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**James Joyce's "The Dead": A Manifestation of Paralysis  
and Epiphanies in the Character of Gabriel Conroy**

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of the requirements for the degree of Master in Literature and Civilization*

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## **Dedications**

*To those who believed in me*

*To those who helped me through hard times*

*To my family and good friends I dedicate this work*

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## Abstract

The twentieth century was the century of cultural revivals; it changed the Modern literary history by introducing new generations of nationalists who were utterly interested in history and society. This century also witnessed the birth of a modern literary practice called modernism. Modernism occupied the years of shortly after the beginning of the twentieth century. In broad terms, the period was marked by sudden and unexpected breaks with traditional ways of viewing the world. Furthermore, Modernist writers were conscious about the preoccupation of the inner self and consciousness based on Psychoanalytical standards. Being an ex-colony of Great Britain, Ireland had significant social problems; The English rule deprived the Irish of their own history and the social frustration motivated the writers to raise their voices. Irish writers such as James Joyce helped the reader familiarize with problems of inequality and injustice, and the foible behaviors of the characters that were paralyzed and unable to follow their dreams or pursue their happiness. James Joyce introduced the urban life and familiar traditions of the early twentieth century. He was an ambitious writer who used his artistic vision to cast the light upon the swelling paralysis in his country and claimed that he is calling the series *Dubliners* to portray the full picture of poverty and paralysis. Gabriel illustrates powerfully that even an intelligent, educated, sensitive man can deceive himself about his own nature. Indeed Conroy was the output of the normalities circulating societywide. Exploratory Irish criticism transformed to be more realistic, to form an echo to the society on one hand and to the writer's psychoanalytic reflection on the other creating controversial psychic propinquities.

**Keywords:** Modernism, Irishness, Irish fiction, epiphany, Paralysis, Psychoanalysis, James Joyce, *Dubliners*, 'The Dead', psychic propinquity

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# **General Introduction**



Modernism is a socially progressive trend of thought that affirms the power of human beings to create, improve and reshape their environment. It has always encouraged the re-examination of every aspect of existence (Berman 16). Modernist literary men were free to choose their own content, they were no longer writing for the aristocracy or guided by the church; they wrote about society and felt bounded to their own people (Barret 20).

The great literary tradition of Ireland presented the Irish people by shedding light on what differentiates them from Europeans in general and the British in particular. Writers merely criticized the general atmosphere in modern Ireland with all the social problems reigning such as emigration, poverty, and social paralysis (Kilroy 07). Writers such as James Joyce revealed unanticipated dimensions on the lyrical, humane and visionary level. Joyce provided further confirmation to this change; he related his artistic development to the cosmopolitan life of Dublin and contributed to the dissection of both, the social life and its psychological effects on the people (Cowley 42).

This dissertation would take the example of Gabriel Conroy to demonstrate helplessness and paralysis in the story of “The Dead” reflecting the helplessness of the Irish people and the writer himself. However, Joyce had a worldwide fame for being an Irish National Literary man dealing with common themes such as exile to foreign countries caused by poor homeland, the struggle between classes, the stream of consciousness and its effects on people. So how did James Joyce reflect his life and psychic qualities in his characters, mainly Gabriel Conroy in “The Dead”?

For the sake of answering the initial research question, a number of sub-questions have been raised:

- First, was Joyce affected by the psychological and social aspects of life in Dublin?

- Second, were there any psychic propinquities found in the story of “The Dead” that proves the use of mirror viewing?
- Third, to what extent is Gabriel Conroy an alternative version of James Joyce?

Thus, a number of hypotheses can be suggested as possible responses, which can be expressed as follows:

- James Joyce, being far away from Dublin and living in between various European cities, was disconnected from his feeling. He held grudges against the Town and tried to portray them in a set of negative people for the world to see.
- Being a hopeless romantic, Joyce, suffered from being separated from his entourage; he left Dublin but Dublin did not leave him. Parts of Dublin were present in the settings of his literary products as parts of himself were in the characters he created

To begin with, it is of interest to note the way through which the social circumstances influenced literature by influencing the literary man. The writer, being associated to his environment, captured the essence of being a common man; he tends to moralize works whenever the question of social standards is raised (Ferhi 02).

The theory in question, especially in the second chapter, is Psychoanalytical. The psychoanalytic explanation of the perceptible appearances of the stochastic community helps understand the background of the story. Providing the biography of James Joyce and an explanation of the Irish Case, this research intends to depict the similarities and oppositions between Joyce and the main character of his story, Gabriel Conroy in “The Dead”. “The Irish case”, or as it is known in Britain” The Irish Question” is an important aspect to understanding the elements of national identity. Cultural, Political, and social transformations occurred during the Irish Land War as the Irish proclaimed their land

from the British Crown. The Irish did gain independence from Britain but continued to face challenges in the area, merely those of safety and social equality.

The establishment of characters is one of the building tasks in writing a story. James builds his characters upon two institutes: his reflection of what surrounds him and his unconscious self-reflection making his story “The Dead” an aptly socio-psychological story indeed. The corrupted city breeds paralyzed citizens, some of these citizens grow up to write about what they cohabited in that immoral environment. The pessimist mood embodied the streets like an epidemic eventually caused paralysis of souls and motives.

Chapter one argues that literature as an art form of expression developed throughout history contemporaneously with the development of societies leading to the emergence of Modernist literature. Modernist literature broke the social boundaries; it supplied the writers with the freedom of adopting old technique as well as developing new criticism of their own. Ireland, like any other European country was dwelling into various social problems which eventually led to serious psychological problems such as drinking, emigration and spiritual paralysis. The psychoanalytical approach of literature was used by many writers to portray the city and its people accurately, one of which is the Irish writer James Joyce.

Chapter two exposes life in Dublin through the eyes of James Joyce; he demonstrated the difficulties confronting the Irish citizens in their daily life in Dublin, the city of paralysis. His *Dubliners*' stories are fictional written in a realistic method and qualified to be considered as honest reflections of the people's conditions. “The Dead” is the last story of the collection and it is considered as a recapitulation to the anatomical process of *Dubliners*. The main character of the story named Gabriel Conroy represented paralysis, the main theme of the story, with his successive failures in dealing with critical situation throughout the night. Gabriel was studied by many literary critics and they all agreed that this character

has a lot in common with James Joyce himself, and analyzing the work, the similarities are detected on many levels. Joyce unconsciously mirrored on the character of Gabriel; he dropped pieces of himself on the paper making of Conroy the man he could have become if he had not left Dublin..

**Chapter One:**  
**Paralysis and Twentieth**  
**Century Ireland**

### 1.1. Introduction

Writing functions around epochal ideas while human language and understanding are founded upon discourse or telling using the articulation of intelligibility, therefore, language. The American poet and writer William Rose Benet states that literature has always been one of man's greatest achievements; it described his marvelous adventures and scenes from his common life as well. The growth of art associated with popular culture in both of Europe and the United States swept literature to be partly influenced by the rapid changes in the world leading to the emergence of literary movements in a relative manner.

Modern literature from the nineteenth century till now, was an innovation in the world of novelty. It expresses a certain belief in progress objectively and represents society realistically. This twentieth-century movement takes new aspects of literature into consideration such as the situation of the society and the new ideologies of the modern tendencies facilitating the path to new movements to appear such as the modernist movement. The modernist movement had a major influence on the rest of the twentieth century; it was exhibited by two major works published in 1922, T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land* and James Joyce's *Ulysses*. These two original works interpreted the world through literature from 1910 to 1930, implanting the seeds for more realistic and profound literary products as opposed to the traditional Victorian literature.

Many restrictions were applied to modernist literature but a large number of European and non-European writers were not affected by that and therefore they were marginalized or suppressed. The founder of the academic field of postcolonial studies Edward Said noted that modernism marks the end for the Grand Narratives<sup>1</sup> that reinforced empire and patriarchy. The early novelists such as Franz Kafka, Marcel Proust and James Joyce organized a whole vocabulary and structured techniques including futurism and

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<sup>1</sup> Grand Narratives: a term used for the totalizing narratives or metadiscourses of modernity which have provided ideologies with a legitimating philosophy of history

symbolism...etc to grasp the norms of society and the industrial city. Commonly, modernity was associated to the rise of mass literacy and social tolerance.

### 1.2. Modernity and Modernism

The first seeds to modernist literature were implanted with the emergence of modernity (Benbida 8). Modernity is a post traditional and historical period that characterized a major move away from the common traditions. It is the epoch marking the rise of the age of reason which began with the Enlightenment (About 1687 to 1789) (Barret 19).

Philosophers such as Immanuel Kant, René Descartes and most importantly Isaac Newton believed that through science the world could be saved, and that through reason they could establish a foundation of universal truth. Modernity was also brought to light by philosophers with reason resulting major movements such as Capitalism, Industrialism and Urbanization (17). Thus, modernity lives on the experience of rebelling against all what is normative (Habermas 162).

Modernity as a theory revolves around criticizing Modernity and what Modernity stands for. It criticizes industrialization and its effects on the peasants in the fields and the workers in factories, as well as the power capitalists had over people (Barret 18). In other words, Modernism refers to a time of interfused styles, mixed cultural layers, oddly merging traditions and multi-cultural pluralism (Bradbury wii).

Modernism, as described by the American writer and the 1998 Lannan Foundation<sup>2</sup> LAA winner John Barth, is a term that describes a movement which came as a revolution against the conservative values of realism. Modernism is often understood through the works of authors who were productive after the turn of the twentieth century. Writers such

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<sup>2</sup> Lannan Foundation: a foundation that celebrates the people who stand for the freedom of imagination and human rights by encouraging them with awards and prizes. It is one among the richest literary foundations in the world.

as T.S Eliot, Ezra Pounds and James Joyce allowed it to be historically and politically understood in their literary works (Childs 5).

### 1.2.1 Modernist Literature

Modernist literature is a literature that flourished in the new capitalist art market during a period of time where writers were no longer pointed when it comes to what they write neither by the church nor by monarchies. They also no longer had to answer to the old system of artistic patronage; to the contrary, they signified their allegiance to all what was new (Barret 20).

According to the Australian-born art critic Robert Hughs, great constructions manifest the dominance of the machine (Childs 76). The velocity of growth in industries and economies was fast, the greediness of men led to conflicts and conflicts led to wars provoking unfamiliar and new conceptions of life and no centeredness or harmony with a loss of control over the contemporary world. (44)

The First World War showed artists how ridiculous life could be. Life was not fair to Europeans and continued to be with the Second World War taking the lives of over 50 million people and damaging the understructure of Europe unslung it from what was generally referred to nowadays as the *Belle Époque*<sup>3</sup>. Later on and when the flames of war finally came to end, this period was seen as a period of calm before the storm which witnessed the armed race between the United States and Russia (Mergian).

The Modernist writers referred to themselves as Avant-gardists<sup>4</sup>, they were rebellious against restrictions, had a futuristic vision, and no limitation when challenging social values (Childs 5). They were known for pointing the inner self and consciousness,

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<sup>3</sup> Belle Époque: An expression invented by the French to in the 1920's to qualify with a hint of nostalgia the period of about twenty years that precedes the first world war

<sup>4</sup> Avant-gardists: people who are avant-gardists or espouses avant-garde points of views and support them as their own.



## Chapter One: Paralysis and Twentieth Century Ireland

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using the existential frame of references in a more comprehensive state and providing a psychoanalytical terminology (Gorer and Storr 120).

Human beings are driven by desires, fear, and needs of which they are unaware (Childs 12). The basic changes in the structures of their personality and the ways they act are affected by their adaptation to the social norms of society which elevate from dominant to dominated depending on the strength of the country's political stigma (Tyson 18). The choices by which any narrator establishes reference to a particular literary work involves the application of different surface expressions to the same work in a textual world, this elegant variation is noticed in Irish literature (Murphy 581).

In Ireland, both politicians and writers saw it necessary to appropriate the past for their own present needs and to protect and save their shared history as well as heritage. According to American historian Benedict Anderson, a nation could exist through writing a body of its cultural distinctiveness and create a belief in the new and prominent figures of society (qtd in Goek 25). Irish modernist writers such as William Butler Yeats, Elizabeth Bowen, and James Joyce wrote standard accounts in the context of fiction stemming from the insistent self-identification with the Anglo-Irish race (Wurtz 120).

### 1.3. Modernist Aesthetics and Criticism

Modernism brought a new art for a new age under the cape of a social and economic revolution that swept over urban Europe (Barret 20). It tended to analyze the complex structures of societies expending beyond clear-cut historical categorizations or aesthetic and ideological commitments (Nabholz 8).

The modernist artistic movement is an intellectual movement that broke aesthetic and social boundaries. It appeared in the early twentieth century and aimed to uncover invisible systems and unconscious codes or rules by explaining various phenomena using attractive and coherent style in writing, painting, sculpture and all artistic and creative performances (Barret 22).

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One of the most important specifications of Modernism was that it abolished the idea of *beauty* as the ideal of art (Atkins 56). The English author Malcolm Bradbury said “One of the defining features of modernism has been the breaking down of traditional frontier of matters of literary and cultural concern” (Atkins 114) writers changed their presented works as rapidly as the intellectual life started to change. Poets likewise sought to account for the rapid changes. Due to its difficulties, modernist poetry is hard to enjoy having a wider and less comprehensive sense (Warner 2)

Artists such as Hans Hofmann and Pablo Picasso eliminated the need to have an artwork so exceptional, making an unofficial statement that beauty has no established scale to be acknowledged (Barret 23). The American art history professor Douglas Crimp argued that the demise was brought about by the invention of photography which allowed the reproduction of images mechanically including art images stripping away from the artwork its uniqueness (Williams 50). Other critics see that the aesthetic revolutions of modernism are formed by the expansion of the comprehensive system of globalized world open to outer cultures and regions (Childs 31).

In the history of modernism, there has always been an urging need express feelings and emotions; humanitarian artists faced an immense system of institutions in order to operate with certain characteristics of realism (Gal 01). Modernistic novels were published and read because they deviate from traditional expression, and seek for new art forms. The literary works of the twentieth century paid more attention to practical problems in society using ethics to judge values. The modernist novels portrayed the spiritual world of the characters and revealed the character’s inner reality and creative skills. This stream of novelists truly shows the blind side of the society (Yuan 28).

Paralysis permeated the social life to become a collective disease, the failed escapes of literature revealed the story of the people and their helplessness when it comes to the process of self-understanding (Yuan 30). Justice, Charity and love in metaphysical and

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religious term were the founding stones of the theoretical part of modernist literature (Caporaletti 406).

Modern fiction such as the short story “The Dead” published in *Dubliners* are fairly conventional in their realistic and even satiric depictions. While presenting cities and societies such as the Dubliner society, claimed the Scottish professor Randell Stevenson (Mehaddi 18). First, the sense of rationality did not have a much of an impact as it was considered to be a limiting authority of structured knowledge. Second, these Irish writers were either living permanently outside of Ireland or going back and forward between Ireland and European cities such as Paris and Milano so their perception was blurred and not completely real or objective (Goek 26), and above all of that the unified books were edited and published in London to fit the British and universal orientations (Cahalan 239).

What most characterizes European literature at the beginning of this century is precisely the deep reflection of the weakened conditions, the helplessness swooning and the fatigue and weariness of the much-burdened population. (Kelleher 414) the dramatization and active fashion in literature manipulated the reader's engagement to the cognitive process that reveals the tripartite structures (Philips 63). The trivial characters were endowed with symbolical meanings taken together to reveal a general state of paralysis which is, in some kind, creating sharp and clean prose (Gal 10).

Twentieth century Irish fiction had a problem of historical legacy and the burden of Irishness (Piatek 157); the writer's nationality was considered to be an obstacle rather than a vital element of personal identity (158). Emigrant writers gave various representations from their landscape away from the people; the true subject of inspiration. The state of instability followed with the War of Independence from 1919 to 1921 and the Civil War of 1923 created political changes and led to a social malaise and loss of identity sense (Travis 1). The seductive reasoning blended with imagination created the perfect ground for ‘geographical narratives’, these geographical narratives are those writers who used

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their traveler's natural, credible enough intuition to create an axial viewpoint for their storytelling art. (04)

Adding a taste of the Irish selfhood minimized the list of potential characters and made them all alike (Mehaddi 07). The perfect example might be James' *Dubliners* as it consists of snapshots of Dublin life in Joyce's time, the main characters used in the early seven stories are made fit to children or adolescent while the other eight stories evolved around maturity and public life (Cope and Cope 02). Investigating that, critics elucidated the stories and tied them together to reach the important conclusion that James drastically documented his childhood and some of the fears he had in his work. The best example to support this case would be the first and last stories which demonstrate the intrigue he felt toward priests, how confused he was about being a priest, and the duties priests do have toward the society. His thoughts are coming from a familiar place as he translate the way in which he reacted to his father's way of raising him as a child to be a priest in the future and how he dealt with it as he grew up. (Benbida 12)

At the end, illustrative examples of Irish fiction were subjective more than objective. As far as the argument goes, it is not the task of the writers to convey the unknown and uncircumscribed spirit with its complexities rather than to suggest proper fiction that goes hand in hand with what the national customs would have the people believe in. (Gillie 90)

### 1.3.1. Modernist writing techniques

Regardless of the modernist artistic excess, technique and style are predominant features of modernist fiction in the sense of demonstrating a tendency while discussing the problems and priorities of the novel in which they appear (Nabholz 17). Modernism could not be characterized by a uniform style since it embraces a great range of artistic movements such as imagism, symbolism, realism and futurism (Omrani 253).

### 1.3.1.1. Imagism

Imagism is a practice or style which employs patterns that concentrate on showing a precise image in demonstrating images. Imagists have the ability to demonstrate a natural visual sense making the images vivid in the reader's mind by achieving a dramatic realization of events, depending on the imagination of the reader (Philips 197). If understood and employed right, Imagism could possess attractive and interesting qualities and fulfils the central function of clarifying to which it is relevant (Coombes 49).

Throughout the modernist period, the visual arts and literature had close relations. Creating a condensed rhythm in writing requires a focus on the image of the subject matter and the clarity of its lines (Lee-Brown 52). The image of the city is reflected using comical irony and realism in the subject of the individual, Irish fiction delves into the small island of Ireland demonstrating the need for change, action and education. Writers such as Yeats and Joyce subjectively narrate stories inspired by their hometowns, Dublin in this case; the settings and characters are described accurately through imagism (McKeown 7) with the depiction of the metropolitan utopia/dystopia of a social and cultural existence. Urban environment, traffic, advertising and shopping are all felt in writings; the early twenty first century Irish writers mirrored what surrounded them from ceremonies and rituals to faces and encounters in a very modern method co-opting receptions of Imagism and many others (Childs 181).

### 1.3.1.2. Symbolism

Literature is just a game which language itself is playing meaninglessly, reformulating its own laws for every law, thus producing pleasure as a free caprice of accepted notions (Moran 133). Symbolism is a technique often used in literature to grow the meaning larger, give insight to the reader and enrich the literary work. The symbolist writers emphasized on reason as the means of exploration and added double level of meanings to their works, therefore making it more interesting and insightful. (Bai 01) Readers do understand the literal meaning shown by the image, but they usually read the

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work symbolically by establishing analogies in order to extract another significance of much deeper insight (Monterrey 62).

Modernists claim multifarious forms and writing styles regardless of the artistic excess. Symbolism is a predominant feature of modernist fiction which demonstrates a tendency in simplifying and discussing problems and priorities of the novel in which it appears. The American literary critic Fredric Jameson argues that in symbolism all interpretations are ideological and that the purpose of interpretation is therefore to penetrate to the story's political conscious (Childs 45).

The traditional sense drowned the analogy of inspiration creating an impact on the inner rational subconscious self. Modern universal themes cannot be simple or direct. symbols and images in written form contribute symbolically in the movement and total effect of the story told squaring to the social and spiritual problems of the modernist realistic man. (Bai 06)

### **1.3.1.3. Realism**

Realism is a method based on accurate description of objects, people, environments and the general attitude and problems in society (Childs 01). It is described as being a mirror that reflects the torment of the common man through literature and a transparent representation of the author's society (03). Modernist literature takes into account the changing idea about reality expanding the reader's understanding of human nature and the modernist movement (Benbida 09).

Realism prompts the reader to associate the characters with the location especially when taking the example of emigrant writers, and cultural and social significance too. Writers used realism as a part of the socio-historical setting of their incorporation of common thematic social element to demonstrate the constant flux between the environmental and social struggle in psycho-social realities (McKeown 07).

### 1.3.1.4. Futurism

Futurism is an important movement that celebrated advanced technology and urban modernity. The enthusiasm for machines and speed was the source of inspiration of the futurists who were interested in media and new technology. Futurism unlike other modern movements of the twentieth century was not immediately identified with a distinctive style; instead it borrowed distinctive visions from other styles such as symbolism and post-impressionism. Futurism proclaimed itself as moving forward so it is rarely related to religion as it focused on religious dogma. Furthermore, representations of divinity, spirituality and religious symbols were inserted in this movement's discussion (Strom 49).

The futuristic ideas first emerged in Italy with the release of a new newspaper called *The Futurist Manifesto* and then spread all over Europe starting from France as essays with futuristic visions were published on *Le Figaro*, the largest circulating newspaper at that time. Famous poet Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, one of the movement's main theorists, tended to criticize all that is old rebelling against religion and proclaimed museums (TheArtStory.org 05). Meanwhile, a productive tension was making an underlying force to re-shape Ireland (Weberg 01)

## 1.4. Critical Reception of The Psychoanalytic Irish Fiction

Psychoanalysis is a psychological and psychotherapeutic method of treating nervous patients medically, this procedure undertakes the difficulties of understanding how a neurotic person feels, help them overcome their accustomed mental habits, without any personal judgment assisting them to master their instinctive opposition. (Freud 09)

The psychoanalytical ideas had a unique contribution to the adaptation of the clinical social work to the evolutionary spans of the century. The climate of the social work in the 1920s favored the introduction of psychoanalytic ideas through moral suasion, advice giving and the manipulation of work environment (Brandell 41).

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Inherited difficulties are located in psychoanalysis if a person's nerves are stimulated. Human beings tend to use their imagination for many different reasons; to escape reality, avoid self-judgment, or to just conceal their inner-pain and force their attention into other channels (Freud 11). Psychoanalytic theory concerned itself with the motivations that drive human behavior as Freud conceptualized it to be the primary experiences rooted in the elemental constitution of every human being. It appears in the life instinct as the most important motivator in mental life (Brandell 71).

The attention that was given to the application of Psychoanalysis on literature proceeded in a parallel line with Freudian criticism of fictional characters like real people, and for psychoanalyzing authors from their work (Michaels 17). The objective of which was to get to a level of a dressed-up case-history or a public exhibition of the points investigated with an artistic intention, and telling a truth about reality that even science could not tell (Stafford 217).

The question 'which part of the reader is the writer addressing?' was raised by the American novelist Jean Stafford, who ended up suggesting that these neurotic novelists generally address the spirit using terms of dark isomorphic symbolism (219). The concept of instinctual drives gives rise to tensions but not necessarily to actions; certain wishes are part of the process driving the author to employ these wishes in their literary works as a form of fictional events (Brandell 47).

Every nation derives meaning and purpose from what makes her unique and Ireland derives hers from the particular principles of ethnic character, shared history and common religion. The declaration of independence, the separation from Great Britain and the limits on political authority founded on self-evident truth and liberty seems to be the main cultural icons structuring this country (Spalding 03). The Irish fiction had broader and more inclusive ideals than just participating in the rigid national narrative. Irish writers provided an excellent opportunity to reassess legacy and vision expanded, and focus, to include previously marginalized groups, figures, and ideologies taken as a whole to a



unique vision of the origins and progressive potential of literature in developing the heart of the Irish nation (Goek 23).

Irish fiction separated the Irish reader from the contemporary novel, and created a big gap between Irish writing and the sophisticated British reader. The narrative structure in prose and realism transmitted genuine Irish values through writers such as Beckett, Flann and Joyce. (Moran 135)

### **1.5. Irish Identity and social problems**

Moving forward, Irish identity and culture were investigated to stress on the themes reflecting reality such as paralysis, helplessness, loneliness, death and religion. Psychoanalytic criticism analyzes literature for meaning as one would inspect a dream; it highlights recurrent story plots and character types, which deeply affects the reader, awaking images of the collective unconscious. These psychoanalytic ideas had a unique contribution to explore the depth of a literary work and by doing so understanding the society reflected in the literary work (Brandell 41).

The Themes of immigration and poverty are two of the most important variation of themes in Irish fiction; as they reflect the changing dynamics of contemporary Dublin (Kilroy 15). The troubles in Northern Ireland discouraged foreign investment causing the stagnation of Irish Economy. The state of instability lasted till the late 1980's and as soon as the European community started to invest, the economic growth rates began reaching a high level (Amado, Demi and Petrone 10).

#### **1.5.1. Emigration**

The early twentieth century writers such wrote with a prestigious cinematic style and respecting traditions, on the other hand, writers such as H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett and James Joyce retained the power to challenge the common judgment and dismantle the claims about reality (Gillie 92). Many of these writers considered themselves nationalists

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writing to point out the constructive nationalist consciousness and the striking voice of the Irish people (Foster 289).

The Irish writer Joseph O’Conner focused on the Irish experience of emigration and poverty best in his novel *Star of the Sea*. The novel depicts the escaping of many men from the Great Irish Famine<sup>5</sup> on a ship across the Atlantic as many died on board from starvation (Kilroy 13). This work provides a critical wedge in which there is the desire to transmit the echo of popular Ireland like many other works by Anne Enright, Roddy Doyle and Bernard Mac Laverty whom all were not active writers till the second half of the twentieth century but somehow succeeded to explore the so-called ‘Troubles’ in Northern Ireland (17).

The stories centre plots had a striking perceptiveness; they were infected by particular social phenomena of the inanimate marginal society. The religious pattern is a slick theme which appears on the surface of many fictional stories to scathingly describe the Catholic Church. In *Dubliners*, James attempted to describe how damaged virtue was in society; one clear example appears as he examined the shallowness and hopelessness of a not-so-young man named Lenehan who wastes his time around waiting for his friend to deceive a young working girl in order to get money (Code and Cope 05). The ‘Two Gallant Story’ is ironic in the sense that both main characters are bankrupted leeches making money by seducing maids but Joyce named his story two gallants as in two honorable and noble men (Joyce 40-52).

### 1.5.2. The Irish case

The “Irish Question” or “The Irish Case” is a phrase used to describe Irish nationalism and the calls for Irish independence. It encompasses issues such as religion, the Irish-British politics and land ownership (Amato, Demi and Petrone 03). The century marked the end of the British colonial project in Ireland leaving the country with an

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<sup>5</sup> Great Irish Famine: also called Irish Potato Famine, famine that occurred in Ireland in 1845 when the potato crop failed in successive years

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outdated agricultural system and a weak industrial economy. The English informal colonization created a nation that is neither native Irish nor wholly British (Duke 18).

The Irish are descendants of the Celtic, who originally inhabited the Island and who are old Catholics, while the English descended minorities were protestant. A sense of belonging and national solidarity arises among the natives and this resulted into a typical national consciousness about the imperial ascendancy the British Empire had on Ireland. The northern Irish, both Catholics and Protestants, have the same attitude toward superstition, good luck charms, fortune tellers... etc, both groups emphasize the aspects of a religious culture and have the same attitude toward the matters of sexual morality and abortion (Greeley 149).

In 1536, Henry VIII decided to conquer Ireland and was proclaimed King of Ireland in 1541. The Irish Catholics rebelled against the British crown and ruled over Ireland from 1642 to 1649 until Oliver Cromwell, the English military and political leader, re-conquered Ireland in 1653 and ruled over it with the King's blessing (Amado, Demi and Petrone 5-6). Therefore, in the course of the century there were several movements reclaiming Britain to return the Irish lands to their real possessors, with support from France who offered military help. The English Prime Minister Pitt was frightened by the idea of having the Irish lands used as a structural military base against the English soil and persuaded the Irish Parliament to agree to its own abolition. In the course of centuries Ireland witnessed ups and downs in its relation with the British crown starting from The Union with Britain which lasted from 1801 to 1912, to the Home Rule Bill of 1912 which was suspended for the war. These years were tough due to many historical events related to being ruled by the British resulting a paralyzed economy and ideological conflicts in society (Mehaddi 35).

In 1920, The English Parliament passed the Government of Ireland Act, establishing separate domestic legislatures for the north and south. In 1949, Ireland finally broke the link with Britain Commonwealth and became an independent republic (Amado,

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Demi and Petrone 8). Modern Ireland, and from the early 1970, faced many challenges that were mainly related to religion. The Catholics did not feel safe in Ireland; forming The Civil Rights Association they were attacked by Protestants in 1968 and 1969. The IRA (Irish Republican Army) got involved right after the RUC failed to stop the anarchy. The IRA troops split into two wings: The officials whose first duty was to establish peace; and The Provisionals who declared war on Britain; that last one responded by taking over Northern Ireland in 1972. IRA replied by bombing Westminster Hall and London; assassinating Lord Mountbatten and MP Airey Neave in 1979 and attempting to blow the Grand Hotel while Mr. Thatcher is a denizen of it. In 1985 the Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed, both sides agreed to collaborate and work together fighting terrorism establishing a new, and hopefully, a lasting peaceful state of coexistence (09).

### 1.5.3. Emigration and Exile in contemporary Ireland

National boundaries in Ireland emerged with the use of labels and categorization in Irish literature; it came in term with the loss of many years of the writers' lives in exile (Goek 23). There is a personal element in exile, an element that muffles and beclouds the work's effects, the insistent self-dramatizations as another factor, a major one (Peter 627). Historically, the Irish by and large found themselves washed up on foreign shores seeking freedom of speech and recreating their hometowns using specific details. James Joyce while being an emigrant in Paris wrote once "when I die Dublin will be written on my heart" (Kilroy 12).

Irish society, like any other society, had many great problems that dwelt deeply in everyday life. Unemployment and poverty reached their peak in the late interwar period as elaborated by Joyce in the opening story of *Dubliners* giving a hint of poverty when Ezra says: "God knows we done all we could, as poor as we are" (Joyce 08). The failure of the Potato Crop<sup>6</sup> in the mid 1840 effected several areas leaving behind according to Sir

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<sup>6</sup> The failure of the Potato Crop : An ecological catastrophe occurred in 1845 when a strain of potato blight reached Ireland , the consequences were devastating.

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William Wild, the father of the well-known emigrant Oscar Wild “a poor, weak, old, lame, sick, blind, dumb, imbecile and insane population” (Fitzpatrick I).

Emigration from the Irish lands had everything to do with the potato famine and the exploitation of labor in the fields. By the 1900's Northern Ireland was suffering from stagnation, its population was overwhelmed by famine, immigration, hopelessness, paralysis in all forms. Alcohol was another massive problem according to the Canadian politician Larry Harrison who stated that “North Irish study group contained a significantly higher proportion of heavy drinkers” (59) stigmatizing the Irish man as a heavy consumer of alcoholic drinks (Mehaddi 7).

The disoriented Anglo-Irishry of after 1922 aimed to reconstruct the consciousness of nineteenth-century Irish people who felt as if all their dreams and life goals are doomed. For the majority of the Irish middle class, being abroad was a common thing, they travelled to all parts of Europe but Britain was often their first destination, and they had their effects entranced by the Haskell House newspaper which considered the language to be in the keeping of the Irish (Weberg 03).

Emigration as a concept must include the middle-class or petit bourgeois who found in places such as London the solid soil and deep settled state they needed to form a literary career (Foster 283). Britain was, and everyone agreed, a Modernist wonderland (Bradbury 67).

Beyond the borders of Ireland, Irish literature connected with Irish independence. The most prominent among the writers in exile made claims about the nature, function and purpose of literature in the emerging nation-state describing themselves to be literary citizens of the world contributing in the development of cosmopolitan aesthetic (Weberg 02). Irish novelists abroad wrote in an interesting and experimental manner and their literary eye was attracted by diverse and alluring topics (kilroy 10). These novelists are informed by and contributed to the thought of their time (Barret 29).

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The significant movement of population caused the displacement and placement of distinctive social groups among those emigrating from Ireland at any one time (Hickman 120). English became the language of Irish writing works as literary medium and a political signifier in the Irish context and achieving considerable prominence in recent criticism and Psychoanalysis (Weberg 06)

### 1.6. James Joyce The Modernist

James Joyce was, and still is, a major figure of Modernism. He is considered as the progenitor of modern Irish prose and arguably Ireland's greatest novelist, who chose voluntary exile (Lee-Brown 39). The famous writer was born on February 2<sup>nd</sup> 1882, in Rathgar and was named James Augustin Joyce after his great grandfather (Noris 59). James was born to a Catholic family but he had always been a rebellious, he rebelled against his father who wanted him to become a priest but he chose, or might have been destined to, become a literature's crooked genius. He subsequently studied languages and philosophy at Clongowes Wood and Belvedere Colleges (Philips 191).

Coming from a middle-class family, James was brilliant; German professor Hildegard Tristman considered him to be "A writer who lost his brain to forgetting", needless were notebooks, his memory was so good that he could retrieve any information he heard or read at any moment (230). The name Joyce is derived from the French word "joyeux" so basically James was supposed to hold the holly spirit of joy. He mostly referred to himself as "James Joyceless", "a Joy of Evil" and as "Joyce in the wilderness" (Ellmann 12).

Growing-up, James was a well-behaved, slim little boy with a set of blue eyes and a pale face. Doing his Jesuit masters, James did not feel at ease with their teaching techniques but later on in his life when he was asked by the German-born Swiss pioneer August Sutter about what he retained from his years in Jesuit he replied: "I have learned to arrange things in such a way that they become easy to survey and to judge" (qtd in

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Ellmann 27). He got from Jesuits his platonic idealism and the grounded Aristotelian realism as the question of his Catholic faith was raised by father Daly, who indicated that his religious and spiritual manifestations were mysterious (Philip 4).

The stress caused by economic difficulties affected James starting from his teen-years and that's how he attained a reputation for being spiritual and conscious of everything happening around him. At Belever, Joyce acquired Italian as a third language to go with Latin and French pursuing to read European literature at the expense of his own grades (Ellman 46).

During this time, Dublin was a town with many important pillars of literature such as William Butler Yeats, Lady Augusta Gregory, James Clarence and George Moore walking its street. James was influenced by all these writers especially Yeats whom he met privately in early October 1902 on the streets of Dublin and had a deepened conversation with. That strongly showed on his statement of method and intention and the way in which he strongly defended all what is temporary and modern (Ellman 100). In April 1900, "Ibsen's New Drama" by James A. Joyce was published in the *Fortnightly Review* and after that, James was no longer an Irishman, he was European (Ellman 71).

Graduating from U.C Dublin, James main focus was to travel; his targeted city was Paris where he did not reside easily. At that time, his fame and readership were not particularly widespread (Goldman 84). He decided to go home as he knew of his mother's health issues. His mother died on August 13<sup>th</sup>, 1903. After this tragedy, Joyce focused more on making reviews for the *Irish Homestead* magazine and during this time he met Nora Barnacle and moved to Pola in late 1904 where he occupied a teaching position at Berlitz School (186). The next few years were difficult suffering from major financial and drinking problem, he became disconnected from the people around him. Eventually Joyce settled into a new life in Paris where he finally was able publish *Ulysses* in 1922 (Benbida 17). He continued to have problems, this time health problems especially with his

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sightedness. Suffering from cataracts and glaucoma, James had successive operations and he suffered from chronic pain and anxiety (Lee-Brown 41).

Difficulties continued to cross James' path as his relationship with publishing houses delayed *Dubliners* from emerging for a decade. Better days were yet to come as he gained an award from the Royal Literary Fund<sup>7</sup> in 1915 followed with the publication of *A Portrait of the Artist as Young Man* in 1916. His work as a whole, *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* predominately served to change the face of novels; they represented a playful mixture of English and other languages and novels completely free from the limitations of normal consciousness (Benbida 41).

James was a relentlessly autobiographical writer, a man who never doubted himself. On August 1929 his self-esteem extended as he was praised by the Irish critic George Moore who wrote to the legend of British music Sir John Elton, 'He (Joyce) was distinguished, courteous, respectful, and I was the same' (Ellman 259). During their short encounter in London Moore said, 'I have been only a revolutionary, while you have been a heroic revolutionary, for you had no money' which shows the honorable side of the Irish man that Joyce really is (qtd in Ellman 617). Joyce died on January 13<sup>th</sup> 1941 leaving behind a considerable amount of scholarly interesting works (Cope and Cope 2).

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<sup>7</sup> The Royal Literary Fund: A benevolent fund set up to help British writers in financial difficulties.



### 1.7. Conclusion

It is vital to recognize the natural and historical diversity within any discursive context, furnishing the example of the city of Dublin and its citizens using the framework of psychoanalysis. It is a not an easy task but a necessary one when dealing with Irish fiction in General, and James Joyce's characterization and themes as an example of the social images and a substitute for imagination in particular (Coombes 47).

The Irish society was held down by the failure of political, religious, and social systems. This is manifested in the structure of the body of literary works published and created by a bond of human morality (Amado, Demi and Petron 07). Personal symbols by emigrant writers such as William Butler Yeats and James Joyce alluded to the resonance and the intensity of imagery serving as short hand for many complex ideas (Childs 208).

The characteristics of the modern Irish fiction were used by the writers to highlight the problems, foibles of behavior, inequalities and the injustice that exist, trying to get the reader to familiarize with his own environment (Croft and Cross 94). James Joyce unlocked the big gates of Irish society in his book *Dubliners* anatomizing its major tumors in reference to major themes (Mehaddi 17).

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**Epiphany in “The Dead”**  
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### 2.1. Introduction

Joyce is one of the few progenitors of modern Irish prose who laid the foundation stone for a literary tradition on which the future generation of writers could stand on proudly (Kilroy 07). His court is the initial and determining act of judgment while working on the justification of the common place which other writers had labored tediously but never mastered until he endowed it (Ellman 05).

The complexities of James’ works like *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* is distinct but in the stories of *Dubliners* the critic must look beneath the deluding surface of nineteenth century realism. ‘The Dead’ contains a substructure which inverts the pleasures and comfort of the bourgeois exemplified in Misses Morkan’s annual dance (Fragensund 139).

The loss of faith and cultural exhaustion are examples of the preoccupation of Modernism (Childs 06). Joyce described paralysis as the intellectual, moral and spiritual stagnation paralyzing the town. He also considered the question of moral goodness in art, a problem of which the Modernist writer’s influence would be misunderstood (Vincent and Sherry 135).

### 2.2. *Dubliners*

James Joyce’s *Dubliners* is a collection of stories that aims to portray middle class life in Dublin, Ireland in the early twentieth century. It is a set of fifteen short stories published in 1914 where Joyce made to appear the literary portrait of an entire society glimpsing into the lives of different social classes and exploring what it meant to be Irish (Joyce VI). These stories take place in Dublin when this last was controlled by the British imperial state and under the Roman Catholic Clergy (Ferhi 14).

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Moments of sudden insights arise frequently throughout *Dubliners*. It has been described and analyzed by critics as a series of fifteen epiphanies coupled with frustrating and enlightened characters with significant and illuminating experiences. These characters are trapped in a city where nothing ever changes (Mehaddi 17). *Dubliners*’ spotted the paralysis in the Irish society and how helpless in their daily lives those individuals are because of Joyce’s artistic vision which simplified the image of Dublin. (Carter & Mc Raf 165)

Nothing would explain Joyce’s purpose in writing *Dubliners* more than his own words:

My intention was to write a chapter of the moral history of my country and I chose Dublin for the scene because the city seemed to me the centre of the 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 (Qtd in Gillie 94).

### 2.2.1. Paralysis in *Dubliners*

The characters found in *Dubliners* are realistic to some extent; they are modern people trapped in their modern urban life facing everyday life struggles (Sharif 5). Here below are some selected characters examined in a psychoanalytic the course of events:

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### 2.2.1.1. Eveline’s Sacrifice

Eveline Hill is the main character in James’ story ‘Eveline’; she is represented as a young girl who dedicated herself to her family after her mother’s death but then unwillingly falls in love with a sailor named Frank. As any other girl, Eveline dreamed about living with Frank and escaping her miserable situation as cited in the story “Frank would save her. He would give her life, perhaps love, too.”(Joyce 31) She saw Frank as a rescuer but was too scared, too bound to her family that she couldn’t seize the chance of a new start.

Based on introspection Eveline is an ordinary person facing a dilemma; she wants a better, more comfortable life away from home but at the same time she also wants to keep her promise to her mother and take care of her siblings and father. The character of the protagonist shows a lack of real external action; the story begins with her sitting by the window thinking about her past life and current situation (27) and ends with the man whom her happiness belongs to leaving while she stands in the station gripping with both hands at the iron railing watching him vanish in the crowd (32).

Joyce described the look on her face in the station to be “passive, like a helpless animal” (32) the concept of helplessness obviously seems to control the state and faith of the main character. Eveline is indecisive whether to go or not to go. Joyce portrays a crisis in identity formation dramatizing the restrictions on human identity and as the reader moves through the story paralysis appear to closely tie Eveline depriving her from the freedom to choose consciously her path in life (Corcoran 68).

The fear of change and starting over in a new country created moral and spiritual paralysis that deprived her from living fully away from her abusive father and the self-defeated lifestyle of Dublin. Eveline was offered a realistic and positive opportunity to Leave and break her ties with Dublin and her family but her thoughts were disconnected

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and chaotic. The stream of consciousness she was having sitting at the window recalling the times her father was nice to her and how he made toasts for her when she was sick (Joyce 30). The interior monologue she was having was translated into obstacles of internal paralyzing squalors (Cope and Cope 5).

### 2.2.1.2. Father Flynn’s Paralysis

Father Flynn is a dying old priest in the first story of *Dubliners* “The Sisters”. The story was reckoned by a young boy who was thought a great deal by the father (Joyce 02) who had a disappointing life by dint of dedicating himself to the church. This woeful finish reveals that Joyce’s *Dubliners* overlooked or misunderstood their ability to think creatively and passionately about their lives and future to be imagined (Coleman 08).

For the sake of explaining why the state of the man was as it was James elaborated “He was too scrupulous [...] “The duties of the priesthood was too much for him” (9), Joyce alludes to the feelings and thoughts of the character and his fall from grace indicating mental disintegration. He also suggests and alludes to many important themes such as death, paralysis and helplessness; he sets the events in an order so that the reader would fight to capture and understand all the allusions of the story (Corcoran 65).

### 2.2.1.3. Old Jack’s Corrupted Soul

Another complex character can be found in Joyce’s story “Ivy Day in the Committee Room” shaped in the presence of old Jack who has a prime Importance in the story. The story took place in the Committee Room where members such as Mr. O’Connor, Mr. Hynes and Mr. Henchy sit and drink and talk with an ideological and social frame work like true Irish men would (Briggs 25).

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Old Jack was described by Joyce to be a politician canvassing in the elections for the candidate Richard Tierney, he is also a determined and delusional man who considers beating his own son a wise method to cultivate and shape him into the ultimate man not confessing the devastating impact this twisted method had on his son Current state as an individual (Corcoran 62).

Family and politics are very important in psycho-analytic theory because a human being is a product of the role given to him in the family complex as a child and later on in his society (Tyson 13). Jack’s son failed to be a perfect child by reason of the lack of attention and affection of parents, his unresolved childhood seemed to leave him feeling defeated and unconsciously feeling unworthy, abandoned and demotivated resulting in two things: (1) becoming a “bad boy” and, like other “bad boys,” unworthy of his permanent commitment, and (2) excessive drinking problems which is recognized as in Freudian psychology as a destructive behavior associated to the need for forgetting painful events (Tyson 15).

### 2.3. Epiphany in Joyce’s *Dubliners*

An epiphany is an illuminating realization or discovery, often resulting in a personal feeling of elation, awe, or wonder; it is a state of Nirvana; a complete cessation of suffering, and a blissful state attained through realization of sunyata<sup>8</sup>, simply an enlightened and heightened experience. It is also a Christian feast celebrated on January 6<sup>th</sup>, (Oxford 127).

Epiphany in James’ dictionary is a religious term that refers to the revelation of the infant Jesus to the Magi in the season of time of the Christian church year; he considered it to be a structural device as he tried to adapt the religious sense of epiphany to moment

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<sup>8</sup> Sunyata : Emptiness, in terms of meditative state ; an Eastern concept of a high meditative state of calm and freedom of distraction

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of literary manifestation of the characters’ spiritual presence and using symbolism as a structural device to do so (Cope and Cope 4).

Irish fiction was known for reflecting the political and social struggle for the revival of the national Irish identity (Lee-Brown 34). Joyce adopted the concept of the epiphany from Catholic doctrines but ameliorated its meaning for artistic purposes (Briggs 3).

The stories of *Dubliners* are distinctive to the reader by the sudden insight about the plot and characters who are kept from seeing who they really are. At first look, the reader might think that the characters, those Dubliners, are taking their journey in a rhythmic way and hope for them to achieve the expectable but suddenly, a dramatic alternation occurs. The characters of Father Flynn and Eveline are probably the best examples to this. Father Flynn ended up as a spiritually crippled man unable to cope with his life choices and Eveline was too afraid to escape her miserable life that she missed the opportunity to start over in a new country with the man she loved. (Cope and Cope 05).

James takes his readers into deep Dublin, showing them versions of citizens who happened to have a blurred vision of their city, families, and of themselves. The last story of the fifteen stories collection, “The Dead”, represents both the synthesis and climax of *Dubliners*. The story took place on January sixth, which is the Christian feast of Epiphany, at Kate and Julia Morkan’s house. This story focuses on Gabriel Conroy from beginning to end throughout his encounter with the party guests who, one by one, ended up revealing his weakness; even his short encounter with the maid Lilly turned in to a revealing scene of his lack of sympathy (Joyce 168). The guest Freddy Malins was drunk despite the fact that he made a promise to his mother on new year’s eve to quit this habit; this symbolically refers to last New Year’s Eve, as if all the plans made and hope to achieve then collapsed in only six days (Fragesund 140).



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*Dubliners* was highly acclaimed to be a masterful sequence of multiple objective epiphanies. This book stands for Irish nationalism raging for a new and independent identity captured by Joyce’s use of epiphany (Corcoran 57). Significantly, the Morkan’s party in ‘The Dead’ holds more reminders of epiphany than only the day on which it took place. Gabriel interacts mostly with women through the evening; he danced with Miss Molly Ivors who, according to him happens to be a “frank-mannered talkative young lady” (Joyce 177). Miss Ivors was a clear person with principals in life; she effectively insulted Gabriel twice, first she called him a “West Briton” saying she is ashamed of him (177), then she poked him hard questioning his sense of patriotism for wanting to visit France or Belgium instead of going on an excursion to the Aran Isles (180).

Gabriel’s nationalism was called into question as he retreats from a tour through his own land just so he would go on his annual bicycle tour (Briggs 30). Moreover, he wrote for *The Daily Express* which is a British journal just so he would get fifteen shillings and a book a week (Joyce 177).

The man later on had another sort of epic revelation as he longed to remind Gretta, his wife, of the beautiful moments they had and make her forget the years of their dull existence together (203). As he was trembling to strove to control himself in her presence, she had been thinking about a boy named Michael Furey who she used to know and who died at a young age (208) .

An ironic epiphany was held down by the failure of Gabriel to demonstrate his love and affection toward his wife. He lost the battle over Gretta’s heart to a boy who used to make a living by working in the gasworks and who died at a young age but made quite an impression over Gretta. Gretta was an exception to other working women in the text; she was an independent professional married woman who managed to keep her life in balance (Benbida 20). That was considered to be an impressive thing in the Irish

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society and made quite an impression over Gabriel too as he was delighted by any move she made toward him (Joyce 207).

The last image of Gabriel as he listened to his wife precedes her talk of the man who died for her sake was a compound one (Joyce 211). At first, Joyce described him to look restless and enraged, “a dull anger began to gather again at the back of his mind and the dull fires of his lust began to glow angrily in his veins” (Joyce 208) but as his wife continued to tell him about that boy Michael, his state changed to be more settled. He finally stood by the window, tears filling his eyes watching the snow falling outside (212).

He could not sleep, could not even stop the rush of images surmounting his imagination. Overwhelmed and derided by a sense of vanity, Gabriel was looking motionless and feeling paralyzed. This manifestation was moving away from the overall sense of epiphany toward enlightenment, bringing up multiple meanings of physical and internal death. The revelation of Gabriel’s new understanding and attitude was closely related to the conversation he had with Miss Ivors and his wife. His obscured fragment of consciousness led him to concede and relinquish a good deal of spiritual understanding and logical conclusions about nationalism, love, spirituality and death (Morrissey 29).

### 2.4. “The Dead”

“The Dead” is one of the finest short stories in English literature and the most significant of *The Dubliners* Stories (Cope and Cope 7). Written by James Joyce, it is known as the most famous and emotionally affecting story of his collection of fifteen stories. The story was a late addition long enough to be a novella (Benbida 14).

“The Dead” includes much believable dialogues, and a more positive tone while often referred to as an exception to the generalization made about *Dubliners*. “The Dead” also

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anticipates Joyce’s move away from the short story and toward the novel, Joyce wrote no other short story after it. He had it substantially completed by September 6<sup>th</sup>, 1906 (Benbida 15). This story serves as a final chorus of the book presenting holiday life, the celebrating of Christmas. “The Dead” is in a way a story of dead people ghosts who return in envy of the living (Kelleher 414).

The Morkan ladies are hosting a party at their house gathering different people with different backgrounds. Gabriel Conroy, the spinster’s nephew, and his wife, Gretta arrive, and Gabriel has a small talk with Lilly, the servant. (Benbida 15) At the party and while dancing with a guest named miss Ivors, Gabriel’s passions and patriarchy is questioned as he refuses to take a journey in his own land because he would prefer to go “for a cycling tour” in France or Belgium (Joyce 178).

Toward the end of ‘The Dead’ Gabriel undergoes a change of perceptions as he leaves his aunts’ house “gazing up the staircase. A woman was standing near the top of the first flight...It was his wife” (199). He realized she was his wife as she was curious to know what the song which Mr. Darcy was playing is called (201). The couple leaves the house to get to the Gresham hotel, as they get in the room, Gretta tells Gabriel about a boy she used to know named Michael (Joyce 208). The story was shocking to Gabriel’s ego; the song, “The Lass of Aughrim” evoked the oppressed memories of Gretta’ past triggering the concluding drama of the night (Fragesund 145).

At the end of the night, Gabriel feels more and more alienated and insecure as the snow drifts down, the disappointed man’s mind and soul swoon giving the reader a strong sense of ending (Morrissey 22-28). The deadly and narcissistic lure of Gabriel represents the subjectivity and identity of the ego. The other in this story is, in other words, a fundamental element which is generally bestowed upon ( Boycen 394).

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"The Dead" is a fitting conclusion to the stories collected in *Dubliners*; it could be seen as another volume of the Joycean oeuvre. His methodology when analyzed is proved to be strong and original as he strengthens the effect of his expressions in a way that illuminate and make our mind and senses more vivid (Coombes 43). In the process themes such as paralysis, helplessness, pessimism, death and religion occur frequently while examining the sophisticated procedure of storytelling in *Dubliners*. “The Dead” could conceivably be inter-changed as the story is parable of love versus lost, personified primarily in Michael and Gabriel and the allegory in which these two influenced Gretta and her happiness (Moseley 426).

### 2.4.1. Joyce’s Paralysis in ‘The Dead’

‘The Dead’ fully illustrates in its method the so called ‘years of bloom’ in James’ life as he, for a decade and a half from 1904 to 1920, had a subtle understanding of women, Jews and all different categories of society (Julian 42). Joyce let Symbolism flow freely using his main characters and objects to impress upon the audience and show them the real crippled condition of the Dublin he saw and the Dublin that negated him. Joyce included the religious life with a slight touch of parody as suggested by his brother Stanislaus Joyce who noticed that James was influenced by Dante’s *Inferno*. The absolute hopelessness and the picture of death present in “The Dead” confirmed his theory (Moseley 426).

### 2.4.2. Paralysis, Helplessness and Pessimism

For it is well known that one of the oldest and most persistent clichés of Joycean criticism has been to associate the Dublin of Joyce’s oeuvre with the one inhabited by his *Dubliners*. The stories follow a regular pattern and they are all connected in a way emphasizing paralysis which makes of ‘The Dead’ a coherent story, and a comparatively

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small part of a greater whole (Ferhi 14). English instructor and Professor Garry Leonard voiced reservations as to the implications made by James and asked a very accurate Question: “If Dublin is the center of paralysis, what is the periphery?” (320)

In the process of seeking the answer to this question critics found themselves analyzing works that are all connected to the lower middle class milieu of the depressed Northeast side of Dublin (Ferhi 53). As paralysis often precedes death, corruption could be defined as resulting from either spiritual or moral death (Mohamed 04).

The theme of paralysis is embodied in the characters’ movement as well, “Kate and Julia came toddling down the dark stairs at once. Both of them kissed Gabriel’s wife, said she must be perished alive” (Joyce 167). The William Chase indicated that in *Dubliners* Dublin is portrayed as the city of the paralyzed and dead and that Joyce’s characters speak lifeless language, spiritually inert (Mohamed 08).

### 2.4.3. Religion and Death

A good novelist takes his reader to a place where he can transmit to them the power of his thoughts and vivid truth of concrete details (Coombes 65). Full analysis would reveal the adaptation of the speaking voice and the near-despair of the writer from the hypocrisies of the church and the twisted religious practices as spiritual death takes over the foundation of the catholic church is illustrated in the story of the monks who try to make up for the sins committed by all the sinners in the outside world by sleeping in their coffins and abstaining from the delights of life (Moseley428).

While claiming love, Gabriel gave complete freedom to his other self to reach full humanity; his deepest instincts and his spirit were affirmed by the perplexity he felt for the world’s woe (Sullivan 10). The Morkans’ annual dance gave the story an edge against conventional hypocrisy and living death celebrating the supper in the same way that

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Christ celebrated the last supper or the Eucharist. In the last supper for Christ, he broke the bread and gave it to his disciples while in the presence of Gabriel a fat goose was at the centre of the table and his aunts were counting on him to ‘carve it’ (Fragensund 141).

Early in the evening, Miss Ivors leave the party before supper like mock Judas did in the original story of Christ’s last supper . The lady left the major event which ‘for years and years had... gone off in a splendid style’ (Joyce 192). Her whispering ‘West Briton’ which is virtually synonymous to the word ‘traitor’ in Gabriel’s ear could be read as the kiss of Judas making it look like as if Gabriel was called a traitor by the Judas of his story and environment (Fragensund 143).

The American social expert Frank Musgrove wrote in his book *Youth and The Social Order* that during his attempt to discover the attitude of older people toward adolescents he found an overwhelming rejection of adolescent interring the adult life. (11). A representation sample for his theory is present in the character of Michael Furey; a seventeen year old boy with ‘big, dark eyes!’ (Joyce 208), whom Gretta used to know in Galway before he died at a very young age.

Another representative literary critic of ‘The Dead’ is William L. Trevor who dealt with the effect of the church as a religious institution on the lives of Dubliners. He argued that the corruption of this institution was a crucial factor behind Joyce’s Paralytic vision through *Dubliners*. Trevor stated clearly that the religious affiliations on Irish life during 1890’s were serving only to cause linguistic, sexual, marital and financial paralysis (qtd in Ferhi 05).

The interrelationship of death and living is a major theme of “The Dead” (Ellman 252) as some indicate flair for drama in all Joyce’s works (45). He died ‘about the beginning of the winter when I was going to leave my grandmother’s’ (Joyce 209) said Gretta about Michael, then she added ‘I think he died for me. As Gretta recalls the passion of her dead

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lover, Gabriel recognized himself as absent, invisible and even dead. These facts proclaim the survival of the dead in the hearts of the livings (Vincent and Cherry 135). This summation enforces the reader to read with the attention commonly used for philosophy or poetry in order to decode such messages hidden by the very smart writer (Childs 07).

### 2.5. Identity, Psychic Propinquity, and Self-consciousness

Psychoanalysis is to be understood in its wider meaning to include all “psycho-dynamic” theories and therapies, regardless as to whether they emanate from Freud or Jung or elsewhere (Benbida 10). The Freudian professional organizations<sup>9</sup> regard the term ‘psychoanalysis’ as one which refers solely to their own theory and practices. The Jungians<sup>10</sup> and Adlerians<sup>11</sup> call themselves analytical and individual psychologists respectively in the hope of differentiating themselves from the Freudians, these distinctions have never caught on even among the well-informed laity, which has always been more impressed by the similarities of the schools than by their differences (Rycroft 08).

Freudian Psychoanalytic theory is basically historical; it treats learning as cumulative, so that early experiences influence later experiences; the dynamic energy of the inner voice of Joyce was, by itself, an interesting stream in academic criticism of the story (Cowley 12). The narrative structure of developmental theory argues that the case history of the narrator affects the dramatic core of the protagonist and plot from beginning to end (Palombo 34).

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<sup>9</sup> The Freudian Professional Associations: organizations made by professional mental health specialists and doctors in Psychology, the aim of these organizations is to provide the latest advances in clinical practice.

<sup>10</sup> Jungians : Psychologists who adopted the idea of Carl Jung, it is also called analytic Psychology.

<sup>11</sup> Adlerians : Named after Alfred Alder. Alderans broke from Freud’s ideas naming their theory The Individual Theory.

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### 2.5.1. Gabriel Conroy in “The Dead”

*Dubliners* deals with a panorama of individuals (Coleman 04) and Gabriel Conroy was the most notable among all of them as it had been pointed that James’ self-consciousness was found and shown over years of writing various and confusing fictional phenomena we call the novel. The Edwardian Irishman promoted the movement of Imagism as a new rhythmic practice which employs the language of common speech and took his style to a new and highly experimental level by dreaming and creating new characters so that he would ultimately get modern and unique plots; Freud’s traumenting appeared in late 1890’s, but Joyce interest in dreams was pre-Freudian in that it looks for revelation, not scientific explanation (Ellman 85). Gabriel Conroy is one of his most controversial Characters ever; a man that represents a variety well known and present in the Irish society (Gillie 90).

Gabriel Conroy is the main character in Joyce’s short story “The Dead”. The man has the portray of an educated intellectual Irish gentleman but when looking beyond and analyzing the events of the night the reader notices that he is nothing more than a privileged spoiled man with very low self-esteem and tremulous self-respect (Vincent and Shelly 136). He had a fatuous self-righteousness that was present as a result to the imaginatively records of Joyce’s literary and dramatic revision of themes and context (Shelly 134).

Conroy’s personality presents a great parody to which Joyce aspires; the man is an inspirational teacher and writer with continental aspirations (Munich173). Still, his behavior shows a complex psychological state, he is a writer and a teacher with continental aspiration who endures epic struggles of Joyce’s own battle to become an international artist. Joyce wrote “The Dead” to offer a symbolic account of himself and the forge of uncreated conscience purging old patterns of the soul’s smithy (174).



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### 2.5.2 Joyce Vs Conroy: Psychic Propinquity

‘The Dead’ is an archetypal story of self-discovery and psychological growth; the story ultimately constructs confrontations with Gabriel’s mirror-image counterpart (Morrissey 499). Like any other classical story, “The Dead” is based upon the individual hero’s biography. (Tret’iakov 58) Gabriel assumes the role of a literal Dubliner who tries so hard to achieve the hegemonic status of natural facts and that represents James Joyce’s situation perfectly as he takes his journey in writing seeking to grasp what it meant to be Irish (Thurston 457).

Gabriel experience the struggle of the life-wish against the death-wish as he is self-absorbed by the idea of reconstructing his devastated self-image by acknowledging the role of passion in human affairs. Like Joyce, he concludes its affirmation of the potential for emotional and spiritual growth. (Sullivan 04) The whole world of ‘The Dead’ is perceived through the eyes of Gabriel as he essentially collects the details that belong to him. (Tret’iakov 58)

Gabriel’s experiences intellectual, and emotional tuition blend, and it can be apprehended by the reader if only he sympathetically shares the experience with him (Vincent and Sherry149). He is the sort of person that Joyce him-self might have become if he had not left Ireland (Munich 175). Gabriel is married to a beautiful women from Galway the west of Ireland, the same town of Nora Barnacle, Joyce’s wife (Mohamed 05).

During the party and throughout the night, Gabriel behaved in a wrong manner but he was blind to his own flaws, he is described to have glasses screening his delicate and restless eyes which resemble the case for James who suffered from problems with his eyesight and wore glasses all the time starting from 1924 (Lee-Brown 41).

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Joyce was a true Irish man suffering from swelling vices which were deeply rooted in the Irish subconscious as they become part of his daily life. He spoke about the town and its people, about the people, taking into consideration that he is one of them, alluding to people he knew, such as his entity (Mehaddi 33). His fictional style was impeccable, his presence in ‘The Dead’ was plenary and complete; his mindset was reflected onto Gabriel Conroy. Gabriel wrote for *The Daily Express* (Joyce 177), and so did James, they were both writers who wrote for Europe and not just Ireland, Gabriel and James were both somehow ‘progressive writers’ (Peter 623).

### 2.5.3 Gabriel’s Paralytic Self-Consciousness

The theme of identity is projected in the work in a Freudian social concept; it explored and defined the identity of Gabriel as James draws upon the actual life he lived (Benbida 05). Gabriel thinks that he is observed and watched by others so he tries to be at his best behavior reflecting the gentlemen perfect image but by the end of the evening and the story, it become obvious that the one watching Gabriel is Gabriel (Storey 199).

The story is paradigmatic of the new sensibility about time showing the contrast between "life in time" and "life by value". The characters in ‘The Dead’ reflect an essential temporal dichotomy and their moral connotation is strictly connected with the temporal modality prevailing in their existence; Gabriel for instance is not distinguished as good or bad according to his behavior, but as "living" or "dead in life" (Caporaletti 408).

Gabriel was sensitive toward the subject of identity, he showed frustration while talking to the nationalist Miss Ivors saying “to tell the truth, ... I’m sick of my own country, sick of it” (Mohamed 05). These inner-conflicts hypothesized how

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unconsciously the man is his own worst enemies and how the stimulated experiences are causing the symptoms (Benbida 11).

Joyce eludes by the attitude of Gabriel an overestimated character suggesting complexities in his responses and reflexes. The troubled Gabriel was both canonized and despised by the people around him; he was idolized by his aunts and marginalized by his wife (Vincent and Sherry135). Literal allusion is obviously used as Joyce intimates in ‘The Dead’ the detailed story of how Gabriel attended his aunts annual party, making a flay appearance which lacked adornment, then making an even unembellished transit in the hotel room (Going 203). The events of the night destroyed by sharp blows Gabriel’s self-confidence creating a sense of inferiority, humiliation and paralysis within his soul (Mohamed 16).

### **2.6. Interpretations of “The Dead”**

The nineteenth-century novel explored the external world, whereas the modern novel dedicated itself to the inner world of human consciousness (Fletcher 246). The modern epoch found in critical reception both a mirror with which it could examine the many vices and perversions that define it and an obscure tapestry of almost fundamentalist punishments that are entirely alien to it. The twentieth century novelist James Joyce is a vivid example of modern writers who managed to not only engage with the world but to reform it as well; among all other contemporary writers, his narrative description of Dublin is the most detailed as he mentions real locations and buildings such as the Gresham Hotel (Joyce 171), in order to associate the cultural and historical significance with the character (McKeown 09).

The tradition bound culture has a dangerous capacity for stifling rather than nourishing the life instinct. Like most of his contemporary writers, Joyce’s story in “The

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Dead” anticipates the traumatic moment of self-discovery by a series of images that convey the protagonist’s unacknowledged estrangement from nature (Sullivan P4).

Joyce never insists on describing the characters or places, and lets the effects seem to rail off as he cradles the techniques of modern fiction (Ellman 84). Joyce mastered the developed style as a return to a bold stylistic regression and striking expression as he used the important concept of space to manifest textual spaces which are a major factor upon environmental conditions (Nabholz 187).

The centre plot and themes evoke in essences the characteristics of Irish fiction as a sterile fragmentation or an abnormal isolation of the sense of literary work manifesting depressed circumstances. James tended to write a chapter in the moral history of his country uncovering central themes and focusing on the way in which the city victimized all the characters involved (Coleman 03).

Writers make images vivid in any number of ways. James imagination was trained to be a compiler of aspects, ‘The Dead’s scenes take place at night, when things are not usually so clear (Phillips 198). Ghosts are present in the character of Michael Furey who was in love with Gretta, Gabriel knew that, and suddenly perceived the tormenting truth; he has always had a competitor who had been capable of greater love than he could ever be and that translated in a childlike behavior. He acted quiet and just stood by the window because children acting was not an acceptable thing in society; Gabriel, similarly to a child, was not seen nor heard through the last scene with Gretta (Brandell 78).

### 2.7. Conclusion

*Dubliners* is an infinitely varied form of books; it presents the stories of survivors and exploring the contemporary Joycean style and the value of fiction (Bradbury XIV). Using a social and vital aspiration of the characters self-struggles in contemporary fiction

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(Bradbury 43). The Dead being a story that fits the literary mainstream seems much more exposed and its characters seem vulnerable (Peter 624).

Advances in theories of cognition have led to fascinating the reader and changing the way by which he perceives the fictional mind (Storey 197). Gabriel Conroy as a character of ‘The Dead was intriguing to study, his isolation from the people and events around him and the way he perceived Gretta as a phenomenon or object to admire all along his paralytic self-consciousness alluded to a lack of coherent identity and a weak development of the real self .

As a consequence of his misanthropy and self-elected exile, James Joyce wished to live as far as possible from the city of which he was a citizen (Boysen 985). He created unique, yet classic characters such as Gabriel Conroy to portray Dublin with all the hoggish social phenomena and psychological burden. Prestige was not the core of his story “The Dead”, yet, the story is categorized as one of the most prestigious stories written in Irish literature.

# **General Conclusion**

Modernist Irish literature was investigated through the analysis of existing social survey data set on identifying Modernism as a literary movement that offers no meaning or purpose to existence, one in which one feels alienated from self and others and in which there are no clear moral standards. The social and historical changes in the process of disrobing the motives behind writing literature in the late twentieth century were considered as a main stream in literary production.

Modern Irish literature reflected life in Ireland in the most common way. The dominant conceptions of this literature put emphasis on the broader social structure of the period by the presence of themes such as paralysis, death, loneliness and helplessness, which were the result of what is called “The Irish Case” or the crises of morality.

The first chapter winds up relating literature to society as literature manifested the social problems scattering Ireland. Literature was claimed to be a medium of communication, a form of expressing ideas of permanent and Universal interest, and a body of writings expressing deep social and psychological issues. Ireland’s main problem was the British colonization, and getting independence did not mark the end to its problems as new problems appeared, these problems were merely economic especially after the failure of the potato crop and the crises that followed leading to the largest wave of emigration in modern history.

Modern Irish writers found themselves bound to cope with the transformations and change of outfit needs of words strong enough to describe and clarify the new social and economic problems that eventually led to the emergence of psychological problems in society. James Joyce, one of the founding fathers of literary transition in Ireland (Kilroy 07) had an exceptional structural unity showing varieties of life in Dublin, by analyzing one of his major works *Dubliners* it becomes obvious that he is a writer to be admired and respected for succeeding to avoid monotony and repetitiveness in a series of related studies of the same phenomena.

The second chapter decoded Dublin along with its citizens in the story of “The Dead”; it is the result of the application of psychoanalysis both on the story and its writer. James’ story “The Dead” is related in context to the other fourteen stories of *Dubliners*. It is a clear manifestation of paralysis in the character of Gabriel Conroy as the paralyzed city affected him and made him a paralyzed human being. However, this logic is not of mere intellect; it is an intellectual and emotional perception formed by psychoanalytical critics analyzing the work for deeper meaning.

Psychic Propinquities are found in the character of Gabriel Conroy, the similarities are detected on many levels; educational level as they are both college graduates, in the form of appearances for having weak vision for example, and more importantly in the psychological form on which the present study is based. The mind is a deceitful device that compels the writers to reflect their reality unconsciously in the shape of characters who suffer in life from similar circumstances.

Therefore, it is clear that being separated from his town did not foreclose the connection Joyce had with Dublin; on the contrary, being an emigrant intellectual helped him even more to describe Dublin giving it the ghostliness criteria that fit her perfectly, and the seditious and violent modernist dialectic between fascination with, and revolution against, the industry and upper class rules.

The crucial point is that “The Dead” is considered as a short story with a narrow space-time; the whole story took place on one night, still, the story tackled many known themes from the period such as death, poverty, helplessness, paralysis and religious corruption. This work outsmarted many contemporary works and was highly appreciated for many reasons. First, it dealt with a fictional character as if it was a human being allowing the reader to relate to him and estimate the uncomfortable situations he was trapped in. Second, this story gathered different people under the same roof and James made them talk of different subjects. By doing so, he managed to anatomize many social problems such as corruption in the Catholic Church, the consequences of drinking heavily



on the person and the people around them, and most notably, the growth of disparity between Conroy's romantic inner perception and the squalid outer reality.

In addition to the external difficulties, love must overcome the narcissistic temptation consisting in the rejection or the reduction of the otherness of the other. Gabriel was fascinated by his wife, by her every detail; he was incapable of perceiving the other as anything but a means instead of a goal in itself, all except for Gretta whom he was proud to call his wife.

Gabriel spent most of his time thinking about himself and a lot of energy to avoid the company of others, which is why his life was carefully organized with the purpose of preventing any interference from elements outside his own personal sphere. His life was discretely organized around solitude, and he had in this manner systemized his exile from his fellow human beings by giving his existence a static and routine order. James Joyce was feeling exiled as well though his exile was voluntary, he put emphasis on earning his living as an artist, just like Gabriel did, writing for *The Daily Express*.

Lexical and syntactical analysis takes central position when dealing with "The Dead" resulting a purely referable sound quality showing that the writer's ear and pulse could be the ultimate dictating forces behind his choice of words and word-order. However, it also illustrates something about mechanics and the rather formal punctuation that helps impress the ground style of "The Dead".

Several other details participated in intensifying the story such as the glorification of death and of the dead coincide. In "The Dead" James symbolism gained a new dimension foreshadowed in the most solid details in the steep moral decline. Modern criticism have taught us to detect the structural placings of the key words, when James's framed story is put under a binocular it shows a predilection to anything, yet in fact Joyce started to cross the continuing relationships of every setting such as the Morkan's house and the Gresham Hotel showing Joyce's intension to record his country's paralysis.

## General Conclusion

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As a conclusion, the main character, in the beginning of the story, Gabriel Conroy represented a common man who is blind to all the suffering that surrounds him. He was an intellectual man with a status and he acted based on this notion, he was blinded to his own faults but not for long as he was confronted by some antagonists such as Miss Ivors and his wife Gretta. Eventually Gabriel realized how fragile he really is facing the truth of himself. James succeeded in portraying a common Irish man; he used some of his own characteristics in polishing Gabriel as a Dubliner merely because he considered himself to be a Dubliner to the core.

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