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Joyce

The Space of the City and the Country in

James Joyce's Short Stories

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Abstract

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to analyse the motives and the thematic aspects which create the space of stories of the Irish Modernist James Joyce in his collection of short stories *Dubliners*. The thesis will also focus on the topic of Irish nationalism and analyse Joyce's approach to the modern city in the early 20th century. Joyce's stories contain both accurate geographical descriptions of Dublin, some irony in judging Ireland's national identity and also rural idealization. The introduction of this thesis presents the author in the context of the Irish national literature as well as a world-renowned Modernist. The thesis will continue with the space of the collection *Dubliners*, then it will analyse the motives of contrasts between urban and rural environment and the thesis will focus on Joyce's image of city's periphery, poverty and the motif of romantic illusion. This thesis includes the analysis of the hero's relationship to the environment and the hero's psychic perception of the space.

Anotace

Cílem práce je zkoumat motivy a tematické aspekty vytvářející prostor povídek irského modernisty Jamese Joyce v jeho souboru povídek *Dubliňané*. Práce mimo jiné zohlední téma irského nacionalismu, a bude se zabývat analýzou Joyceova přístupu k modernímu velkoměstu na počátku 20. století. V Joyceových povídkách lze jednak nalézt přesné geografické popisy Dublinu a zároveň určitou míru ironie v posuzování irské národní identity a idealizace venkova. Práce v úvodu představí autora v kontextu irské národní literatury i jako světově uznávaného modernistu a dále se zaměří na prostor povídkového souboru *Dubliňané*, podrobí analýze motivy kontrastu mezi městským a venkovským prostředím a soustředí se na Joyceův obraz městské periférie, chudoby a na motiv romantických iluzí. Součástí práce bude analýza vztahu hrdiny k prostředí a hrdinovo psychické vnímání prostoru.

Table of Contents

1.	Introduction.....	1
2.	Life and Works of James Joyce	3
2.1	James Joyce as a Respected Modernist.....	7
3.	The Space of Dubliners.....	8
4.	The City and the Country.....	13
5.	The City's Periphery and Poverty	15
6.	The Hero's Point of View	23
7.	Conclusion	29
8.	Bibliography.....	32
8.1	Primary sources	32
8.2	Secondary sources.....	32
8.3	Internet sources	33

1. Introduction

James Joyce is one of the most well-known, influential and celebrated writers of British literature, although he is mainly associated with Ireland. In every aspect, he is probably the most dominant writer of the twentieth century. T. S. Eliot (1888-1965), Ezra Pound (1885-1972) and W. B. Yeats (1865-1929) belong among other famous poets of Modernism of the first half of the twentieth century. For a long time, it used to be said that literary modernism included mainly men, but also many female authors became representatives of Modernism. It is worth noting Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), who was included in connection with the stream-of-consciousness technique, and Gertrude Stein (1874-1946), who considered herself a male genius.¹

Despite the fact common readers understood Joyce as a difficult author, nowadays he is very likely the most widely read, studied and taught of all modern writers. Without any hesitation, these four books made James Joyce popular author – *Dubliners*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Finnegans Wake* and *Ulysses*. These four books can be considered as the milestones of British modernism. Joyce's first novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, shows a young writer, Stephen Dedalus, growing up and rebelling against his family, his country and his religion. Each episode also demonstrates his emotional, educational and cultural element of his imaginations' DNA. Joyce emphasized hero's self-involvement in this novel. Regarding another Joyce's book, *Ulysses*, this is probably the most difficult modern novel as far as for the manner of its telling. The plot of this book is quite simple – it maps certain events which happened in Dublin on June 16, 1904. The crucial thing in this novel is using of the stream-of-consciousness technique, which allows characters and their thoughts to speak directly. Another important point is similarity to Homer's tale *The Odyssey*, when Joyce wanted to demonstrate the 'epic' and the 'heroic' nature of everyday life. Third, the stylistic richness of Joyce's writing makes *Ulysses* and each page a treasure to be excavated. To sum it up, Dublin became a main part of James Joyce's works in which he celebrated the

¹ Samberger, Sonja, *Artistic Outlaws: The Modernist Poetics of Edith Sitwell, Amy Lowell, Gertrude Stein and H. D.*, Transaction Publishers, UK, 2005, p. 11

noise of urban life.² Joyce's first longer work, a short-story collection of fifteen stories *Dubliners*, which was published on June 15, 1914, is the main subject of this thesis.

James Joyce can be considered as a comic genius, a formal innovator and an emotional poet not only of Irish life and language. He is also regarded as the most outstanding author of the era of Modernism. Joyce was the first author who used the interior monologue and the stream-of-consciousness method which we can discover in his notable fiction. In James Joyce's works, we can find modern themes as the nature of art, the social responsibility of the artist, the character of social institutions and public life. Undoubtedly only James Joyce could have realized such a project, because he was unparalleled in his ability to manipulate language for effect. His masterpieces are also full of the ultimate nature and significance of human culture itself. As many critics and readers would agree, reading Joyce is like to bring oneself to a different world full of brilliant inventiveness. Joyce's writings make demands upon the reader that can be problematic and upsetting at times, but the rewards are well worth the effort.³

Dubliners is a collection of selected short stories written by James Joyce, first published more than a century ago, in 1914. James Joyce wrote this collection at the final era of Irish Nationalism. Irish Nationalism was a political movement proclaiming that the people in Ireland are a nation and they want their own and a sovereign state. James Joyce, in contrast to his colleagues, never took part in this nationalist movement. In one of the letters, which he sent to his brother Stanislaus about the Irish movement, he wrote: *"If the Irish programme did not insist on the Irish language I suppose I could call myself a nationalist. As it is, I am content to recognise myself an exile: and, prophetically, repudiated one"*.⁴ In view of the fact that nationalists considered to preserve the Irish language as the most important aspect, Joyce leave the Ireland to be free.

²Medium – Reading Joyce [online]. C2019, last revision 2019, [cit. 2019-11-15] <https://medium.com/@jamesmustich/reading-joyce-8ae4ea3ddd8b>

³ Fagnoli, Nicholas A. and Gillespie, Michael P., *James Joyce A to Z: The Essential Reference to the Life and Work*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1995, p. 13

⁴ Moran, Maria Rodriguez, *Nationalism in James Joyce*, Famous authors [online]. C1999, last revision 2000, [cit. 2020-04-02] <http://mural.uv.es/romoma/nationalism.htm>

When this work first appeared, the stories were regarded as something new, but they were not always understood because they did not fit the established literary patterns.⁵ The collection of *Dubliners* can be considered as a separate piece of work. However, if we want to understand Joyce's unique technique it is necessary to read *Ulysses* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* altogether with *Dubliners*. These three books are significantly unified and each one of them can be seen as a continuation of the previous book. The exclusive atmosphere, scenes and characters created in *Dubliners* appeared both in *Ulysses* as well as in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. 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 only his books.⁶

2. Life and Works of James Joyce

James Joyce, in full James Augustine Aloysius Joyce, was born on February 2 in 1882 in Dublin, Ireland. He was born to the era of the famous Irish politician, Charles Stewart Parnell. James Joyce was the oldest and surviving child of John Stanislaus Joyce and Mary (May) Joyce (Murray), a middle-class Catholic family. Joyce's father came from a prosperous Cork family and Joyce's mother was the daughter of an agent for wines and spirits. They lived in the south-side Dublin suburb of Rathgar and when the family began to grow, they moved to a succession of house to the south side of the city – 23 Castlewood Avenue, Rathmines; 1 Martello Terrace, Bray and 23 Carysfort Avenue, Blackrock. John Joyce worked for a Secretary of the United Liberal Club in Dublin and he was devoted to Parnell. James Joyce was admitted to Clongowes Wood College, which was a significant Jesuit school in County Kildare at the age of six. He attended this school only for three years, from September 1888 to July 1891, because Joyce's family could no longer afford to pay the tuition, they had a lack of money. The consequence of financial stringency was loss of Joyce's patronage appointment as a tax collector in the Rates Office because of the fall of the British statesman Parnell. After John Joyce lost his job in the Rates Office, he never again held the steady

⁵ Power, Mary and Schneider, Ulrich, *New Perspectives on Dubliners*, Rodopi, Amsterdam, 1997, p. 1

⁶ Hüttlová, Monika, *Symbolism in Joyce's 'Dubliners'*, Bachelor thesis, University of South Bohemia, Pedagogical Faculty, thesis supervisor: PhDr. Christopher Koy, M.A., Ph.Dr., České Budějovice 2016, p. 6

employment. It had an impact on the family and they experienced a steady decline into poverty, which was punctuated by frequent changes of their addresses.⁷

James Joyce and his brother Stanislaus were sent to the Christian Brothers' School, which was located in North Richmond Street, in 1893. Incidentally, this area later became a characteristic place for the opening of the *Dubliners* story called 'Araby'. On April 1893, he and Stanislaus were enrolled at respectable school, Belvedere College, situated on North Great George Street. Joyce's academic career was truly successful. He won several prizes for scholarship and he was also elected president of the Solidarity of the Blessed Virgin Mary – a Jesuit association that performed charitable works. In Belvedere Joyce became more interested in poetry and drama.⁸ Importantly he remained guided by the spiritual independence all the time, but on the other hand, in his mid-teens he abandoned his Catholic faith. He apologized himself by this sentence: „That's for the Church to say.” (Fagnoli, Gillespie: 4, 5) This rejection of religiosity collided with his sexual awakening, because in 1896, he had his first sexual experience with a prostitute. (Bulson: 2)

Before graduating from Belvedere, James Joyce discovered the Norwegian Modernist and playwright Henrik Ibsen, in whom he found a kindred spirit. (Bulson: 3) Joyce graduated from Belvedere in 1898 and continued with his studies in University College, Dublin. In this time Joyce was articulating powerful criticisms of Catholicism, Nationalism, Celtic rival and Irish family, which later became important themes in his fiction. On October 31, 1902, Joyce was awarded his university degree in modern languages – English, Italian and French. By this time, he got to know many friends between Dublin's literati. He also arranged to order the support of Yeats, Russell and Lady Gregory. (Bulson: 3) In December 1902 Joyce went to Paris, where he wanted to pursue his studies in medical school. He returned from Paris in three weeks mainly because of his mother illness. The cancer was the reason why James Joyce's mother died in 1903 at the age of forty-four. (Fagnoli, Gillespie: 5 – 7)

Joyce stayed in Dublin and began writing *Dubliners* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, but he lacked inspiration. In 1904 he met a woman who became a real motivation for

⁷ Fagnoli, 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. 3, 4

⁸ Bulson, Eric, *The Cambridge Introduction to James Joyce*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2006, p. 3

him, the 20-year-old girl from Galway, Nora Barnacle. This was the woman with whom he stayed for the rest of his life and who became mother of their two children, George and Lucia. In the same year, they left Dublin, because the intellectual and artistic atmosphere of Dublin was unclear and stifling. On top of that, James could not live openly together with Nora. They moved to Pola, where Joyce obtained a position as an English-language teacher at the local school. After only five months, they went to Trieste in 1905 and spent there the next ten years of their life. (Bulson: 7) By this time, he had already written three stories of *Dubliners* – ‘*The Sisters*’, ‘*Eveline*’ and ‘*After the Race*’. In March 1907, James Joyce completed the final story of *Dubliners* – ‘*The Dead*’. (Fargnoli, Gillespie: 7, 8, 9)

Joyce’s famous books *Dubliners* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* were published in 1914. Unfortunately, both books did not get that understanding. On the other hand, James Joyce sent a copy of *Dubliners* to the American poet, Ezra Pound, and he recognized the author’s avant-garde style. This first correspondence started the beginning of the long era of professional involvements between Ezra and James.⁹

The year 1914 was pivotal for James Joyce. Thanks to the assistance and financial support of Ezra Pound, the novel *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* began to appear as a serialized version in famous *Egoist* magazine in London. Joyce’s collection of fifteen short stories, *Dubliners*, was finally published and showed up in June of that year. During 1914 and 1915, the author of previous mentioned book wrote his first and only play, which named *Exile*, but it has never been as well-known as *Dubliners*. After that, Joyce turned attention back to fiction and started thinking about the novel, *Ulysses*, which has been formulating since 1907.¹⁰

Due to the start of World War One, Joyce and his family were forced to leave their contemporary hometown Trieste, and went to Zurich, where they stayed during the war. Life in Zurich was quiet, but on the other hand very financial demanding. Thanks to Yeats and Pound James’s family could live in Zurich because they provided them support and gave

⁹Famous authors [online]. C2019, last revision 2019, [cit. 2019-11-06] <https://www.famousauthors.org/james-joyce>

¹⁰James Joyce’s centre [online]. C2018, last revision 2019, [cit. 2019-11-06] <https://jamesjoyce.ie/about/james-joyces-life/>

them money. (Bulson: 10) In addition, James Joyce continued in his writing in this Swiss town.¹¹

James Joyce started to be considered as a very famous writer. Unfortunately, in August 1917, James Joyce underwent the first eye operation, because of glaucoma. (Fagnoli, Gillespie: 11) Since that, Joyce received others eye surgeries, in France and in Switzerland.¹² James Joyce and his family wanted back to Trieste after the end of the War. However, Ezra Pound convinced them to come to Paris, where they settled for the next twenty years.¹³

After publishing the book *Finnegans Wake*, which did not have really pleasant reactions, Joyce started to complain of the stomach pains. Unfortunately, James Joyce had developed a duodenal ulcer. In June 1939, when Nazis arrived, Joyce and his family decided to leave Zurich. Thanks to the intervention of their friends, they obtained the proper papers, except for Lucia, who Joyce never saw again. (Bulson: 16)

The family without their daughter Lucia came back to the city and James had to go to the operation due to worsening stomach pains. Soon, after the surgery, he passed into a coma and died of a perforated duodenum on January 13, 1941. James Joyce was buried in Zurich's Fluntern Cemetery two days later in sight of his closest family and friends. He did not have a religious service because of Nora's rejection. Nora Joyce stayed in Zurich until her death on April 10, 1951. She was buried next to her husband, James Joyce. (Bulson: 16)

¹¹James Joyce worked steadily on *Ulysses* during this time. He tried to mention many characteristics, which were around him in Switzerland and recorded them to the work. James Joyce's centre [online]. C2018, last revision 2019, [cit. 2019-11-06] <https://jamesjoyce.ie/about/james-joyces-life/>

¹²Connolly Cove [online]. C2019, last revision 2019, [cit. 2019-11-06] <https://www.connollycove.com/james-joyce/>

¹³Thanks to Ezra Pound's help, Joyce met very interesting people and they used to live in Paris very quickly. An American ex-pat Sylvia Beach, whom Joyce met in Paris, supported him to publish *Ulysses*, after fifteen years in 1922. James Joyce became friends with Paul Léon, the man who helped Joyce to publish his final book *Finnegans Wake* in 1939. James Joyce's centre [online]. C2018, last revision 2019, [cit. 2019-11-06] <https://jamesjoyce.ie/about/james-joyces-life/>

2.1 James Joyce as a Respected Modernist

The early twentieth century, when James Joyce was about 25 years old, characterized crucial moments in the history of the English novel. Writers and reviewers debated how the form of modern fiction should respond to the experience of modern life. For contemporary readers, the modern novel can be considered as variable and rich in many styles and subgenres. However, in the early 1900's, it seemed for many writers that the best novels become stuck in the representation of characters and reality.¹⁴

The era, which we describe as Modernism, can be characterized as an international revolution in the arts, in cultural groups and in individual writers. (Parsons: 134) The term Modernism can be applied to fictional and poetic techniques, modes of writing or experimental process such as a stream-of-consciousness, unreliable narrator and spatial forms.¹⁵

By the time, when James Joyce was twenty-six-year-old, he had already tried many careers, but without any huge success. He was a poet, a journalist, a novelist, a bank clerk and a teacher in many different countries in Europe. When he became aware that as a novelist he did not fail, he returned from the nineteenth-century naturalism to the linguistic experimentation, that we identify as Modernist literature. The kinds of fiction, like Joyce's *Ulysses* or *Finnegans Wake*, never existed before and especially the literary landscape was not the same. (Bulson: 17)

Without any hesitation, James Joyce is considered as one of the leading high modernists during the era, which is a period between 1890's and 1940's. The year 1922 is very significant, because during this time two major works were created – Joyce's *Ulysses* and Eliot's *The Waste Land*. They represent an important piece of the modern British and the world literature. The publication of these two important works can be understood as an introduction of a new era in prose and poetry. During the 1930's many modernist writers

¹⁴ Parsons, Deborah, *Theorists of the Modernist Novel: James Joyce, Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf*, Routledge, New York, 2007, p. 5

¹⁵ Eagleton, Terry et al., *Modernity, Modernism, Postmodernism*, University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 2000, p. 46

such as Eliot, Pound and Lewis, returned to the traditional defined forms. James Joyce is unique because of continuation with his experiment further. (Bulson: 18)

It is necessary to say, that despite the fact of being the leading British modernist, James Joyce was Irish and lived in Ireland, but he never belonged to the modernist group. During time of movements such as Bloomsbury, the Futurists, Imagists or Expressionists, Joyce always kept his distance from them. The reason was that he suspected the group and wanted to be independent, so we can mark him as a singular creation. (Bulson: 19) His later influence on other authors is enormous and no one takes his position back. Joyce's use of the stream-of-consciousness narrative technique and his fantastic fiction are arguments why it is hard to surpass such a big modernist.

3. The Space of Dubliners

Firstly, it is necessary to say, that Joyce's notable work, *Dubliners*, is the most widely read from all Joyce's fiction and works. It was this collection of fifteen short stories which made him a skilled prose technician and placed him among others famous authors in the literary history. I would like to point out that every story in *Dubliners* contains the issue of ambiguity, alternatively absence, which makes the story difficult to read and figure out what is happening. (Bulson: 32, 35)

Obviously, Dublin is a location, where all of James Joyce's works take place. Although Ireland became the independent nation in 1922 after the Anglo-Irish War, Joyce's works are set into the era, when the Roman Catholic Church had a huge impact not only on religious, but also on social and political life. As a result of this influence, Ireland suppressed themselves and James Joyce hoped that his writing changed the thinking of the Irish. (Bulson: 32, 33) Joyce himself defined a moral history of Dublin as a closer step to liberating Ireland.¹⁶

The space, which Joyce created in his works, is a combination of the topographical features of the physical city and the mental landscape, which is made by inhabitants. This

¹⁶ Harding, Desmond, *Writing the City: Urban Visions and Literary Modernism*, Routledge, London, 2003, p. 35

mixture produced a complex world of signification. Firstly, Joyce's Dublin depicts a predatory urban space, where during a contact with strangers the aspect of urbanism getting worse. On the other hand, „James' naturalistic vision poeticizes the entropy of Irish life.” (Harding: 34) Thanks to these aspects, a space both praise and withstand the city. Joyce emphasized that people should read *Dubliners* not only as a novel, but more as a part of a history. (Harding: 34,35)

For closer description of *Dubliners*, it is necessary to say that Joyce's stories capture the life of Dublin in four main stages of life. The first period signifies childhood ('*The Sisters*', '*An Encounter*', '*Araby*'), the second adolescence ('*Eveline*', '*After the Race*', '*Two Gallants*', '*The Boarding House*'), the third maturity ('*A Little Cloud*', '*Counter-parts*', '*Clay*', '*A Painful Case*') and the last expresses public life ('*Ivy Day in the Committee Room*', '*A Mother*', '*Grace*'). The last story of *Dubliners* is entitled '*The Dead*' and was written in 1907. (Bulson: 35) This story was added later as a novella from two reasons. The first reason is its length and the tone of the story. The second reason is that this final story created a sense which has impact on everything which had gone before in the book as well as on the whole Ireland. (Power, Schneider: 19)

We can find many lower-middle-class types in *Dubliners* but only a few of upper-class or blue-collar Dubliners. Additionally, people who are intent on destroying themselves as perverts, alcoholics and gadabouts are mentioned in these stories. It seems that everyone in Dublin feels despair and if they want to escape from this world, it is not possible. I can mention an accurate example – in the one of the fifteen stories, '*Eveline*', the main character is the young woman, who chose to stay in Dublin instead of a new life in Buenos Aires with her lover Frank. (Bulson: 33) In the book, it is described this way: „*She sat her white face to him, passive, like a helpless animal. Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition.*”¹⁷

Initially, James Joyce did not want to make *Dubliners* as a unified collection of short stories. George Russell, who was an Irish writer, critic, poet, painter and editor, gave Joyce the first impulse to write '*The Sisters*' when he asked him to make some story for the *Irish*

¹⁷ Joyce, James, *Dubliners*, Garamond, Prague, 2016, p. 58

Homestead.¹⁸ James Joyce used this opportunity in the term of exploring the paralysis of Dublin life. The first story, which he wrote for the *Irish Homestead*, narrates the story about a little boy and his relationship between the aged and dying priest. This short story, 'The Sisters', emphasizes the strange behaviour of the priest and leaves a lot to be explained. Furthermore, Joyce expanded his publication 'The Sisters' in the *Irish Homestead* with two more stories – 'Eveline' and 'After the Race'. (Bulson: 35)

In few years, Joyce decided to increase the complexity in 'The Sisters' and he added three key words that help us to deeply understand the story – 'paralysis', 'gnomon' and 'simony'. All these three words are heavily weighted, and *their relevance extends well beyond any single story*. (Power, Schneider: 115) 'Paralysis' means inability of the physical movement or spiritual, social, cultural, political and historical difficulties. In *Dubliners*, this word is often emphasized. Joyce himself explained in one letter that he had chosen „...*Dublin for the scene because that city seemed to me the centre of paralysis*“. (Power, Schneider: 115) For example, the story which characterized the adolescent stage of life – 'After the Race', is about the main character Jimmy who desires for excitement and escape from Dublin, however it has price in gambling losses and he is unable to get away from the city.¹⁹

The word 'simony' is the process of selling material goods for spiritual benefit but, on the other hand, it means the vulgarization of religion, romance or the intellect. (Bulson: 36) The last word 'gnomon' can be used to typify incompleteness, which is the major theme in these short stories about the empty or broken lives of the people.²⁰ These motifs or words can be found in each of these stories, for example in the story 'Counterparts' Farrington, who is a copy clerk in the firm, is paralyzed by alcoholism. 'Gnomons' occur all over *Dubliners*, because in each story they are the missing pieces of information in the plot, so it is impossible for the readers to clearly understand the stories. James Joyce challenges us to fill

¹⁸ The *Irish Homestead* was a weekly newspaper of small circulation which targeted to rural readers. George Russell published Joyce's earliest stories in this newspaper. Joyce project – Irish Homestead [online]. C2015, last revision 2015, [cit. 2019-11-06] <http://m.joyceproject.com/notes/020077homestead.html>

¹⁹ Laurea, di Tesi, *Mapping Dublin in James Joyce's 'Dubliners', Dublin, a Static and Timeless Environment: a Text Narrative*, Thesis, University in Padova, Italy, 2013, p. 47

²⁰ Stephen Sherman [online]. C2017, last revision 2018, [cit. 2019-12-08] <http://stephen Sherman.com/gnomon-the-theme-of-incompleteness-in-dubliners/>

the missing information in the gaps. In this instance, the suitable example is what really 'went wrong' with Father Flynn in 'The Sisters'? (Bulson: 37) „Wide-awake and laughing-like to himself ... So then, of course, when they saw that, that made them think that there was something gone wrong with him ... “ (Joyce: 20)

In addition, the reader can find ellipses in conversations, in view of the fact that Joyce leaves readers in the middle of a conversation from time to time. When the boy from 'The Sisters' comes into the kitchen, he listens to his neighbour, Old Cotter, how he is talking about Father Flynn, the priest who died: „No, I wouldn't say he was exactly ... but there was something queer... there was something uncanny about him. I'll tell you my opinion ... “ (Joyce: 6) Suddenly, many questions arise to the reader. Father Flynn was *exactly* what? What does the words 'queer' and 'uncanny' refer to? One thing is, that Old Cotter is unable to complete his sentences logically, but on the other hand, we can find the ellipses between unfinished sentences which helped him to talk to the parents about such an unsuitable theme for the little boy. (Bulson: 36)

Another example typical for Joyce's stories is the occurrence of multiple interpretations. 'Araby' is the story about the little boy and his visit in the Araby bazaar, where he wants to buy something for his love, Mangan's sister. In the story, the little boy has a self-realization, maybe because of the disappointment of the bazaar or because of disillusion with the adult world: „Gazing up into the darkness I saw myself as a creature driven and derided by vanity; and my eyes burned with anguish and anger.“ (Joyce: 48) After this sentence, it is possible that the reader has many questions and multiple interpretations – but James Joyce does not provide us an easy and precise answer. (Bulson: 38) In my opinion, his aim is to motivate the reader to look for the unanswered things all around the book.

The important aspect of *Dubliners* and of James Joyce is the narrative method, which Joyce used. The narrator tells us what is going on in the story, he tells us about the characters and what they do or say. But it is not always so easy to identify the speaker and furthermore the relationship between the narrator and the character. James Joyce wanted to capture the attention of the reader so, in his stories, he used a special type of third-person narration. Only in the first three short stories he used the first-person narrative

method. The reader can see the world only through character's senses, because there is no occurrence of the omniscient narrator.²¹

In 'An Encouter' there is an appropriate example of missing of the omniscient narrator. The story tells us about little boys and their encounter with an older man. He speaks about school, girls and books. But suddenly, he gets up, walks away and does something, which is really problematic for readers to recognize, because the narrator refuses to tell us what the little boys sees: „I say! Look what he's doing! ... „I say ... he is a queer old jossel!” (Joyce: 34)

To complete the facts about the space in *Dubliners* it is important to mention the term of economies which can be found throughout this book and which is crucial in reading. The origin of this word 'economy' comes from the Greek word 'oikos' which means house and the word 'nemein' which means control in English – it is literally denotes a form of 'home rule'. The most famous term of the word is 'management a house', where economy signifies the careful management of resources. Furthermore, there is a need for economy in everyday life, for example the wasting of resources may mean wasting of energy and life. James Joyce considered economy as a significant term for understanding *Dubliners* on the first page of the book, where the boy mentions words as 'simony', 'gnomon' and paralysis'.²²

It is necessary to say that the stories are not connected to each other. Each story has its own themes and characters. James Joyce wanted to create every story special in some way and that makes *Dubliners* so famous and peculiar. On the other hand, it is sometimes hard to understand the whole meaning. The important fact is, that James Joyce mentioned streets, places or squares in *Dubliners*. This makes the book so unique in showing the real face of Dublin, which was an important European city. (Nemčoková: 31)

²¹Nemčoková, Martina, *A Comparison of Narrative Organization, Style and Thematics in James Joyce's Dubliners and Pat Barker's Union Street*, Bachelor thesis, Masaryk University in Brno, Philosophical Faculty, Department of English, thesis supervisor: Stephen Paul Hardy, Ph. D., Brno, 2011, p. 13,14

²² Brown, Richard, *A Companion to James Joyce*, Wiley-Blackwell, United Kingdom, 2011, p. 21, 22

4. The City and the Country

In the beginning of this chapter, which is focused on the analysis of the city and the country in *Dubliners*, it needs to be mentioned that the setting is situated in Ireland, specifically in the streets of Dublin and its suburbs. As expected, streets of Dublin play a significant role in *Dubliners*. James Joyce mentioned many names of streets in his work and so the word “street” is repeated very often, for example Great Britain Street (*The Sisters*), Gardiner street (*The Encounter*), North Richmond Street (*Araby*) and many others. (Joyce: 10, 22, 38)

The stories and their events happen at the turn of the nineteenth and the twentieth century. Ireland was under the power of foreign political and cultural domination.²³ The Roman Catholic Church played a notable role of Irish life and Irish people during the twentieth century. While most of Western Europe had become secularized, Ireland remained devoted to its faith – to Roman Catholic or Protestant.²⁴

„If the Catholic Church had the souls in its grip, then the British Empire had forced these same souls into political and economic submission. There were psychological repercussions as well. After centuries of foreign invasion, the Irish learned oppress themselves.” (Bulson: 33)

James Joyce’s fifteen short stories were written to copy and create the life of the city and of its citizens at a definite historical or cultural moment in a realist impression of Dublin. (Georgescu: 2) In the era of *Dubliners*, the city of Dublin was overcrowded, full of slums and there were many houses in a Georgian style.²⁵ Unfortunately, streets of Dublin were also

²³ Georgescu, Valentina, *Imagining the modern city: James Joyce’s Dubliners*, University of Pitești, Romania, 2007, p. 2

²⁴ Briggs, Roger T., *Dubliners and the Joycean Epiphany*, Thesis, Wichita State University, Department of English and the faculty of Graduate School, Kansas, 2003, p. 1

²⁵ Georgian architecture creates one of the most important parts of Ireland’s heritage. The main Irish cities and other towns were designed and constructed to the liking for the “Georgians”. However, Georgian architecture is not a defined style, rather than it is a name applied to the set of architectural varied styles that were trendy between 1720 and 1830. Georgian style is based on the mathematical ratios, for instance the shape of rooms was a base on cubes, and on the symmetry. If we want to notice these houses, we should know that they look like simple boxes with strictly symmetrical arrangements, all windows are arranged symmetrically and front doors are centred. Examples of this style can be found all over the Ireland. Trip Savvy – Guide to Georgian Architecture in Ireland [online]. C2019, last revision 2019, [cit. 2020-01-07] <https://www.tripsavvy.com/georgian-architecture-in-ireland-1541642>

affected by diseases and poverty. Additionally, drunkenness was also very common thus Dublin created an unattractive image of himself to its surroundings.²⁶ Victorian Dublin in *Dubliners* was affected by its declining and deteriorating urban, political, cultural, social and economic status. In this case, Dublin was the opposite to the European cities. (Desmond: 44, 45) While the European continent experienced the development of modern technologies and shift from the old world to the advanced world of the 20th century, Dublin was still understood as the old world standing before the closed gate to the new and the modern world.²⁷

The city itself is inseparably bound up with the oppressed and shabby figures who we can find in the public space of the metropolis and who had to deal with troublesome issues as poverty, need and entrapment of a daily basis. (Georgescu: 2) The important fact is that James Joyce did not see Dublin as a city of perfection. By contrast, he wanted to describe this city rather as a place where he experienced many personal events. For him, Dublin was „*a city centred around the lower middle-class environment of the depressed northeast quadrant of the city*“ and once he called it ‘the sleepy Irish capital’. (Harding: 35)

The typical example of Joyce’s portrait of the city of the Dublin is summarized in a short part from his last story ‘*The Dead*’:

„The morning was still dark. A dull, yellow light brooded over the houses and the river; and the sky seemed to be descending. It was slushy underfoot; and only streaks and patches of snow lay on the roofs, on the parapets of the quay and on the area railings. The lamps were still burning redly in the murky air and, across the river, the palace of the Four Courts stood out menacingly against the heavy sky. “ (Joyce: 338)

In this extract James Joyce offers what life in the city was like. As it is mentioned above, the streets of Joyce’s Dublin are foggy and without pavement under the yellow lamps, the canal is in a haze over the river and horse-drawn carriages are no exception. It seems like Dublin wants Dubliners to stay inside the borders physically as well as mentally and changes

²⁶ Bakhtiari, Behrooz M., *The Reflection of Urban Identity in Novel: A Case Study of Dublin in James Joyce’s Dubliners*, Open Journal of Social Science Research, Sciknow Publications Ltd., Tehran, 2014

²⁷ Kleprlík, Michal, *The past and the present in James Joyce’s “The Dead”*, Bachelor thesis, University of Ostrava, Philosophical Faculty, Ostrava 2009, p. 11

adventure into failure. (Laurea: 1, 2) Nevertheless, Joyce did not mention the depth poverty in the city that could be seen through the appalling houses and high death rates. However, Dublin in the early 20th century was a complex place, in some cases more complex than it is today.²⁸ For comparing, today's Dublin is a different place in many ways. It's a favourite destination for Irish people as well as Europeans and it is a fast and busy city.²⁹

The interesting aspect is the fact that James Joyce managed to describe the city of Dublin without being there. During the writing of *Dubliners* or *Ulysses* he was in exile in Trieste, Zurich or in Paris. Despite this fact he perfectly depicted the streets of Dublin and their details. (Kleprlík: 11) This is the reason why he wrote a novel which is supplemented by more than two hundred street addresses. James Joyce stated that he wanted to give a picture of Dublin so complete that if the city one day suddenly disappeared from the earth it could be reconstructed out of his book.³⁰ Joyce's intention was to describe the city as if it were an objective reality and not an idea of fantasy. James Joyce described the geography of Dublin in which we can see the changing cultural and historical context. (Laurea: 5)

5. The City's Periphery and Poverty

In this part I would like to summarize the selected stories from Joyce's *Dubliners* with respect to the theme of space and the city's periphery. In addition, I would like to mention the topic of poverty. The main part of this chapter deals with the questions of where the chosen stories take place and how the space, the city and its periphery look like based on my opinion and my imagination. As I have stated already, each of *Dubliners'* stories contains several symbols which appear in the different way in the space consideration and through which the story can be interpreted. In my opinion, James Joyce mentioned his own personal

²⁸ The Irish Times; James Joyce's Dublin: a city of contrasts [online]. C2015, last revision 2015, [cit. 2020-03-06] <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/james-joyce-s-dublin-a-city-of-contrasts-1.2243035>

²⁹ Irish Culture and Customs; Togher, Irene, *Joyce's Dublin* [online]. C2006, last revision 2011, [cit. 2020-03-06] <https://www.irishcultureandcustoms.com/AWriters/JoyceDublin.html>

³⁰ Budgen, Frank, *James Joyce and the making of 'Ulysses', and other writings*, Oxford University Press, London, 1972, p. 68

experience through the themes of stories in *Dubliners* – disappointment from the present in the novella *'The Dead'* and lost dreams in *'Eveline'*.

The first analysed story is *'An Encounter'* which states the main themes of paralysis and desire for freedom. This story is told from the little boy's point of view, who is an unnamed narrator throughout the whole story. The main characters, the unnamed narrator and his friend Mahony, are schoolboys who love the Wild West, the cowboys and Indians. However, they desire for more concrete adventure, for bigger experience than they know from magazines. Consequently, they decide to skip one day at school, walk through and explore streets of Dublin.

In the beginning of the story the reader meets the school environment, which represents a routine of everyday life and which main characters want to abandon. As it is stated in the book, they decide to meet at ten in the morning on the Canal Bridge and then „ ... *go along the Wharf Road until we came to the ships, then to cross in the ferryboat and walk out to see the Pigeon House.*“ (Joyce: 24) To sum it up, they want to meet in the city, from which they come, but then they want to go to the periphery of the centre – behind urban Dublin. The reason is that they desire to feel the eventual freedom, which is scarce for them inside the city, because of the school and daily routine. Before their escape to the periphery the unnamed narrator describes the city with these words – 'sunlight' and 'green leaves'. He feels happy about the vision of new adventure and the space around him seems to him beautiful.

Their trip starts on the Canal Bridge and continues to the North Strand Road, where they come across Vitriol Works, and then they walk along the Wharf Road up to Smoothing Iron, which is a bathing place on Dublin Bay.³¹ The environment seems to be really industrial and poor, because of the chemical factory and reference to ragged girls, who played on the streets and who Mahony chased. Further note about the industrial city refers to working

³¹ In Dublin, there were two types of 'ragged school', Protestant and Roman Catholic, which were charitable institutions and they provided free education, clothes and food for those who were very poor.³¹ This is the reason why two ragged boys screamed after Mahony and unnamed narrator „*Swaddlers! Swaddlers!*“ (Joyce: 26) because they thought they are protestant. Gifford, Don, *Joyce Annotated – Notes for Dubliners and A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, University of California Press, London, 1982, p. 38

cranes and engines, which are situated near the river around the noisy streets and high stone walls. School boys also watch „ ... *the spectacle of Dublin's commerce ...* “ from the quays, which brings them pleasure. (Joyce: 28) The more important part of their adventure starts when they reach the field with the view to the river Dodder in the periphery of the city. The field was far away from the boys' home and school. In this field Mahony and unnamed narrator encounter the older man, who talks about weather, books, school, but also about chastising boys, specifically Mahony. Although these boys seek an escape, they must suffer the man's creepy monologue. This encounter in the periphery suggests that daily routine is inescapable and new adventure and experiences can be shocking. These boys searched for adventure and freedom, the periphery was supposed to bring them new experiences, better than those they know from the magazine. Nevertheless, all they reached in the periphery was suffering and torture. The positive message of this story is that main characters managed to escape, except for Leo Dillon, when compared with other stories in *Dubliners*. From my point of view, this is a sign of childhood when children can take an adventure before their paralysis develop.

As regard the poverty, the little boy mention his „ ... *frail canvas shoes ...* “ (Joyce: 26) about which he cares and which he admires despite how shabby they are. Another reference to poverty in the era is a moment, when boys come to Ringsend. This quarter abounds with squalid streets where fishermen live and where is lack of shops – no diary.

The second analysed story – ‘*Araby*’ is about young love and desire. This story has also the unnamed narrator. This narrator is an adventurer, as in the previous story, because he decides to go to a bazaar to get some present for a girl he barely knows. In the opening paragraph, the author describes North Richmond street in detail. It is necessary to say, that during Joyce's studies, he attended the school which was located in North Richmond Street. In this story, his dark and cold house is located in this street and he spent his childhood there. The space on the street of his description seems to be calm, silent and still. „*The other houses of the street, conscious of decent lives within them, gazed at one another with brown imperturbable faces.*” (Joyce: 38) Regarding his house, where a charitable priest died, air was musty, and all the objects give a sense of oldness because of the long closure of the room. The garden behind the house was wild with a few straggling bushes. From my personal standpoint I think that surroundings of the house were neglected because of lack of time or

insignificance for residents. The environment of adjacent streets is familiar by noises, drunken men, bargaining women, street-singers who sang about the troubles in their native land. The road to the Araby bazaar led through Buckingham street, ruinous houses and the river. In the bazaar, „...*nearly all the stalls were closed and the greater part of the hall was in darkness...*” and there was an uncomfortable silence. (Joyce: 46) The narrator did not find experiences which was differ from everyday Dublin and he did not find the freedom of the unknown East, in which he hoped. When the bazaar closed, he realizes that his love, Mangan’s sister, would fail his expectations as well as bazaar did, and that his desire for her was only a hopeless wish. The boy only gets in contact with a stagnant reality and the wrong time and the wrong people contribute to paralysis.

The space is not very happy, it is rather gloomy, and only the thoughts about Mangan’s sister and about the desire to get the bazaar bring pleasure into the story. The narrator’s love presents the part of familiar surroundings of his streets and city as well as the magical promise of the bazaar. Considering poverty, the nameless adolescent narrator does not have enough money to buy a simple gift for his love.

James Joyce’s next story is called ‘*Eveline*’ and it is the adolescent story about a young girl and her desire to escape from his contemporary hard life. The narrative view changes, when compared to the childhood stories and main characters face more complex decisions. The young girl Eveline presents in this story a case when she isolates herself from the environment that surrounds her and keeps dealing with memories of her life. However, it will be better to take a step forward and cope with the exhausting situation. This story begins with the description of Eveline Hill sitting by a window in her house, watching people on the familiar street while recalling her pleasant childhood: „*She sat at the window watching the evening invade the avenue.*” (Joyce: 50) The word ‘evening’ in this sentence can be interpreted as a metaphor for the paralysis, which occurs through every story in *Dubliners*. In this case it is like a shadow which gradually darkens the light of the day, life, future or of dreams. There is also the element of realism in connection with Eveline sitting behind the window, behind the glass that separates her from her dreams. She is forced to experience reality and let illusions flow. While outside the window she imagines her childhood, inside her house Eveline only perceives a grim picture of reality, without idealization. It can be presented as an image of enclosure or an image of restrictions and

fixations of life in Dublin. Eveline depicts her childhood, how they used to play every evening with other children in an open field. The open field symbolizes how free and beautiful her childhood was, because her father did not threaten her when she was a child. However, she lives currently in the modern world and open space for playing was replaced by „... *bright brick houses with shining roofs...*“, not those brown houses which she remembers from childhood. (Joyce: 50)

Eveline practically does nothing throughout the story. She refuses to leave her hometown, which is her only activity. The major part of the book takes place in Eveline's room in her house by her window. Eveline's house and our house are our corner of the world and it is a real world for us. Past, present and future give the house different forces and without the house, the person would be without soul and body.³² For Eveline, her room is full of familiar objects about which she took care and where now she summarizes in her head all the memories that have occurred in her life. These memories are housed thanks to the house. It is naturally that Eveline comforts herself by reliving memories of protection. When she recalls the memories of her house and of her childhood, she also adds dream values. (Bachelard: 6,8) She remembers a picnic with her whole family on the Hill of Howth, where her father made them laugh and at the moment her life does not seem as unpleasant as before, before she adds values of dreams. Nevertheless, she must escape and starts new life in new environment with Frank. In the final scene, she stands in the crowd in the station at the North Wall with her beloved. The space around them is energetic and busy, the station was full of soldiers and the swaying people. The boat in the quay represents the black mass which refers to something frightening and which blew a long and mournful whistle into the harbour in mist. (Joyce: 56) On the other hand she feels desperate and confused. We can imagine her shaking hands clutch the railing, pale face and her frightened eyes. The railing made of iron symbolizes a cage or the strict rules which Eveline finds comforting and habitual. This indicates that her mind and her body is too attached to her life at home. Eveline is stuck in the repetition of her daily life fuelled by past promises to her mother and she is unable to change the current situation. In my opinion, this feeling which Eveline experienced, were also the feelings experienced by many people in Dublin.

³² Bachelard, Gaston, *The Poetics of Space*, Beacon Press, The United States of America, 1994, p. 4-7

The final story within this collection is entitled *'The Dead'*. It was written in 1907, which means three years after the other stories in the collection were written. Its length and complexity suggest its importance and it is considered rather a novella. This story can be seen as a grand finale of the entire collection. While the other stories in *Dubliners* are always focused on the concrete stage in life (childhood, adolescence, maturity, public life), this story combines all four main stages in one story, so it can be considered as an epilogue too. The title *'The Dead'* is in plural, it means that many people are dead, and this reveals the difference between how the people appear to be and who they really are. The space of the dinner party in the story is full of people who appear lively and happy, but they are emotionally dead inside and they do not want to change it, apart from Gabriel Conroy. They are all adapted to their norms and rituals and their lives seem to be a part of a machine. As in many stories of *Dubliners*, the characters are not successful in escaping from their daily routine and they do not go further than the periphery of the town.

The story *'The Dead'* is without plotline. The characters attend a dinner party and the reader is surprised by an unexpected revelation at the end, which has nothing to do with the party. In the beginning, the story introduces the space, where the annual dance and the dinner party of Misses Morkan takes place. Kate and Julia Morkans with their young niece Mary Jane belong to the bourgeoisie. With their housemaid Lily they live in the house and their life is modest, but on the other hand they believe in eating well. As regards to poverty, James Joyce emphasized the importance and the high social level of Misses Morkan when he mentioned *'the ladies' dressing-room'*, which poor people cannot afford. In addition, they have a housemaid which was not customary for poor people in that era. While inside the house there is the classic feeling of a cosy home, it freezes and snows outside. The warm of the house welcome the guests who arrive with a light fringe of snow on their clothes. The two guests that Kate and July expect most at the celebration and who arrive later are Gabriel and Freddy Malins. He seems to be Gabriel's counterpart in case that Gabriel is a well-educated sensitive professor and a part-time book reviewer, he has a stable income and a contend marriage. Whereas Freddy is considered as the drunkard who represents a potential embarrassment. The pleasant atmosphere at the party symbolizes that everything seems to be happiness inside – the piano's music, the dance, the champagne and the guests who talk about opera, theatre, music and songs but also about nationalism, politics, culture and its

habits. Two characters are completely different from other guests in the party – Gabriel Conroy and Molly Ivors, who can be considered as a young Irish nationalist. The characters obey all the rituals and they are devoted to their country, to Ireland. Their rituals and norms become part of their lifestyle but without purpose or meaning. The example of an extreme ritual is the monks who „...never spoke, got up at two in the morning and slept in their coffins.” and it illustrates their observance. (Joyce: 318) Molly Ivors violates the rules of fashion when she does not wear a low-cut bodice and she also leaves the party too early. Gabriel Conroy mentions during his dance with Molly that he is sick of his own country and Molly accused him that he is not loyal to Ireland and she called him West Briton, which makes Gabriel unsure of himself. Throughout these two characters Joyce illustrated how people, who do not obey the norms and the rituals, are more visible to the rest of the group.

In spite of the pleasant, warm and musical atmosphere of the space in the story, the reader will find that almost every speech and every incident have an impact of the presence of death everywhere. The theme of death and a graveyard is present from beginning to the end of the story. It starts with the title and continues with the symbolic meaning of the housemaid's name, Lily, which is associated with the flower of the graveyard. It seems that the events of the plot are not directly linked with death, but the words as 'pale', 'dark' 'mortal' and 'grey' makes the space of the dinner party gloomy and related to a context of the death. Furthermore, many deaths are mentioned in the story such as Gabriel's mother Ellen, Patrick Morkan or a legendary tenor called Parkinson, however all of them are reminded in a good way. The symbol of death follows Gabriel's wife Gretta in the story. She is caught up in the past of the dead, because her beloved died for her when he was only seventeen years old.

The crucial aspect of the whole story is the motif of snow, which is present throughout the whole story as well as death. At first glance it seems that the snow is the symbol of freshness, purity and innocence because of its clear and white colour. Snow gives us also hope for new beginnings, because it is necessary to forget about the past. On the other hand, it additionally symbolizes the death which comes indiscriminately and wait for everyone and also isolation and coldness. The symbol of snow follows Gabriel Conroy from the beginning of the story. He comes into the warm, Christmas tuned house and he tries to scrape the snow from his feet: „A light fringe of snow lay like a cape on the shoulders of his

overcoat and like toe-caps on the toes of his galoshes." (Joyce: 280) In the course of Christmas party, in spite of the friendly atmosphere and enjoyable space, Gabriel fantasises how cool it would be to be outside and how pleasant it would be to walk by the river: „*The snow would be lying on the branches of the trees and forming a bright cap on the top of the Wellington Monument.*" (Joyce: 304) He wishes to be outside in the snow, because the freshness of snow is more enjoyable than dinner. However, snow in *'The Dead'* also reflects the theme of paralysis in a way that snow is cold and if something is frozen and icy, it is without emotion and movement, so it is paralysed.³³

In the end of the party, Gabriel Conroy sees his wife standing in the hall and listening to a man's song. This song means for Gretta much more than Gabriel can realize, because it is associated with the death and with the past, whereas it is the contrast for Gabriel. He desires to be alone with her and looks at his wife with great feeling on the way to the hotel room. At the hotel the porter wants to create a romantic atmosphere in their room, but Gabriel does not want any light, because from outside, from the street, they have enough light. Gabriel thinks he can create a romantic setting in which he wants to be with his wife alone. As Gabriel's passion grows, Gretta seems to be more and more unhappy and tired. When he asked her, what she is thinking about she responds that she is thinking about that song, *The Lass of Aughrim*, which the man sang in the dinner party. This song reminds her of Michael Furey, who was a young seventeen-year old boy, who worked in the gasworks and died for her. As Gretta finishes her painful story, she breaks down into an uncontrollable cry and falls asleep. This moment is crucial for the story's plot, because Gabriel after his wife's speech realizes that he has no idea who his wife is, what she feels and what she wants from life. This realization brings truth about himself; he is not the man who he thought he was, he is more dead than alive, and he has doubts about his life and his wife. The space in the room is full of cool air and Gabriel turns to the window.

„Yes, the newspapers were right: snow was general all over Ireland. It was falling on every part of the dark central plain, on the treeless hills, falling softly upon the Bog of Allen and, farther westward, softly falling into the dark mutinous Shannon waves. It was falling,

³³Self-discovery in James Joyce's *The Dead* [online]. C2020, [cit. 2020-03-25] <https://www.iasj.net/iasj?func=fulltext&ald=35550>

too, upon every part of the lonely churchyard on the hill where Michael Furey lay buried. “
(Joyce: 356)

This moment, when he is looking through the window, is the moment of epiphany and self-discovery and he starts to connect himself with his Irish soul. In fact, *'The Dead'* suggests that the dead are the people who walk through Dublin's street, because the snow is all over the Ireland and falls upon all the living and all the dead people. (Laurea: 28)

Regarding poverty, Joyce believed that Ireland had problems with economy, with the Catholic Church and with class differences in the city. However, poverty is in fact a widespread problem that causes sadness and that can sometimes imprison a person. Joyce never described the characters as poor, but he presented us their social condition through details which Dubliners must face due to lack of money. The crucial issue is also the economic life of the childhood, specifically the exact number of pennies. In each of the three stories, money constitutes important aspect and „define the limits of possible escapes in Dublin“. (Power, Schneider: 46, 67) The reason is that James Joyce wrote some of the stories in *Dubliners* during a state of financial crisis and he was desperate to earn money from his writing.

6. The Hero's Point of View

This part focuses on heroes' point of view in five stories, which I have chosen based on chapters which interested me. Initially, I would like to point out that every story in *Dubliners* is different and has its own hero or heroine and each of them has different relationship to the Dublin's environment and different point of view on their lives. Another issue of importance is hero's mental perception of space in *Dubliners*. On the other side, all the characters in this book must tolerate the gloomy and limiting life which hung over society of Dublin. Sometimes it seems impossible to escape from this life.³⁴

Every story in *Dubliners* is notable for the understanding of character's and hero's in its moments of transcendental revelation, which means a state of mind or the moment of

³⁴Grin [online]. C1994, last revision 2000, [cit. 2020-02-04]
<https://www.grin.com/document/174842>

epiphany, as the author stated. James Joyce took this term from religion and applied to art. The book describes character's desire for happiness and how they live their frustrated lives through others. Joyce said that his intention was "to write a chapter of the moral history of my country".³⁵ For him, as I indicated, Dublin is a centre of paralysis. The book *Dubliners* expresses how paralysis progresses from immature hope, produced by limitation, to the failure to escape the life as an adolescent and how people become attached to the poor life and to the routine. (Thorsten: 4)

In consideration of the foregoing, the collection of *Dubliners* is divided into four main stages of life. The first three stories, 'The Sisters', 'An Encounter' and 'Araby', signifies childhood and they deal with oncoming adolescence, maturity, with absence of a public life and with poverty as well. 'The Sisters' is the first of the three stories which is told in the first-person point of view, whereas in other two stories, 'An Encounter' and 'Araby', the narrator never mentions his name and rarely takes part into conversations.

The first story which opens the collection of fifteen short stories, *The Sisters*, starts with this dramatic sentence: „*There was no hope for him this time: it was the third stroke.*” (Joyce: 6) This part of sentence indicates oncoming inevitability and certainty likewise predictable consequences. James Joyce tried to introduce the hopelessness which rules the life of Father Flynn. (Fagnoli, Gillespie: 48) From the beginning of the book, the reader is facing a present, but the reader does not know previous events and they are unknown for him. There is a mention about the third stroke, but in the story, there is not a reference about previous two strokes. (Power, Schneider: 24) The whole story focuses on the psyche of the narrator, who tries hard to cope with the world which he is a part of and struggles with his feelings about the death of his friend, the old priest. (Fagnoli, Gillespie: 48)

The little boy, who is the main character of this story, is looking ahead in the beginning, when he thought, that „*if he (Father Flynn) was dead, I would see the reflection of candles on the darkened blind ...*” (Joyce: 6) The little boy desires to be the first from his family who tell them about the old man's passing. He feels the responsibility for this new, because Father Flynn was his friend. Unfortunately, the narrator is annoyed by this desire, because Mr.

³⁵ Klein, Thorsten, *An Analysis of the short story 'The Dead' by James Joyce*, Scholarly Paper, GRIN Verlag, Germany, 2000, p. 4

Cotter, his neighbour, already brought this new to the family. In this scene, the hero must deal with his disappointment and anger against the neighbour's ambivalence toward Father Flynn. (Fagnoli, Gillespie: 48)

In this first story the little boy, who is also a narrator, thinks back on the moment from his childhood, when he was a part of the death of his friend and teacher of life. Additionally, the narrator tells about their friendship with Father Flynn, events which they experienced together. The boy, who is now a few years older, is finding himself during the narration. The little boy is influenced by the priest, Father Flynn, not only in the linguistic way, but he accepts some social rituals as well. The narrator sees the priest as a romantic hero who has seen many places and who experienced mysteries.³⁶ There is also a passage in the text, where the little boy shows his attitude to the Mr. Cotter. The rest of the story continues in the mysterious near future. (Power, Schneider: 47, 23)

The second story of the childhood collection, '*An Encounter*', caused problems with Joyce's publisher, because Grant Richards did not want to include this story into the whole collection. On the one hand, the story focuses on the schoolboy's adventure and how they spend one day skipping their school classes in order to exploring the city around them. On the other hand, Joyce included themes such as homosexuality, pederasty, paedophilia or religious oppression in this story. (Fagnoli, Gillespie: 50)

Like in each other story in *Dubliners*, even in this story we can find the motif of paralysis in the form of seeking some sort of escape from the daily routine of life. The narrator emphasized "*the routine of school*" and "*the weariness of school life*". (Joyce: 24) The turning point in the story occurs when the unnamed narrator and his friend Mahony decided to skip the school and met near the Royal Canal and wandered around the city. In the field near the Dodder River they are approached by an old man, who was interested in them. He started to talk about young girls and punishments. The narrator did not feel comfortable, he did not understand him in many ways. The reader can feel the old man's paedophile undertone and the narrator's inclination to perversity. When the man left, the narrator felt relieved to be in the safety of his friend's company. (Fagnoli, Gillespie: 50) From the end of the story, we can

³⁶ Booker, Keith M., *Ulysses, Capitalism and Colonialism; Reading Joyce after the Cold War*, Greenwood Press, London, 2000, p. 154

see the sudden realisation of the paralysis and narrator's change of attitude and perception. (Hüttlová: 18, 19)

The final story of the initial stories oriented on childhood, 'Araby', is based on unnamed narrator, who reminisces on his love, Mangan's sister, in adolescent. In the beginning, the unnamed narrator highlights how he watched Mangan's sister through the window and then how he followed her shyly. The narrator was never able to start an extend conversation with her and so he was confused and surprised, when she asked him if he was going to the Araby bazaar. When he learned that she cannot go to it, he decided to buy her some present here, despite the fact he was not interested in exposing the Araby. The curious point is, that this bazaar became for him a symbol of imagination of desire. (Fagnoli, Gillespie: 51) By coincidence, he came late to the bazaar and he find emptiness in the Araby. The symbol of romance and desire dissolve through the dark and shady gallery of the bazaar.³⁷

'Eveline' is the fourth story in *Dubliners* which was published under James Joyce's pseudonym Stephen Dedalus in 1904. This story is one of the fourth stories which belongs to the section of adolescence. It is concerned with the consciousness of its female protagonist Eveline Hill, who is nineteen-year-old woman. (Fagnoli, Gillespie: 69) The young girl, Eveline, must face a life which is full of great disappointments, such as her mother's death and violence of her father. Before her mother died, Eveline made a promise to her dying mother to „keep the home together as long as she could”. (Joyce: 56) Since that time she is bound with this crucial promise and she serves as a housekeeper for her father and surrogate mother for Eveline's siblings. Despite this promise, Eveline feels how few options and how limited options Dublin offers to her. Besides this, the young woman, who works as a store clerk, resists contradictory decisions. The first decision concerns whether she should leave her hometown, Dublin, with her boyfriend Frank, who is a sailor, and start a completely new life in Buenos Ayres. The part of the second decision is whether she should stay in Dublin and hold different roles she must play as a woman. Thanks to a third-person point of view, the reader perceives Eveline's way of discovering herself and her wishes.³⁸ The female

³⁷ Norris, Margot, *The Suspicious Readings of Joyce's "Dubliners"*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2003, p. 47

³⁸ Franz, Anne-Mareike, *Stylistic Analysis of James Joyce 'Eveline'*, Seminar paper, GRIN Verlag, Germany, 2007, p. 3

protagonist, Eveline, is similar to James's sister Margaret who was 20 years old. She also promised her mother she would take care of the house and of the family after her death, despite a violent father. (Laurea: 6)

There are many elements of realism in this story. One of them is an objective approach to the fact that the author is not involved in the work but asserts his opinion by choosing characters or themes. As an appropriate example I can mention that the sailor Frank presents Joyce himself in this story. The first similarity can be that Frank is willing to take his young lady, Eveline, along with him and Joyce left Ireland together with his love Nora, who was to become his wife later. Another closeness is that Frank visited many countries, from Canada to Patagonia and James Joyce visited many countries too.

Eveline's lover Frank is described by Eveline like „*very kind, manly, open-hearted*“ and also handsome and observant. (Joyce: 54) Interesting aspect is that we do not know what happened with Frank in the end of the story. The narrative does not tell us more about the young sailor, but he practically symbolizes the person who has helped to break all the problems. However, his actions indicate her opinions in case Frank takes Eveline to the opera, he sings about her, gives her lovable nicknames and tells her about their future life in distant countries. (Norris: 63) Eveline knows that she has a right to happiness and that Frank will save her, but her inability to board Frank is symbol of „*Joyce's dramatization of the impact of social purity propaganda upon a bewildered.*“³⁹ However, Joyce mentioned in this story frustrated emigration and sexual danger too. (Mareike: 3)

When we focus on Eveline's point of view, we find out that she desires to elope with Frank due to the tender love, which absents in her life. She has romantic illusions about their marriage. Furthermore, she wants to be respected as a married woman that she does not now enjoy, and she believes she deserves it. However, Eveline's shyness causes her puzzle over her decision to give up the crucial promise and leave her family forever. She feels a need to escape with Frank who will save her and give her life, which is different from everything she has ever known. Anyway, the powerful force of Dublin caused Eveline's immobilization by the fear of unknown and she remains motionless. She stayed at the North

³⁹ Mullin, Katherine, *James Joyce, Sexuality and Social Purity*, Cambridge University Press, UK, 2003, p. 571

Wall paralyzed – she was unable to move on and start a new life in a completely new country. (Fagnoli, Gillespie: 52, 53)

In the last story and a novella, *The Dead*, the main protagonist is a university-educated teacher and a writer, Gabriel Conroy. He represents a force of control in the story, but on the other hand, he has problems with simple social situations and conversations of the Irish middle class in Dublin in late 1800s. As well as in other stories, this story demonstrates similarity between James Joyce life and the plot in *'The Dead'*. Gabriel Conroy is an intelligent, literary man, college teacher and contributor of a literary column to the Dublin Daily Express. Another example can be that Joyce's mother never accepted Nora as James Joyce's wife, who was a lower-class girl from Galway. Gabriel's mother is also against his marriage with Gretta. The more interesting parallel between Joyce's life and the story is the incident at the end. The reader finds out that Gretta's affection had already belonged to the young Michael Furey who died for her. Joyce's wife Nora had also an admirer, Michael Bodkin, who died very young too, at the age of twenty. This information provides us the story's real conclusion. (Hüttlová: 37)

The whole story is about extensive dialogues and repetitiveness at the dinner party and also about norms and rules which are part of people's life. In the end of the story, Gabriel Conroy looks back on the meaning of his marriage with Gretta, his importance as a man and his role in the whole universe. He experiences a moment of epiphany as he looks at his sleeping wife and reveals his life, but in a completely different light. This kind of epiphany is the way to self-knowledge. Gabriel's feelings are describing many times. „*He had felt proud and happy then, happy that she was his ...* “ or „*Gabriel's eyes were still bright with happiness ...* “. However, the moment he learnt that his wife was loved by Michael Furey and even died for her, he suddenly reveals his entire marriage in a completely different way. Michael Furey, the dead Gretta's lover, and his unexpected appearance change everything „*which for Gabriel brings his own being into question.*” (Power, Schneider: 32)

7. Conclusion

James Joyce, who was born in 1882 in Ireland and died in 1941 in Zurich, was truly a well-known and respected Irish author of Modernism. The term Modernism can be characterized as new fictional and poetic techniques, modes of writing or experimental process such as a stream-of-consciousness, unreliable narrator and various spatial forms. Despite the fact that James Joyce never belonged to any modernist group, he used the interesting language and atmosphere that made *Dubliners* and his other works unique.

Thanks to his works – *Ulysses*, *The Finnegans Wake*, *A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man* and *Dubliners*, he belongs to the leading authors of the era of the 20th century. Even though Joyce's works are often hard to read, the themes in his works, such as public life, nature and culture of people are very familiar for people. However, during Joyce's studies at University College in 1898, he criticised Catholicism, Nationalism, and Irish family which also became important topics in his fiction. Joyce's works often include the motif of his hometown, Dublin, although James Joyce spent most of his life abroad, in exile (Trieste, Zurich, Paris). It was for the reason that he knew foreign languages perfectly and he couldn't live openly together with his wife in Ireland. Ireland became the independent country and nation in 1922, nevertheless Joyce's works are set into the era, when the Roman Catholic Church had a huge impact not only on religious, but also on social and political life of people.

Focusing on *Dubliners*, which was the main theme of bachelor thesis, James Joyce intentionally named the book *Dubliners* and not only *Dublin*, just to point out the lives of people at that time. He wanted to highlight the inhabitants who are trapped in a stagnant city. James Joyce used the term 'paralysis' very often. He believed people were unable to face the situation in the era, they were trapped in the state of paralysis and they were imprisoned in everyday routine of Dublin. Another specific term, which is used in *Dubliners*, is 'epiphany'. This term is used to see the hope that Ireland can awake from the paralysis. 'Epiphany' can mean a sudden revelation of one's authentic inner self. Furthermore, *Dubliners* as a book collection is also special in the way that Joyce sometimes used ambiguity and alternatively absence, which makes the meaning sometimes hard to understand.

The book *Dubliners* is divided into four parts and it is no coincidence. The stories capture the life of Dublin in four main stages of life. The first period signifies childhood ('*The Sisters*',

'*An Encounter*', '*Araby*'), the second adolescence ('*Eveline*', '*After the Race*', '*Two Gallants*', '*The Boarding House*'), the third maturity ('*A Little Cloud*', '*Counter-parts*', '*Clay*', '*A Painful Case*') and the last expresses public life ('*Ivy Day in the Committee Room*', '*A Mother*', '*Grace*'). The last story of *Dubliners* is entitled '*The Dead*' and it is the longest story in this collection.

The stories are situated in the streets of Dublin, in Ireland. James Joyce mentioned many names of streets and places in the collection even though he wrote the book from exile. The vision of the city created by Joyce is so vivid that the reader can make his own and an accurate image too. In the era of *Dubliners*, the city was full of slums, the streets were affected by poverty and diseases. Drunkenness, wanderers, many lower-middle-class types and people, who are intent on destroying themselves can be found in Joyce's works to highlight the life of Dubliners.

Most of the *Dubliners*' stories take place in the periphery of the city centre. The example can be the story '*Two Gallants*' which takes place in the periphery of the centre of Dublin along the South Circular Road. In addition, the main characters try to get to the periphery to escape from everyday life, from rush of the centre or they long for adventure. As an example, I can mention the story '*An Encounter*' where the schoolboys desire to escape from the school routine. However, in the end of their trip to the city's periphery, they realize that the routine is unavoidable. It seems unpracticable to escape from their lives. This realization is typical for many characters of *Dubliners*, who are stuck in the life of Dublin.

Regarding romance and romantic illusions of the hero in *Dubliners*, love in the stories is peculiar, multi-faceted and also simple. Love in Joyce's work is not a typical example of love with hearts, roses and nice gestures which we know from many books of romance as a genre. As I stated above, the book is divided into four main periods in life and this structure lets the reader see what love is in the adolescent stage, in the teenage stage and in the adult stage. The reader comes across young love, which is full of disappointment, many chances, which were not fulfilled or plain marriages. For instance, Mr. and Mrs. Kearney in the story '*A Mother*' or Tom Kernan and his wife in the story '*Grace*' have on the one hand functional marriages but on the other hand, the marriages are not affectionate. Joyce tried to project the motif of romantic illusions and the distant reality as a contrast to the shabby and grey

Dublin scene of that period. James Joyce used the motif of romantic illusions as a mean of escape from everyday life in Dublin and reality to the different world or to the exotic places as in the story 'Araby'. Romantic illusions can be considered also as a function of youth and inexperience.

The last important aspect of *Dubliners* is the hero's point of view and his perception of space. It is necessary to mention that all the characters, heroes and heroines in the stories must face the bleak atmosphere which is presented all over Dublin's society. As the book is divided into the main stages of life, Joyce showed us how each hero perceives the space separately and differently. For Eveline, from the eponymous story, the perception of space of escape is associated with Frank, who promised her a better life in another country. However, most characters are disappointed in the end of the story or they experience paralysis or epiphany. The perception of space can be interpreted in many different ways but the characters in *Dubliners* perceive the space as an instrument to escape physically. However, their emotional space perception is still limited to the streets of Dublin and Ireland in general.

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