes, which were pink-veined and raw; and all day long he sat in a bailiff's room, waiting to be put on a job" (*Dubliners*: 44). There is an irony in this characteristic; Mr Mooney is a man who inherited a family business by marriage and potentially could have expanded his fortune. Yet he lost it all; the affection of his wife and children, his home and possession. Instead he was given a seemingly important job. However, this new

³² Ehrlich, Heyward, "*Socialism, Gender, and Imagery in Dubliners*," *Gender in Joyce*, Florida, University Press of Florida, 1997, p. 98.

career seems to be rather ludicrous. He was enlisted as a sheriff's man as a result of his own uselessness as he is only waiting to be put on a job all day long. He managed to turn the course of the future of a man with a stable income into a desperate drunkard while his wife established a fairly successful boarding house. In addition to this, the residents of the boarding house are mostly clerks in which case we can assume that most of the residents succeed in at least one level of their lives. This means that, unlike Mr Mooney, they were responsible enough to secure themselves with a descent profession. Such observation suggests that Mrs Mooney rid herself of a useless husband to be surrounded by young successful men and therefore we can see the success of the boarding house as a symbol of Mr Mooney's own incompetence. If their marriage was a combat between the married couple, then Mrs Mooney's 'survivors' symbolise her victory and an utter mockery on Mr Mooney's account.

Another comparison with Eveline is at hand: Eveline is bound to obey her father and social expectations; to take care of the household as she promised to her dying mother. Being seemingly free of all these duties, Polly is less mature than Eveline although they are of the same age (Köseman: 595). However, with a closer look at Polly, we may find her as helpless as Eveline because neither of them is able to deal with the paralysis and stagnation they are stuck in. In addition to this, Polly and Eveline are both bound to obey their parents. Moreover, it is their mothers who seem to contribute to establishing the paralysis. Such statement brings us to another meaning of the symbolism of the boarding house: the boarding house as a trap.

We learnt that the most of the house's boarders are fairly successful young men. We also know that Polly was brought back home from the office, where she had worked, in excuse for not seeing her father. However, perhaps she was brought home in order to find a husband. If this is the case then Mrs Mooney, who seemingly does not interfere although we realise she might have set up the affair between her daughter and her suitor, successfully managed to create a suitable environment for finding a husband for her daughter. According to the description of her looks, Polly serves well for catching a suitable young man. She seems carefree, lively and attractive: "...[S]he had light soft hair and a small full mouth. Her eyes, which were grey with a shade of green through them, had a habit of glancing upwards when she spoke with anyone which made her look like a little perverse madonna" (*Dubliners*: 44). If we consider the boarding house a trap, Polly can be seen as a suitable bait for a satisfactory wealthy young man due to her looks and her nature.

Having discussed the two interpretations of the boarding house as a symbol, it seems appropriate to mention another symbol which contributes to the development of the plot: the cleaver. The cleaver serves to the story as a situation breaker, the need for a change. At first it appears there literally when Mr Mooney "went for his wife with the cleaver and she had to sleep in a neighbour's house" (*Dubliners*: 43). Things certainly begun to move because Mrs Mooney left him after this incident. Secondly the cleaver appears in the story metaphorically when Mrs Mooney finally intervened in Polly's affair: "She dealt with the moral problems as a cleaver deals with meat..." (*Dubliners*: 44.). Such description suggests Mrs Mooney's indifference insensitivity and pragmatism; she views her own daughter and her suitor as pieces of meat.

It seems that the search of a fitting husband for Polly is some sort of a game Mrs Mooney is sure to win. Mr Doran is a decent man with a good job but most of all he is a good Christian. The story and Mr Doran's feeling of guilt engage with a thought of what guilt means in Christianity. It suggests that many Christians suffer from the fear that they have sinned which may be relieved through a kind of reparation³³. This supports Mrs Mooney's efforts as "[Mr Doran] was almost thankful for being afforded a loophole of reparation" (*Dubliners*: 46). However, we can ask whether it is Mr Doran or Mrs Mooney who needs reparation. Köseman suggests that Mrs Mooney's determined personality is a relief from her previous domestic struggle and that she is obsessed with repairing her problematic marriage. According to him, Mr Doran is there to "fill the gap of finding a proper husband for her daughter that she could not afford... for herself in the past" (Köseman: 596-597).

Having discussed the female emancipation, Mrs Mooney exceeds the issues of emancipation by far as she is a self-sustained woman. She is also the only character who steers the wheel of her future but also the future of others. Due to her actions Polly and Mr Doran remain paralysed, unable to change their future which Mrs Mooney partly installed for them. Speaking of her determination, her features also reflect her personality when she looks at herself in a mirror: "The decisive expression of her great florid face satisfied her and she thought of some mothers she knew who could not get their daughters off their hands" (*Dubliners*: 46). Unlike her, Mr Doran is as if he lived in a mist, blinded, oblivious to where he was going. This is demonstrated several times in the story. "... every two or three minutes a mist gathered on his glasses so that he had to take them off polish them with his pocket-handkerchief" (*Dubliners*: 46). There is another

³³ <http://www1.cbn.com/spirituallife/why-do-i-still-feel-guilty> and <http://www.net-burst.net/guilty/ashamed.htm>, accessed on 2/12/2015.

occurrence of the mist in the story: "Going down the stairs, his glasses became so dimmed with moisture that he had to take them off and polish them" (*Dubliners*: 47). The fact the Mrs Mooney is the only one who can overview the situation is reflected by her clear vision in the mirror whereas Mr Doran's vision is often encumbered by mist and moisture. This metaphorical mist, or blindness by an extension, is one of the paralysis appearing throughout the book. Furthermore, there are several other examples of blindness. Expressions such as "blown out candle" and "delirium" (*Dubliners*: 47) also suggest that Doran is unable to see the consequences of his actions. Anne Michels claims that the reason for the paralysis in *Dubliners* is that "the people of Ireland had the capacity but lacked the desire to come to a realization about their situation. [Joyce] thought that their refusal to open their eyes to their situation (and also to accept some responsibility for it) was the reason they were trapped in a state of paralysis"³⁴. "A literal use of "blindness" and "darkness" is intentionally used to emphasize the coexistence of overwhelming the state of paralysis in this short story" (Köseman: 592).

As for Polly, she too is paralysed with blindness but Joyce uses different ways of expressing her paralysis: "She regarded the pillows for a long time and the sight of them awakened in her mind secret, amiable memories... Her hopes and vision were so intricate that she no longer saw the white pillows on which her gaze was fixed or remembered that she was waiting for anything" (*Dubliners*: 48). Her long blind gaze is symbolic of her own blindness, her paralysis. Her naivety makes her unable to see anything but the amiable visions instead of the reality.

The main issue we analysed is the significance of the social conviction and expectations in terms of paralysis the young adults in their inability to overcome their critical situation. We also examined the social status of women in Ireland and their effort to stand for their independence in the patriarchal society. Overall, the main victims of the misfortune demonstrated in the story, Polly and Mr Doran, disclose the realisation of the entrapment within the paralysis and their simultaneous inability to slip away. Such a realisation can serve the text as the epiphany. If so, however, they do not renounce their burdens in order to break free but instead remain paralysed.

³⁴ Michels, Anne, *Paralysis and Epiphany: How Joyce could save Dublin*, <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/academics/hohonu/documents/Vol105x17ParalysisandEpiphany.pdf>, accessed on 3/10/2015, p. 64.

4 A Painful Case

A Painful Case is the final story in the 'maturity section', originally the seventh story in the order of composition. Initially it was titled '*A Painful Incident*' and it was written in 1905. The story focuses on a relationship of two frustrated characters, James Duffy and Emily Sinico, and a series of unfortunate events culminating to Mrs Sinico's death (Fargnoli, Gillespie: 66). It is possibly one of the saddest stories in *Dubliners*. After an initial reading of the text, it appears as a tragic love story and we do feel sympathy for both characters. Moreover, we might feel dissatisfied as we anticipate and hope for a happy end but instead the love remains unfulfilled and moreover, death appears. With regard to what was just said, the main protagonist, Mr Duffy, appears to be the only character in the short story collection who vigorously works against his own happiness³⁵. The first reading thus leaves a question mark as we fail to understand why Mr Duffy acts opposed to his contentment. This chapter offers several different points of view and we will try to analyse the inner symbolism through which we understand his behaviour. First we will scrutinise the interpretation of colours used in the text. This will lead us the narcissistic reading of the story. Then we will discuss the indicators of Duffy's narcissism through his possessions, thoughts and actions. We will also debate the expectations of adultery while reading the text, and finally we will analyse the possible homosexuality of Mr Duffy. The fact that Mr Duffy rejects society is provided to us at the very beginning of the story:

"[H]e wished to live as far as possible from the city of which he was a citizen and because he found all the other suburbs of Dublin mean, modern and pretentious. He lived in an old sombre house and from his windows he could look into the disused distillery or upwards along the shallow river on which Dublin was built" (Dubliners: 77).

The use the word 'shallow' symbolises the degree of disdain with which Mr Duffy treats society. His room provides two views from his window to choose from; either the mean city of Dublin or the empty distillery. The latter foreshadows the seeming emptiness of his life. The former suggests the reason for Duffy's alienation from society. However, this alienation will be later discussed in depth.

In his essay Dermot McManus points out the symbolical use of colours. For example, the use of black and white in the description of Duffy's room and Duffy himself appears significant³⁶: blank (and most likely white) walls of his room, white bookcase, white bed

³⁵ <http://dubliners2013.blogspot.ie/2012/10/some-thoughts-on-painful-case-by.html> accessed on 10/03/2014.
³⁶ McManus, Dermot, "A Painful Case – James Joyce." *The Sitting Bee*. The Sitting Bee, 6 Jul. 2014, p. 1 & 2. <http://sittingbee.com/a-painful-case-james-joyce/> accessed on 10/02/2016.

clothing, white-shaded lamp, black colour on the rug covering the bed, also his hair is black. Even his surname might have a symbolical significance as it is derived from the Irish word *dubh*³⁷ which means *black* or *dark*³⁸. McManus claims that this suggests the dullness and a metaphorical lack of colour in his life. Furthermore, brown is also used much in this story as well as other *Dubliners* stories. According to McManus it symbolizes paralysis or decay. Mr Duffy owns a hazel walking stick, supposedly brown, orders beer and biscuits (also allegedly brownish) for lunch every day which also suggests repetition in his life, and the newspaper announcing the death of Emily Sinico is also yellowish brown. There are also other colour and material that can be found in Mr Duffy's room, which might not be there by mere coincidence; cedar wood, scarlet and purple. Those two colours are often used in Bible and they are not always distinguished. Both of them are claimed to have been placed on Jesus' robe. Purple symbolizes kingship or royalty and scarlet often relates to blood atonement or sacrifice³⁹. As for the cedar wood, cedar tree is known for its spiritual significance. It "was used for the doors of sacred temples and burned in cleansing ceremonies for purification. The tree was thought to house important gods and to be an entrance to higher realms"⁴⁰. Its name is "derived from modern Indian language derivatives of the Sanskrit name 'devdar', meaning 'timber of the gods'"⁴¹. These interpretations possibly mean that Mr Duffy thinks himself to be somewhat superior.

Such objective brings us to the significance of having Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and *The Gay Science* standing on his bookshelves. In his essay *The Self and the Other* Benjamin Boysen suggests that Mr Duffy possibly involves himself with Nietzsche's *Übermensch*, or superhuman. He claims that Joyce's understanding of Nietzsche's philosophy is that he perceived it as cynical, egoistic and unsympathetic. The notion of the superman is a vulgar, "narcissistic utopia of the autonomous and sovereign subject". Therefore the presence of Nietzsche's work on Mr Duffy's bookcase appears rather negative and intensifies his alienation and exile from the outer world.⁴²

The presence of Nietzsche's work symbolises Duffy's narcissism. Thus, Mr Duffy appears obsessed with himself. "He had an odd autobiographical habit which led him to compose in his mind from time to time a short sentence about himself containing a subject in the third person and a predicate in the past tense" (*Dubliners*: 77, 78). According to

37 <http://www.wordsense.eu/dubh/> accessed on 13/03/2016.

38 <http://crossref-it.info/textguide/dubliners/38/2798> accessed on 13/03/2016.

39 <https://www.christcenteredmall.com/teachings/symbolism/colors.htm> accessed on 14/03/2016.

40 http://www.ehow.com/facts_5587602_spiritual-meaning-cedar-tree.html accessed on 14/03/2016.

41 <http://livingartsoriginals.com/infoforests.htm#cedar> accessed on 14/03/2016.

42 Boysen, Benjamin, *The Self and the Other, On James Joyce's 'A Painful Case' and 'The Dead'*, TCD library electronic database, p. 395.

Christopher M. DeVault his obsession prevents him from interacting with others. In his essay it is much debated as to why Mr Duffy has such narcissistic views on life. DeVault argues that Duffy's "self-relation instinctively compels him to subordinate the concerns of others to his own, demonstrating the inherent narcissism that emerges from his sexual repression"⁴³. The question of his sexuality is also often examined amongst critics and we will return to it later in the analysis but at the moment let us focus on the issue of narcissism. In the text there are other numerous examples of Duffy's narcissistic behaviour and thoughts: "He thought that in her eyes he would ascend to an angelical stature...", "we cannot give ourselves... we are our own...", "...she began to tremble so violently that, fearing another collapse on her part, he bade her goodbye quickly and left her" (*Dubliners*: 80). Imagining himself ascending to an angelical stature refers to what was discussed above, i.e. assimilating himself to an *Übermensch*. His self-preoccupation is most striking when he learns about Emily Sinico's death. Rather than moan for his soul mate's tragic end, his initial reaction shows an utter repulsion: "But that she could have sunk so low! Was it possible he had deceived himself so utterly about her" (*Dubliners*: 83)?

It was previously mentioned that Duffy keeps himself disassociated from the others. In a way, he also appears disconnected from his own "self": "He lived at a little distance from his body, regarding his own acts with doubtful side-glances" (*Dubliners*: 77). This might seem contradictory to his supposed narcissism, however DeVault's interpretation of Jackson argues that this is an "evidence of someone always under surveillance"⁴⁴. This could mean that through his practises, Duffy strengthens his superiority. However, when he meets Emily Sinico and seizes the right moments to "become intimate" with her, he temporarily breaks off his self-preoccupation by "entangling his thoughts with hers". Paradoxically, neither Duffy nor the reader ever truly become intimate with Mrs Sinico. She remains silent for most of the story and as the narrator does not share her thoughts with us, she prevails rather anonymous. DeVault uses Suzane Hyman's interpretation claiming that the key word in this argument is the narrator's use of the expression "confessor": "She listened to it all... she became his *confessor*" (*Dubliners*: 79). Hyman states that confession is entirely based on verbal communication and is purely

43 DeVault, Christopher M., *Love and Socialism in Joyce's "A Painful Case": A Buberian Reading*, TCD library electronic database, p. 82.

44 Jackson, Roberta, *The Open Closet in Dubliners: James Duffy's Painful Case*, *James Joyce Quarterly* 37 (Fall- Winter), 1991, p. 91, in DeVault, p. 82.

confidential and anonymous.⁴⁵ Thus she lets Duffy "transform [...] her into an impersonal, silent priest and robs her of her individual identity, revealing his continued inability and disinterest in recognizing the otherness of the people he encounters" (DeVault: 98).

Emily Sinico is strongly contrasted with Duffy's narcissism. Taking into account that she became his confessor, it can be assumed that she is profoundly empathetic. Apart from describing Mrs Sinico as very sensible, DeVault (83) also suggests that her ability of empathy is symbolised primarily by her only two sentences in direct speech in the text when she comments on the scarcely peopled Rotunda: "What a pity there is such a poor house tonight! It's so hard on people to have to sing to empty benches" (*Dubliners*: 78). This shows an ability to feel for other people's inconvenience while enduring an unhappy life and an unhappy marriage herself. Moreover, both DeVault (85) and Boysen (397) agree that Duffy reduces her to a mere mirror in a sense that she, being an excellent listener, reflects his greatness. In addition, being an exile from her husband's "gallery of pleasures" (*Dubliners*: 79) she is simultaneously exiled from Duffy's indulgence. To a certain extent, the narrator already foreshadows her tragedy at the concert in Rotunda, portraying her as a woman of swooning gaze and stating that "[t]he house, thinly peopled and silent, gave distressing prophecy of failure" (*Dubliners*: 78). This is consequently followed by the failure of her heart and her tragic end on the railway tracks which makes her "Dublin's Anna Karenina" (Boysen: 398). To this Margot Norris (163, 164) adds that in the letters to his brother Stanislaus there is evidence of Joyce's admiration of Tolstoy and his Anna Karenina. Sinico's death thus symbolises an escape from the paralysis, i.e. her existence in a society which does not offer any comfort in her misery.

It was established that Mr Duffy appears disassociated from religion, ideology or love of any kind. Therefore we must ask whether Mr Duffy is not "a well-qualified example of a counterpart to all the socio-ideologically paralysed existence of *Dubliners*" (Boysen: 395)? It seems that he is not held back from relishing such romantic "adventure" with a married woman and yet, by breaking it off, he shows no capacity for affection. However, the narrator inserted some signs into the text to symbolise that Duffy desires love and religion in his life. For instance, why would he own the Maynooth Catechism (containing the basics of faith, compiled in Maynooth, Ireland) or the collected poems of William Wordsworth (The English Romantic poet)? These are also strongly contrasted to Nietzsche's works and this contrast might represent Duffy's "regress from hopeful youth

⁴⁵ Hyman, Suzanne Katz, "'A Painful Case': The Movement of a Story through a Shift in Voice." James Joyce Quarterly 19 (Winter): 114-15 in DeVault, p. 98.

to despondent adult"⁴⁶. In other words, he desires, or once desired, love and religion but on the other hand he is not able to endure neither.

To emphasize this controversy Joyce placed Duffy's dwelling in Chapelizod which is associated with the legend of Tristan and Isolde. The word itself is derived from the French '*chapel d'Iseult*' (Boysen: 396). It is a legend about a love triangle between the king of Cornwall Mark, his nephew Tristan and an Irish princess Isolde. Not being able to fulfil their undying love, Tristan and Isolde die and are buried together. According to the legend, two trees grew on their graves and entangled their branches so that the lovers can never be parted.⁴⁷ Duffy, "entangling his thoughts with hers [Mrs Sinico's]" (*Dubliners*: 79) can thus be another reference to the English legend. On the contrary, Boysen (396) suggests that Joyce refers to the legend to contradict *A Painful Case's* 'love triangle':

"If one applies the schema from the myth of love to the short story, one gets the following result: Mrs Sinico is Isolde the Blonde, whose love is aroused outside lawful marriage, while Mr Sinico is to be considered as a contemporary King Mark, who in contrast to his predecessor remains absolutely indifferent and phlegmatic to the thought of his wife's potential infidelity, and Mr Duffy is finally an inverted Tristan, who turns away from his 'Isolde' in disgust and loathing when she declares her yearnings for love and her cravings for the consumption of their relationship... The fatal end of the story is thus, in sharp contrast to the tragedy of Tristan and Isolde, not an expression of an all-devouring love that knows no boundaries" (Boysen: 396).

Boysen demonstrated that utilising the name of Chapelizod in the text can serve the story as a means of mockery and contradiction rather than as a parallel. Nonetheless, he offers one other point of view through which we can understand story. He claims that Duffy can be perceived as an aspiring revolutionary. This is symbolised through the significance of Duffy's occupation as a cashier of a private bank, his scornful references to his Dublin allegiance (DeVault: 90), and mainly his participation at the Irish Socialist Party. This can be examined as a symbol of Duffy's revolutionary aspirations and moreover a need of some sort of association with the working class.⁴⁸ However there is a controversy in Duffy's impression of himself and his judgemental thoughts and deeds towards the working class and socially weaker citizens of Dublin. On one hand, he might see himself as

46 <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/elt/summary/v052/52.4.lowe-evans.html> accessed on 18/03/2016.

47 Tristan and Isolde. 2016. Encyclopædia Britannica Online. Retrieved 22 March, 2016, accessed on <http://www.britannica.com/biography/Tristan-and-Isolde>.

48 Williams, Trevor L., *No Cheer for 'the Gratefully Oppressed': Ideology in Joyce's Dubliners in ReJoycing: New Readings of "Dubliners"*, ed. Rosa M. Bolletieri Bosinelli and Harold F. Mosher Jr. Lexington, University Press of Kentucky, 1998, p. 99 in DeVault, p. 90.

an aforementioned *Übermensch* capable of great accomplishments but on the other hand removing himself from the centre of paralysis, i.e. Dublin, precludes him from succeeding anything. "Such subtraction may bolster Duffy's self-image as the society-spurning intellectual, but it also reduces any act of revolt..." (DeVault: 90). DeVault interprets Weldon Thornton to emphasise that Duffy's alienation from the society symbolises his lack of "the constructive power to produce any meaningful reform, rendering his efforts superficial and even self-defeating"⁴⁹. To support this claim, let us investigate Duffy's behaviour amongst those who in his opinion do not deserve his consideration. Earlier we discussed how he chooses an exile from the society. In addition to this, he shows the disregard by refusing to give alms to the beggars, by his scornful reception of Emily Sinico's death, but also by his disapproval of the discussion of the Irish Socialist Party's members, that is their wage. By the "refusal to assist those less fortunate" and the "refusal to entertain socialist beliefs that counter his intellectual interest compels him to reject one of the few socio-political groups that would be receptive of his ideas... Duffy locks himself into a purely idealist, utopian politics whose effectiveness does not extend beyond his intellectual musings" (DeVault: 91).

However, it is not only the Irish Socialist party but also Emily who can provide opportunity for his socio-political ambition. DeVault (92) thus claims that Joyce creates a bond between love and socialism. He states that Joyce connects those two by utilising the word "adventure". First it is used in the text when Duffy fantasizes of robbing the bank: "He allowed himself to think that in certain circumstances he would rob his bank but, as these circumstances never arose, his life rolled out evenly- and adventure-less tale" (*Dubliners*: 78). Secondly the expression is used while reflecting on Duffy's and Sinico's secret relationship: "Neither he nor she had had any such *adventure* before and neither was conscious of any incongruity" (*Dubliners*: 79). Moreover, Sinico invites him to "write out his thoughts" (*Dubliners*: 79) and her willingness to listen to his thoughts and ideas could be conducive to his revolutionary aspirations. Therefore the rejection of their relationship symbolizes not only the rejection of her love but also of the socio-political ambition. (DeVault: 94) In other words, the break off of their relationship foreshadows his inability to revolt and break through the paralysis; "Mr Duffy returned to his even way of life" (*Dubliners*: 80).

⁴⁹ Thornton, Weldon, *The Antimodernism of Joyce's "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man"*, Syracuse, Syracuse University Press 1994, p. 78 in DeVault, p. 90.

Let us bring forth the two last readings of *A Painful Case*; adultery and queer readings. Margot Norris (158) argues that Joyce intended to awaken the memory "of the two great Irish sex scandals of the late nineteenth century: the case of Charles Stewart Parnell, and the case of Oscar Wilde". As she suggests (160), we might expect the story to be headed towards adultery. We gain this impression already when the narrator comments on Sinico's breasts at their first encounter. Moreover Norris (161) states that our anticipation of adultery is supported by a semiotic similarity of the names Emily Sinico to Emma Bovary, a Flaubert's famous adulteress, and of Captain Sinico to Captain O'Shea who was the husband of Katharine O'Shea, the mistress of Ch. S. Parnell. "Duffy, like Parnell, gains access to the Sinico home as a family friend, and Captain Sinico, like Captain O'Shea, is frequently absent from home and judged by Duffy to be indifferent to his wife" (Norris: 161). Additionally, Norris (164) also suggests that the theme of adultery in the story, which can partially be read as a parallel to Parnell and O'Shea, symbolises an "unresolved ethical wound in the Irish conscience... *A Painful Case* can be read as an imaginary scenario of a hideously ironic outcome had Parnell resisted the temptations of adultery...".

However, "Duffy's abrupt withdrawal has turned the impending adultery narrative into a frigidity narrative..." (Norris: 162). Therefore we ask why is it that Duffy reacts disapprovingly to Emily's physical expression of intimacy. DeVault (78) refers to Roberta Jackson who claims that Duffy's heterosexuality is being challenged throughout the story. She argues that his need for isolation is a result of his existence in a homophobic society. Furthermore, DeVault (79) quotes Joseph Valente saying that we read the story from a point of view of the 'compulsory heterosexuality'. We automatically assume that Duffy's rejection of Sinico is based on the lack of sexual attraction.⁵⁰ However, Norris (166) states that the reason behind Duffy's alienation towards the society and his rejection of Sinico might dwell in the fact that he is a homosexual. Under Irish law, homosexuality decriminalised in Ireland only in 1993.⁵¹ His different sexual orientation would thus justify his denial. We can also find several cues in the text that could symbolise his homosexuality. Firstly, during their break up, Duffy tells Sinico that "every bond... is a bond of sorrow" (*Dubliners*: 80). This, assuming his homosexuality, may mean that every relationship with a woman causes him nothing but despair and dissatisfaction. Secondly,

⁵⁰ Valente, Joseph, *Joyce's (Sexual) Choice: A Historical Overview*. In *Quare Joyce*, ed. Joseph Valente, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1998, p.1, quoted in DeVault, p.79.

⁵¹ <http://www.thejournal.ie/gay-rights-ireland-history-varadkar-history-1890129-Jan2015/> accessed on 22/03/2016.

the homosexuality can be assumed through one of the sentences written on Duffy's sheaf of paper which the narrator himself clearly revealed in the story for a reason: "Love between man and a man is impossible because there must not be sexual intercourse and friendship between man and a woman is impossible because there must be sexual intercourse" (*Dubliners*: 80). This might mean that if Duffy was free of social restrictions and the law, he would love a man. He chooses to befriend a woman instead who, however, ruins his strategy by demanding physical intimacy. Although there is no apparent link with Oscar Wilde, we might see a parallel between himself and Duffy. Joyce himself refers to Wilde as "hunted from house to house as dogs hunt a rabbit"⁵². Norris (170) states that the narrator does not mention Wilde's works beside other books on Duffy's bookcase, however this does not exclude Wilde's presence in Duffy's collection. The reason might be the fact that the "writing a homosexual story in the climate of 1905 and 1906 would have been unthinkable" (Norris: 169).

On the first sight Mr Duffy can be seen as a victim of the paralysed Dublin society. However we analysed how the symbolism of colours and books appearing in Duffy's room may be an indicator of his narcissism and the haughty reception of himself. Taking his narcissism into an account we discovered that his thoughts, actions and mainly his final rejection and disregard of Mrs Sinico testify of his ego-centrism which not even Sinico's compassion can soften up. Furthermore we analysed the possibility that in his thoughts, Duffy dreams of a revolt against. We discussed the irony of the fact that Joyce chose Chapelizod for Duffy's place of residence and the presence of owning romantic and religious books. We can thus conclude that either he desires love and religion in his life or that he once had them but rejected them. Such a conclusion eventually led us to an assumption of Duffy's homosexuality. If we allow the possibility the he might be a homosexual, rejecting Mrs Sinico thus does not appear as incomprehensible although it does not justify his insensitivity. At the end of the story he experiences a sudden epiphany; a realisation of his loneliness and loss of the only human being who had ever loved him. However, despite this awareness, "[h]e turned back the way he had come..." (*Dubliners*: 84), leaving this realisation to evaporate and remaining deprived by the paralysis.

⁵² Joyce, James, *Oscar Wilde: The Poet of Salomé*, Il Piccolo della Sera, Trieste, 24/03/1909, referred to in Norris, p. 169.

5 A Mother

A Mother is the second story in the 'public life section'. It was written in 1905 as the tenth in the order of composition. The story line focuses on her intention of bolstering her daughter's musical career but subsequently failing. (Fagnoli, Gillespie: 65-66) The mother in this eponymous story may represent all of the mothers in *Dubliners*. They may, at first, appear to display the good qualities all mothers should have; support and love. However, *A Mother*, as other mothers in *Dubliners*, only unwillingly reveals what hides underneath this façade. Moreover, we ultimately realise that her daughter Kathleen voices all other children of *Dubliners'* mothers who also suffer from a certain kind of paralysis.⁵³ We will thus analyse the consequences of sustaining Mrs Kearney as an ambitious mother and a dominant wife, and what effects does it have upon her family in terms of paralysing them. Similarly to this analysis, we will discuss the position of women in patriarchal Ireland in the 19th and early 20th century and the possible sexual undertones in terms of prostitution appearing in the story. We will also debate on the predetermined superiority of some men in *A Mother* which, as we will see, contradicts the mother's strong hold of her family's every move.

We get an impression of who Mrs. Kearney is at the very beginning of the story. She appears emotionless despite the fact that she dreams about romance. She married her husband only to silence those who mocked her and she treats her daughters with the same detached concern. Joyce uses the expression "unbending in manner" (*Dubliners*: 99) to imply the state of her paralysis. Therefore from the opening of the story we feel that Mrs Kearney has a rather narrow-minded attitude towards life, unable to adapt to upcoming situations. Furthermore she does not show any deeper emotion nor affection:

"She respected her husband in the same way as she respected the General Post Office, as something large, secure and fixed; and though she knew the small number of his talents, she appreciated his abstract value as a male" (*Dubliners*: 102).

This short extract demonstrates Mrs Kearney's indifference to her marriage. As Martin F. Kearney states, "She must marry or forever tarry"⁵⁴. Warren Beck suspects that her incentive for marrying Mr Kearney is socially motivated. Failing to meet the one who

⁵³ Paige, Linda Rohrer, *James Joyce's Darkly Colored Portraits of "Mother" in Dubliners*, TCD library electronic database, p. 329.

⁵⁴ Kearney, Martin F., *Robert Emmet's Rising of 1803 and the Bold Mrs. Kearney: James Joyce's 'A Mother' as Historical Analogue*, *Journal of the Short Story in English*, 37, Autumn 2001, TCD library electronic database, p. 2.

would offer her "a brilliant life" (*Dubliners*: 99), she soothes her hunger for romance by eating Turkish delight in secret. This exotic delicacy symbolizes a relief or a consolation prize for her austere, loveless life. Her secret rendezvous with Turkish delight are ended after marrying Mr Kearney and their daughters seem to be products of boredom rather than passion.⁵⁵ On the contrary to what Beck (333) suggests, some marriages were still socially motivated in Ireland of couple of decades after The Great Famine in the mid-19th century. Though most marriages were based on mutual affection, the arranged marriages were still in play which does Mrs Kearney justice.⁵⁶

Let us go back to Mrs Kearney's state of paralysis. Her inability to adapt to new circumstances is found throughout the story. It is as if her whole life and the lives of the members of her family are bounded within a circle of repetitive events. Nonetheless, where other characters of *Dubliners* would find the repetition or paralysis troublesome, Mrs Kearney seems to embrace it as if it made her more self-confident. Joyce uses several instances to demonstrate this repetition; monthly visits at the altar, Mrs Kearney's concern in dealing with her husband's cough, paying a weekly sum into a society, annual holidays in either Skerries, Howth or Greystones, and sending Irish picture postcards. Kathleen is even sent to a good convent, where she learns French and music, just like her mother (*Dubliners*: 99). It is almost as though Mrs Kearney signed a contract with life to be obliged to its repetitive procedure. Paige discusses the meaning of contract in the story. A contract is an arrangement related to duty and rights. A contract is arranged between Kathleen and Eire Abu Society. But as a matter of fact, we know that genuinely it is her mother who arranges the terms of the contract. Paige says that the contract "seems not only a means for this *Dubliners* mother to guarantee a monetary hold on her daughter's performance, but also it serves, metaphorically, as a vehicle for retaining other kinds of strangle holds on Kathleen, binding her both physically and emotionally" (Paige: 331). The contract, of course, is not the only paralysis of the story but rather serves the story as an articulation of other means of paralysis. It is then a symbol of restriction, and inability to adapt to alteration and it is basically means of paralyzing Kathleen.

Another symbol that is closely connected to the meaning of contract is a parallel drawn between Mrs Kearney and "an angry stone image". (*Dubliners*: 108) In his essay, M. F.

⁵⁵ Beck, Warren, *Joyce's Dubliners: Substance, Vision, and Art*, Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1969, p. 270, 274 in Linda R. Paige, p. 332, 333.

⁵⁶ http://www.wesleyjohnston.com/users/ireland/past/famine/demographics_post.html, http://www.tara.tcd.ie/bitstream/handle/2262/4266/jssisiVolXVIXPart4_82103.pdf;jsessionid=7271753AC5C7477C4A364E0B094D174E?sequence=1, <http://pubs.socialistreviewindex.org.uk/isj91/horgan.htm>. accessed on 02/02/2016.

Kearney paraphrases Jane Miller stating that through such depiction, Mrs Kearney becomes both literally and metaphorically paralysed.⁵⁷ Linda Paige comes up with a similar interpretation indicating that she becomes immobile "like a monument to inflexibility" (Paige: 331) which even intensifies her inability to adapt to newly occurred circumstances.

There is irony to be found in this. Mrs Kearney acts as if she was the one who has everything under her control and yet she is the one remains frustrated and paralysed the most. Linda Paige claims that she, in her preoccupation with the urge to control everyone's actions, or shall we say mobility, marries a bootmaker. "Boots, paradoxically, protect, yet constrain their wearers" (Paige: 331). Believing that she has a control over her family, Mrs Kearney reduces her husband to a pair of boots: "Mrs Kearney perceived that such a man would wear better than a romantic person..." (*Dubliners*: 99). Thus, as much as we would think that boots enable mobility rather preclude it, from Paige's point of view boots symbolize some sort of a restriction. The use of boots as a symbol of restriction also appears in the play *Waiting for Godot*. Similarly, boots can be understood as a means of restriction furthermore causing suffering and "obstructing his [Estragon's] ability to comfortably inhabit the world"⁵⁸, or in other words, to prevent mobility. Kathleen, wearing her new shoes her mother bought her, also remains immobile straight before the concert starts; restricted by her mother's persistence in getting the payment before the concert, she is only able to move the tip of her shoe (Paige: 331)

Mrs Kearney's obsession with controlling mobility is contrasted with Mr Holohan's handicapped leg and his own inability to control his mobility (Paige: 331). Not only can his insufficiency be regarded literally, i.e. as an actual impediment, but also symbolically. This brings us to another theme this story explores, namely gender reading. On first insight we may deduce that Mrs Kearney takes over the assumed inter-gender conflict if we take into account the arguments discussed earlier. Not only does she controls her daughter's every move but to a certain extent she also casts shadow upon the male characters of the story. We learn that Mr Holohan is physically disabled and even Joyce's portrayal of his character undermines Holohan's masculinity as a man by calling him "Hoppy Holohan". As Paige (333) also points out, his name, Holohan, reminds of hollow hand which also symbolizes male impotence or ineptitude. Moreover, his organizational competence is

⁵⁷ Miller, Jane, "'O, she's a nice lady!': A Rereading of 'A Mother.'" *James Joyce Quarterly* 28.2 (Winter 1991): p. 420 in Martin F. Kearney, p. 2.

⁵⁸ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265744995_Bare_Ontology_Synge_Beckett_and_the_Phenomenology_of_Imperialism accessed on 08/02/2016.

constantly being contrasted with Mrs Kearney's; "He walked up and down constantly stood by the hour at street corners arguing the point and made notes; but in the end it was Mrs Kearney who arranged everything" (*Dubliners*: 99). In *Suspicious Readings of Joyce's "Dubliners"*, Margot Norris asks "who is to blame for the concert debacle: the weak male management or the strong woman, Mrs Kearney" (189) and why do Mr Holohan and Mr Fitzpatrick hesitate to proceed with the payment (192). Some critics, such as David Hayman and Warren Beck, see Mrs Kearney as a condemned woman who is ultimately defeated by her own excesses and ambitions. On the other hand, there are some feminist critics who claim that Mrs Kearney is a victim of a gender ideology which chastises female strength and courage, and that the story itself reveals a symbolic deconstruction of the male authority (Norris: 185). However, Norris states that the narrator of the story is misogynistic and prejudiced against Mrs Kearney (189). Let us, for example, have a look at Mr O'Madden Burke. He appears at the concert having no connection to the event whatsoever but because "[h]e was widely respected" (*Dubliners*: 105), we undoubtedly do not question his verdict "Pay her nothing" (*Dubliners*: 107) based on his "abstract quality as a male" (Norris: 191). Even Mrs Kearney seems to have doubts about her competence as a woman: "They wouldn't have dared to have treated her like that if she had been a man" (*Dubliners*: 107). At the end of the story Mr Holohan, having a clear conception of what a 'lady' is, disrespects her both as a woman and a human being: "'I thought you were a lady,' said Mr Holohan, walking away from her abruptly" (*Dubliners*: 108).

Nonetheless, whether she wins the struggle between genders or not, both womanhood and manhood are in fact ultimately undermined by the sexual ambiguity of the story. To begin with, let us analyse the aforementioned Mr O'Madden Burke:

"He was a suave, elderly man who balanced his imposing body, when at rest, upon a large silk umbrella. His magniloquent western name was a moral umbrella upon which he balanced the fine problem of his finances" (*Dubliners*: 105).

Linda Paige interprets the umbrella as a sexual symbol, a "phallic image and symbol of patriarchal power" (Paige: 334). In her essay, Norris (165) quotes Garry Leonard who also suggests that the umbrella is a phallic symbol and adds that Mrs Kearney successfully manages to assault manhood considering that the male authority is embodied by "one

shaky leg [Hoppy Holohan] and a prosthetic Phallus to balance upon"⁵⁹. Furthermore, according to Paige (333), the main plot of the story is of a mother metaphorically offering her own daughter's sexual services rather than a musical performance. Being so keen on receiving the payment in her own hands altogether with Holohan's disbelief in her lady-like nature make her look like a procurer rather than a mother. It is as if she provided entertainment for the audience whose behaviour seems more appropriate for a red light district. Sexual climax is suggested when Mr Fitzpatrick and Mr Holohan burst into the room with payment, panting. At the end of her performance, Kathleen is "deservedly applauded" (Dubliners: 107) as her services satisfied the audience which also invokes the sexual undertone.

Despite other interpretations, *A Mother* can essentially be seen as a story of a great potential that is ultimately crushed down by one's selfishness and unbending manner. Nonetheless, as we can see, *A Mother* offers several different interpretations. Having discussed some of the main symbols of the story, it becomes obvious that the main protagonist's conduct should not be judged mindlessly. She can be seen as both a caring mother trying her best to support her daughter, or as a selfish parent determined to achieve her goals in spite of her daughter's prospects. We analysed Mrs Kearney's dominance over her family which is contrasted to her failure as a woman in the patriarchal society. However, failing to detect a substantiation for the male sovereignty, masculinity is undermined in the story. Despite realising her weaker position as a woman, she does not experience the epiphany; she remains paralysed in her unbending manner.

6 The Dead

The Dead is the final and the longest story of the collection. Its length and thematic complexity in fact make it a novella. For this reason it is often perceived as a coda to the whole collection (Fagnoli, Gillespie: 73). Joyce started planning the story while living in Rome in 1906 and completed it when he moved to Trieste in 1907 (Schwarz: 63). It recapitulates and amplifies the major themes of paralysis that pervade all of the *Dubliners'* short stories (Fagnoli, Gillespie: 73). Similarly to *An Encounter*, the story's finale differs completely from what we anticipate at the opening and for most of the text. We are invited to a snobbish New Year's Eve dinner party only to be guided to an unexpected revelation at the end which has nothing to do with the dinner party. But also

⁵⁹ Leonard, Garry, "Dubliners" *Again: A Lacanian Perspective*. Syracuse, N.Y., Syracuse University Press, 1993, p. 271, in Norris, p. 165.

similarly to *An Encounter*, the final revelation is foreshadowed throughout the story via certain symbols and actions. The major discussion in this chapter focuses on how the main protagonist perceives himself in terms of his interaction with the whole of society and especially women. We will analyse his superior aspirations and the constant effort to overcome his insecurity and assert his predominance. This will be analysed through a series of little embarrassments while interacting with women. Further we will discuss the theme of Ireland in an opposition to Britain and Continental Europe which is also linked to the theme of escape. The significance of colours and their symbolic relevance to the text will be analysed which will proceed to the analysis of snow, one of the major symbols in *The Dead*.

As well as the other stories that to an extent feature some episodes of his life, the analogy of Joyce and *The Dead* is crucial. For example, Joyce's mother never approved of Nora, who was a lower-class girl from Galway (Schwarz: 71). Equivalently, Gabriel's mother is also in "sullen opposition to his marriage" (*Dubliners*: 135). There is also a similarity between Joyce himself and Gabriel as both of them fear of becoming bourgeois; Gabriel might thus serve Joyce as his own self-critique. Gabriel is "that bourgeois nightmare which in part took Joyce away from Ireland". Gabriel is an image of what Joyce feared to become had he not left Ireland. (Schwarz: 104). The main parallel between Joyce's life and the story is the incident in the story's final disclosure. At the end of the text we learn that Gretta's heart had already belonged to the young Michael Furey who, despite being terminally ill, sets out to meet her before her departure to Dublin and eventually dies for her. Substituting their names with the names Nora and Michael Bodkin gives us an actual event upon which the story's conclusion is based (Schwarz: 72).

At the beginning of the story a great anticipation is present literally at the door. The two most anticipated guests to arrive are Gabriel and Freddy Malins who acts as Gabriel's counterpart. Freddy's arrival and his presence at the dinner party elevates Gabriel's superiority and masculinity. A juxtaposition of these two characters naturally suggests itself; well-educated and well-received Gabriel with a stable income, seemingly content family on the one hand and Freddy the drunkard who represents a potential embarrassment on the other hand. Thus it might not be a coincidence that Gabriel's name symbolically alludes to the Archangel Gabriel⁶⁰, who is known as the angel of revelation.⁶¹ Though Gabriel Conroy is not the one to deliver the revelation at the end of

60 <https://www.lettres-et-arts.net/litteratures-francophones-etrangeres/joyce-dead+10> accessed on 16/04/2016.

61 <http://angels.about.com/od/AngelsReligiousTexts/p/Meet-Archangel-Gabriel.htm> accessed on 13/04/2016.

the story however he is involved in its disclosure. In addition to this, since we witness the story's events through his eyes, he delivers the message of the *Dubliners*; through him the paralysis pervading the whole collection is recapitulated. Moreover, the Archangel Gabriel is often "depicted holding a lily, which stands for a purity and truth."⁶² The scene when he meets Lilly might thus symbolically allude to a deformed angel who not only does not emanate purity and truth but is instead filled with pride and arrogance. More precisely, he wishes to be convinced of his own supremacy and makes him believe that the guests' "grade of culture differed from his" (*Dubliners*: 129) while fearing that his insecurity will be discovered.

One of the main themes permeating the story is the perpetual conflict between masculinity and femininity. Gabriel gives us the impression that he perceives himself as superior to the rest of the guests, especially the women. And yet it's the women who play a significant part in undermining his position (Schwarz: 76). The text thus manifests female emancipation through series of "female outbursts and protests" (Norris: 218). Let us begin by discussing the theme of Gabriel and the women, and what we can make of their interaction. "The Three Graces" (*Dubliners*: 147) look up to him as if he truly was a guardian angel or a saviour: "It's such a relief... that Gabriel is here. I always feel easier in my mind when he's here" (*Dubliners*: 131). In return he thinks of them as "ignorant old women" (*Dubliners*: 139). Similarly, as it is demonstrated on the conversation with Mrs Malins, "Gabriel hardly heard what she said" (*Dubliners*: 138), which also articulates his attitude towards the women as his concern is not to be found deep below the shallow surface of his affectation.

However, Gabriel's biggest fear is humiliation and failure. The whole story oscillates between small instances of his humiliation and his consecutive regain of his masculine superiority which only leads to his final humiliation. Gabriel's masculinity is first challenged by the encounter with Lilly. Not only is Lilly's harsh statement of men aimed against the male gender as such but for Gabriel it carries out another connotation; it offends his pride as a man and authority within the social hierarchy: "The men that is now is only all palaver and what they can get out of you" (*Dubliners*: 129). In return Gabriel seems to fight for his masculinity with a simple gesture of apparent generosity when forcing Lilly to receive the coin he wishes presented her with. He attempts to silence her with the coin (Norris: 216) and thus symbolically assert his masculine superiority. However, his effort appears to be in vain as it is rejected and questioned immediately. The

⁶²<http://angelsweek.com/archangel-gabriel/> accessed on 13/04/2016.

refusal gives him a great discomposure because he does not expect a female servant to refuse his so-called generosity. Being incapable of facing this humiliation he leaves Lilly and consequently reassures his male predominance by rearranging his cuffs and tie which are symbols of his masculinity. He readjusts his tie once again when Gretta expresses her subordination to him when being forced to wear the goloshes: "Gabriel laughed nervously and patted his tie reassuringly" (*Dubliners*: 130). However, this instance shows his insecurity and thus indicates his impending failure as a man in terms of his superiority to women in general, and furthermore the loss of his value as her husband.

Later, when Gabriel converses with Molly Ivors, his authority is undermined again. While inviting Gabriel to the Aran Isles, Molly brings about the fact that Gabriel is incapable of articulating his point clearly enough: "Of course, you have no answer" (*Dubliners*: 137). Similarly to the incident with Lilly, he is not able to endure such humiliation. Molly's arguments left Gabriel speechless. This moment contrasts with his actual speech; failing to express himself despite being a confident speaker again reveals his distress of having to face the humiliation, especially when it comes from a woman. Moreover, he confesses his fear of embarrassing himself in front of her which means that he clearly values her opinion perhaps more than he is willing to admit: "It unnerved him to think that she would be at the supper-table, looking at him while he spoke with her critical quizzing eyes. Perhaps she would not be sorry to see him fail in his speech" (*Dubliners*: 138-139). The slicing of the goose and his actual speech is where he asserts his authority back temporarily only to be degraded again when he realises his final defeat of his male authority. As the narration directly implies, Gabriel regards his wife as an impersonal "symbol of something" (*Dubliners*: 151) and an object of his own desire. As he asks himself what she is the symbol of, we might interpret that the scene when observes Gretta, veiled by "grace and mystery" (*Dubliners*: 151), symbolises the approaching of his own epiphany.

"Gabriel is forced to realise that his wife is not an aesthetic object, "a symbol of something", but an actual person whose individuality and otherness must be respected... The distant music to which she is listening reminds her of Michael Furey, who died for love of her, and it is the revelation of this part of her past that exposes the shallowness of Gabriel's attitude, forcing him to recognise his wife as a person" (Garrett: 10).

Similarly to Garrett, Norris (219) suggests that "when woman is transformed into a symbol

by a man, [s]he becomes a symbol of social de-contextualization, her silencing, the occlusion of her suffering." The transformation of Gretta into a symbol thus sums up Gabriel's attitude to women, and is contrasted to Michael Furey who, despite his young age, achieved more than Gabriel ever has; to overcome his self-centeredness by dying for Gretta. Joyce thus draws a parallel between Gabriel, who makes Gretta wear goloshes in the rain (or snow), and the tubercular boy (Norris: 226). Reading the climax, that is revealing the sight of Michael Furey, from a feminist point of view, Norris (217) understands Gretta's confession as a sort of a feminist revolt and a "revenge for a denied trip to Galway by revisiting it spiritually and romantically in a way that displaces her husband forever from the passionate center of her life and marginalizes him in his own self-image." Gretta's revelation thus ultimately silences Gabriel's superior aspirations just like he attempted to silence Lilly at the beginning of our discussion.

The notion of the goloshes leads us to another subject appearing in this text, as well as in the other stories of *Dubliners*; it is the theme of escape which we have already discussed in *An Encounter*. The escapist inclination is symbolised through several remarks to foreign objects, art and overseas travels. Moreover, the theme is developed into a need to define Irishness in contrast with the continental identity. If the Irish nourish the urge to stand out from the world and Ireland perceives itself as a separate country, it is undermined several times, beginning with the conversation about the goloshes:

"And what are goloshes, Gabriel?" [Julia Morkan]

"Goloshes, Julia!" exclaimed her sister. "Goodness me, don't you know what goloshes are? You wear them over your... over your boots, Gretta, isn't it?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Conroy... "We both have a pair now. Gabriel says every one wears them on the Continent."

"O, on the Continent," murmured Aunt Julia, nodding her head slowly" (Dubliners: 205, 206).

This indicates a certain distance of Ireland from the rest of Europe and likewise in a sense of being eclipsed by Europe. "The galoshes can be seen as symbolic of the dichotomy of continent versus/against Ireland...it highlights [Gabriel's] motivations and his abandonment of the Irish identity (probably as a result of his belief in its inferior nature)." Additionally, the text refers to Ireland's loss of culture and cultural independence which is symbolised by praising the foreign music, namely English, French and Italian opera⁶³.

⁶³ <http://www.learningandwriting.com/blog/symbolism-in-james-joyces-the-dead-and-mary-lavins-a-wet-day> accessed on 15/04/2016.

However, Gabriel's need to emerge from Ireland is in a conflict with his irritation when called a "West Briton" (*Dubliners*: 135). Such a label alludes to an Irish person who considers Ireland a western continuation of Britain and is in accordance with it (*Dubliners*: 169). His annoyance thus disagrees with his literal escape to the Continental Europe for the cycling tour. Garrett (4) finds such travel as a symbol of Gabriel's need to escape as a result of frustration caused by the Irish provincialism. His hostility towards Ireland climaxes when renounces Irish, "Irish is not my language" (*Dubliners*: 136), and the whole country, "I'm sick of my own country, sick of it" (*Dubliners*: 137). Mrs Ivors, on the contrary, represents the "Irish Ireland"; she symbolises the era of the Celtic Revival.⁶⁴ Equivalently, coming from the Irish speaking part of Ireland, Gretta represents Ireland in its inferior form as she is subordinate to Gabriel who, labelled a West Briton, symbolically represents Britain. He attempts to detach her from Galway by making her wear the goloshes and it is further illustrated when, being asked whether she is from Connacht, he answers "[h]er people are" (*Dubliners*: 136) as if she were no longer one of them.⁶⁵ Being the climax of the whole collection, *The Dead* reviews on the decay and paralysis of *Dubliners*. As we also discussed in the previous chapters, the symbolism of the colours used in the stories is significant while scrutinising their content. For example, green is used to symbolise Ireland. Despite Gabriel's alienation towards Ireland, he still appreciates the "genuine warm-hearted courteous Irish hospitality, which... [he] in turn must hand down to [his] descendants" (*Dubliners*: 146) by making his son Tom wear green shades at night. There are many more used in the text, such as red, blue, purple, white, black etc. The most significant colours, though, are yellow and brown. These are the two most common colours appearing in the collection. "A dull, yellow light brooded over the houses and the river; and the sky seemed to be descending" (*Dubliners*: 153). Here Joyce links the two colours symbolising dullness and progression into decay and paralysis⁶⁶; the yellow light falls upon the supposedly brown houses and brown river. Moreover, the sky's descent helps to create a psychologically claustrophobic atmosphere often caused by paralysis. Brown, however, seems to have frequently appeared especially in *The Dead*:

"Browne is out there, Aunt Kate," said Mary Jane.

'Browne is everywhere,' said Aunt Kate, lowering her voice.

Mary Jane laughed at her tone.

64 <http://stephenesherman.com/notes-on-james-joyces-the-dead/> accessed on 15/04/2016.

65 <http://www.learningandwriting.com/blog/symbolism-in-james-joyces-the-dead-and-mary-lavins-a-wet-day>

66 <http://tamarasworld9.blogspot.ie/2013/11/the-importance-of-colours-in-james.html> accessed on 16/04/2016.

'Really,' she said archly, 'he is very attentive.' (Dubliners: 148)

Joyce's depiction of decay is intensified by utilising the name Browne on an alcoholic with "a very low Dublin accent" (*Dubliners*: 132). Not only his name but also his looks symbolise the decay as he is described as "[a] tall wizen-faced man, with a stiff grizzled moustache and swarthy skin" (*Dubliners*: 131). As Garrett (9) points out, even Mr Browne himself draws attention to brown when Aunt Julia is concerned about the degree of the pudding's brownness: "'Well, I hope, Miss Morkan,' said Mr Browne, 'that I'm brown enough for you because, you know, I'm all brown'" (*Dubliners*: 144).

William Tindall analyses the significance of the "fat brown goose" (*Dubliners*: 141) served at the feast. Not only does it refer to the decay as it "displays nevertheless the colour of Dublin like Mr Browne himself" but wild geese as such also refer to freedom. Nonetheless, this goose is cooked brown and thus symbolises the protagonists' unattainable escape. Moreover, when Gabriel offers a wing to a guest, her symbolic refusal then refers to the stupor in the paralysis.⁶⁷ Furthermore, brown is truly everywhere as all of the guests consume it in the form of the brown goose.

Another frequently used colour is grey: "[Aunt Julia's] hair... was grey; and grey also with darker shadows, was her large flaccid face" (*Dubliners*: 130). Her depiction implies that she "would soon be a shade" (*Dubliners*: 159). Speaking of the shade, we can not omit the contrast between light and darkness often illustrated in the text which is a symbolical contrast between life and death. These refer to the opposition of East and West when the first symbolise life and the latter symbolise death⁶⁸. Michael Furey, the dead lover from Galway, is buried in the west of Ireland. It thus seems significant that Gabriel, experiencing his epiphany, realises that "[t]he time had come for him to set out in his journey westward" (*Dubliners*: 160). Tindall (46) also suggests an epiphanic implication of such statement claiming, that "Gabriel, facing the reality at last, goes westward to encounter life and death."

Another symbol which might represent death is cold and snow. Michael Furey died of cold and there are several remarks to cold, from the cold air outside to Gretta and Mr Bartell D'Arcy actually having a cold. This is contrasted with Gabriel's appreciation of cold (Tindall: 47). There are several instances of the protagonists' occupation by snow, starting by removing snow from the goloshes, to the image of snow covering the whole country. As the critics agree, the image of snow also suggests death (Garrett: 15, Tindall: 47)

⁶⁷ Tindall, William Y., *Readers Guide to James Joyce*, Thames and Hudson, London 1959, p. 44.

⁶⁸ <http://www.symbolism.org/writing/books/sp/2/page3.html> accessed on 16/04/2016.

especially when we learn that "[i]t was falling, too, upon every part of the lonely churchyard on the hill where Michael Furey lay buried" (*Dubliners*: 160). Garrett (15) claims that snow connects the whole country as it is "general all over Ireland" (*Dubliners*: 160). The Irish thus seem joined in a kind of living death (Garrett: 15) meaning that everyone will somehow be affected by death.⁶⁹ On the other hand, snow may also have a positive connotation. David Daiches (in Garrett: 26) perceives the snow as "the symbol of Gabriel's new sense of identity with the world". Similarly, Tindall (47) suggests, that snow can also refer to hope: "Snow is frozen water, and water a traditional image of life. Accepting snow... is accepting life and death; for in snow there is a prospect of thaw." The text itself implies the melting through Gabriel's epiphany: "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" (*Dubliners*: 160). The epiphany thus suggests a possibility of hope and new beginnings.

The bulwark of this chapter explored Gabriel's treatment of the guests and especially women from his superior point of view. The feminist scrutiny of the story appears essential when reading the text for the first time. We analysed his effort to maintain his superiority and masculinity through his thoughts and conduct of women and the guests as a constant struggle with his insecurity. We conclude that Gabriel loses his masculinity to the dead young boy. Nonetheless, he seems to experience an epiphany which results in realization of his own shallowness which, in a way, awakens compassion within himself. We also discussed the importance of colours and also the contrast between light and darkness which led us to the final symbol, snow. Omni-present throughout the story, we analysed snow as the symbol foreshadowing death. However, as it was demonstrated, some critics perceive snow as the symbol of hope and new life. In any case, the finale of *The Dead* and essentially the conclusion of the whole collection thus proposes a glimmer of hope for the citizens of the centre of paralysis, the Dubliners.

⁶⁹ <http://dc.cod.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1354&context=essai> accessed on 15/04/2016.

7 Conclusion

This bachelor thesis analyses the symbolism in James Joyce's *Dubliners*. It has been demonstrated that most of the symbols are generally unnoticeable without a deeper knowledge of Joyce's life, his motifs and the social situation of Ireland in the early 20th century. However, the analysis of the symbols hidden throughout the book often changes our understanding of the text. Reading Joyce thus requires a certain awareness of the complexity of his life and work. *Dubliners* demands an understanding derived from the context of Joyce's time.

Dubliners is divided notionally into four sections: childhood, adolescence, maturity and public life. *The Dead* was added additionally and it stands above the division. It serves the book as an epilogue and a review of paralysis in *Dubliners*. The stories are thus linked with the omnipresent theme of paralysis, which is occasionally relieved by the appearance of epiphany. Joyce uses the term 'paralysis' in order to designate Dubliners' state of corruption and numbness, which is caused by the restraints of the Irish society and the Catholic church. Epiphany becomes a sudden realisation of the presence of paralysis. Each section demonstrates a different perception of the paralysis that develops from a naïve unconsciousness, to a full comprehension. The climax of the book however indicates Joyce's possible faith in Dublin's recovery.

The introduction of the thesis mentions how Joyce's life profoundly influences his work. As was shown through the analysis of symbols, his condemnation of his home, fatherland and church is clearly detectable throughout *Dubliners*.

An Encounter opens with the theme of escape. The desire to escape, either from the cycle of their everyday routine or Ireland as such, appears to accompany the permeating theme of paralysis from which it seems to result. In this chapter the young protagonists long to escape from the boredom of their daily routine. However, we examined how the urge to escape exceeds a mere "day's miching". The text may thus symbolise the ambition to escape from the colonial and religious oppression which remains unfulfilled. Furthermore, we analysed the issues of class discrimination as a part of every day life situation. We investigated the narrator's effort to appear superior to his friend Mahony which led us to an assumption that he links himself with the "queer old josser". The appearance of the josser proposed the possible homosexual and paedophilic overtones of the text. Moreover, through the constant recurrence of the colour green and his attempt to appeal

to the josses, the narrator suggests his own homosexuality and inclination to perversity. Nonetheless, his final repentance indicate a potential occurrence of epiphany.

In *The Boarding House* Joyce alludes to the female rights in Ireland. Mrs Mooney represents a strong independent woman who, having left her husband, is able to provide for herself and her children. Moreover, she humbles her husband by being the 'Madame' of her own boarding house and thus casts shadow upon the patriarchal society. The patriarchy is mocked here as it is represented by an abusive drunkard and a young man who is easily manipulated into marriage. However, some critics agree that despite her success, Mrs Mooney's independence is only ostensible because she remains preoccupied by the household duties in the boarding house. Moreover, the boarding house might serve her as a trap for a suitable husband for her daughter. If so, she is absorbed by the search of a suitable husband for Polly which would heal her wound from the unsuccessful marriage. In any case, it appears that it is Mrs Mooney who contributes to establishing Polly's and Mr Doran's paralysis. If we extend this argument, we realise that children are paralysed by their parents. In addition to this, through Mr Doran Joyce shows again the paralysing authority of the Catholic church and its influence upon everyday life of the Irish. Nonetheless, Polly and Mr Doran realise their paralysis, however they lack the ability to break free.

A Painful Case examines several different perceptions of Mr Duffy. Our understanding of his character oscillates between seeing him as an outsider we sympathise with and a narcissistic egoist. Moreover he shifts between being a man without love and religion while owning romantic and religious books, engaging in a relationship with Emily Sinico, and living on the outskirts of Dublin symbolically named Chapelizod. On a different note, the chapter presents a different aspect of Duffy's personality; by some critics he is perceived as an aspiring revolutionary who however lacks the ability to revolt. The analyses attempts to answer why Mr Duffy breaks off the contact with the only person who had ever loved him. Based on the previous analysis he is either overly occupied with himself which results in his inability to establish a relationship or he cannot love Emily Sinico due to his homosexuality. Nevertheless, being a homosexual in a homophobic society does not justify his harsh treatment of Emily Sinico. He experiences a moment of epiphany but does not seize the chance to become a different person.

A Mother presents similar issues as *The Boarding House*. Here Joyce also draws attention to the position of women in Ireland in the early 20th century, but this time the female

heroine is genuinely contrasted to her male counterparts. Joyce establishes Mrs Kearney's matriarchal sovereignty only to be undermined by the unjustifiable patriarchal authority. From another point of view, Mrs Kearney's domination and our compassion for her is undermined if we take into account her loveless marriage, and the fact that she is not willing to negotiate the new arrangement, in spite of her daughter's embarrassment and the end to her career. Mrs Kearney's "immobility" prevents her from adapting to any sort of alteration and condemns her to remain paralysed.

The Dead summarises the theme of paralysis in the collection, and closes with a possible predication of hope. The story alludes to the themes examined in previous chapters while emphasising paralysis through the excessive use of the brown colour. Some critics interpret the text as if Joyce articulated his fear of what he might have become had he not left Ireland. Such an assumption is likely, as we examined, due to the story's accordance with Joyce's life discoveries. However, this thesis analyses the story from a feminist point of view. Throughout the text Gabriel attempts to assert his male superiority which is constantly being threatened by confronting the women. His serial humiliation and his effort to regain the authority only lead to his final defeat which also delivers the epiphany. Some critics understand the pervasive presence of snow as another symbol of paralysis referencing death. However it can also invoke an optimistic interpretation. If so, the finale of the story and also of the whole collection thus allows the protagonist to experience the recognition of the paralysis, coupled with a willingness to utilise this realisation in order to step outside the paralysis.

Joyce's generosity dwells in the fact that in only a few pages he accomplished to touch on some of the relevant social issues of Ireland of his time. Issues that are to an extent, also compatible with nowadays concerns. Although each story has a life of its own, Joyce adroitly connects the stories with the theme of paralysis pervading the whole book. Joyce indeed reverberates his condemnation of his home, fatherland and his church in *Dubliners*, however we might argue that some of the themes analysed in this thesis might not appear visible to an unaware reader. Therefore, reading Joyce requires a comprehensive knowledge of the matter which might discourage the readers, however it elevates the short story collection above the realm of "popular literature". It is the endless possibilities of interpretation that makes reading *Dubliners* an exceptional reading experience.

8 Summary

Tato bakalářská práce se zaměřuje na rozbor symbolů v povídkové knize *Dubliňané*, napsané významným irským spisovatelem Jamesem Joyceem. Úvodní kapitola se soustředí na život Jamese Joyce a jeho přijetí v Irsku. Dozvídáme se, co spisovatele vedlo k zavrnutí své vlasti a katolické církve, a následnému odchodu z Irsku, do kterého už se nikdy, až na krátké návštěvy, nevrátil. Joycova bouřlivá povaha pochopitelně ovlivnila i jeho rozsáhlé dílo, které do jisté míry zrcadlí spisovatelův život i jeho rozkol se svou vlastí a církví. Tato kapitola dále stručně shrnuje dlouholeté úsilí o vydání *Dubliňanů* a pomyslnou strukturu knihy na následující sekce: dětství, dospívání, dospělost, veřejný život. Každá sekce je v této bakalářské práci zastoupena rozbořením jedné povídky. Rozebrané povídky jsou následující: *Střetnutí* (dětství), *Penzion* (dospívání), *Trapný případ* (dospělost), *Matka* (veřejný život). Povídka *Nebožtíci*, která je v této práci taktéž analyzovaná, nespadá do žádné sekce, protože byla do *Dubliňanů* přidána dodatečně a působí spíše jako doslov knihy. Rozbor symbolů poskytuje interpretaci daných povídek. Povídky jsou propojeny přítomností “paralýzy”, kterou je Dublin podle Joyce postižen. Paralýza je podle jeho slov jakýmsi ochromením celé společnosti, kterou většina Dubliňanů není schopna překonat. Hrdinové všech povídek jsou tedy zajatci společenských konvencí, katolické církve, ale i vlastních nedostatků a neschopnosti vzdoru. V některých případech hrdinové prožívají “zjevení”, neboli uvědomění si svého vlastního zajetí v paralýze, mnohdy však nejsou způsobilí k úniku z tohoto zajetí.

Kapitola *Střetnutí* (*An Encounter*) analyzuje téma úniku. Hlavní hrdinové utíkají z Irsku paralyzovaného katolictvím a šedí každodenního života do světa her na indiány a záškoláctví. Čteme-li však mezi řádky, zjistíme že tyto formy útěku zrcadlí potřebu uniknout ze země svázané kolonialismem. Dalším tématem je třídní diskriminace, která je v textu zřejmá na každém kroku. I hlavní hrdina povídky, který je zároveň vypravěčem, se cítí být nadřazeným svému společníku Mahonymu, což je očividné i při střetu s podivným neznámým mužem. Přítomnost tohoto muže navíc vnáší do textu nepříjemný podtón homosexuality a pedofilie. Tato kapitola analyzovala možnost vypravěčovi nestoudnosti a možné opačné sexuální orientace skrze opakující se přítomnost zelené barvy, která byla některými kritiky označena v tomto případě za symbol homosexuality. Vypravěčovo závěrečné pokání však naznačuje jeho prožitek zjevení.

V *Penzionu* je nejpodstatnější náplní rozboru postavení žen v patriarchální společnosti. Hlavní hrdinka, paní Mooneyová, svou soběstačností zastiňuje mužskou suverenitu, která

je v povídce zastoupena jejím bývalým manželem, násilným opilcem, a panem Doranem, který je natolik svázán společenskými a katolickými konvencemi, že se snadno paní Mooneyovou nechá zmanipulovat do manželství s její dcerou Polly. V této kapitole byla dále pomocí symbolů rozebrána neschopnost dětí, či spíše mladých dospělých, postavit se proti vůli rodičů. Ani Polly, ani pan Doran tudíž nejsou schopni vymanit se z paralýzy.

Kapitola *Trapný případ* analyzuje motivy, které vedou pana Duffyho k zavržení Emily Sinicové. Pan Duffy, který se zdá být egoistou přesvědčeným o své nadřazenosti, si zakládá na svém statutu osamělého muže ve středních letech, v jehož životě nemají láska, rodina, přátelství, ani náboženství místo. Rozbor některých symbolů však naznačuje opak. Tato kapitola navíc odhaluje Duffyho potenciální plánování revolty proti společnosti, kterou však není schopen podniknout. Závěr této kapitoly připouští možnost Duffyho homosexuality, která by vysvětlila, ale však neospravedlnila jeho razantní zamítnutí paní Sinicové. Pan Duffy si sice po její smrti paralýzu uvědomuje, není však schopen jakkoliv ji prolomit.

Kapitola *Matka* se vrací k tématu postavení žen v patriarchálním Irsku na počátku dvacátého století, kdy hlavní hrdinka čelí neopodstatněné suverenitě mužů. Paní Kearneyová je zde prezentována jako silná žena, která však svazuje svou rodinu přílišnou emancipovaností a nepřizpůsobivostí, na kterou je v rozboru symbolů kladen velký důraz. Dále jsme analizovali možný sexuální výklad povídky. Tato kapitola, podobně jako *Penzion*, dále analyzuje neúspěšnou snahu dětí vymanit se ze svazujícího područí rodičů. Ani jedna z postav povídky si paralýzu neuvědomuje.

Kapitola *Nebožtíci* shrnuje a zdůrazňuje témata, která byla analyzována v předešlých kapitolách. Téma útěku je v této kapitole rozebíráno skrze několikeré porovnání Irska se zahraničím a Gabrielovy nelichotivé postoje vůči jeho domovině. Paralýza je v této povídce nejvíce zřetelná a je realizovaná hlavně přítomností žluté a hnědé barvy, které znázorňují rozklad a zkaženost společnosti. Podstatná část této kapitoly je věnována feministickému výkladu povídky. Gabriel, navzdory svému úsilí prosadit svou mužskou autoritu, je v průběhu textu několikrát ponížěn právě ženami. Tato ponížení vyvažuje pomíjivými okamžiky dominance, které jsou však zcela upozaděny ve vyvrcholení povídky. Tato kapitole se dále věnuje významu sněhu, který je v textu všudypřítomný a předznamenává smrt. Další analýza sněhu však naznačuje, že sníh v textu předznamenává příchod nových, lepších časů, což potenciálně signalizuje překonání paralýzy.

Závěrem této bakalářské práce je shrnutí rozboru povídek, který byl zprostředkován analýzou symbolů, a ocenění geniality Jamese Joyce.

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