DUBLIN AS ANCESTRAL MATRIX:
THE REBIRTH OF THE IRISH FETUS INTO SELF-RECOGNITION
IN JAMES JOYCE'S "EVELINE" AND "THE DEAD"

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ABSTRACT

DUBLIN AS ANCESTRAL MATRIX:
THE REBİRTH OF THE IRISH FETUS INTO SELF-RECOGNITION
IN JAMES JOYCE'S "EVELINE" AND "THE DEAD"

Kızrak, Meral

James Joyce's *Dubliners* depicts the city of Dublin as a metaphor for the Irish soil. Though self-exiled, Joyce the Irish patriot introduces Dublin to be the ancestral matrix from which the Irish may be reborn to claim their Irish identity. The dilemma with Irishness, as Joyce explores, is that the Irish are in a state of denying their identity. Mistakenly apprehending Dublin as a city of decay, Dubliners are compelled to desert it. Their impetus to escape from Dublin and its psychological detention results in an inevitable loss of Irish identity. However, Dubliners are, shockingly and almost instinctively, dragged into Dublin, the ancestral matrix, where they undergo an embryonic state: they are nourished by the genuine Irish blood, and reborn as themselves, with the Irish identity from which they have sought escape.

The protagonists of “Eveline” and “The Dead” are in a state of self-denial, thus becoming invisible in Dublin, which causes them to quest for identity. From a psychoanalytic perspective, theirs is an instinctive drive to seek maternal safety and protection, a reason for their futile attempt to escape into a Platonic and idealized womblike cocoon. However, having done away with the anxiety resulting from impersonating an alien identity, they undergo ‘the oceanic feeling’ of oneness with the ancestral womb. This regression into the form of the Irish fetus provides the characters with the pleasure of claiming their individuality and of becoming regenerated through an introspective self-realization. Therefore, in *Dubliners,* Joyce attempts to hold up a mirror to his compatriots to help them realistically visualize and appreciate their actual self, reflected on the ‘liquor amnii’ of Dublin, the ancestral matrix.

Key words: “Eveline”, “The Dead”, Psychoanalysis, ‘Oceanic Feeling”

ÖZ

ANA RAHMİ DUBLIN:
JAMES JOYCE'UN "EVELINE" VE "THE DEAD" ADLI
ÖYKÜLERİNDE IRLANDA CENİNİ'NİN
KENDİNİ TANIYARAK YENİDEN DOĞUŞU
Kızrak, Meral

James Joyce *Dubliners* adlı yapıtında Dublin şehrini İrlanda toprağını temsil eden bir metafor olarak tanımlar. İrlanda'dan uzak kendi isteğiyle sürgün bir hayat tercih eden İrlanda vatanseveri yazar, Dublin'i vatandaşlarının yeniden hayatiyet bulabilecekleri 'ana rahmi' ne benzetir. Joyce'un da öne sürdüğü gibi, İrlandalılar kendi öz kimliklerini reddetme ikilemiyle karşı karşıyadırlar. Böylece Dublinliler, şehirlerinin harap durumu karşısında Dublin'i terketme çabası içine girerler. Dublin ve yarattığı psikolojik tutsaklık, nihayetinde, İrlanda milli kimliğinin yok olmasına sebep olur. Ancak şaşırtıcıdır ki, Dublinliler neredeyse içgüdüsel olarak Dublin'e, yani embriyonik bir hale dünüşüp, gerçek İrlanda kanıyla beslenerek, bir zamanlar kaçmaya çalıştıkları öz kimlikleriyle yeniden doğacakları yere dönerler.

“Eveline” ve “The Dead”, öykülerinin ana karakterleri, özlerini reddetme noktasında bir tür hiçlik duygusuyla kimlik arayışı içindedirler. Psikanalitik açıdan bakıldığında bu arayış, içgüdüsel bir dürtüyle, annenin bebeğine sağladığı türden bir emniyet ve korunma ihtiyacını ifade etmektedir. Bu dürtüyle karakterler, Platonik, ideal ve ana rahmine benzer koruyucu bir koza arayışına girerler. Ancak, yabancı bir kimliğe bürünmenin sonucunda ortaya çıkan kaygı, nihayetinde karakterleri ‘okyanus duygusuna’, yani ‘ana rahmi’ ile özdeşim duygusuna yöneltir. Bu geriye dönüş, yani yeniden İrlandalı cenin formuna dönme, karakterlere, İrlanda rahminde kendini tanıyıp öz kimliğiyle barışma ortamı sağlayarak, özgün bir birey olma hazzı verir. Sonuç olarak, Joyce, *Dubliners* adlı eserinde, vatandaşlarına kendi yansımalarını görüp, öz kimlikleriyle uzlaşabilmeleri için gerçekçi bir ayna tutar. İşte bu ayna sembolik anlamda Dublin rahminin amnion sıvısıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: “Eveline”, “The Dead”, Psikanaliz, ‘Okyanus Duygusu’

To my parents,

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation purports to apply the psychoanalytic theory of the 'oceanic feeling' in James Joyce's short stories "Eveline" and "The Dead" in order to provide an insight for the themes of 'ineffectual escape' and 'consequent psychological paralysis' embodied throughout the series in *Dubliners.* To this end, both conscious and unconscious motives will be revealed with a close examination of Joyce's realistic and, at the same time, symbolic style of narration.

In the first chapter of this study, it is proved that James Joyce has followed an unconventional approach in *Dubliners* about the lives of ordinary Dubliners, putting the priority on the exploration of their inner realities over the physical objects, settings, and appearances. To reach this synthesis, first, the paralyzing and oppressing influences in Dublin will be illuminated from the historical and economic perspective and then, their impact upon the Irish psyche will be traced through psychoanalysis. In the next half of the first chapter, Freudian psychoanalytic theories of the unconscious and the instinctive drives will be scrutinized with a special emphasis on

“the oceanic feeling” of unity with the mother. Finally, a parallel is established between the protagonists of “Eveline” and “The Dead” and the oceanic feeling with its dimensions of identity, self-reflection, and regeneration in order to clarify the characters’ inability to desert their homeland, Dublin.

The second chapter focuses on the main character Eveline’s psychology and her deprived sense of selfhood. Joyce depicts Eveline as a Dubliner seeking identity outside Dublin, fantasizing a Platonic identity in Buenos Aires. This part of the thesis reveals that the psychological urge for security and protection in an idealized locus ends in a complete frustration and loss of identity. On the other hand, regression to the ancestral soil, the Irish matrix, crowns the quest with the recognition of and reconciliation with the original self. Accordingly, the conclusion of the second chapter portrays how Eveline experiences self-awareness through the satisfaction of the ‘oceanic feeling’, repressing her urge to escape into a Platonic utopia, thus masochistically acquiring the instinctive pleasure in the motherly hometown, gloomy and depressing Dublin.

The third chapter of this study firstly discusses the ego-centeredness of the protagonist Gabriel, the elite intellectual in “The Dead”, and his detachment from the other characters, who are involved in his both personal and professional lives. The initial part of this chapter also illustrates Gabriel’s virtual self-image resulting in the alienation from his Irish self. It will be later proved that his

narcissistic self-made image is completely a façade providing him with a spurious womblike security, leading to the denial of his identity of rural and naïve Irishness. After Gabriel becomes aware of his state of invisibility due to the vainness of his self-made identity, he gets drifted into the ‘oceanic feeling’, thereby fulfilling his drive for maternal protection through regression into the ancestral matrix, and identification with his dead ancestors. The concluding lines of this chapter will present Gabriel’s regeneration in and by Dublin, the Irish matrix, with the image of snow blanketing all Ireland.

CHAPTER II

DUBLINERS AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

Dubliners is a collection of fifteen stories, each representing one aspect of life in Dublin. It reflects a society with the traditional impression of being in the grip of paralyzing forces, as James Joyce writes in a letter dated May 6, 1906 and sent to the publisher:

> My intention was to write a chapter of the moral history of my country and I chose Dublin for the scene because that city seemed to me the center of paralysis. I have tried to present it to the indifferent public under four of its aspects: childhood, adolescence, maturity, and public life. The stories are arranged in this order (Bosinelli, et al., 2).

Since "paralysis" denotes a meaning of dissolution coupled with immobility, it subsequently suggests the idea of spiritual death which also involves stagnancy. Hence, pointing out the paralyzing forces that affect Dublin, or the realities that dominate its public life in Dubliners, Joyce sheds valuable insight into the city's moribund or even death-like nature.

Dublin is paralyzed by mainly two oppressing factors: its history and economy. From the 15th and till the end of 20th century, Dublin had such apocalyptic experiences as famine, Black Death, successive foreign invasions, wars, colonization by the British

Empire, futile revolts against English rule, all of which caused the city to fall into a constant decline and decay that deteriorated Ireland, and Dublin alike, into a cultural paralysis. Since culture and history are not considered in isolation because of their interdependency on each other, it is the history, past, and memories of a city's inhabitants whose ancestors have suffered from "misery pile[d] upon mishap" that abandon Dublin into a lethargic position and devastation (Davenport, 62). Undoubtedly, this steady devastation that Dublin has witnessed has left a deep imprint on Dubliners, who are the representatives of this "god-forsaken" city, as Davenport states:

> as Britain continued to rule with an iron fist, opposition to its rule hardened. The famine, the deaths and the mass exodus changed the social and cultural structure of Ireland profoundly and left a scar on the Irish psyche that cannot be overestimated…[To illustrate], by 1910 it was reckoned that 20,000 Dublin families each occupied a single room. Booze had long been a source of solace for Dubliners but alcohol abuse became a huge social problem (64).

Religion is another oppressing factor shaping the cultural identity of Dublin inhabitants, 90 percent of whom is Roman Catholic (Davenport, 2004). Their religion, Catholicism, does not solace their sorrow coming from their unpleasant past, nor does it provide them with the impetus for changing their miserable fate; it rather inhibits their potential for healing their wounds by forcing the Irish to subjugate the ascendancy of the Church and the clergy. In fact, the strictness of its doctrines and deductive Jesuit philosophy even worsen the already existing 'scar on the Irish psyche'. As opposed to

the Protestant minority, who constitute the upper level society in Dublin, and whose loyalty to the union between Ireland and Great Britain is unquestioned, the Catholic Dubliners are, once again, victimized by the disadvantages that their religion brings to them: colonial degradation and inequitable social order resulting in exclusion from governmental bodies or even from better-paid jobs.

As for the economic situation in Dublin, the city is viewed as a provincial backwater. Like Dubliners, who are under the dominance of the British Empire and the Church, the city Dublin is economically led by the regal power, and its economy highly relies on the resources that the Empire has a grip on (Jackson and McGinley, x). Its dependant economic structure also reflects itself in the distribution of the economic resources among Dubliners: British caste system is imposed upon Dubliners, which hinders their desire to advance, and thus restrains their energy to move upward. As a result, Dubliners try to exist in the face of their desperate poverty in slum conditions. In the early twentieth century Dublin,

> over 30% of the tenements consisted of single rooms; estimated of the average number living, eating and sleeping in these rooms varied from three to six, though cases of from seven to twelve were by no means uncommon. Up to one hundred people could live in a single tenement house; often there would only be one cold tap in a yard or passage, and the facilities for sewage disposal were unspeakably inadequate. Unsurprisingly, Dublin had both a disgracefully high infant mortality rate and the highest death rate in the (Brown, 1993: xix)

Consequently, Dublin's past, with a run of bad luck, precipitates its demise. It is a city "burdened with history and

experience" (Brown, 1993: xxxxv). Its people, being oppressed by the outside forces and inheriting all forms of misery, pain, and degradation, are trapped into their past. Accordingly, Joyce's *Dubliners* is made up of stories which picture Dublin itself; not only the physical setting of the city but also the political and cultural environment in which these mordant events are enacted. The environment has a highly complex pattern of a multi-layered and multi-faceted formation. "On the surface these stories appear extremely transparent. As a rule, particularly at first glance, nothing sounds simpler than a sentence in *Dubliners"* (Bosinelli and Mosher, 13). Therefore, a reader who is not careful about the complexity of the environment in which the characters live may ignore the symbolic patterns and multi-layered formation involved in the stories; and may be deceived by the straightforward style Joyce used while composing the stories.

In short, a closer look into Dubliners reveals that the realistic nature of the stories masks their symbolic content because there is a "deceptive transparency of the stories…. [made up of] infinitely tenuous and often imperceptible uncertainties and indeterminacies….Some characters, situations, and events or even entire stories are quite astounding" (Bosinelli and Mosher, 13). Hence, the simplicity of the stories in *Dubliners* is just a trap: *Dubliners* provides not only a realistic narration of Joyce's native city,

but also rich symbolic implications with its characters, representing Dublin and its spiritual death.

Dubliners conceals deeper meanings beneath the surface of the narrative that can be deciphered through a psychoanalytic study of characters. In the collection, Joyce gradually peels off the psychological layers which are made up of dynamics functioning covertly inside the characters' mind. The stories reveal that Joyce's main concern is

> the psychological realities of a person in preference to external considerations such as physical appearances. This is not to say that physical objects, settings, and appearances are not important at all, but I would say that Joyce seldom describes things simply for their own sake. Almost always such external features appear as a way of exploring symbolically the consciousness of the character under attention, so that physical objects often take on an internal life of their own (Blades, 3).

Therefore, in *Dubliners*, Joyce gives clues about the characters' inner lives that bear a resemblance to the pathetic situation of the city they are involved in. Much like Dublin, the characters are paralyzed, imprisoned, depressed and spiritually dead. Inhabitants of the city are stuck in Dublin inertia and psychologically impoverished for altering their moribund status. They have a futile tendency to escape into a better state but none succeeds in improving his or her stagnant life.

The reason for the futile urge to escape from Dublin is because the characters are repelled by the morbid atmosphere that evokes them. Their escape becomes the only way out, a relief, from

gloomy Dublin, from which they are jettisoned into an alternative world where they could find pleasure, security, and protection. Yet, they grotesquely return to Dublin, to that city which magnetizes them as being their past, their heritage, and a psychological vortex.

Dublin is identical with the deceased characters in *Dubliners* in that both of them are more real and effectual than the protagonists of the stories, who are unable to alter or improve their inert lives and who live like zombies. For a Dubliner, vitality means remaining in Dublin despite the sense of death that prevails over the city. Therefore, being a living-dead in their universe, Dublin, is preferable for the characters in *Dubliners* to being a non-existent elsewhere.

Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, provides clarification for such 'unperceivable' circumstances as exemplified in behavioral patterns of the characters in *Dubliners*. Here, the question is whether or not the literary characters are real people, and they have psyches to be psycho-analyzed. For these questions, the advocators of psychoanalytical criticism have grounded their theory of psychoanalyzing literary characters on two bases:

> (1) when we psychoanalyze literary characters, we are not suggesting that they are real people but that they represent the psychological experience of human beings in general; and (2) it is just as legitimate to psychoanalyze the behavior represented by literary characters as it is to analyze their behavior from a feminist, Marxist, or African American critical perspective, or from the perspective of any critical theory that analyzes literary representations as illustrations of real-life issues(Tyson, 29).

Kaplan and Kloss (1973 cited in Wright, 1984: 46) also put forward a similar suggestion when they argue that the limitations of psychoanalytic character analysis are similar to those of literary character analysis: “Fictional characters are representations of life and, as such, can only be understood if we assume they are real. This assumption allows us to find unconscious instinctual motivations by the same procedure that the traditional critic uses to assign conscious one”. In short, fictional characters are the ones who have personal characteristics and who represent identities which a reader sees in flesh-and-blood people existing in a real world.

In a literary work, fictional characters are regarded as key elements to comprehend the content the work presents. They are analyzed by a study of their visual images and personalities; their relationship to other characters; and the purpose they serve in a literary piece. On the other hand, from a psychoanalytic perspective, data concerning a literary character’s personality, the meaning of their behavior and motives of their actions, can only be studied through the exploration of the unconscious reaches of the character’s psyche.

The exploration of the unconscious reaches lies in the core of the psychoanalytic theory because Freud views the actions of individuals – whether they are real or fictional – as the result of their unconscious motivations. He makes a correlation between the tip of the iceberg and the unconscious. The greater part of the iceberg

lying beneath the surface of the water resembles the unconscious, which constitutes the larger part of the mind and exists below the surface of awareness (Corey 2001; Hall and Lindzey, 1985). In order to grasp the meaning of human behavior, then, the storage of all experience, memories, repressed materials, instinctive needs and motivations in the unconscious are to be achieved.

In Freudian approach, instincts have a vital role in human evolution. Libido, originally referred by Freud as the sexual drive, includes the life instinct, which ensures the survival of the individual and the human race with an inborn capability for growth, development, and creativity. This instinct, in the Freudian sense, shapes all acts to obtain pleasure and avoid pain for survival. In contrast to the life instinct, there is the death instinct, which is the other determinant concerning why and how people act. The death instinct refers to the de-motivated and destructive drive of human beings, which are in people's behavior in the form of an unconscious wish to die or hurt themselves or others.

For Freud, human behavior is essentially driven by life and death instincts. Because "instincts are quantities of psychic energy – the energy that powers psychological activities like thinking –, and all the instincts together make up the total amount of energy available to the personality" (Hall and Lindzey, 1985: 35). Therefore, human personality is shaped by the ways in which this psychic energy is

distributed to the id, the ego, and the superego, which are the components into which Freud classifies the structure of personality.

Each component operates as part of a whole, functioning together to make up the personality. The id is the original personality system, upon which the ego and superego are established. It is the "seat of the instincts" and is "blind, demanding, and insistent" (Corey, 69). For this reason it only wishes without thinking and it demands its wishes be fulfilled. It is ruled by the pleasure principle and is mainly concerned with acquiring pleasure and avoiding pain. Essentially, it is the id which provides the primary source of the psychic energy which directs the operations of the remaining two.

The ego, on the other hand, is governed by the reality principle and represents rational thinking. It "evolves out of the id to enable the organism to deal with reality" (Hall and Lindzey, 1985: 34). It is the "executive that governs, controls, and regulates the personality"(Corey, 69). The ego is a mediator between the id's instinctive needs and the outside world. It controls the id's impulses and makes logical and realistic plans to satisfy a need.

Finally, derived from the ego is the superego, which is the voice of conscience. Unlike the id, the superego tries to achieve perfection, not pleasure. It represents parental or traditional values and is concerned with the societal standards. It tries to inhibit the id, to impose the moralistic goals on the ego, and to reach perfection.

Therefore, it is a continuum of the past tradition and the representation of ideals for future goals.

Another notion in Freud's psychoanalytic theory, anxiety, arises from the struggle among the id, ego, and superego to gain control of the existing psychic energy. To cope with anxiety, and to prevent the ego from being overwhelmed with this power struggle with the id and superego, the individual experiences the "oceanic feeling of oneness" which Freud ascribed (1930) as "a desire to return to the helpless infantile state of total identification with the mother" (Peat, 191) and "a wish to return to the watery bliss of the womb" (Gilmore, 144). Therefore, the 'oceanic feeling' is a regression into the unity with the mother, first in the womb later at the breast, in order for the fulfillment of pleasure-acquisition needs.

In the early course of infantile development, the relationship of the fetus with its mother constitutes the foundation of its sensual life. In its mother's womb, the fetus feels secure and protected. The womb is a self-sufficient place, providing the fetus with warmth and shelter. Then after its birth, the infant still maintains its sensual connection with the mother, not regarding her as a distinct and detached identity. The infant, by instinct, feels unified with the mother, who satisfies its essential needs, such as food, love, and comfort.

As the child grows up and socializes, it encounters the indifferent external world, which is alien and ignorant, unlike the mother. The external world is

> not the infant's mother. It is indifferent to the child and entirely outside of the child's control. Within the context of this indifferent outside world, the child is vulnerable and helpless. It defends against this helplessness in the only way it can, through the wish to reunite with, to fuse with, its loving mother. The mother will hold us, comfort us, and make things all right. Her limitless power to take care of us is experienced as omnipotence. Reinforced by our mother's love, we will no longer be helpless and powerless. We will again be the center of a loving world (Schwartz, 37).

To be a center of a caring world again and to have the omnipotent mother is the id's wish to be fulfilled. Since the infant does not obtain unconditioned love and care from the external world, which is lack of sympathy and concern, and full of dangers, traps, and failures, it fantasizes the original oneness with the mother with a desire to return to the security of the womb. This childish fantasy maintains its existence latently in the unconscious, deeply affecting one's inner life.

> According to psychoanalytic theory, childish fantasies do not disappear; they remain with us in the unconscious, where they can have the profound effects. For instance, the 'oceanic feeling'… is one of these effects. In general, our idea of a positive direction in life, a place that we can 'get into', in which the tensions and limitations of our lives will disappear, and in which we can simply be ourselves and be loved for it, is formed out of this image of fusion (Schwartz, 38).

Therefore, the 'oceanic feeling' is the id's desire for the peace of the womb and a wish for oneness with the loving and all-powerful mother. It is

> the desire to return to the womb, a hidden place of safety. Mother is a dark cave, containing everything before consciousness exists… [Oceanic feeling] is reunion with the 'me not me' state of wholeness with the mother… and a back to a painless, blissful time when two were one (Ayers, 82).

Finally, it can be concluded that the wholeness with the mother and the desire for returning to the womb take the form of seeking an opportunity to be lost forever in a larger unity which is nourishing, unthreatening, and powerful, like mother. This fusion with a larger unity through dissolution of the self is observed in mature individuals' unity with an organization, the society, the world, or even with God. By being identified with a larger entity, which will dissolve all boundaries and conflicts, the individual then satisfies his or her wish to experience the bliss and the safety of the womb.

Consequently, the recurrence of the infantile experience of being merged with the mother in the later phases of an individual's life provides a way of coping with the anxiety of being vulnerable, helpless and hopeless in the outside world. The anxious ego "seeks to return to the security of the womb, to await a rebirth into a more hospitable human environment. Thus, regression entails… a longing for renewal" (Keller, 16). Because the womb is a regenerative space and "in this safe space healing of the inner psychological wound can occur, the self can be constellated and the inner child re–discovered, with all of its potentiality for creativity and renewal" (Bradway, 19). Thus, the regression to the mother's matrix offers an individual the

possibility of resurgence and of activating his or her life instinct which will eventually bring self-improvement and self-actualization.

From this perspective, it can be suggested that regression to the unity with the mother to gain ‘the watery bliss’ of the matrix equals to returning back to Dublin and seeing the reflection of one’s self-portrait on the ruins of the city. Dublin, signifying “liquor amnii”, the amniotic fluid in the womb to protect the fetus (Hoblyn, 1900), forms such a mirror-like surrounding that it creates a one-to-one reflection of the actual self, providing a self-mirroring for the city’s inhabitants to conceptualize who , in reality, they are. This self-reflection, providing an image of self-portrait, differs from the reflection in an ordinary mirror, in that the image created in the mirror is totally virtual and deceptive because this artificial reflection in the mirror varies relative to the direction of light rays and to the position of the mirror’s reflective side.

For survival and well-being, the individual should satisfactorily create a sense of self-definition. For this, he has to answer the question of ‘who I am’, which is the focal point in man’s perennial search for the meaning in his life. In other words, one’s self-definition is awareness of and exposure to one’s “identity [which] is any characteristic that individuals use to define themselves” (Turner and Rosenberg, 95). It refers to the “establishment and stabilization of a sense of self or identity, [which] is a crucial dimension of personal development (Arthur et al, 100). To conclude, self-definition is

developing a view of self and a realization of what the meaning of one's existence is.

Similarly, in order to define one's own self, the individual has to develop a sense of identification with others for survival since "to survive, in the sense that concerns us, means to continue to exist as a person identifiable as those here and now" (Noonan, 1). This sense of belonging to the community formed by 'those here and now' provides a base for one's self-definition in a way that one can introspectively look at his actual self, leading to self-exploration and self-understanding. Otherwise, the individual creates an "idealized self-image, an imaginary (and largely unconscious) picture of the self as the possessor of unlimited powers and superlative qualities" (Hall and Lindzey, 160). That is, the individual falls into the abyss of misconception about the true nature of his own self.

The idealized self-image is totally unlike the actual self, and it ultimately produces alienation from the self, a gap between the identity one has constructed through the cultural conduct and the way one wants to be. This alienation and self-refusal is

> loss of self-respect for any reason. Loss of moral integrity through the violation of one's own conscience. Loss of physical integrity in injury or illness. Loss of intellectual integrity through any kind of mental disintegration in trauma or senility. Loss of identity....Being made to feel other within one's own self (a stranger lives inside me). I am a foreigner in my own body. The ultimate self-alienation is loss of sanity, losing one's own reality altogether, a sickness of the soul (Campbell, 158-159).

These lines prove that one's miss-conception about his actual self, and thereby the creation of a virtual self-image, diminish one's personal worth and dignity. On the other hand, creating a self-reflection promotes personal inquiry in a way that one can carefully and objectively weigh his strengths and weaknesses in order to achieve personal improvement. It refers to ".... knowing what is going on inside ourselves: knowing who we are, knowing why we choose what we choose, why we do what we do and what our feelings and desires are" (Au, 3). This type of self-consciousness is the last step in man's timeless investigation of his actual self and identity.

During this timeless investigation in the history of humanity, of course not all have reached the final point of existential reality: finding the twin-self for self-exposure. In Greek mythology, to illustrate, Narcissus misconceives that what he sees in the water is the reflection of his actual self and then he falls in love with the fake beauty of his virtual image mirrored in the water. As he leans closer and closer to his reflection of the idealized self-image, he falls into the water and gets drowned (Hamilton, 1969). As the tale suggests, the tragic end of Narcissus' life is due to his misinterpretation of finding self-love in his virtual reflection of the self, not in his actual self, or the reflection of his self-portrait similar to the original self existing in the mother's womb.

For these reasons, the individual has to find the true picture of the self, creating a self-reflection to see himself mirrored by a

symbolically and psychologically reflective surface. In this sense, Dublin enlivens a twin self-portrait, loyal to the real duplicate of the self, thus helps a Dubliner realistically perceive his actual self. Dublin, as 'liquor amnii', resembles the water in which Narcissus sees his reflection in the pond, yet it provides a self-reflection for a Dubliner – not in a megalomaniac way; as happened in the case of Narcissus. This self-reflection, through an emphatic look at Dublin, creates self-exposure, which precipitates the characters' compromise with the identity of being a Dubliner. Dublin and the characters in the stories are like identical twin-siblings, who have shared the same uterus. If these twins diverge, the self of the characters fade away. Because for a Dubliner, abandoning Dublin and being transformed into a different, idealized, and fantastic identity or "seeking a new locus for identity, one that [the characters assume] provides a sense of personal worth" (Turner and Rosenberg, 451) means becoming a vampire, whose crisis is his inability to visualize his image, his self on a mirror or a mirror-like surface.

As a result, the reason why the characters in Dubliners cannot break away with Dublin and its unburied past is that they unconsciously develop a regressive tendency towards gaining safety and life pleasure from their city, being the only matrix that embraces them. The characters experience the 'oceanic feeling' in that Dublin acts as a protector against the external reality, which is rather demanding and oppressing. Even if this reality emerges from the

past and present experiences of Dublin, the characters, each of them acting as a Dubliner, seek pleasure through the unification and identification with Dublin itself. In the stories, main characters, who are leading a moribund existence, are reborn through merging with the deceased ancestors, who remind them their Irish identity and pride.

With this outlook, it can be put forward that the characters in James Joyce's Dubliners are driven by the id's instinctual need to seek pleasure and avoid pain, the pain which arises from Dublin's past and present realities. To cope with these realities, main characters, as illustrated in the stories "Eveline" and "The Dead", are observed to have been drifted into the Freud's notion of the 'oceanic feeling', with its dimension of unification with a larger entity as a mother figure, providing a self-reflection to reach one's actual self; and of the infantile longing for returning to the womb, as a need for security and protection and for a possible rebirth. The characters in these two stories are closely identified with Dublin because their psychology is as pathetic as their city is. There is an organic tie between the characters and Dublin due to the common merits both sides are evolved from. For this reason, the characters search for a new womblike caecum, or a new locus for identity, in an attempt to be born from their ancestral matrix, Dublin. However, the birth causes the characters to be unsheltered and unprotected, helpless and hopeless, like an infant who needs its mother and yearns for the

security of her womb. Eventually, the characters regressively return back to Dublin, an encompassing and protective hollow for them, developing awareness that if a renewal is to happen, it will definitely take place in this hollow, not elsewhere.

CHAPTER III

"EVELINE": AN INSTANCE OF SELF-RECOGNITION

"Eveline" is a story of a 19 year-old Irish girl, Eveline Hill, who is exhausted by being confined to Dublin's depressive circumstances filled with hopelessness, poverty, and despair. On the point of embarking for Buenos Aires with an exotic sailor, she bizarrely returns to her unpromising future in Dublin, instinctively anticipating that, without her Irish identity, she would be a ghost elsewhere, which, yet, could provide an opportunity to change her inert life. That is because she unconsciously clings to the womblike security and protection of her hometown, Dublin, a matrix from which she originates and develops. In short, she is compelled to be renewed within this matrix, as she experiences self-awareness after a long quest for identity.

The story of Eveline is narrated almost completely at the window of her home and takes place in her mind as she is planning to escape from Dublin: "She sat at the window watching the evening invade the avenue. Her head was leaned against the window curtains, and in her nostrils was the odour of dusty cretonne. She was tired." (*Dubliners,* 37) She watches pensively through the

window gazing at the outside world, engulfing her home. This is the world that she is alien to. She, at present, questions trespassing beyond the window screen – beyond her familiar territory – which refers to the rest of the world, alien but seductive for her. Therefore, the window, the transparent and filmsy screen, projects unlimited possibilities for Eveline to break free from her duty to her alcholic father and her promise to her mother on her death-bed to “to keep the home together as long as she could” (*Dubliners*, 41).

Eveline is psychologically “tired” and has a deprived sense of self and identity (*Dubliners,* 37). Till now, she has achieved maintaining her submissive role of as a Dubliner; but at present, she feels depleted by her “subjugation to the realities of patriarchal religion, familial duty, and assigned roles of females” (Black, 162). Even in her own story, her name “Eveline” does not appear, except in the title, until the last few lines. In other words, she is in a state of losing her selfhood and in need of “exploring another life” “in a distant unknown country”, where “she would not be treated as her mother had been” (Dubliners, 38-39).

3. 1 Eveline’s Quest for Identity

Frustrated with the familial burdens and oppressed by Dublin’s paralyzing forces, Eveline passively looks through the window, in need of re-establishing her sense of being by the idealization of a place outside Ireland, where “people would treat her with respect”

(*Dubliners,* 38*).* By looking through the window, in fact, she seeks a new locus for identity where she expects to visualize her image of self-portrait. Nonetheless, the window does not reflect her actual self nor does it help her to conceptualize her identity. That is because "The window [refers] to the gate, a transitional boundary, a medium for violation of borders" (Reisner, 150). Therefore, by breaking the window boundary, Eveline exposes to infinite possibilities of diverse identities, being idealized, fantastic, yet alien to her original self, the crude Dubliner. The window creates a romantic vision, an alternative life, with which Eveline is deceived by her idealized self-image, an illusion in which she imagines herself as a refined lady; extravagant and bohemian, away from the depressive atmosphere of Dublin. Thus the window screen claims a symbolic dimension, through which Eveline can transform into a fantasized, Platonic identity, bestowing her a livelier life.

In this romantic vision, there appears an exotic sailor, Frank and his fantastic country promising an alternative life for Eveline different from the life in Dublin.

> She was about to explore another life with Frank. Frank was very kind, manly, open-hearted. She was to go away with him by the night-boat to be his wife and to live with him in Buenos Ayres, where he had a home waiting for her (*Dubliners,* 39).

Frank offers a new beginning for Eveline in Buenos Aires, which signifies some "good air" or "fresh air" as it is suggested by the name of the city (*The Encyclopedia Americana*, 708). If Eveline elopes with

Frank to Buenos Aires, then, she can be a bohemian girl and lead a much more satisfying life in that ideal city. She associates Buenos Aires to utopia – a nowhere land – where, if she would make it, she would re-emerge or reborn as her platonic conception of her self. Her rebirth would crown her as a new Eveline, baptized by the fresh air implied by Buenos Aires, which is juxtaposed against the stale atmosphere in Dublin, a city on the verge of decay and decomposition.

> Frank offers a haven, escape, and adventure, a baulk against the stifling repression of home: “He would save her” (*Dubliners,* 41). He is associated with the alternative life which beckons: together they see the operetta *The Bohemian Girl* (one of the many ironic touches in the story) (Blades, 20).

Eveline builds fantasies around a sailor with stories of a better life. At present, she is not concerned with love because her feelings toward Frank are not clear. “First of all it [their relationship] had been an excitement for her to have a fellow and then she had begun to like him” (*Dubliners*, 40). She thinks Frank, a “very kind, manly and open-hearted” man, might give her a bohemian life by marrying her. Buenos Aires is a new locus for Eveline on which she wants to visualize her idealized self-image, as a bohemian girl, free from the burden of her responsibilities and of her past. This could be an opportunity for her to transform into an alien identity by which she would not have to cope with her alcoholic father who beats her and to do an overwhelming job at “the Stores” with Miss Gavan ”whom had always had an edge on her”. That is, “in a distant unknown country, it

would not be like that. Then she would be married – she, Eveline. People would treat her with respect then" (*Dubliners,* 38). Eveline pursues an identity in a distant country that, she expects, will bestow her a sense of respect and self-worth. At that moment, she does not take account of a possible disappointment she may experience with Frank.

Nevertheless, the story conveys details about Frank's symbolic association with exile and dubious morality:

> …Buenos Aires was associated with prostitution and the "Patagonians" he [Frank] describes were notorious for their barbarity. Also, the night boat journey from the "North Wall" may be a reference to the mythological voyage through the river Styx to the Underworld and therefore Eveline's death (as opposed to the "life" of psychological normality she seems to desire) (Trudel, 3).

The kind of escape and the forthcoming circumstances, as well, are indeed out of certainty. The night-boat departing from the North Wall is probably the regular way to Liverpool and while passengers might sail to Buenos Aires from there, Liverpool could be the sordid end of this journey for Eveline; or she could reach South America still unmarried and find Frank's promises false (Beck, 2). The first scenario – ending journey at Liverpool port – brings into her mind another discouraging fact that the place was a notorious one where many Irish girls had been taken by sailors and left to a life of poverty and, even prostitution. This might lead Eveline to another male exploitation from which she tries to escape.

Even the most optimistic scenario in terms of the possibilities after the escape does not seem to provide Eveline with the life she expects, since the nature of the promises the couple made to each other are undetailed in the story. Eveline accepts Frank's offer to go away to Buenos Aires and Frank, in return, promises to marry her and to provide her with a home there. "He would give her life, perhaps love too. But she wanted to live" (*Dubliners,* 41). This arrangement between the pair does not include any sign of passion or romance, rather it refers to a need for security and identity for Eveline. She claims a passive identity defined by Frank, an approach which nullifies her individual identity.

Eveline accounts for such words as 'unaccustomed', 'excitement', 'distant', 'different', and 'secretly' which signify Frank's appeal to her and which indicate her assumption that he has the opportunity to provide Eveline with a different and fulfilling life in a far away place from her death-smelling home. Eveline is clearly seduced by a mysterious sailor, who, in return, is expected to lay the ground for her to lead a bohemian life, a life she idealizes for future without any familial and cultural burdens with which she is already frustrated. With this expectation, she passes responsibility onto Frank for the initiation and direction of her own life in a way that she submissively admits Frank's superiority to change her life for her. This is her understanding of re-establishing a sense of being and value, expecting Frank, a man from an alien country, to shape, define, and

establish her individual identity for her. But then, she suddenly awakens from her fantastic future world by citing her father's warning after banning her of seeing Frank again: "I know these sailor chaps" (*Dubliners, 40).*

Eveline goes on her quest, by the window, for finding her twin-self, or the reflection of her actual self, and begins to recollect her past memories. She remembers "the children of the avenue [who] used to play together in that field – the Devines, the Waters, the Dunns, little Keogh the cripple, she and her brothers and sisters" *(Dubliners,* 37). However, her recollections are selective and subjective, serving to idealize the past to create nostalgia. By this way, she tries to re-conceptualize her horrifying past as if it had been of much glory and happiness. This is escapism from the fearful past by compensating for it with an ideal past. Her escapist tendency is the proof of her quest for a reflection of her selfhood and individual identity, with a need to improve her stagnant life. However,

> nostalgia is … an orientation toward the past that freezes past experience, preventing rather than encouraging true investigation and dialectic. Nostalgia idealizes and romanticizes the past at the expense of the present and future, and like habit, it calcifies the past, anesthetizing present experience by robbing it of its uniqueness and immediacy (Rickard, 66).

Therefore, at the expense of present and future, Eveline tries to be dependent on a few pleasant days when "her father was not so bad [and] her mother was alive" (*Dubliners, 37).* Through nostalgia without a realistic but a retrospective look at the past, she fails in re-

constructing her present and future. She actually does not know where to look at for self-reflection in order to claim her identity. Once again, she is not able to visualize the projection of her actual image mirrored, even in the past, since “everything changes”, she cites. The children of the avenue have “grown up”, the field in which Eveline and her friends “used to play every night” has now houses built in it, old neighbors like “the Waters” moved to England”. She, too, feels the need of change and now a saver, Frank, offers an opportunity “to go away like others, to leave her home” for good (*Dubliners,* 37). The opportunity for leaving her home, Dublin, becomes an impetus for her to move out into an alien universe, though fearsome. It is as if she yearns for birth from her ancestral womb, Dublin, yet with an attempt to find a new womblike cocoon, elsewhere, in Buenos Aires, a utopian place with which she expects to identify herself.

However, the idea of an imminent birth into an alien land causes her to have an increased sense of desperation, and she feels alienated, vulnerable and helpless with a new, fantasized identity, which is too remote to her original being. Then she cries out: “Home! She looked around the room, reviewing all its familiar objects which she had dusted once a week for so many years, wondering where on earth all the dust came from” (*Dubliners,* 38).

3.2 Dust: The Ashes of Ancestors

The gothic dust, that layer of lifelessness, morbid and moribund, triggers in her the awareness of being spiritually dead. When Eveline recollects “the pitiful vision of her mother’s life”, and pictures her on her death-bed, lying immobile and lifeless, she spontaneously empathizes with her (*Dubliners,* 41). That is what scares her: living in Dublin as dead as her mother. Scared of undergoing the same experience as her mother had, she retreats from the horror of situation; yet, she is grotesquely compelled to claim her home, Dublin and every bit of fine details against which she is forced to yield; being totally overpowered she returns. She is instinctively compelled to maintain the union with Dublin, signifying her ancestral matrix, by which she is nourished. Her hometown nourishes her by its Irish past, signified by “the familiar objects” in the house (*Dubliners,* 38). This motherly nourishment provides her with a fortification against the severity of outside world. As a result, she is unconsciously afraid of not finding this motherly protection and care “in her new home, in a distant unknown country” (*Dubliners,* 38).

Eveline unconsciously feels secure not only at home but also with its dust she inhales, which is pervasive all over the house.

> That this odour is “in her nostrils” and that in between her complex reveries she “inhales” it, suggests that she takes a somber comfort from this action: she breathes it to calm herself. Dust; after all; is typically beneath notice (Leonard, 96).

Home signifies Dublin and dust signifies Dublin's past, – and thus Eveline's ancestors. To emphasize the choking dust, that rotting, stale, and decomposing residue, and its solace function in Eveline's inner world, Joyce uses similar sentence structures twice: "Her time was running out but she continued to sit by the window, leaning her head against the window curtain, inhaling the odour of dusty cretonne" (Dubliners, 41).

On the conscious level, dusting off the objects in the house seems to Eveline a part of her everyday routine. Despite her efforts to clean off the dust, which stands for her roots and identity, it pervades over the atmosphere of the whole house. She wonders about the origin of the dust but does not understand "where on earth all the dust came from" (*Dubliners,* 38). The dust has crept into the present as if the residue of some decayed corpse. In Eveline's world, "dust is set up as a sort of prison for her in its inescapability, the monotony of its inevitability and also its hints of the decay about the house" (Blades, 18). She is unaware that dust is embodying her past: her friends, her brother, her mother, who are already dead. The past is like "a source of rootedness", providing Eveline with a sense of belonging (Bosinelli and Mosher, 158). That is why she is oriented toward the past, which makes her closer to her ancestors. Here, there is a biblical allusion which reminds that we come from and return to dust (Manser, 1995). Therefore, the dust is the crude fact, that undesirable reality, from which there is no escape. She has to

stay, suffering as all those who suffered to claim their Irishness. To be precise, the dust at home suggests the image of death which Eveline cannot – or does not want to – get rid of. In fact, it is her relationship with the dust, or death which reminds Eveline her roots and her Irish identity.

The dust signifies the ashes of Eveline's mother, or those of her ancestors, who have lived suffered and died by the flames of great agony they have had throughout their lives in Dublin, "live[s] of commonplace sacrifices closing in final craziness" (*Dubliners*, 41). Consequently, inhaling the dust, she reaches the realm of her original being, and she gets relaxed as she regresses into the womb of Irish origins. At this moment, Eveline is not conscious of the fact that the change she tries to actualize can take place in this ancestral matrix, where she can be reborn just like Phoenix, a mythical bird, consumed itself by fire and later reborn from its ashes (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1996). Eveline will definitely be able to rise renewed by the ashes of her dead mother, if she does not reject but compromise with the identity she has inherited from her mother.

The ashes of Eveline's mother become the inspiring source for Eveline. Even if the mother has already turned into dust and ashes, she is much more real than her daughter, who has been in a state of self denial.

> Although the mother is no longer alive, she ironically, exhibits the greatest force in the story; her daughter is so passive that she seems on the point of (spiritual) death (Taglieri, 38).

The ashes of her mother's corpse have blanketted the soil of her homeland, Dublin. Regardless of their inorganic status, Dublin and the mother's corpse both have the power to inspire and motivate Eveline to be reborn and rise out of the ashes of Irish ancestors. In short, it is Eveline who is to find her own vitality and to blossom within the impoverished soil of Dublin, by cultivating and fertilizing it.

In fact, Eveline has, so far, satisfied her survival needs with her affinity with the past: the past which has made the Dublin life so stale. These past memories have revived Eveline by giving peace, comfort, and harmony at home. As a product of Dublin, she is attracted by the past and for a Dubliner the past is "a way of habitually or reflexively turning to the past to avoid the present" (Rickard, 69). This orientation to the past, from the psychoanalytic point of view, refers to the attempts for restructuring instinctive fantasy of the oneness with the mother. That is why, upon questioning her attempt "to go away", Eveline suddenly remembers that, "In her home anyway she had shelter and food; she had those whom she had known all her life" (Dubliners, 38). In Eveline's world, death prevails, as if a matrix, encompassing concentrically the source of life, while the unborn fetus awaits its birth.

3. 3 Confrontation with the Twin Identity

The vision of the past is so powerfully audible and visible for Eveline that she vividly remembers the night her mother died, and the promise she made to her “to keep the home together”.

> As she mused the pitiful vision of her mother’s life laid its spell on the very quick of her being- that life of commonplace sacrifices closing in final craziness. She trembled as she heard again her mother’s voice saying constantly with foolish insistence:
> - Derevaun Seraun! Derevaun Seraun! (*Dubliners,* 41).

Her dead mother’s memories resurface from the past in order to remind Eveline of her Irishness. Even though the mother has not had a peaceful, comfortable, or secure life in her Irish home, her corpse now forces her daughter to adhere to the tradition and to be submissive enough to lead a life similar as her own.

Eveline remembers her mother’s final incoherent and incomprehensible words with horrifying drama and devout determination: “Derevaun Seraun! Derevaun Seraun!” (*Dubliners*, 41). The words are incomprehensible. According to an Irish scholar, they are not Gaelic. They might mean “one end… bitterness” or more closely, “end of riches …bitterness”. For Patrick Henchy of the National Library the phrase means “the end of pleasure is pain” (Beck, 2). They are unintelligible to Eveline but they somehow disturb her and cause her to sense that should her solemn promise be kept, she would be like her mother, to be misused and deprived. But in reality, her mother’s final pronouncement conveys a warning that she will suffer more due to lack of Irish identity if she abandons Dublin.

What Eveline will acquire from her transformation into a virtual identity, though offering a rich pack of pleasurable life chances, will nothing but a life-long alienation that will end with bitterness.

After visualizing her mother on her dead-bed,

> She stood up in a sudden impulse of terror. Escape! She must escape! Frank would save her. He would give her life, perhaps love, too. But she wanted to live. Why should she unhappy? She had a right to happiness (*Dubliners*, 41-42).

Eveline becomes frightened because she confronts with her twin identity as her mother's corpse. The corpse mirrors her image of actual self. She gets terrified with the possibility of following her mother's fate and sacrificing her life to a handful of dust. On her recollection of her mother's final words, she visualizes herself reflected in her mother's death-bed, in "a life of commonplace sacrifices closing in final craziness", thus, becoming her mother's twin-identity (*Dubliners,* 41). Mother's is a distorted picture, her fear of what she is yet to become.

At the moment of confrontation with her actual self, she regretfully tries to avoid the harsh reality: "Escape! She must escape!" (*Dubliners*, 41). Facing reality is always painful but liberating. Therefore, regardless of its painfulness, challenging the reality with a claim of one's own self makes an individual self-reliant and self-respected. In order to re-define her sense of individuality, Eveline should introspectively examine her inner self and develop a positive view of identity. From this perspective, what she pictures in

her mother's death-bed will not necessarily be the destiny of hers. She, as a separate individual, can determine her destiny by apprehending and appreciating her own identity, which she can only identify through a close look into the mirror of Dublin. Dublin offers a projected-image of Eveline's own self. Out of Dublin, she will not definitely find her alter-ego with which she can identify herself. Therefore, staying in Dublin means yielding into the gravitational pull of self-acceptance and self-satisfaction through seeing the projection of the self. This will ultimately prevent Eveline from self-denial by impersonating an alien identity, a mask to avoid the reality of Dublin's moribund atmosphere.

Her confrontation with her twin identity has produced a consistent resolution to her dilemma after her long questioning of a possible escape to a Platonic land, outside Ireland. Earlier, she has been deluded into believing that she could be reborn with an alternative identity that introduces a fantastic and idealized way of life. It is true that Eveline's is "a hard life – but now that she was about to leave it, she did not find it wholly undesirable" (*Dubliners,* 39). At this moment, however, she experiences a repression of opportunity, holding back a desire for leading a bohemian life in a utopian city, Buenos Aires. Since repression means the exclusion of the "impulses and actions connected to pleasure gratification" from the conscious (Marrone, 19) in order "to avoid guilt, anxiety, and insecurity" (Corsini, 757), the guilt of disloyalty to her family, to her

dead ancestors, and to her identity as a Dubliner becomes a psychological and spiritual pressure for Eveline to stay in Dublin. That is, her former escapist tendency has now turned into an undesirable impetus for Eveline. Now the only pleasurable life sources left for her are nothing, but Dublin, and her selfhood, as a Dubliner.

> She stood among the swaying crowd in the station at the North Wall. He held her hand and she knew that he was speaking to her, saying something about the passage over and over again… She answered nothing. She felt her cheek pale and cold and, out of a maze of distress, she preyed to God to direct her, to show her what was her duty…No!, No!, No! It was impossible (*Dubliners,* 42).

After taking a repressive step at the end of the story, Eveline stands paralyzed on the dock and loses her consciousness. Frank calls out her name but she remains spiritually unresponsive.

> "Eveline! Evvy!"
> He rushed beyond the barrier and called to her to follow. He was shouted at to go on, but he still called to her. She set her white face to him, passive, like a helpless animal. Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition (*Dubliners*, 43).

She is now poised between the past and present, helpless and vulnerable, lacking any desirable sources to satisfy her instinctive needs for security and protection. Then, she unconsciously reconstructs the instinctive fantasy of the oneness with the mother.

3. 4 The 'Oceanic Feeling'

She feels like a powerless infant, longing to merge with the omnipotent mother to fulfill the id's pleasure-acquisition needs.

Instinctually, she yearns for a return to the security and safety of the matrix, for the satisfaction of the 'oceanic feeling' to regain the sensual connection with the mother and experience the watery bliss of the matrix again. Eveline's unconscious mind yields into the 'oceanic feeling', creating a regression into her ancestral matrix Dublin, a haven for her to be safe and sheltered. In the ancestral matrix, she conceives the image of her actual self, reflected on the 'liquor amnii' of Dublin.

Due to this stunning instance of her self-awareness, her self temporarily dissolves and is dominated by paralysis, which is an essential theme throughout *Dubliners.* The inert state of her paralysis suggests a circumstance of stasis, which correlates with the notion the 'oceanic feeling'. Eveline, facing an unbearable situation, a loss of rootedness and of identification, unconsciously shows a regressive tendency to return to the state of her original form as an Irish fetus in the ancestral matrix. This regression into the re-generative matrix not only temporarily obstructs the progress of an individual, but also provides the individual with stability and ease, signifying the pre-birth period. Because the regression

> is an attempt to fuel or regenerate the personality by encounter and merger with a parental God-Image…This leads inevitably to a dissolution (or 'death') of the ego in its old form with a consequent reduction in the tensions and excitations of a former way of life… and it is only after the personality emerges enriched that the 'death' can be seen to have been a prelude to transformation (Jung cited in Samuels, 40).

Figuratively, the ‘oceanic feeling’ provides rebirth and it grants a change for pleasure, that is, of being one’s self, as a Dubliner. Therefore, it is an impetus for further growth for Eveline, after the repression of her urge to escape. Here, in “Eveline”, Joyce “felt and depicted the repressions in Ireland – particularly in Dublin as the capital and center of Ireland – repressions that he himself struggled to escape” (Dumbleton, 158). At the early stages of her questioning the escape from these repressions “She [has contemplated] leaving home, but to her xenophobic Dublin mind leaving home is equated with death” (Putzel, 2). What seems life for a non-Dubliner is death for Eveline and vice versa. She instinctively seeks her rebirth from death because she has to undergo the pain and suffering of rebirth, thus murdering her former self and re-creating a new self out of the dead mother’s ashes.

Thus, Dublin shelter and food is complacency for her even if they cost too much: working outside in “the Stores” with a supervisor who ”had always had an edge on her” (*Dubliners,* 39) and then returning to the house of her threatening and abusive father, with whom she fought for money to go shopping. For this reason,

> Eveline’s past and her home are her universe and she dares not disturb that universe by embarking on a journey into an unknown future in an unfamiliar Buenos Aires. She clings to the security of what she ‘knows’: a fabricated past (Rickard, 69.)

In conclusion, Eveline can not escape from the dust of her homeland but returns to its somber atmosphere. She embraces Dublin, where

she has once been left insignificant, ashamed of her Irish identity, dominated by poverty, inferiority and self-denial. Thus falling in a state of paralysis, Eveline reacts against Dublin's paralyzing powers, such as the oppressing religion, male-centered culture, and economic exploitation of the British regal power, by being reborn out of the ancestral dust and matrix.

To be reborn out of the ashes of Dublin, Eveline considers that "her own salvation and happiness mean nothing in light of her mother's dreadful pull upon her and her obligation toward suffering" (Taglieri, 38). Hence, by repressing the joy of escape into an ideal place, she makes self-sacrifices like her ancestors, having suffered from grinding poverty and shameful degradation. Her mother has martyred herself for the family and so have the Irish ancestors for their country. Eveline is a Dubliner and for Dubliners "evil becomes what little good is left them and their only pleasure, if any, would be a martyr's masochism" (Beck, 4). Eveline's life seems to be devoid of meaning but masochistically suffering for the sake of Dublin fills its lack.

To conclude, with the hollowness of identity, Eveline has lost of her self-worth and respect, which erodes her sense of selfhood. That is, "she has a profound uncertainty about her identity and she appears to have little other than that which is imposed by other people" (Blades, 21). To resolve her predicament and to re-define her self, she fictionalizes a romanticized version of life with Frank, a

sea adventurer, whose prospects are expected to create a vision of an idealized self-image for Eveline. However, toward the end of questioning her escape, Eveline instinctively senses that should she be reborn with a virtual identity in an alien country distinct from her Dublin microcosm, she will be non-existent:

> she can visualize herself absent from her own home, a fading, yellowing, discarded memory, a vacuum that only the dust fills. The fear of non-existence eventually paralyses Eveline into remaining a ghost in her own home" (Benstock, 37).

Her fear of being invisible causes her to have preferred "the unpleasant realities of a 'home' that she knows [to] an abroad that is unknowable and that presets itself to her as patently fabulous" (Norris, 58). Eveline claims being an individual staying in Dublin, where she can still define herself, claiming an identity.

She has been paralyzed like the city she lives in. In one of Joyce's lectures in Trieste about Dublin, he writes, "individual initiative is paralyzed in my homeland" (Seidel, 44). As Joyce points out, Eveline, as a Dubliner, has been metaphorically dead as her environment is: she has lacked initiation and mobilization. Yet, after her self-understanding at the moment of confrontation with her actual self, she compromises with her past, culture, and Irish identity. She is drawn into the 'the oceanic feeling', regressing into the ancestral womb, Dublin, and experiences the enjoyment of the wholeness with it, thereby admitting the dignity of identification with her hometown. She is now aware of the fact that Dublin is the only place for her to

be able to find and internalize her own projected self. It is the only matrix for Eveline to be renewed as an individual undertaking her responsibility in the enlivenment of Dublin.

CHAPTER IV

"THE DEAD": RESUSCITATION OF THE IRISH SOIL IN DUBLIN

"The Dead", as the last story of the series in *Dubliners*, further elaborates the motif of psychological paralysis of sterile individuals in Dublin. It balances Joyce's harsh – but realistic – criticism on Dublin with a display of Irish hospitality. In a letter, he writes to his brother Stanislaus, he says:

> sometimes thinking of Ireland, it seems to me that I have been unnecessarily harsh. I have reproduced none of the attraction of the city, for I have never felt at ease in any city since I left it, except Paris. I have not reproduced its ingenuous insularity and its hospitality; the latter 'virtue' so far as I can see, does not exist elsewhere in Europe (Seidel, 43).

Considering that he has written so bitterly about his hometown, Joyce broadens the scope of *Dubliners* "with the suggestion of vision signal [ling] movement, change, enlargement" in the conclusion part of "The Dead" (Davies, xvii). Therefore, divergent from the preceding stories ending with inconclusive closures, "The Dead" reveals an unconvertible fact that there is still hope for Dublin and Dubliners to rise in the event of self-understanding and self-acceptance through an introspective examination of the self. The narration of "The Dead" develops around an elite group of Irish middle class

families, living sterile and isolated, residing in the wealthiest neighborhood in Dublin. Having gathered at “the Misses Morkans annual dance” party, they are ignorant about the problems dominating and paralyzing Ireland (*Dubliners*, 199). This crème de la crème of the Irish population is entirely indifferent to the morbid and moribund state of their nation. Their only consideration is “eating well; the best of everything: diamond-bone sirloins, three-shilling tea and the best bottled stout” (*Dubliners*, 200). Therefore, they are detached from the ordinary Irish people, who are suffering from the sordid atmosphere including all modes of pain and poverty. This plain truth is in fact demonstrated in the title of the story: Dublin is a city of the dead, a fact into which these elite partygoers in “The Dead” have turned a blind eye.

Set against the poor and the helpless in Ireland, the privileged few in “The Dead” are depicted in a cheerful party atmosphere, at Christmas, beautified by the easy falling snow flakes outside. Among the participants of the party are the story’s protagonist Gabriel Conroy and his wife Gretta, Gabriel’s aging aunts Julia and Kate Morkan, his unmarried cousin Mary Jane, his colleague Molly Ivors, and many others, who represent the privileged stratum of the Irish society.

4. 1 Gabriel's Elevated Self-Image

Gabriel, the epitome of the prideful Irish intellectuals, ironically takes an empty pride in his intellect and culture, which drifts him into a sense of alienation. His alienation is observed not only in the relationship with the rest of the party guests, but with his own homeland, Ireland; his wife, Gretta; and his self and identity.

The vanity of his pride reveals itself with an examination of his alienation from the rest of the party goers. As he rehearses the after-dinner speech in his mind, he is worried about the effectiveness of his wording with an assumption that his toast "would fail with them [party guests]", who cannot appreciate the quotation from Browning's poems, which he will add into his speech. Namely, he mistakenly imagines that he is socially and intellectually "above the heads of the hearers", who are participating in the party. (*Dubliners*, 203).

His false sense of importance is also proved by his illusion of being culturally superior to the rest of the people. It is during Mary Jane's piano recital that he thinks he cannot appreciate her Academy piece, giving the reason that he does not find the melody sophisticated enough:

> he liked the music, but the piece she was playing had no melody for him and he doubted whether it had any melody for the other listeners, though they had begged Mary Jane to play something (*Dubliners,* 211,212).

His illusion of superiority seems impalpable when one considers the fact that these prosperous Catholics share similar cultural and social backgrounds.

Gabriel is so swollen with pride that he is “sick of [his] own country” (*Dubliners,* 216). It is obvious that Gabriel’s prideful blindness to his identity of Irishness prevents him from providing rational grounds for his being sick of his own homeland, whereupon Miss Ivors calls him “West Briton!”, implying that he is more English than Irish, and completely spoiling his party mood for the rest of the evening.

His conflict with his national identity is apparent in his inability to give satisfactory answers to Miss Ivors’ questions concerning the extend of his patriotic feelings.

> O, Mr. Conroy, will you come for an excursion to an Aran Isles this summer? … And why do you go to France and Belgium instead of visiting your own land? …Haven’t you your own language to keep in touch with – Irish? …Haven’t you your own land visit, that you know nothing of, your own people, and your own country? (*Dubliners*, 215-216).

Hence, his discord with his national identity leads him to a quest for an idealized identity and creates megalomania in his psyche. This psychological defense mechanism develops out his fantasy of impersonating the identity of the colonizing powers. “He cares little for Irish culture and expresses himself in the medium (the Unionist *Daily Express*) of the colonizer, [suggesting] the self-rejection of the colonized (Jones, 76). Moreover, “he feels much more at home with

English and European influences rather than those of Ireland" (Taglieri, 103). For instance, he plans to quote an English poem in his speech, prefers vacations in European countries, and imposes the European habit of wearing galoshes on his family, since "everyone wears them on the continent" (*Dubliners,* 205). In short, he assumes that a way of life outside Ireland is the right one to pursue, though he is unaware that it would be a life with an impersonation of an alien identity.

Gabriel's self-worship leads him unconsciously to exploit his wife's inferiority, socially as well as culturally. He feels ill at ease with his mother's slighting phrases about her grade of culture:

> thanks to her [his mother], Gabriel himself had taken his degree in the Royal University. A shadow passed over his face as he remembered her sullen opposition to his marriage. Some slighting phrases she had used still rankled in his memory; she had once spoken of Gretta as being country cute (*Dubliners,* 213).

His false sense of superiority even produces restlessness when he is reminded of Gretta's rural origins. For instance, when Miss Ivors asks about Gretta's birth-place, Gabriel irritably replies her.

> - She's from Connacht, isn't she?
> - Her people are, said Gabriel shortly (*Dubliners,* 215).

Gabriel is embarrassed by the rural identity of Gretta, "who comes from the West [Western Ireland] and hence represents the unreconstructed, inferior native" (Potts, 93). He even does not desire Gretta's escort to his summertime vacation in the continent, but he rather prefers going to "France or Belgium or perhaps Germany" with

his male friends, “partly to keep in touch with the languages and partly for a change “(*Dubliners,* 215).

Gabriel is pre-occupied with maintaining his megalomaniac state so much so that he becomes completely mistaken about his intellectual identity. That is, he falls into a state of intellectual self-deception, a state in which he is deceived by what his mind perceives through his eyes, not through his interrogative logic. For example, he is fascinated by the virtual image of the self he sees in the mirror, as narrated in the story: “He caught sight of himself in full length, his broad, well-filled shirt-front; the face whose expression always puzzled him when he saw it in a mirror” (*Dubliners,* 249). At this moment, Gabriel is blinded by the fascination with his virtual image because his eyes are oriented to perceive what his mind is pre-occupied with. Since he is so absorbed with his blinding pride, he is too remote from his intellectual responsibility. On the other hand, as an intellectual, he is supposed to consider that self-worth does not lie in the reflection of the idealized self-image, but of the actual image, however “ludicrous” and “pitiable” it is (*Dubliners*, 251). Of course, this kind of self-deception is quite normal for Gabriel, an intellectual who is even incapable of penetrating the world around him, the world of Dubliners, surrounded by the moral and social lethargy.

From this aspect, it can be concluded that he has a serious defect in his intellectual formation, assuming himself as a gifted

individual who deserves admiration and acceptance. In the course of the Morkan's party, to illustrate, he "relishes the sound of his own voice, seeing himself as a gifted public speaker or the designated raconteur" (Bosinelli and Mosher, 46). His mind has created an illusion, which leads him nowhere except for a desperate quest for him to reach his sublime self, magnified by his convex mirror of his all conquering ego. Therefore, Gabriel's case of intellectual self-deception on this timeless quest for reaching the sublime self bears a resemblance to the mythical story of Narcissus. Much like Gabriel, Narcissus is deceived by what his eyes are oriented to see on the reflection of the water. Since Narcissus, too, is so much self-absorbed with his own ego, he sees what his mind tends to perceive. Accordingly, Narcissus falls in love with his own self-image, and gets drowned as he tries to reach his virtual sublime-self.

On the other hand, there is still a sign of hope for Gabriel in avoiding getting drowned in his narcissistic world. In the course of the story, his false pride is challenged by significant encounters with the servant Lily, his female colleague Molly Ivors, his wife Gretta, those who Gabriel supposes are beneath him in the social hierarchy and whose fallen state doubles his self-worship. By shattering his ego, these three women attempt to hold up a mirror to Gabriel to help him visualize realistically who he is, through establishing a sense of identity for him, far from his fantasized, Platonic, transcendent and supra-identity.

4.2 Puncture in the Womb Shell

Just at the beginning of the party, Gabriel feels annoyed by his failure in communication after receiving, from the servant Lily, “a bitter and sudden retort” to his patronizing question:

> - Tell me Lily, he said in a friendly tone, do you still go to school?
> - O no, sir, she answered. I’m done schooling this year and more.
> - O, then, said Gabriel gaily, I suppose we’ll be going to your wedding one of these fine days with your young man, eh?
> The girl glanced back at him over her shoulder and said with great bitterness:
> - The men that is now is only all palaver and what they can get out of you (*Dubliners,* 202).

Gabriel has assumed that Lily would desperately consort to marriage if not schooling; but after her bitter reply, he gets “colored” due to the gaffe he has made. Then, he quickly tries to offset his failure in a condescending manner, offering a coin for her service.

> - O, Lily, he said, thrusting it into her hands, it is Christmas-time, isn’t it? Just … here’s a little…
> He walked rapidly towards the door.
> - O no, sir!, cried the girl, following him. Really, sir, I wouldn’t take it (*Dubliner,* 203).

Gabriel further fails by assuming that Lily, the servant, would be overpowered by his higher economic status. “His shell is punctured by Lily” (Bosinelli and Mosher, 46); in other words, his self-made image is shattered by the dignity of a simple girl. What is ironic is that the back answer of this insignificant, underprivileged, illiterate, and ordinary Irish, signifying the majority of Dubliners, does not satisfy an intellectual’s superior identity but provides a reflection for him to see his inadequacy.

As Gabriel is “still decomposed”, his narcissistic shell is once more punctured by Miss Ivors, his female colleague. This “unpleasant incident with Miss Ivors” begins with her accusation of him of being an embarrassment to the Irish nation as he is writing for an antinationalist newspaper. Moreover, she accuses Gabriel of neglecting his own country and language. With her stunning question of “who is G. C.?”, she provokes Gabriel to gain an insight about his own identity. By so doing, Miss Ivors wishes to unmask his virtual self image with an attempt to raise his awareness of his own Irish past and roots.

Gabriel gets perplexed to be provoked by Miss Ivors, “the girl, or the woman, or whatever she was” (*Dubliner,* 217). Because, Gabriel’s self-made womb shell is damaged by an assumed inferior, a female colleague, who reminds him of his original being by asking such questions as

> O, Mr. Conroy, will you come for an excursion to an Aran Isles this summer? … And why do you go to France and Belgium instead of visiting your own land? …Haven’t you your own language to keep in touch with – Irish? …Haven’t you your own land visit, that you know nothing of, your own people, and your own country? (*Dubliners*, 215-216).

These provocative questions annoy him because a female forces his masculine identity to gain insight about his original personality, his western Irish being. That is, his illusion of megalomania reinforced by his masculinity is further revealed by a woman who forces him to confront his western Irishness.

4.3 Facing the Ancestral Matrix and Subsequent Escapes

Miss Ivors' insistence on Gabriel's visit to western Ireland does not actually imply a journey to the distinct western topography of Ireland away from Dublin, but rather it is an attempt for the evocation of Gabriel's intellectual responsibility in the revitalization of the authentic Irish soil in Dublin. Since the conception of the west refers to the foundation of Irish civilization and thereby the authenticity of Dublin, Gabriel is forced by Miss Ivors to extract the artificial layer of Englishness in the soil of Dublin and replace it with the authentic Irish soil, which has once been eroded by the colonizing English regal power. As a result, Gabriel is not necessarily supposed to bodily move from Dublin to the rural part of his homeland to confront his original being, but to mentally fertile the Dublin soil through the renaissance of western Irishness, already awaiting in Dublin.

This will become Gabriel's ultimate return to his ancestral matrix signified by rural, western Ireland, which Joyce implies is "emotionally freer, more authentic, less repressed and distorted by its proximity to England and the continent whose influences bastardized Irish culture" (Taglieri, 103). In this respect, the west is like the mother's dark womb, naïve but safe, promising selfhood and genuineness. The Irish fetus is there in the western Irish soil, free, authentic and genuinely pure Irish. It is where the Irish fetus is bred,

where it awaits the birth, where it is the only sovereign. The soil is the womb, nourishing the patriotic Irish blood. For the time being, however, this sovereignty of the fetus, namely the western Irish layer in Dublin's soil, is conceived by Gabriel as dark primitivism.

Consequently, the allusions to the west in the story indeed force Gabriel to confront with his actual self, reflected on the 'liquor amnii' of Dublin, the ancestral matrix; and these allusions lead to an increased tension in his inner world throughout the evening. Because for him "the west is savagery; to the east and south lie people who drink wine and wear galoshes" (Ellmann, 1983: 248). Therefore, having been exposed to his rural and unrefined origins by Miss Ivors, he instinctively desires to escape from the party to the peaceful atmosphere of the snow-covered Phoenix Park, as if signaling his imminent birth into another womb shell, providing peace, safety and pleasure.

> Gabriel's warm, trembling fingers tapped the cold pane of the window. How cool it must be outside! How pleasant it would be to walk out alone, first along by the river and then through the park! The snow would be lying on the branches of the trees and forming a bright cap on the top of the Wellington Monument.

Especially after Molly Ivors' attempts for the disclosure of his narcissistic alienation from his own personality and identity, the dynamics in his psyche begin to erode the armor of his own self-absorption and the illusion of his unshakeable pride. The spontaneity of facing reality makes Gabriel undergo remarkable tension in the course of the evening.

Yet, the nostalgic recollections made by the guests throughout the evening assuage his developing anxiety over the potential threats of confrontation with the present reality of Dublin.

> The dinner conversation…reflects Dublin's glorious past but now uncertain future…the story of the dead opera heroes, the monks who sleep in their coffins and Patrick Morkan's deceased horse all highlight the topic of death, returning us to the title and theme of the story. The greatness they admire lies in the past with the dead. The livings …are doomed to remember and long for it, but they cannot rekindle it (Taglieri, 103-104).

The affinity with the dead and the idealized past of Dublin calm Gabriel, as well as the other partygoers. This death-smelling nostalgia helps him avoid facing the present, thereby suggesting his regressive attempts to gain the safety and security of the womb. "Through the memory of those dead and gone great ones whose fame the world will not willingly let die", Gabriel unconsciously yearns for the oneness with his dead ancestors, that is, the regression to the oceanic state of the mother's womb (*Dubliners, 232).* However, Gabriel has not yet abandoned his virtual world of narcissism, but indulged in a lustful fantasy about rising with the myths of the Irish past. He is, for now, too remote from rekindling the past of Ireland and rising out of it, like Phoenix. Because even when he idealizes the older generation in his speech, his concern is not to control over the past but to abuse it in order to denigrate the **"**hyper educated" "new generation" represented by Miss Ivors (*Dubliners,* 232).

Gabriel then seeks a way out to heal the injury incurred by his narcissistic ego and wishes to enjoy his pride by ending the evening

in triumph over his wife, Gretta. Feeling “that she [his wife] was his”, with her “wifely carriage” (*Dubliners*, 246), Gabriel seeks her submissive, loyal, and womanly contribution to polishing his ego. In fact, his desire to “overmaster her” has been stirred earlier in his sight of Gretta listening to “The Lass of Aughrim”, at the staircase:

> a woman was standing near the top of the first flight, in the shadow also. He could not see her face … It was his wife. She was leaning on the banisters, listening to something …There was grace and mystery in her attitude as if she were a symbol of something…If he were a painter he would paint her in that attitude (*Dubliners,* 240*).*

Gabriel is named after “the archangel Gabriel who brought news of the births of both John the Baptist and the Messiah to the world” (Taglieri, 101) so he is the messenger to announce the rebirth of Jesus Christ. But, at this moment he is not worthy of the augury of his name, but is filled with desire to enjoy his pride being reborn out of Gretta’s matrix, seeing her as a sign of the Madonna, the mother of Jesus Christ:

> Gretta on the stair way appears as an icon veiled in white, a Madonna figure. She remains momentarily unrecognizable to her husband, and becomes a tableau, an enigmatic representation of femininity (Benstock, 190).

In his illusionary painting at the staircase, Gabriel sees Gretta as the Virgin Mary. His intention is to exploit the Virgin Mary, seeing her as both virginal and womanly objects, as he abuses the virgin rural origins of Gretta, the guileless Irish woman, representing the Irish soil “freed from the yoke of English tyranny”, (Creed, 162) in order to flatter his vanity of pride. Actually, Gabriel’s exploitation of the Virgin

Mary reveals that he is still in search of a protective hollow. He now yearns for a rebirth out of Gretta's matrix. However, in order to achieve a Christ-like birth, he has to endure hardships and tortures: he has to abandon his self-denial and relinquish the comfort it creates. Namely, he has to exterminate his former corrupt intellectual identity and to shoulder an intellectual responsibility for the alteration of circumstances in Dublin, which will require masochistic attachment and dedication to the motherland. Actually, as the name Gabriel suggests, he has the potential for messaging his own rebirth and his country, a fact of which he is, for now, completely unaware.

Therefore, Gabriel unconsciously senses that his egocentric shell is cracked and he now needs Gretta's body to be re-emerged with his narcissistic personality. But, unaware that Gretta is about to give birth to a "figure from the dead" buried long ago (*Dubliners,* 251), Gabriel fantasizes the moments of ecstasy with her, after the party on their way to the hotel, "galloping to their honeymoon":

> moments of their secret life together burst like stars upon his memory … Like the tender fires of stars moments of their life together that no one know of or would ever know of, broke upon and illuminated his memory. He longed to recall to her those moments, to make her forget the years of their dull existence together and remember only their moments of ecstasy (*Dubliners,* 244-245).

However, he will not be able to achieve in attracting the attention of Gretta on himself and his desire will be interrupted by her memories of the dead lover, Michael Furey.

When they are alone in their hotel room, Gabriel expects Gretta of guessing what he has been imagining and “com[ing] to him on her own accord” but he gets annoyed that she seems “so abstracted” (*Dubliners,* 248). He learns that Gretta is preoccupied by the song ‘Lass of Aughrim’, an Irish ballad her dead lover used to sing for her. Gretta now reveals that she was passionately loved by a teenager Michael Furey, who died for his love of Gretta.

Gabriel gets humiliated and degraded by Gretta’s excitement at recalling her dead lover because Furey, though dead, achieves in activating a more impassioned reaction in her than her husband does.

> Gabriel felt humiliated by the failure of his irony and by the evocation of this figure from the dead, a boy in the gasworks. While he had been full of memories of their secret life together, full of tenderness and joy and desire, she had been comparing him in her mind with another (*Dubliners,* 251).

Gabriel is crushed by the discovery that Gretta has an inner life of her own, which is inaccessible to him and that only a dead figure, a boy in the gasworks, claims a more superior power to reach her emotional world. Therefore, “Gretta’s young admirer, who has been willing to give his life for love of another, challenges Gabriel’s own smug safety” (May, 59). This becomes the most devastating assault on his narcissistic self-image, confronting the irony that the dead Michael possesses greater vitality than him.

Once again, but this time by Gretta, he is made to see his actual self and to confront the reality of his own fake identity.

> A shameful consciousness of his own person assailed him. He saw himself as a ludicrous figure, acting as a pennyboy for his aunts, a nervous, well-meaning sentimentalist, orating to vulgarians and idealizing his own clownish lusts, the pitiable fatuous fellow he had caught in the mirror. (*Dubliners,* 251)

He accepts his insignificance and superficiality in the mirror of Dublin, signified by the dead Michael Furey, held up by Gretta. “Gabriel abandons his own self-consciousness and narcissism to sympathize with Gretta and empathize with Michael, as ‘generous tears filled Gabriel’s eyes’” (Taglieri, 104). By this way, he understands his failure of love and a general spiritual hollowness and wishes to be reborn as the way Michael has been evoked from the world of the dead.

4.4 The ‘Oceanic Feeling’

After recognizing his self-made image of superiority, he acknowledges his being totally languished, which is “disturbing and painful, like a birth [out of his self-made womb shell], for it deprives Gabriel of mastery over a world rendered comfortably by habit” (Rickard, 70). Therefore, his birth into the reality without his narcissistic shield makes him vulnerable and helpless, leading to the ‘oceanic feeling’. This is the moment when Gabriel yearns for the regression to the painless and blissful time in the mother’s womb. It can be suggested that Gabriel now finds a universe for him to terminate his alienation if one considers the identity dimension of the oceanic oneness; because, the “oceanic feeling” describes a known

tension to plunge into the shared universe, to 'feel with', to participate and mix; it is at the basis of the possibility of sharing and of understanding each other" (Gordon, 2003:105). Thus, the "oceanic feeling' helps Gabriel re-emerge in Dublin with the powers gained through the bond established with his Irish originality.

Gabriel's regression into his original form as an Irish fetus creates oneness with his ancestral Irish matrix, where he identifies himself with the rest of the Dubliners, and where he sees Furey's rebirth out of death:

> The tears gathered more thickly in his eyes and in the partial darkness he imagined he saw the form of a young man standing under a dripping tree. Other forms were near. His soul had approached that region where dwell the vast hosts of the dead. He was conscious of but could not apprehend their wayward and flickering existence. His own identity was fading out into a grey impalpable world: the solid world itself, which these dead had one time reared and lived in, was dissolving and dwindling (*Dubliners,* 255).

Gabriel returns to the ancestral matrix, and confronts his own selfhood. There, "Gabriel coalesces with the inhabitants of the Irish hell" and experiences Michael's "martyrdom for Mother Ireland, sacrifice that is paralleled by the demands of romantic love, which may require the masochistic adoration" (Black, 191). Therefore, in the ancestral matrix, Gabriel clutches the meaning of the masochism of martyred patriots died for their motherland. With the acceptance of self-sacrifice, he realizes that his rebirth in the ancestral matrix depends on murdering his previous "clownish" self and abandoning the artificiality in his intellectual identity (*Dubliners,* 251).

At the hazards of his former smug safety, Gabriel undergoes a sense of regeneration through self-knowledge, as the story moves toward its end:

> A few light taps upon the pane made him turn to the window. It had begun to snow again. He watched sleepily the flakes, silver and dark, falling obliquely against the lamplight. The time had come for him to set out on his journey westward. Yes, the newspapers were right: snow was general all over Ireland… His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead.

In these lines, the west refers to an expression of dying but not into nothingness. It rather indicates a return to the ancestral matrix, the Irishness, and a rebirth out of death. Because,

> this regression is suggested geographically and temporally by a metaphorical reversal of the idiomatic expression of 'going west' as a term for dying, by depicting dying as 'going east', toward sunrise rather than sunset…in a historical and cultural regression (Attridge, 2004: 179).

This historical and cultural regression reminds one of the regression into ancestral matrix, represented by the heartland of Dublin, the authentic Irish soil awaiting revival. Therefore, Gabriel's westward journey metaphorically refers to self-awareness; coming terms with the dead ancestors and their martyred masochism for the sake of their own homeland. It is a transition from a form of self-deception to a form of self-knowledge, resulting in the death of Gabriel's supreme egotism.

His egotistical death happens under the snow covering all Ireland, and its inhabitants, dead or alive. The snow is as freezing as the death. But, "if the snow freezes and deadens, it also secretes the

sources of new life" (Eagleton, 300). The snow bears the glad tidings of spring, enriching the soil with its flakes. As the snow renders into the soil of Dublin, Gabriel's former self melts away, too; and a new Gabriel becomes reborn, conscious of his own roots, shouldering his intellectual responsibility for the revival the authentic Irish soil in Dublin.

In conclusion, Gabriel now becomes reborn as himself and rejuvenates after the embracement of his own national identity. It is proved that his former narcissism has become a defense against his fear of confrontation with his actual-self, namely, his rural, western Irishness, which he considers as an inferior and disturbing identity. His false sense of importance has emerged out of his self-hatred in the unconscious. His virtual identity created in his fantastic womb shell has provided him with temporary and deceptive security and protection. However, he is now aware that up to now he has led an illusory life, far more lifeless than a corpse, a dead figure Michael Furey.

With the shattering of the fantastic world he has created, he now realizes that he has lacked a sense of self and rootedness. As a result, he undergoes the regression into the ancestral womb. There, he has the opportunity to identify himself with his Irish ancestors, to enjoy his self as an Irish, to be fertilized with the naïve Irish soil and finally, to acquire the satisfaction of being an individual, freed from his inner conflicts and intellectual shallowness. In brief, he

recognizes his own self as a self-esteemed, self-loved, and conscientious Irish, and recognizes his own potential for raising Dublin and Ireland.

CONCLUSION

This study has focused on the psychological dynamics shaping the reactions of main characters in “Eveline” and “The Dead” to the depressing state of Dublin, acting as a psychological whirlpool for its inhabitants. Eveline’s self-degradation and her sense of loss; Gabriel’s self-exaltation and his artificiality have been regarded as unconscious defenses against the underlying fear of self-exposure. Both characters have epitomized the majority of Dubliners, who are alienated from their innermost being, in quest of an identity other than Irishness. Both stories culminate in the repression of the characters’ impetus to escape.

Any repression creates anxiety until the instinctive craving for pleasure is satisfied with a gratifying act. Since the id’s sole concern is to achieve pleasure, it immediately seeks a way out to reduce the tension created by anxiety. Thus, for the characters’ in “Eveline” and “The Dead” the instinctive urges are satisfied by the ‘oceanic feeling’, which describes the fantasy of fusion with the omnipotent mother, and the regression into the blissful womb in order to regenerate. This womb is the only locus for suffering characters to be cared for and cured by heavenly communion with the mother. Hence, in these stories, the only satisfying instinct left for the characters is the

oceanic feeling of merging with the ancestral matrix, Dublin, which has prevented the characters from becoming non-existent or invisible. In other words, Dublin acts as the mother, the ancestral matrix, where the Irish fetus is bred and reborn in “Eveline” and “The Dead”.

Eveline and Gabriel, the main characters of the two stories, represent the Dubliners as suffering from any claim for identity. They are depicted as being ashamed of their Irishness, and therefore, in a state of self-denial, counterbalanced by an impetus to escape from Ireland or being Irish. They either create distant utopias or utopian visions of themselves. This psychological overreaction is depicted as the result of a lack of being satisfied with Irishness. The sense of detachment from Ireland, the sick escapist tendency, the inability to embrace Ireland, and the responsibility of being Irish are not without any reason: Ireland has become exasperating and suffocating as it has also become a wearied country that does not promise anything to its people, such as relief from an overload of its psychological, social, economic or political structure**;** neither has Dublin, the city as a metaphor to Ireland. The city is suffocating, a decaying cultural whirlpool, from which there emerges continual effort to escape.

The more the Dubliners try to escape from the city, either physically or intellectually, the more does it get exhausted of its energy, becoming more diseased, decadent, withered, and limp like an aging mother. Without the people that would take over the

ancestral energy, no country or city can survive. The energy of the mother needs enlivening, revitalizing or revival with the energies of the younger generation. However, since the younger generation does not contribute to its revival, both Dublin and Ireland are dragged into nothingness, yielding into inevitable dust of death. Ireland suffers from the vitality and patriotism of the younger Irish generation who do not claim their Irishness, being proud of their Irish identity.

In *Dubliners,* Joyce diagnoses the condition of Dublin and its inhabitants: Dublin is the city of those trying to disclaim their zombie-like existence in Dublin, an existence being fed by the corpse of a dead or moribund city. In so doing, his main purpose is to enable the Irish to introspectively look at and into themselves “in [his] nicely polished-looking glass” (Joyce in Attridge, 41). In other words, Joyce believes that Dublin and Ireland call for individual contribution with an introspective self-understanding, and even self-sacrifice, without the ignorance of the painful reality in their homeland. While the image Joyce reflects in the mirror of *Dubliners* is not sympathetic, Dublin and Dubliners will be liberated by the therapeutic effect of this image after facing and compromising with it. This liberating change requires Dubliners to put stupendous effort into the salvation of their homeland, thus resulting in their own revival as prideful Irish.

On a superficial level, individual self-sacrifice may seem suffering for nothing as it would mean the abandonment of the comfort already guaranteed by self-denial. To masquerade a hurting

fact is always the easiest way out. However, a claim for independency requires the sorest need to put it under a surgical examination and alter it critically. What hurts a Dubliner is the disturbing fact of being a dead descendant of a dead city. Therefore, Dubliners' salvation lies not in the escape from this hurting fact but ironically in the challenge to face it, in a brave, honest, and decisive manner without fear and frustration.

In this respect, it can be argued that Dubliners' liberation from the whirlpool swirling around them depends on the extermination of their former ignorant selves, as in the case of Gabriel, or the elimination of their dependant selves as Eveline typifies. This will naturally inspire and lead them to accomplish their state of conscientious individuality. Eveline will become a self-reliant Irish girl; Gabriel, a realist and sensitive intellectual. The characters' rebirth into awareness does not take place in a fantasized or elevated city or place, like Buones Aires or the countries in Europe, but in the ancestral matrix, Dublin, which serves as a mirror of Ireland with its 'liquor amnii' reflecting the prideful Irish self to be reborn from the city**.** Eveline and Gabriel returns back to Dublin, the nourishing matrix, providing pure Irish blood. In its 'liquor amnii', the Irish fetus sees and admits the image of its self-projection, which has once been discounted and ashamed of.

Nevertheless, both characters' lack of self-reliance hinders their capacity to achieve transformation into a new self. Such a

transformation requires developing an insight into the necessity of creating a meaning for their existence, thereby leaving their previous sense of self-rejection and self-hatred, activating their life instincts to acknowledge their existence. In brief, this “psychological metamorphosis” can occur only when the life instinct of “will-to-meaning” is prompted (Akın, 117).

Man always needs to realize the meaning of existence, a drive unique to man, distinguishing him from animals. Man’s quest for meaning is the primary motivation in life. The meaning in life could be acquired through a commitment to an activity, an object, or a figure which is considered to deserve being respected and loved. Meaning is a purpose for survival, a purpose like completing a task, doing a deed, devoting one’s self to the family, or experiencing a profound emotion such as love. “In order to achieve the purpose [for finding meaning], if the change is essential and required, man inevitability metamorphoses into any possibility” (Akın, 118). That is, man is able to live and even metamorphose for the sake of a cause by which the “will-to-meaning” is instigated.

On the other hand, for Dubliners, the motive for undergoing a psychological metamorphosis has apparently not been activated by any public or private institutions such as family, marriage, religion, education, law, politics, or alike. The only cause for such a transformation in the psychology and mentality of Dubliners is nothing but love dedicated to the salvation of their motherland, no

matter how painful it is. The love can stimulate, albeit agonizing, their humanly existence. In other words, at the cost of abandoning their self-satisfied and death-smelling existence, Dubliners can create meaning in the fulfillment of their dedication to their homeland. In fact, James Joyce conveys the message that deep down in the heart of Dubliners, there is respect for ancestors, attachment to duty, and firmness to work; all can serve for the revival of Dublin. They have the potential for fighting out of love for their homeland, a love once thwarted by historical and economic misfortunes.

Fighting out of love for Dublin will definitely bear a parallel with masochistic gratification derived from a tormenting love, which is dedicated to the motherland with a sense of rootedness. In their motherland, Dubliners are offended, dominated, mistreated but still, can achieve the satisfaction of creating a meaning in life. Enduring the hardships and fighting for the betterment of the motherland are definitely holy acts and more logical choices than being swept into nothingness. By this masochistic love, Dubliners can be metamorphosed into living beings with a profound awareness of the fact that there are still traces of hope for the rebirth of Dublin and of Dubliners.

To conclude, Dublin acts as a mirror in the stories of *Dubliners*. As the characters approach the mirror, their images become more visible and livelier but as they move away from the mirror, their images fade away. This absence of identity creates

anxiety in Dubliners' psyche, similar to the paralysis they go through when the time comes for a change or an improvement. It is almost as if they lose their self-confidence and sense of belonging when the ties holding Dubliners together weaken. The ties uniting them are their own national identity, which has its roots in the Irish ancestral matrix. The Irish belong to the matrix that has given birth to them. Therefore**,** Dublin, in spite of being the instigator of the characters' predicament, is their nourishing soil and their universe where they can discover their inner capabilities as Dubliners in order to construct their present and future. It is the only place in which Dubliners can attain self-satisfaction in search for meaning in life and exist as themselves, as self-dependant Irish compatriots.

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