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Rituals of Mourning and Melancholia in *Dubliners*

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1. Introduction

James Joyce's short story collection *Dubliners*, published in 1914, is the object of my study. *Dubliners* came into being at the turn of the century when Ireland was going through a radical, social, and literary change, and was on the brink of the War of Independence. In order to escape "the parochialism and national self-obsession of Irish society," (Boss, 35) Joyce went into exile, during which he wrote the short-story collection. Previous studies on *Dubliners* that somehow engage with the concept of grief – for example, "Dubliners and the Art of Losing" by John Gordon, "Nostalgia and Rancor in Dubliners" by Michael Patrick Gillespie, *Strange Country: Modernity and Nationhood in Irish Writing since 1970* by Seamus Deane – are dedicated to remapping the origins of mourning in *Dubliners* on either individual (*psychoaffective*) or socio-political levels, without first establishing a distinction between mourning and melancholia.

However, mourning and melancholia are two separate concepts and have different implications on the way the Dubliners observe or tackle grief in *Dubliners*, and delimiting *melancholia* as an interchangeable term for *mourning* does not take into account the complications of the rituals of grieving. Joyce also seems quite particular when to use which of the two terms, which shows he was conscious of nuances of the two. For example, he uses the term "melancholic" in "A Little Cloud" for a Dubliner who has never been to England but feels he belongs there and is dejected because he cannot go there. Whereas in "Ivy Day," Hynes uses the term "mourn" as an imperative to grieve the loss of the late Irish leader, Parnell. Therefore, I am interested in understanding the nuances of mourning and melancholia and how that complicates the observance of grief in *Dubliners*.

Gana Nouri acknowledges this difference in his book *Signifying Loss: Towards a Poetics of Narrative Mourning*, and in accordance with Sigmund Freud's take on mourning and melancholia, he establishes a dichotomy in terms of narrative tropes of prosopopoeia (i.e.,

personification, apostrophe) as the master trope of mourning, catachresis (i.e. the figure of contextual abuse of, or improper, word use) as the master trope of melancholia, and chiasmus (i.e. the figure of repetition and reversibility) as the master trope of trauma. He remaps these tropes across modernist, postmodernist, and postcolonial literatures to explore how the representation of grief is manipulated in narratives from being suffered to being signified. Using *Dubliners* as one of his study's primary sources, he generalises that melancholia is at "the horizon of all possible mourning" (75). This statement is a distortion of a previously made claim by Henry Staten in his *Eros in Mourning* that "mourning is the horizon of all desire" (xi). However, Staten and Gana do not use the term *horizon* in the sense of the "horizon of interpretation" (205) as proposed by Martin Heidegger in "Being and Time," according to which, owing to the subjectivity of humans, *meaning* is an idiosyncratic phenomenon, and thus, contingent. On the contrary, they use *horizon* as a synonym of *final destination* or *end result* that can be generalised to all.

I am interested in exploring the nuances of mourning and melancholia, and for that, I must dichotomize the two. Therefore, I shall use Freud's essay on "Mourning and Melancholia" as the premise of my dichotomy. Also, extending on Gana's generalised claim, I want to investigate if melancholy is the horizon of mourning in *Dubliners*. However, my dichotomy will be expressed through thematics and not rhetorics, and while Gana uses prosopopoeia as a master trope of mourning and declares it to be a dysfunctional trope for consolation with loss, I will use it as a concept that dichotomizes mourning and melancholia. Using the first chapter as a handrail to introduce and establish some psychological concepts for the rest of the chapters, I will dichotomize mourning and melancholia in terms of the concepts of *Eros*, *Gnomon*, *Ghosts*, *Exile*, and *Stasis*, one in each chapter.

These particular concepts are recurrent in *Dubliners* and by providing a dual aspect to each of them through their components, this essay shall express and dichotomize mourning

and melancholia. *Desire embraced* and *transcendence* will be components to the concept *Eros*, *absence* and *loss* to *Gnomon*, *prosopopoeia* and *prosopopoeic reversal* to *Ghosts*, *mobile exile* and *immobile exile* in *Exile*, and *movement* and *paralysis* to *Stasis*. Thus, just as *mourning* and *melancholia* are components of *grief*, likewise each of these concepts have two counterparts, one of which links to mourning and the other to melancholia. However, from the whole collection, I will only focus upon “The Sisters”, “A Painful Case”, “Eveline”, “A Little Cloud”, “Ivy Day in the Committee Room” and “The Dead” as they display mourning and melancholia in a continuum.

Freud refers to mourning not only as a reaction to loss but also a process of healing, whereas he deems melancholia as a pathological state of continuous grieving. He contends that in mourning, the subject consciously mourns a particular love object that has been lost, and temporarily places it in his mind, so that he can let go of it in the external world. He notes that the subject eventually masters the mourning and comes out of it through “remembering” (of the lost object in order to sever the sexual or mental energy tied to it), and by finding a new love object. Therefore, to get out of mourning, one must mourn first, and that becomes “the work of mourning” (Freud, 245). Whereas, in melancholia, Freud argues there is a hindrance in the work of mourning because the subject has an “unflinching fixation” (Gana, 74) on the object. This fixation is caused due to permanent incorporation of the lost object in the psyche, or because the lost object has been unknown to the subject, and thus, can never be reconciled with the subject. (Freud, 245).

I will then probe and problematise Freud’s dichotomy. Freud’s imperative of embracing desires in “Beyond the Pleasure Principle” will be linked to mourning, and consequently, reconciliation (such as the narrator boy from “The Sisters”), while Staten’s explanation of the Christian tradition of transcendence in *Eros in Mourning: Homer to Lacan* is linked to melancholia in that the characters that curb or dodge their desires more, ironically,

are most vulnerable to grief when somehow met with desire such as Duffy, Mrs. Sinico, Eveline, and Father Flynn. In “Trauma, Absence, Loss” LaCapra’s concept of loss will be connected to mourning, applied on Hynes (“Ivy Day”) who mourns the loss of Parnell through remembrance, while LaCapra’s notion of absence will be connected to melancholia in that one can never really form a reconciliation with a lost object that was never there in the first place, which in Ivy Day, is portrayed in the longing for an Ireland that embraces the “true” Irish identity.

De Man’s narrative trope of prosopopoeia (conjunction of the dead) from his article “Autobiography as De-facement” is presented as a facilitator in accomplishing the work of mourning in that the narrator boy from “The Sisters” witnesses a “ghost” of Father Flynn that helps him master his mourning through *remembrance* of the lost object, while Gana’s concept of *prosopopoeic reversal* (“the act of de-facing, disfiguring the living” (54) followed by the conjunction of the dead) is linked to melancholia in that as Eveline and Gretta remember the dead lost objects, they are literally “transfixed into motionlessness” (Gana, 54), which is due to an unfaltering fixation on the dead object. Said’s concept of (mobile) exile in “Reflections on Exile and Other Essays” is associated with a longing of going back to the lost homeland, and thus mourning, such as in Gallaher’s (“A Little Cloud”) case; whereas Boss’ concept of an inner exile from *Re-Mapping Exile: Realities and Metaphors in Irish Literature and History* is associated with melancholia such as in Chandler’s example in that the reconciliation with the lost object or the loss can never be worked through and mourning can never be mastered if there is no lost object in the first place. In the last chapter “Stasis”, I use Durrant’s concept of movement from “Undoing Sovereignty: Towards a Theory of Critical Mourning” to link to mourning, and in turn reconciliation (Gabriel’s case), while Declan Kiberd’s idea of paralysis in *Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation* is linked to melancholia (Father Flynn, and others). I have chosen these theorists for their analyses of

their respective concepts works in correspondence to the duality I am trying to manifest in my argument. Also, the observance of all the aforementioned concepts is what I refer to as the *rituals of mourning and melancholia* in *Dubliners*.

However, the rituals are not always as simple as stated above; there are some twists (conflations between and across the counterparts) too. Even though Gretta seems to have mastered mourning by finding a new love object (Gabriel), she still has a melancholic fixation on her lost love object (Michael Furey); the loss of Parnell is confused with an (absent) “ideal” Irish community; instead of conjuring the dead object, Gabriel distorts prosopopoeia by disfiguring the living lost object (Gretta) as dead in order to mourn his loss of her; Gabriel reconciles with the west of Ireland by his resolution to *go westward*, but this movement is generated in a stasis. As a result of such twisted themes and concepts, Freudian rituals of mourning and melancholia become twisted too, in that, mourning does not remain solely mourning, and melancholia is not solely melancholia. Thereby, my analysis will also show that a hindrance or conflation in any of these concepts results in melancholia, just like an obtrusion in the work of mourning results in melancholia. In this regard, mourning becomes just a temporary phase of being before the characters set out for melancholia. This will, consequently, pave the way to my claim that melancholia is the horizon of *Dubliners*. When I say, “melancholy is the horizon of *Dubliners*,” I mean it in the sense that they all end up – in one way or the other – inconsolable and without an effective closure. Gordon puts this as, “following the stories of these people is like watching a sand castle as the tide rises” (345).

2. Melancholy and Mourning

In his essay “Mourning and Melancholia,” Freud contends that both, mourning and melancholia are occasioned in response to the loss of a love object. He clarifies that a love object does not necessarily have to be a “loved person,” but can also be an “abstraction...such as one’s country, liberty, an ideal, and so on” (Freud, 243). Likewise, in *Dubliners*, it is different kinds of love objects that the characters grieve: Gabriel grieves the loss of passion in his wife for him and later mourns the loss of her (while she is still with him); Gretta grieves the dead Michael Furey; Father Flynn grieves the broken chalice, and basically his priesthood; Little Chandler grieves his inability to go to London; Hynes grieves the idea of Ireland under the reign of Parnell; Duffy tries too hard not to grieve at all.

As the loss of the love object occurs, Freud contends, all the cathexis (psychic or libidinal energy) invested into that lost object is withdrawn from it and “[incorporated]” (249) into the ego, so that the lost love object can be given up in the external world. *Ego* is a component of the mind that mediates between the conscious (superego) and the unconscious (id) and is responsible for reality testing. Reality testing is a mechanism that tells the subject “that the loved object no longer exists, and it proceeds to demand that all libido shall be withdrawn from its attachments to that object” (Freud, 244).

However, in mourning, this incorporation is temporary, and a new love object is eventually found to invest back cathexis in it, as consolation with the loss and reconciliation with the reality is established. This consolation and reconciliation are achieved through remembrance of the lost object, in order to attach and then detach from it. As Freud puts, “each single of the memories and situations of expectancy which demonstrate the libido’s attachment to the lost object is met by the verdict of the reality that the lost object no longer

exists” (Freud, 255). Freud refers to this whole process of healing through mourning as “the work of mourning” (245).

With melancholia, Freud argues, there is an obtrusion in the work of mourning because the subject has an unwavering fixation on the object due to permanent incorporation of the lost object into the ego. In such circumstances, remembering the lost object becomes a precarious drill, that instead of alleviating the catechetical ties with the lost object, intensifies it. This in turn contains the ego from having new desires, and so consolation with the loss and a reconciliation with the reality is not achieved. Moreover, the irreconciliation and inconsolation could also be caused because the longed lost object has been unclear or ambiguous to the subject (245). For example, a toddler who is extremely thirsty for water and must satisfy her thirst but is presented with a table of fizzy drinks, juices, and water. She keeps drinking all the other fluids but water and even gets distracted temporarily but shortly afterward realises that her thirst remains unextinguished. Thus, she remains fixated on the missing object (water), unless she drinks the right fluid. This is different from mourning, as mourning connotes a conscious and identifiable lost object that they can name and acknowledge.

Moreover, Freud asserts some distinguishing mental features of melancholia: “profoundly painful dejection” (244) as witnessed with Mr. Duffy in “A Painful Case”; “cessation of interest in the outside world” (244) as experienced in the case of Gabriel towards the end; “loss of the capacity to love” (244) manifested by Gretta towards her husband; “inhabitation of all activity” (244) as experienced by Father Flynn and Little Chandler; “and a lowering of the self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-reviling, and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment” (244) as experienced by Mrs. Sinico from “A Painful Case,” who was doomed “to sing to empty benches” (D 78) after having been cold-heartedly excluded from her husband’s

“gallery of pleasures,” (D 79) and when rejected by Duffy too, commits suicide. (“D” in the citations denotes Dubliners) While in mourning, Freud notes, all above the aforementioned features are seen temporarily except for “the disturbance of self-regard” (244).

However, the Freudian conventions may not apply as neatly in the Joycean world because as we enter the world of *Dubliners*, we realise the norms begin to twist. Desire becomes a ladder to achieve transcendence (“The Dead”); “loss” is not really loss at times, it is taken for absence and vice versa (“Ivy Day in the Committee Room”); the metaphorical exhumation of the dead turns into the de-facing of the living (such as that of Gretta); the exiles are not all geographical exiles, there are inner or symbolic exiles too (such as Chandler and Gabriel); movement is generated within a stasis (“The Dead”); paralysis becomes more profound in its moral or metaphorical element in comparison to its physical element in respect to grieving (Father Flynn). In reciprocation to the twisted Joycean norms, Freudian application to it too twists, and we occasionally come across situations in which a hybrid approach is applied, an approach that mixes rituals of mourning with that of melancholia. And yet, the rituals end up leaning more towards the *melancholia* extreme of the continuum.

2. Eros: Desire and Transcendence

This chapter shall re-map Freud's claim on *Dubliners* – that the more frequently one embraces their love objects, the more easily they recover from losses and grief, and vice versa– to show how this leads to mourning as a healing process. On the other hand, Staten's explanation of the Platonic-Christian stance of transcendence will be linked to Freud's understanding of melancholia (Father Flynn and James Duffy). However, Staten's understanding of mortal eros as a ladder to transcendence will conflate Freudian and Platonic-Christian argument through Gabriel's case.

Freud, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, reinforces this connection of desires embraced and desires suppressed by intimating that those who embrace their desires more frequently, in order to get into affective attachments with the love objects, are well-rehearsed as to how to contain and discharge their internalised cathexis or libido in order to shield themselves from an overwhelming amount of it, in case of a loss. This implies a “highly cathected” (Freud, 302) individual system. By the same token, those that keep away from investing their cathexis into affective attachments are at a disadvantage with managing the overwhelming amount of cathexis, if somehow met with affective attachment – whether sexual, platonic, or spiritual. Then if and when a loss is incurred, they are unlikely to find a way out for all the accumulated catechetical energy in the ego, which in turn implies “lowly cathected” individual systems (Freud, 302). Likewise, a highly cathected system is witnessed in the case of Gretta from “The Dead” in that she invests her cathexis in Michael Furey, and after losing him she is better rehearsed to deal with the loss of Gabriel too, though her coldness towards Gabriel suggests that she has bid farewell to him a long time ago.

Staten explains the Christian tradition, according to which, in order to avoid mourning, one must avoid committing themselves to “merely mortal loves, loves that can be

lost” (2). In correspondence to this view, Staten asserts that “mourning is the horizon of all desire” (xi). This statement conveys the inescapability of mourning in that the moment you desire for a mortal object the loss is bound, and so is the mourning: “As soon as desire is something felt by a mortal being for a mortal being, eros (as desire-in-general) will always be to some degree agitated by the anticipation of loss—an anticipation that operates even with regard to what is not yet possessed” (Staten, xi). The Platonic-Christian remedy to this problem of desire and mourning is “transcendence” i.e. the act of curbing or dodging one’s desires for mortal objects and invest it in immortal ideas such as institutions, justice, religion and etc. (Staten, 3). However, this practice of *avoidance* only leads the Dubliners to misery, and not *transcendence*.

This is manifested by Father Flynn and James Duffy in that they achieve avoidance by curbing their desires and eventually set themselves up for melancholia. The socio-religious structure that Father Flynn is obliged to, prompts him to transcend any stimulus that could render an affective desire for any love object other than his priesthood. Thus, by virtue of his low system of cathexes, he is incapable of hosting new inflowing cathexis, much less of managing the loss of his holy chalice (that he wrongly takes for a loss of priesthood). Consequently, he is not able to guard himself against the loss, and this has grave impacts on his mental organs. His self-incriminating provokes melancholia whose tendency toward death—though diverted to the path of mania (D 7) for some time—culminates in suicide.

As we proceed to James Duffy, he is an advocate of “every bond is a bond to sorrow,” which aligns with Staten’s assertion that “mourning is the horizon of all desire” (xi). However, Duffy’s transcendence is not achieved in reciprocation to faith: “He had neither companions nor friends, church nor creed” (78). He keeps away from all mourn-able desires in the first place because he never wants to be vulnerable: “Mr. Duffy abhorred anything which betokened physical or mental disorder” (D 77). When his acquaintance with Mrs.

Sinico begins to wear away “the rough edges of his character, emotionalised his mental life” (80) he begins to hear a voice inside him “insisting on the soul’s incurable loneliness. We cannot give ourselves it said: we are our own” (80). Therefore, he broke off his union with her. He even successfully returned to the old life, although the bliss is short-lived because as he hears of her suicide, he gets infuriated “to think that he had ever spoken to her of what he held sacred...Not only she had degraded herself, she had degraded him” (D 82-83).

Nevertheless, this fury shortly changes into resentment as the realisation almost hits him as an “empiphany” (Gana, 56) – a moment of empathy overlapped with a moment of epiphany—that she had ceased to exist and that he was the cause. However, this realisation does not come without his acknowledgment of being lonely, and a longing to be acquainted with someone, at least in their memory; a longing to be remembered (D 83). Despite his struggle to escape mourning since the beginning, he is captured by a foreclosure in the end to grieve the loss of Mrs. Sinico, and basically, his own loneliness. Thus, the characters that practice transcendence in *Dubliners*, by curbing or dodging their desires, are bound to fail and when they fail, they are hit the hardest by grief, as suggested by Freud.

Then comes Gabriel’s case, who seems to have achieved Freud’s trajectory of a highly cathected system – by putting his desire into Gretta, which then leads to loss and the healing process of mourning – to an extent that he can comfortably entertain the idea of his dear aunt Julia’s death, in advance. However, Gabriel’s case is not solely in correspondence to Freudian conventions of mourning because even though he withdraws his cathexis from Gretta, he does not reinvest it in a new love object. In compliance to the Platonic-Christian viewpoint, he realises the inbuilt flaw of immortality (Staten, 2) in Gretta that will never let him truly acquire her and reaches transcendence as “it hardly pained him now to think how poor a part he, her husband, had played in her life” (D, 159). Gabriel, thus, reinforces Staten’s point that

“divine eros is rooted in mortal eros, since before it is the love of Ideas, eros is the sexual attraction of bodies” (3) and uses the ladder of mortal eros to reach transcendence:

One by one, they were all becoming shades. Better pass boldly into that other world, in the full glory of some passion, than fade and wither dismally with age... His soul had approached that region where dwell the vast hosts of the dead... His identity was fading out into a grey impalpable world: the solid world itself which these dead had one time reared and lived in, was dissolving and dwindling. (D 160)

However, the fact that Gabriel’s transcendence leads him to a “region where dwell the vast hosts of the dead” classifies him as a melancholic, as “a pathological cessation of interest in the outside world” (Freud, 244) is implied from the text.

3. Gnomon

Joyce uses the term *gnomon* in the opening paragraph of the first short story (“The Sisters”) as the narrator expresses his apprehensiveness about “the word gnomon in Euclid” along with the terms “paralysis” and “simony” that “filled [him] with fear, and yet [he] longed to be nearer to it and to look upon its deadly work” (D 1). Joyce, manifestly, sets up this concept of gnomon and paralysis (discussed in the last chapter) at the very beginning of the collection as an integral theme for the rest of the short stories. Gordon, in his “Dubliners and the Art of Losing,” states, “[t]he Gnomon in Euclid is two things. It is the sign of an absence, and the product of a process, the process of subtraction” (344). Drawing on Gordon, this chapter establishes gnomon as either *absence* or *loss* and explains how in *Dubliners* the nature of gnomon – either loss or absence – influences the ritual of mourning and melancholia, linking the former with loss and latter with absence through examples from *Dubliners*. LaCapra’s analysis in “Absence, Loss, Trauma” will facilitate this link between lost objects and mourning and absent objects and melancholia. Instances where loss is confused or conflated with absence, or vice versa, will also be discussed.

LaCapra contends that “losses are specific and involve particular events,” (700) that “can be laid to rest through mourning only when they are specified and named” (712-3). It is only when Gabriel realises that he has lost Gretta a long time ago, he is able to mourn her loss as explained in the previous chapter. However, if the loss remains unknown or replaced with some other object, then the subject is never consoled. For instance, Father Flynn has the guilt of breaking the chalice, but he somehow replaces the loss of the chalice with the loss of his priesthood. If the loss were treated for what it actually was, it could be mourned, and redemption could be expected in the face of forgiveness and hope to be reunited with the

chalice in the afterlife. Nevertheless, the subject cannot reach reconciliation as he does not have the right object of loss to mourn in the first place. Freud would link this case of the unknown and replaced lost object with melancholia.

However, I contend that LaCapra's concept of *absence* also falls under Freud's paradigm of melancholia, which the former connotes to objects that have never been present with the subject in the first place. Little Chandler in "A Little Cloud" also comes across an absence, though a transhistorical absence, as the absent object transcends a history of any certain space and/or time: "He watched the scene and thought of life; (and as always happened when he thought of life) he became sad. A gentle melancholy took possession of him. He felt how useless it was to struggle against fortune, this being the burden of wisdom which the ages had bequeathed to him" (49). Chandler's realisation that "how useless it was to struggle against fortune" implies that he acknowledges the absence of self-determination, which further triggers "melancholy" in him. Thereby, *absence* too is congruent with Freud's paradigm of melancholia because in the case of an absent object, just like that of a vague or unknown object, the subject cannot reconcile with the emptiness within them because what causes emptiness in them is either unknown to them or absent in the first place.

LaCapra then explains cases of conflation between loss and absence. "When loss," LaCapra points out, "is converted into (or encrypted in an indiscriminately generalized rhetoric of) absence, one faces the impasse of endless melancholy, impossible mourning, and interminable aporia in which any process of working through the past and its historical losses is foreclosed or prematurely aborted" (698). This concept is explained through an analogy between the desire for a lost object and a broken vase: what and how can one fix a broken vase if they have discarded all the debris? Likewise, in mourning, we have an unsettled desire in the ego that requires to be fixed (through acknowledging and remembering it as proposed by Freud), but if we treat the lost love object as an absence then the subject can never really

fix it and they will be forever stuck in melancholy. For instance, in “Ivy Day,” the canvassers are caught on a day that commemorates the prominent nationalist politician Charles Stewart Parnell, but ironically from the first two-thirds of the plot Parnell is not mentioned, let alone mourned, and thus, is treated as an absence. The result of this absence is that Dubliners do not remember Parnell’s vision of bringing prosperity and unity to Ireland, let alone executing it. This results in a lost spirit of nationalism as there are no consistent beliefs and passion among the canvassers about the future leadership of the place.

LaCapra, on the flip side, explains the conversion of absence into loss. He says: “The conversion of absence into loss gives anxiety an identifiable object—the lost object—and generates the hope that anxiety may be eliminated or overcome. By contrast, the anxiety attendant upon absence may never be entirely eliminated or overcome but must be lived with in various ways” (707). LaCapra adds that it is especially a matter with transhistorical or structural absence (an absence that prevails throughout the history and for everyone), that when it is narrativized, it is converted into a historicised loss, for example, the loss of paradise, full community, or unity with the mother” (701) and “there is a sense in which such narrative—at least in conventional forms—must be reductive, based on misrecognition, and even close to myth” (701). Likewise, in “Ivy Day,”—which is set in the wake of a political collapse of Ireland—after the loss of Parnell is finally acknowledged in the elegy towards the end, it is fraudulently associated with a notion of a “lost” unity of Ireland. As if Parnell’s death is the reason why Ireland has not been able to retain its “real” image, and if he were alive, the nation would be thriving (D 96-97). Nevertheless, endorsing LaCapra’s point, I would argue that the “lost” Irish prestige (D 96) - that the Dubliners seem to mourn in the elegy – is, in fact, a myth of a national character, and was never there in the first place (Deane, 53). Therefore, it is an absence that the subject can neither be consoled for nor reconciled with, hence links to melancholia.

Also, even though elegy begins with a hopeless note as if the patriot poet (Hynes) has accepted Ireland's doomed future and that there can be no revival after Parnell, it ends with a hope of a somewhat promising future (hope being an integral by-product of conversion of absence into loss):

They had their way: they had him low.
 But Erin, list, his spirit may
 Rise, like the Phoenix from the flames,
 When breaks the dawning of the day,
 The day that brings us Freedom's reign
 And on that day may Erin well
 Pledge in the cup she lifts to Joy
 One grief – the memory of Parnell. (97)

Thus, it is a structural or transhistorical absence of a national character narrativized into a historical loss of Parnell. Moreover, “[w]hen absence is converted into loss,” LaCapra explains, “one increases the likelihood of misplaced nostalgia or utopian politics in quest of a new totality or fully unified community” (698) and entertains the possibility that “there was (or at least could be) some original unity, wholeness, security, or identity which others have ruined, polluted, or contaminated and thus made "us" lose” (LaCapra, 707). This scapegoating is practiced by Hynes (V 21 to 28, P 97) as he condemns those “coward, caitiff hands” he thinks responsible for Parnell's, and eventually Ireland's downfall.

Thus, to conclude, in *Dubliners*, if loss is treated as loss only then can the subject be consoled, as manifested in the case of Gabriel; while absence treated as absence alleviates the melancholy, as done by Little Chandler, and thus, there are no serious implications of an absent fate on him, as he only goes through a “gentle melancholy”. However, if Chandler were to treat the absence as loss as Hynes does in “Ivy Day” he would have to find other

scapegoat objects to treat as lost objects, and consequently, stuck in the vicious cycle of dodging anxiety till the next scapegoat object is found. Thus, the conflation of loss and absence is definitely bound to more intense melancholia.

4. Ghosts

By *ghosts* I do not imply supernatural beings, but shades of the past, such as the dead objects that conjure every now and then in *Dubliners*. Paul de Man refers to this metaphorical conjuration of the dead, in order to reunite with the living, as the narrative trope of prosopopoeia¹. Paul de Man's understanding of prosopopoeia will be re-mapped on *Dubliners* to see how the trope could be with alignment to Freud's work of mourning. Freud deems *remembering* as a vital task in the work of mourning in that it helps the subject to sever ties with the lost object. "Each single one of the memories and expectations in which the [cathexis] is bound to the object is," Freud expounds, "brought up and hypercathected, and detachment of the [cathexis] is accomplished in respect to it" (245). Likewise de Manian concept of prosopopoeia lines up with Freud's imperative to "[first] conjure and [then] dispel" the lost object in "The Sisters" by first making the narrator boy conjure the priest by remembering him, and eventually dispelling him by detaching all his cathexis from him.

However, De Man partially thwarts this moment of prosopopoeia (and consequently, the work of mourning) by pointing out a "latent threat that inhabits prosopopoeia, namely that by making the dead speak, the symmetrical structure of the trope implies, by the same token, that the living are struck dumb, frozen in their own death" (928). This symmetrical phase of the trope – that I refer to as "frozenness of the living" – implies that this metaphoric exhumation of the dead is carried out by the living as vessels of prosopopoeia. This makes *remembrance* a precarious drill as it sabotages the work of mourning by keeping the subject frozen, and basically, fixated (physically and mentally) on the lost object, instead of being liberated from it. In the case of Eveline and Gretta, the conjuration of the dead is not observed without a *frozenness of the living*, and so, they have a mental and physical fixation on their dead objects.

¹ A figure of speech in which an abstract thing is personified.

Therefore, in *Dubliners*, the de Manian moment of prosopopoeia only aligns with Freud's theory of mourning if it is only observed in its first phase i.e the conjuration of the dead like witnessed in "The Sisters". However, the first phase of prosopopoeia observed along with its second phase (i.e the frozenness of the living), brings about a "prosopopoeic reversal" (Gana, 53). This is an indication of a hindrance in not only the reconciliatory function of the trope but also of Freud's reconciliatory work of mourning, as witnessed in the cases of Eveline and Gretta. In their cases, the trope instead aligns with Freud's theory of melancholia as the subject fixates on the lost object through melancholic incorporation with it, instead of liberating one's self from it.

Moreover, Gana's ideas of "return *to* memory" corresponds to prosopopoeia and mourning, and "return *of* memory" to a reversal of prosopopoeia, and consequently, melancholia. Return *to* memory is "a deliberate, transformational, and generative practice of remembering," in other words: deliberately going back to the memory or remembrance of a lost object so that you can mourn it, and finally give it a burial in your memory. Thereby, I contend that return *to* memory results in a prosopopoeia in alignment with Freud's theory of mourning. On the other hand, I intimate that Gana's idea of "return *of* memory" instigates a prosopopoeia – rather a reversal in prosopopoeia – in alignment to Freud's theory of melancholia. Gana notes that a "return *of* memory is but the eruption of hitherto latent, but unsubdued force," (60) which in other words is an unplanned eruption of an otherwise suppressed memory, and leaving the subject all captivated in remembrance and melancholia.

The alignment of prosopopoeia and Freud's work of mourning is manifested in the case of the narrator from "The Sisters". Initially, the narrator from "The Sisters" delays the conjurative process of prosopopoeia as he fights to hide his feelings from Old Cotter when he finds out about the death of the priest: "I knew that I was under observation so I continued eating as if the news had not interested me" (D, 1). Later, the boy "returns *to* memory" of the

priest to work through the loss: “In the dark of my room I imagined that I saw again the heavy grey face of the paralytic...It murmured; and I understood that it desired to confess something. I felt my soul receding into some pleasant and vicious region...I felt that I too was smiling feebly as if to absolve the simoniac of his sin” (D, 2). Thus, the narrator mourns the loss of the priest, through the conjurative process of prosopopoeia, and in turn, practices Freud’s imperative of “conjure and dispel”. This closure is later confirmed as the narrator confesses, “[N]either I nor the day seemed in a mourning mood and I felt even annoyed at discovering in myself a sensation of freedom as if I had been freed from something by his death” (D, 3).

On the other hand, Eveline and Gretta both experience inadvertent and bewitching returns of the phantoms of the past. In Eveline’s case, a prosopopoeic reversal is activated right from the beginning, as almost possessed by the images of the past, she has her head prostrated which further subdues as she moves from a “detached distillation of past childhood, forgone memories, and departed friends into a more active and elaborate engagement with the past” (Gana, 53) which includes her promise to her late mother that she would take care of the household after her death. In the meanwhile, she is barely left with time to run away with her boyfriend (Frank): “Her time was running out but she continued to sit by the window, leaning her head against the window curtain, inhaling the odor of dusty cretonne” (D 25). Whereas Gretta conjures Michael Fuerry as she finds out about Miss Ivor’s invitation to her husband (Gabriel) and her to Aran Isles, that is the very place where her childhood lost love (Michael Furey) was once united with her. “I’d love to see Galway again,” she tells Gabriel.

Gretta and Eveline’s conjuration of the past further intensifies through music, which plays a vital role in the instigation of prosopopoeia and its reversal. Eveline listens to a street organ playing that in turn, “prompts her virtually to exhume her mother, her voice and her promise” (Gana, 52) to take care of the family. Gretta, on the other hand, is captured by a

“return of memory” of Michael Furey, who apparently died for her, as she listens to a chance singing of *The Lass of Aughrim* by Bartell D’Arcy. Gretta’s frozenness (meaning reversal of prosopopoeia) is manifested when Gabriel observes her standing static in a shade and unwittingly de-faces and disfigures her down to the deadness of a “picture” or a “symbol” (Gana, 54): “There was grace and mystery in her attitude as if she were a symbol of something. He asked himself what is a woman standing on the stairs in the shadow, listening to distant music, a symbol of. If he were a painter he would paint her in that attitude . . . Distant Music he would call the picture if he were a painter” (D 151).

Therefore, in the case of Gretta, I fully endorse Gana’s claim that “[p]rosopopoeia clearly has the animating force not only of defictionalizing the faceless but also of fictionalizing the living face” (54). Eveline, on the other hand, once again exhibits this “petrification” or “deadness” in the end right before the ship is about to leave when “[s]he set her white face to him, passive, like a helpless animal. Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition’ (D, 26). Thus, the spell of prosopopoeic reversal over Eveline does not let her go of the enchanting memory, legacy and promise of the past, and so, she ends up refusing a new life with Frank just to fall back in the same life of misery.

The last we see of Gretta is that, bursting into tears, she collapses in her bed and falls asleep. Her response demonstrates a hybrid ritual of grieving. Arguably, the mourning was somewhat mastered through remembrance, but the fact that it was achieved by an inadvertent return of memory implies that she has failed to achieve a consolation in the past too regarding the loss of Michael Furey, and yet remains at the mercy of the next unbridled outbreak. This kind of mourning becomes a phase of melancholia as Gretta seems to have incorporated the dead object (Michael Furey) in her ego in the long-run. Derrida, in *The Ear of the Other*, explains this dead object that remains like a living dead abscessed in a specific spot in the ego [. . .] The dead object is incorporated in this crypt – the term “incorporated” signalling

precisely that one has failed to digest or assimilate it totally, so that it remains there, forming a pocket in the mourning body” (57).

The ghosts in “The Dead” also attest to this “living dead” as lost objects incorporated in the ego. Gabriel encounters ghosts on several occasions, sometimes as people “standing in the snow on the quay outside, gazing up at the lighted windows and listening to the waltz music. The air was pure there” (D 145). This is a metaphor of a peaceful past as a lost object. Then there is a return *to* memory of Irish “qualities of humanity, of hospitality, of kindly humour which belonged to an older day” accompanied with some “great singers of the past” (146), some “absent faces” (147), and “sad memories,” (147) as reminisced by Gabriel in his speech. As LaCapra suggests, “specific phantoms that possess the self or the community can be laid to rest through mourning only when they are specified and named as historically lost others” (712-713). Laurence Davies in his notes on *Dubliners* argues that “the old, warm-hearted Dublin of Gabriel’s speech was the impotent capital of a disease and famine-stricken country” (xiii).

Then, after learning about Michael Furey, Gabriel even feels “some impalpable and vindictive being was coming against him, gathering forces against him in its vague world” (158), and later experiences a return *of* memory as he sees the ghost of Michael Furey: “in the partial darkness he imagined he saw the form of a young man standing under a dripping tree. Other forms were near” (160). Thus, Dublin becomes a haunted place,

inhibited by the swirling souls of the dead. But it *is* a place, a geographical reality as well as a symbolic ‘region’, the territory of the Famine dead and of the revival of the culture which they were the supposed possessors. This is the world of the Joycean Undead, a Transylvania that has unmasked itself as lying beyond the Shannon, traditional boundary in Irish history and legend [...] the world of Undead [...]. (Deane 95)

Moreover, Gretta too becomes a ghost for Gabriel, who even though is alive, yet dead for him, as he realises, he can never truly acquire her due to the inbuilt flaw of mortality in her, and works through the loss. Ironically, he reduces her down to the deadness of a “painting” even before he learns about his loss of her. This is, however, a distortion of *prosopopoeia* in that the lost object is transfixed into “deadness” instead of being exhumed. Nevertheless, mourning is achieved. He even extends this ritual to his own aunt by mourning her loss in advance of her death: “Poor Aunt Julia! She, too, would soon be a shade with the shade of Patrick Morkan² and his horse” (159).

² Peter Morkan is Gabriel’s dead grandfather.

5. Exile

There are two aspects of exile: geographical and metaphorical exiles (also known as mobile and immobile exiles). This chapter connects mobile exile to mourning and immobile exile to melancholia. Edward Said in his “Reflections on Exile” describes a “true exile” as “a condition of loss,” an ‘unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home’ and a ‘crippling sorrow of estrangement’ (173). However, Boss in “Theorising Exile,” expresses that Said’s “definition of exile which excludes symbolic uses [is] limiting for a full understanding of the complex social, cultural and psychological structures and historical meanings of exile” (15). Boss, therefore, supplements the definition of exile with his own idea of metaphorical or non-structural exiles, which has two sub-types: “inner exile” (20) and “symbolic exile” (20). Boss explains inner exiles as “[r]esident individuals/groups suffering political, social and cultural repression, marginalisation or exclusion but have not been able or willing to leave their community/country” (20), while he refers to symbolic exiles as “individuals who understand their lives – or whose circumstances of life may be understood – with reference to religious, philosophical or aesthetic notions of exile. This subcategory includes medieval monastic pilgrims, modernist artists etc” (Boss, 20).

I argue that, in regard to *Dubliners*, exiles connote mourning, as there is a “longing” (30), an “irreconcilability” (31), and eventually a “fixation” (33) about the place of belonging. (I use *place of belonging* instead of *native place* because an individual can be born in a certain place and still not feel a sense of belonging to it. This point will become more concrete as we discuss Gabriel and Little Chandler’s case). Whereas immobile exiles connote melancholia, as in addition to all three aforementioned traits, they further comply with Freud’s understanding of melancholia in which the subject “mourns an object that is unclear or obscured from it” (Beaumont, 2). As Boss quotes Britta Olinder, “exile has many faces, as many as those in

exile,” (13) from Father Flynn, to James Duffy, to Chandler, and Gallaher, the canvassers in “Ivy Day”, Eveline, Gabriel all in one way or the other are exiles. However, I shall focus on Gabriel, Chandler and Gallaher’s exiles.

I would refer to Gabriel as an “inner exile”. Despite belonging to Ireland, there seems to be an “estrangement” (Said) between his Gaelic cultural identity of West of Ireland³ and himself. He cannot associate with Irish culture, language or places. Just as he enters the party, he right away is reminded that “their grade of culture differed from his” (129). He is even accused of being a “West Briton”⁴ (135) by Miss Ivors, who is a peer of his, for writing in *The Daily Express*⁵. He, however, believes “literature (is) above politics”. He even spills in anger that he is “sick of (his) own country, sick of it” (137) and defaces his disassociation with the culture into his rancour for it. Rancour is yet another integral trait of an exile towards his homeland (explained later). This discord between his English identity and Gaelic identity (of western Ireland) seems to be settled by the end as he realises that “the time had come for him to set out on his journey westward” (D 160). This reconciliation between Gabriel and the west is symbolically manifested as the snow falls “all over Ireland” and “into the dark mutinous Shannon waves”⁶ reconciling the east and west of Ireland for him. However, he sets himself for yet another, rather unrecoverable exile, as he enters a “grey impalpable world,” (D, 160) where “dwell the vast hosts of the dead” (D, 160). Thus, he lives up to Vander’s definition of an exile in segments; he is first “exiled from his people and, through a process of falsification,

³ “The west became the place of Irish authenticity, the place that was not yet subject to the effects of administrative, governmental rules and laws, and which therefore preserved among its population the national character in its pristine form or, at least, in such a state of preservation that the pristine form could be inferred from it... This emphasis on the west as a national place, as the site of a deep authenticity, was intensified by the political question of the land, from the Famine to the Land War, in which the western counties played a crucial role” (Deane, 52-53).

⁴ West Briton: “somebody Irish who considers Ireland a western extension of Britain” (Davies, 169).

⁵ Davies writes in his notes that Joyce himself wrote for *The Daily Express*, and that “it’s politics was Unionist but not blind to Irish issues”. (169)

⁶ Shannon waves: “a great river of Ireland, a boundary between east and west” (Davies, 170).

from their history,” and later, “he is exiled from his own self, which has become a copy without an original” (Boss, 14).

Edward Said proposes that “cultures are always made up of mixed, heterogeneous, and even contradictory discourse” (184) and points out that a state of exile is not necessarily a detrimental one. He reconciles the lost homeland to the new habitat in a third space that gives one “a plurality of vision” (186) or “an awareness of simultaneous dimensions” (186).

Likewise, I contend that melancholy too is not always detrimental, it can at times culminate into pleasure, or what I refer to as *cosy melancholy*. A juxtaposition of Boss’ concept of inner exile with Said’s idea of “plurality of vision” on Chandler (from “A Little Cloud”) manifests how “cosy melancholy” is generated from such a juxtaposition. Chandler is in exile in his own place as he feels the poet in him does not belong to Dublin but longs to be in London: “Every step brought him nearer to London, farther from his own sober inartistic world” (D 51) and Deane puts, “[e]xile is most profound when it is experienced at home” (96). Chandler, thus, becoming an exile in his own homeland, reaches to a “plurality of vision,” which helps him look at the melancholy of a cosy kind: “a melancholy tempered by recurrences of faith and resignation and simple joy” (51).

Nevertheless, towards the end, this cosy melancholy is transformed into some other, more involuntary kind of melancholy as Chandler ends up in “tears of remorse” (59). Though Chandler realises: “[...] if you wanted to succeed you had to go away [...] [y]ou could do nothing in Dublin” (D 51), his longing to escape is thwarted by his family’s dependency on him (just like in Eveline’s case). Deane points out that there is an immobility about such an exile “who remains home but in a state of deep dissatisfaction” (167) and in a metaphorical sense associates it with “Joycean words – hemiplegia, paralysis” (167). This immobility gets reinforced with the realisation: “He couldn’t read. He couldn’t do anything...He was a prisoner for life” (59). It is the very condition of remaining physically fixed and mentally

fixated that pushes the internal exile into melancholia. This immobility is closely related to stasis, explained in more detail in the next chapter.

Additionally, Chandler's absent love object (i.e. residence in England) connotes to melancholia, as he longs for something he has never had in the first place (unlike a literal or mobile exile who longs to come back to a concrete lost homeland), and in his case, a longing that can never be fulfilled. "Melancholy representation," as Peter Schwenger puts, "awake our longing towards what must always remain inaccessible" (14). On contrast, Chandler's friend, Gallaher, observes a mobile exile that could be associated with mourning. Gallaher is located in England, but Dublin remains his hometown. He has an ambivalent relationship with Dublin that of "nostalgia and rancour"⁷: there is an implicit desire to be back home, enveloped in disgust towards it. Thus, once in a while, he comes back on a visit from London to his "dear dirty Dublin..." (D, 52).

⁷ Gillespie deems Joyce's "nostalgia and rancour" towards Ireland as an integral part of Joyce's his exile. She further implements this paradox on *Dubliners* which she suggests betrays "a pattern of emotional perspectives oscillating between sentimentality and bitterness...throughout the book" (23).

6. Stasis

This chapter acknowledges movement and stasis on three levels: physical, metaphorical, and narrative levels in *Dubliners*, and associates movement with mourning and stasis with melancholia. *Stasis* is a state of inactivity that does not typically entertain movement or change. In the context of *Dubliners*, in a stasis nothing (that is longed) comes back and nothing that causes pain is taken away; everything remains frozen. Therefore, stasis plays a vital role in harbouring a permanent inconsolation, observed not only by the characters but also in the plot narrative of all the short stories I have selected.

To begin with narrative stasis, Gurr explains in *Writers in Exile: The Identity of Home in Modern Literature* how the writer in exile is obsessed with presenting a stable image of their homeland, just as they had left it. The “fixation” mentioned about exiles in the previous chapter is deeply associated with stasis. Gur argues, “the exile is still more deliberately concerned to identify or even create stasis, because home is a static concept rooted in the unalterable circumstances of childhood. Insecurity [of homelessness] prompts the writer to construct static worlds, to impose order on the dynamic, to see the dynamic as chaos” (23-24). In this way, Joyce’s loss of home (Dublin) makes him an exile, and whatever is lost by Joyce is preserved in *Dubliners* in stasis, as he himself asserts to his friend Frank Budgen (Gillespie, 20). The fact that Joyce is obsessed with giving a stable picture of Dublin and *Dubliners* melancholy as a by-product of stasis in *Dubliners*.

Jahan Ramazani uses the term “melancholic mourning” for modernist elegies that represent a form of mourning that “tends not to achieve but to resist consolation” (Gana, 11). However, I would argue that in “Ivy Day” this elegiac element of resisting consolation rather applies to the narrative of the prose than the poetry, due to the plot stasis. In the first two-thirds of the story, the loss of Parnell seems to be forgotten in compliance with a “culture of

amnesia”⁸ which Neto considers an escape for Dubliners to forget “uncomfortable histories” (272). However, towards the end, the loss of Parnell is eventually acknowledged and mourned as he is “given a proper burial” (LaCapra, 716) in the memory of his supporters through remembrance. Thus, the memory is buried, and consolation is somewhat achieved, as discussed in Gnomon. Nevertheless, the elegy is deliberately written and said “in a style that can never escape the nineteenth century,”⁹ (Davies, xvii) and thus, as Deane puts, “the ritual of revival and commemoration here is abortive” (215). The historicized loss of Parnell is preserved in Hynes’ mind in stasis. Therefore, I argue that the mourning is still not mastered as all Hynes’ and other canvasser’s hopes and passions are stuck in the past, in an unflinching fixation on Parnell, while in the present there is (in a figurative and literal sense) no activity as they remain seated in the committee room, though ironically, being the canvassers they should be out to campaign for their respective leaders on the election day. Consequently, consolation becomes impossible, and thus, Hynes becomes melancholic.

However, one can argue that after a certain point in a fiction it gets hard to contain stasis within the fiction, and therefore, the longer the more complicated. “Each story moves to an epiphanic revelation of an impasse,” Kiberd asserts about *Dubliners*, “a paralysis which marks its termination, because if it were to proceed any further it would exfoliate into a much more extensive and unlimited type of narrative: the process which was allowed to happen just once when “*Mr. Hunter’s Day*” became *Ulysses*” (330-331). This complication between movement and stasis is dramatized in “The Dead,” the longest story of the collection, which does not end with “another frustration, another stoppage, but with a famous and famously rendering of snow, rarely and remarkably blanketing the whole island and its inhabitants,

⁸ “In the Dublin that Joyce attempted to capture in *Dubliners*, a narrative of modernization that was substantiated by the speed of technological, economic, and political change conflicted visibly with signs of the suppression of the more complex and uncomfortable histories that had accompanied it. One consequence of this was the emergence of what has been called a “culture of amnesia.” (Neto, 272).

⁹ Extract shared on page 15.

alive or dead” (Davies, xvii): “His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their latter end, upon all the living and the dead” (D 160).

Even though the discord between Gabriel’s cultural identity and himself seems to be settled by the end as he realises that “the time had come for him to set out on his journey westward,” (D 160) the reconciliatory closure is problematic because even though there is a resolution to *go* westward he is still static. Davies also notes that this stasis brings about “movement, change, enlargement, the unfolding of a great set-piece about transcendence” (xvii) and refers to Gabriel’s resolution to go westward the result of an epiphany. This claim is supported by Durrant’s logic, as explained by Beaumont, that stasis grants the melancholic subject “the space [he] needs to reflect on [his] circumstances and arrive at a politically and ethically meaningful response to them” (3). However, while I do acknowledge a movement within the stasis, and even the epiphany as the result of a reflection on his circumstances, I still do not dismiss Gabriel’s melancholic take on the outside world because the fact that this resolution is made from a “region where dwell the vast hosts of the dead... a grey impalpable world” does not support “a politically and ethically meaningful” stance, not at least in a Freudian world. Thus, Gabriel still observes one of Freud’s criteria of vicissitudes of melancholia i.e. “cessation of interest in the outside world” (244). Nevertheless, I conclude that this kind of melancholia does not necessarily have to have a harmful impact on the subject as witnessed in Gabriel’s case.

Moving on to paralysis, which is a form of stasis, is yet another integral theme of the collection. Joyce himself endorses this claim as he acknowledges that *Dubliners* betray Dublin as “the soul of that hemiplegia or paralysis which many consider to be a city” in a letter to Constantine Curran in 1904 (Neto, 286). Moreover, Deane refers to *Dubliners* as a text that “specifies most fully the relation between immobility and exile” and in this

representation refers to Dublin “as the world capital of boredom, presiding over the country of the dead” (167). In “A Little Cloud” there is an interesting contrast between the descriptions of Paris and Dublin, while Paris is associated with movement and energy, Dublin is implicitly established as a “site of paralysis” (Deane, 95) and the capital of boredom. Gallaher reaffirms that “there’s no city like Paris for gaiety, movement, excitement...” (D 53). Whereas, we are early on told that “[Y]ou could do nothing in Dublin” (D 51) and this paralysis is later on reinforced by Chandler with the realisation that “He couldn’t read. He couldn’t do anything...He was a prisoner for life” (D 59). Thus, this literal or physical fixation symbolises a metaphoric fixation. Just a few minutes before he meets Gallaher we are told that “A light began to tremble on the horizon of [Chandler’s] mind” (D 51). Little did we know that this light soon transforms into melancholia.

In the case of Father Flynn and Eveline, a metaphorical paralysis becomes more profound than a physical paralysis. Eveline is unable to escape with Frank, who would “give her life” (D 26) and just when the ship is about to board, she realises she cannot abandon her family and elope. She exhibits a physical paralysis: ‘She set her white face to him, passive, like a helpless animal. Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition’ (D 26). This is followed by a more profound, metaphorical paralysis as she eventually is “pulled back to her inadequate and troublesome family to remain eternally a daughter” (Davies, xvii). However, it was her metaphorical paralysis or a mental fixation on her mother’s promise that set her in motion for melancholia. Likewise, Father Flynn, sitting in his confessional in the dark, his mind fixated on the broken chalice, and not being able to perform his duties as a priest exhibits a physical, metaphorical and eventually a moral paralysis that leads him from melancholia to suicide.

Father Flynn, after mistakenly breaking the holy chalice associates his loss of chalice with the loss of priesthood and remains inconsolable which results in an unhopeful stasis.

LaCapra describes this phenomenon of inconsolation in the narrative as “a dialectic that does not reach closure but instead enacts an unfinished, unfinalizable interplay of forces involving a series of substitutions without origin or ultimate referent—an interplay that may enable more desirable configurations that cannot be equated with salvation or redemption” (705). Father Flynn substitutes the loss of the chalice with a loss of priesthood and is pressed into self-incriminatory guilt for losing priesthood, while lets the chalice itself be treated as an absence. Nevertheless, if the chalice were treated as a loss, it could be mourned, and redemption could be achieved in the face of forgiveness and hope to be reunited with it in the afterlife. Absence, on the other hand, does not entertain any such hope of reunion with the lost object because it does not have an identifiable object to mourn in the first place. Thus, the road to consolation is prematurely aborted as explained in “Gnomon”. The guilt apparently leads him to suicide, and before his death, he is found in his dark confession-box, “[w]ide-awake and laughing-like to himself [...] there was something wrong with him” (D 7). The last we hear from the narrator is his realisation “that the old priest was lying still in his coffin as we had seen him, solemn and truculent in death, an idle chalice on his breast” (D 7) and after that the reader is left with a quote from one of Father Flynn’s sisters, and then without any final words from the narrator, the story ends.

This instance completely advocates Gordon’s claim about *Dubliners* that typically “these stories end in a moment of frozen finality, one in which aesthetic stasis and personal paralysis, parable-framing artist and short-circuited system, disabused recorder and disilluminated subject, become indistinguishable” (349). It is due to this inconsolation with loss and irreconciliation with hope, as the end result of the short stories in general, that I assert that melancholy is the horizon of *Dubliners*.

Conclusion

From the stories I analysed in light of the hypotheses from different theorists, and examining their configurations with Freud's understanding of mourning and melancholia, I conclude that even though Father Fynn, Mrs. Sinico, Eveline, Gretta, Little Chandler, James Duffy, Hynes, and Gabriel have different ways of working through loss, their inconsolability with mourning and lack of an affective closure is what eventually keeps them compact. This inconsolability originated from either melancholia or a conflation between components of mourning with those of melancholia. Just as a hindrance in the work of mourning leads to melancholia, a conflation (which is also a form of hindrance) between the components of mourning with those of melancholia also leads to melancholia in *Dubliners*.

This conflation can be within a concept (such as absence and loss conflation within the concept of *Gnomon* results in melancholia for Hynes in "Ivy Day"), or across components of different concepts, for instance, Freud's imperative to embrace desire in order to gain consolation is obtruded by a prosopopoeic reversal resulting in melancholia for Gretta in "The Sisters." She works through her loss of Michael Furey by embracing a new desire in the face of Gabriel, and yet is still not liberated by the melancholic incorporation of him, triggered by a prosopopoeic reversal. This presents mourning as just as a temporary phase of being before the character can set out for melancholia. Therefore, for all my six short-stories, I am inclined to assert that melancholia is the horizon of *Dubliners*.

Not only do I assert that melancholia is the end result of all these characters, my analysis also manifests that melancholia does not necessarily have to culminate into extreme consequences. For a character to be called melancholic, their symptoms do not have to culminate into something as extreme as depression or anxiety and that melancholia can also be observed with very mild symptoms (Gabriel), and in some cases its observance can even

bring pleasure to the observer (Chandler), and that is how the Joycean world bargains with the Freudian conventions.

This study could be situated on Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, based on a fictional high-society woman in post-First World War England. There is an extensive amount of literature out there that probes and problematises the recurrences of melancholia and mourning in *Mrs. Dalloway*, a very notable study of which is Sara D'Arcy's "Mourning, Gender Melancholia, and Subversive Homoeroticism in Virginia Woolf" in which she analyses *Mrs. Dalloway* from a gender perspective. However, extending on D'Arcy's study, the gender perspective could be analysed in terms of the concepts of eros, gnomon, ghosts, exile and stasis to bring out some interesting findings.

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