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Analysis of Chapter III

Chapter III, the middle chapter of *Portrait*, is central to the narrative both in sequence and in formal structure. Chapters I and II represent, to a large extent, a continuing development of the same thematic materials: school, friends, and home. At the end of II, however, the important new theme of submission appears in Stephen's acquiescence to his adolescent desires. Chapter III exhibits in the interrelation of this theme with that of religious ideality a major structural pattern found in the remaining chapters of the novel. As the chapter begins, the last major theme of the preceding chapter is developed and expanded; during the latter half, it recedes in importance and finally disappears. Concurrent with the starting theme's recession is the emergence of a new theme—*religious ideality*—that builds toward epiphany. This theme, similarly, follows the same pattern in IV that *submission* follows here. Chapter III is the first chapter to exhibit this full cycle of development.

The chapter has three sections. In 3.1 we see Stephen's present psychological state through direct narration of his thoughts and feelings and through depiction of habitual actions. First shown is a family meal followed by an account

of Stephen's frequent visits to the brothel district of Dublin. The narrative then enters Stephen's imagination and shows his attempts to deal empathically with feelings of separation from the ideality of the Virgin Mary and from God. The section ends with the classroom speech in which the rector announces the retreat. Section 3.2 contains the direct narration of the retreat interspersed with short scenes depicting Stephen's reaction to the sermons. In the first sermon Father Arnall outlines the retreat: the announced topics for the four sermons are Death, Judgment, Hell, and Heaven. The sequence is followed rigorously except that the final sermon, instead of examining heaven, further explores the horrors of hell. The last section of the chapter extends the basic rhythm of sermon and reaction by describing Stephen's final, climactic reaction. This portion of the narrative begins with his fears while alone in his room at home and the nightmare that follows. When Stephen awakens, he wanders through the streets of Dublin, but instead of going to the brothel, he seeks a chapel in which to make his confession. The chapter ends with two brief scenes: the Dedalus household and Stephen's earnest prayers.

That Stephen's experiences are markedly different from those of the first two chapters is indicated by the more frequent images of the chapters:

Chapter I	name	smell
	cold	air
father	God	head
Dedalus	rector	bed
hand	dark	
eye	cried	
face	door	Chapter II
prefect	voice	father
day	walk	Dedalus

Heron	home	child
day	light	day
eye	garden	eye
dark	halt	fire
face		word
voice		hand
walk	Chapter III	body
hand	God	heaven
smile	sin	saint
heart	soul	confess
night	hell	death
silence	dark	face
work	pray	light
head	heart	

The central figure of authority in I and II is father, associated with Mr. Dedalus and the fathers at Clongowes; in III, the theme of authority is related to the image *God*. The prominence of images associated with the physical body in I and II has diminished considerably in III; one image, *eye*, from this group that is important here is used metaphorically. The most obvious shift in subject matter concerns religious images.¹ *God*, *sin*, and *soul* each occur almost twice as often as the next most frequent image, *hell*. So pervasive is this group that the first image without necessarily religious associations, *dark*, occurs only some thirty-eight times compared with 134 for *God*. The comparative positions of *hell* and *heaven* are also interesting; the former occurs twice as often as the latter. In comparing these lists, we see the strong shift in the general areas of Stephen's experience as well as the connotations of this experience, suggested by the importance of the images *sin*, *hell*, *dark*, *fire*, *confess*, and *death*.

The early scenes of Chapter III reveal Stephen's state of mind. As he sits in the darkened classroom he thinks of the evening meal:

He felt his belly crave for its food. He hoped there would be stew for dinner, turnips and carrots and bruised potatoes and fat mutton pieces to be ladled out in thick peppered flourfattened sauce. Stuff it into you, his belly counselled him. (p. 102)

In the preceding chapter, several meals were described, but one quoted in particular is closely related to this meal:

There had been mutton hash that day and he knew that his father would make him dip his bread in the gravy. But he did not relish the hash for the mention of Clongowes had coated his palate with a scum of disgust. (p. 71)

The earlier association between scum and the ditch heightens our sense of Stephen's repulsion. The kind of food that had been impalatable to him earlier is not only acceptable now but desired. The attraction suggests a beast, craving for fats and starches. In later meals (3.2), this suggestion is more direct.

The sensual response Stephen experienced with the prostitute in Chapter II indicate at least a partial break in his sense of isolation; here the encounter is reduced to habit. It has become his custom to wander after dark into the brothel district: "He would pass by them calmly waiting for a sudden movement of his own will or a sudden call to his sinloving soul from their soft perfumed flesh" (p. 102). The necessity to await an impulse from his "lower" nature before acting reinforces his sense of himself as bestial. The earlier impression of breaking through the barrier between outer and inner has been dissipated: there is no communication—only submission to physical desires.

In the scene that follows, Stephen uses formalized structures to examine the distance between inner, personal reality and the outer, physical world. The immediate images that evoke this empathic projection are two equations in his textbook. In his imagination, the first equation begins "to spread out a widening tail, eyed and starred like a peacock's" (pp. 102-3). The eyes in this passage are more closely associated with stars than with Stephen's own eyes or with his earlier sense of vulnerability and fear: "The indices appearing and disappearing were eyes opening and closing; the eyes opening and closing were stars being born and being quenched" (p. 103). The significance of this train of associations is increased by Stephen's strong involvement:

The vast cycle of starry life bore his weary mind outward to its verge and inward to its centre, a distant music accompanying him outward and inward. What music? The music came nearer and he recalled the words, the word of Shelley's fragment upon the moon wandering companionless, pale for weariness. The stars began to crumble and a cloud of fine stardust fell through space. (p. 103)

Fear of physical harm, earlier associated with *eyes* and *bird* images, has been replaced by his overwhelming sense of isolation. Shelley's fragment about the moon wandering companionless links this passage with the scene in the Cork bar where Stephen experienced childhood's end, realizing the emotional distance separating him from his father. There the metaphoric representation of phenomenological isolation as spatial distance was inchoate; here the imagery makes that metaphor much more substantial.

Stephen's musings on the second equation clarify the reasons he feels are responsible for his condition:

It was his own soul going forth to experience, unfolding itself sin by sin, spreading abroad the balefire of its burning stars and folding back upon itself, fading slowly, quenching its own lights and fires. They were quenched: and the cold darkness filled chaos. . . . The chaos in which his ardour extinguished itself as a cold indifferent knowledge of himself. He had sinned mortally not once but many times and he knew that, while he stood in danger of eternal damnation for the first sin alone, by every succeeding sin he multiplied his guilt and his punishment. His days and works and thoughts could make no atonement for him, the fountains of sanctifying grace having ceased to refresh his soul. (p. 103)

These scenes portray Stephen's general psychological state at this time. The events and attitudes that were tumultuous or climactic in the preceding chapter have become habit; although capable of empathic projection outward toward physical reality and life, he is preoccupied with his own inner sense of guilt and sin, manifested in a cold indifference that verges on nonentity. Stephen's sense that his is a dark, bestial, and loathsome personality and the emotional isolation he feels because of this is closely associated with the large number of images connoting physical distance.

Two other groups of images central to the major development of the chapter are *light* and *dark* images. Like *fire* and *water* in Chapter I, these images carry opposite connotations. Their importance for the chapter is apparent in the graph in Appendix E, which indicates that the greatest concentration of this group by far is in Chapter III; however, the importance of an image group is often a matter of placement as well as frequency. In Chapter I, Joyce uses *fire* and *water* images almost emblematically, ending the traumatic Clongowes scene with a *water* image and beginning the succeeding Christmas dinner scene with a *fire* image. In section 3.1, Joyce similarly begins most scenes with an image denoting light or its absence. The chapter begins:

The swift December dusk had come tumbling clownishly after its dull day and, as he stared through the dull square of the window of the schoolroom, he felt his belly crave for its food. (p. 102)

The images of dusk and the two references to *dull* describe the amount and kind of light present. Later, his visits to the brothels are on "gloomy secret" nights. Referring to one of the equations, "the dull light fell more faintly upon the page whereon another equation began to unfold itself slowly and to spread abroad its widening tail" (p. 103). The central image in the following summary statement is one of darkness:

At his first violent sin he had felt a wave of vitality pass out of him and had feared to find his body or his soul maimed by the excess. Instead the vital wave had carried him on its bosom out of himself and back again when it receded: and no part of body or soul had been maimed but a dark peace had been established between them. (p. 103)

In all of these scenes, images of darkness or of dim, unattractive light reinforce Stephen's sense of the darkness of his own inner nature.

In contrast to the *dark* images associated with Stephen's sense of self is the *light* motif. This theme is punningly suggested in the first sentence describing Stephen's room: "On the wall of his bedroom hung an illuminated scroll, the certificate of his prefecture in the college of the sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary" (p. 104). The important relation between *light* and *religious ideality* becomes apparent immediately:

His sin, which had covered him from the sight of God, had led him nearer to the refuge of sinners. Her eyes seemed to regard him with mild pity; her holiness, a strange light

glowing faintly upon her frail flesh, did not humiliate the sinner who approached her. (p. 105)

Later reference is made to Mary, "whose emblem is the morning star, *bright and musical, telling of heaven and infusing peace*" (p. 105). The association between the *religious ideality* of God and Mary and images of *light* with the further development that religious acceptance of the individual is indicated by his existing within the "sight" of God makes Stephen's negative sense of self even more dramatic. The passage also suggests a different connotation for *eyes* from the earlier association with *fear*.

There are some seven *eye* images in section 3.1, occurring in a variety of contexts. The first occurs in the brothel, where Stephen notes details such as a "ring of porter" with his eyes (p. 102). In the passages concerning the equations, *eyes* are associated with stars and Stephen's attempt to resolve his isolation. The image's final occurrence in the section is the rector's "dark stern eyes" whose "dark fire kindled the dusk into a tawny glow" (p. 108). The implications of fire associated with the eyes of a religious personage become clear in 3.2; here we can simply note the general environment of these images: *stars, religious personages, fire, and Stephen's sense of isolation*.

Water imagery also changes in its connotations during the chapter before figuring dramatically in the epiphanic scene of Chapter IV. In Chapter I *water* imagery was strongly associated with Stephen's fall into the ditch before being explicitly identified with *filth* and *excrement* in Chapter II. In contrast, the image of the brimming bowl following Stephen's pandying carried quite different, even mysterious, connotations. Elements of both associative patterns are present in 3.1. In questioning "the darkness of his own

state," Stephen felt himself sinking into a "swamp of spiritual and bodily sloth" (p. 106); however, a different *water* image occurs in the passage assessing Stephen's psychological state. The isolation he feels because of his sinful nature is characterized as follows: "His days and works and thoughts could make no atonement for him, the fountains of sanctifying grace having ceased to refresh his soul" (p. 103). In a passage from the same scene quoted above in the discussion of *light/dark* imagery, the entire experience is characterized as a "wave" of vitality that passes out of him. In these instances, the wave and the fountain suggest positive, life-giving forces that contrast with Stephen's dark inner state. This connotation is strengthened in the section's final scene: "A little wave of quiet mirth broke forth over the class of boys from the rector's grim smile. Stephen's heart began slowly to fold and fade with fear like a withering flower" (p. 107). The flower is withered—dying—from the lack of water; *aridness*, as we would suspect, carries opposite connotations from the life-giving effects of water. This same image is repeated as the final image of the section, emphasizing its importance and giving symmetry to the scene: "Stephen's heart had withered up like a flower of the desert that feels the simoon coming from afar" (p. 108).

One final image group that warrants special attention is that concerned with cyclical or rhythmic motion. As Stephen would approach the brothel district, "He would follow a devious course up and down the streets, circling always nearer and nearer in a tremor of fear and joy, until his feet led him suddenly round a dark corner" (p. 102). While he was there, Stephen's gaze fixed itself on the "ring of porter," an image characterizing the experience. Images of cycles are also important in the sections dealing with the equations. For example: "The vast cycle of starry life bore his weary

mind outward to its verge and inward to its centre, a distant music accompanying him outward and inward" p. 103). And later, "the vital wave had carried him on its bosom out of himself and back again when it receded" (p. 103). The association between *cyclical movement* and *music* is interesting, for it is the "music" of the Latin prayers that attracts Stephen most to the Roman Catholic Mass. Later, Stephen associates the auditory sense with temporality in his aesthetic theory, suggesting, perhaps, a relation between cyclical, rhythmic motion and aesthetic structure. Section 3.2, we shall see, is developed in rhythmic patterns; Joyce thus foreshadows aesthetic structure by the thematic use of imagery.

Looking back, we can now see that the major image groups coalesce to support the one dominant theme of the section: Stephen's sense of isolation and degradation. Early in the chapter he is helpless in the grip of his physical appetites, which he feels are bestial. The resulting sense of isolation is developed in several contexts. The empathic projections stimulated by the two equations evoke a metaphoric relation between emotional distance from those around him and physical distance. Similarly, he feels that his base nature is far removed from the purity and ideality he associates with God and Mary, making their grace unattainable. This aspect of the theme is heavily supported by light and eye imagery. This section represents a nadir for Stephen, out of which grows the sequence of events that culminate in the religious epiphany that ends the chapter. Thus Stephen's self-image swings 180 degrees in the course of the chapter: from a sense of bestiality and spiritual isolation to an experience of religious ideality and union.

The most striking characteristic of section 3.2 is its com-

plex blend of rhythms. The narrative regularly alternates from sermon to effect. It begins with Father Arnall's outline of the retreat, followed by a description of Stephen's walk home. The next day, after sermons on death and judgment, comes the section's longest introspective view of Stephen. The third sermon describes the sensual qualities of hell; the fourth, its psychological horrors. The two are separated by a brief account of classroom activities and Stephen's reactions. Section 3.3 is the final oscillation: the portrayal of the retreat's cumulative effects on Stephen, climaxing in his epiphanic confession. Thus there is a regular alternation from the sermons, narrated without authorial comment just as though the reader were hearing them, to close scrutiny of Stephen's activities and mental state. A similar oscillating pattern was seen in Stephen's empathic projections induced by the equations; here the same pattern is reflected in narrative point of view.

Another pattern of rhythmic alternation is present in the modulated use of imagery, as indicated in II.g. In terms of density of imagery, the lowest point of the chapter occurs during Father Arnall's outline of the retreat. The imagery then follows a remarkably regular pattern of alternating richness and sparsity. Rising to a high point during the sensual description of death, the level of richness falls during the more abstract sermon on judgment. The second cycle begins with Stephen's musings on Emma and the Virgin Mary and then dips with the introduction of the first sermon on hell. The level of intensity increases dramatically during the sensual description of hell before dipping once again during the preacher's metaphoric comparison with language. The final rise and fall in intensity corresponds with the description of Stephen's classroom thoughts and the description of the psychological horrors of hell. Thus, the

pattern of intensity of imagery alternates regularly, rising during some experiences rendered in a highly objective manner, falling during others; invariably it rises during the glimpses we get of Stephen's thoughts. The pattern continues through section 3.3, culminating in the religious epiphany.

The highest concentrations of religious imagery, the thematic group with the highest frequency in Chapter III, occur in sections 3.2, 3.3, and the first half of Chapter IV. This concentration is apparent in the graph of its distribution (Appendix E). Most of these occurrences reflect the subject matter of the narrative; some assume interesting connotations in their associations with other, secular images. These latter religious images will be discussed in connection with the specific secular images that lend them these connotations.

Another important group includes *fire* and *heat* images. The distribution of this group over the novel shows that in one scene there are over twenty occurrences—more than twice as many as in any other scene in the novel (see Appendix E). That scene, the description of hell, will be given special attention; there are several other instances before and after that point that warrant attention. During the first sermon, Stephen is reminded of his days at Clongowes:

The figure of his old master [Father Arnall], so strangely rearsen, brought back to Stephen's mind his life at Clongowes: the wide playgrounds, swarming with boys, the square ditch, the little cemetery off the main avenue of limes where he had dreamed of being buried, the firelight on the wall of the infirmary where he lay sick, the sorrowful face of Brother Michael. (pp. 108-9)

Occurring in this context, the image of firelight on the infirmary wall is interesting. In Chapter I, *fire* was associated most strongly with the hearth, suggesting the security of

home, while *water* connoted all that was most threatening and unpleasant about Clongowes. In the pandybat episode they were fused associatively in the image of scalding tears. Here, the earlier strains of pleasant associations with fire have been overpowered by negative ones. This change becomes even more dramatic in the sermons to follow.

In his first statement about the nature of hell, the preacher states: "Hell is a strait and dark and foulsmelling prison, an abode of demons and lost soul, filled with fire and smoke" (p. 119). The cultural association between *hell* and *fire* becomes a heavily emphasized link in Stephen's own experience during the sermons. Another association, that between *fire* and *darkness*, is also reinforced in the passages that follow. For example,

The fire of hell gives forth no light. As, at the command of God, the fire of the Babylonian furnace lost its heat but not its light so, at the command of God, the fire of hell, while retaining the intensity of its heat, burns eternally in darkness. It is a neverending storm of darkness, dark flames and dark smoke of burning brimstone, amid which the bodies are heaped one upon another without even a glimpse of air. (p. 120)

When the tactile qualities of hell are characterized, *fire*, as one would suspect, is again the dominant image:

The torment of fire is the greatest torment to which the tyrant has ever subjected his fellow creatures. Place your finger for a moment in the flame of a candle and you will feel the pain of fire. But our earthly fire was created by God for the benefit of man, to maintain in him the spark of life and to help him in the useful arts whereas the fire of hell is of another quality and was created by God to torture and punish the unrepentant sinner. Our earthly fire also consumes more or less rapidly according as the object which it attacks

is more or less combustible so that human ingenuity has even succeeded in inventing chemical preparations to check or frustrate its action. But the sulphurous brimstone which burns in hell is a substance which is specially designed to burn forever and forever with unspeakable fury. Moreover our earthly fire destroys at the same time as it burns so that the more intense it is the shorter is its duration: but the fire of hell has this property that it preserves that which it burns and though it rages with incredible intensity it rages forever. (p. 121)

Later, in the final roll call of hell's sensory tortures, the sense of touch is tormented by "redhot goads" and "cruel tongues of flame" (p. 122). This overwhelming association between *fire* and *hell* implies a further link with *sin* and *guilt*; consequently the preacher's appeal to Stephen and the others to confess to a God "burning with love for mankind, ready to comfort the afflicted" (p. 134) is highly ambivalent in associations.

The thematic use of *light-and-dark* imagery in 3.1 is continued and expanded here, linking it with other important groups in the chapter. One early occurrence of a light image is the following: "So he had sunk to the state of a beast that licks his chops after meat. This was the end; and a faint glimmer of fear began to pierce the fog of his mind" (p. 111). The image *glimmer* suggests faintness or darkness, perhaps light from a fire; if so, this sequence would establish associations among *fire*, *darkness*, and *fear*, a pattern that becomes a dominant motif later in the section. The negative connotations that images of darkness have for Stephen are reinforced considerably before the hell sermons. First, *darkness* is identified with death:

Death and judgment, brought into the world by the sin of our first parents, are the dark portals that close our earthly exist-

ence, the portals that open into the unknown and the unseen, portals through which every soul must pass. (p. 114)

Next, it is used to epitomize Stephen's sense of his own sinful, bestial nature: "Like a beast in its lair his soul had laid down in its own filth but the blasts of the angel's trumpet had driven him forth from the darkness of sin into the light" (p. 115).

The most consistent and dramatic use of *dark* occurs in the sermons on hell. The preacher gives a one-sentence description characterizing the sensual horrors of hell: "Hell is a strait and dark and foulsmelling prison. . ." (p. 119). *Dark*, along with *fire*, plays a major role in describing hell. It occurs some ten times in a span of text approximately five hundred words long, always in the context of *fire* images. *Darkness* is also used to epitomize the mental horrors of hell:

Just as every sense is afflicted with a fitting torment so is every spiritual faculty; the fancy with horrible images, the sensitive faculty with alternate longing and rage, the mind and understanding with an interior darkness more terrible even than the exterior darkness which reigns in that dreadful prison. (p. 130)

The chain of associations is drawn full circle and completed. *Darkness*, which began as an image connoting Stephen's sense of his own sinful and bestial nature, is strongly associated with both the sensual, emblematic images of hell and the general psychological state of all sinners. Stephen's intense inner feelings are linked with what is presented to him as factual, an image within the objective world with which he can identify; as before, that image has highly negative connotations.

The association between *food* and Stephen's sense of

bestiality suggested in 3.1 is developed more directly here. In a passage already quoted, Stephen acknowledges that he has sunk "to the state of a beast that licks his chaps after meat" (p. 111). Later, in the same scene :

His soul was fattening and congealing into a gross grease, plunging ever deeper in its dull fear into a sombre threatening dusk, while the body that was his stood, listless and dishonoured, gazing out of darkened eyes, helpless, perturbed and human for a bovine god to stare upon. (p. 111)

In both passages his inner, psychological state is closely associated with images of food that is thick, greasy, verging on congealing. The association between *thick, scummy food* and the earlier theme of *filth* and *excrement* is here linked directly with bestial imagery and Stephen's own self-image. This train explains the underlying pattern of associations found in the dream of section 3.3. A foreshadowing of that experience appears just before the first sermon on hell :

His monstrous dreams, peopled by apelike creatures and by harlots with gleaming jewel eyes; the foul letters he had written in the joy of guilty confession and carried secretly for days and days only to throw them under cover of night among the grass in the corner of a field or beneath some hingeless door or in some niche in the hedges where a girl might come upon them as she walked by and read them secretly. Mad! Mad! (pp. 115-16)

In the second sermon on hell, this pattern of associations is extended to include the psychological dimension of sin :

—Sin, remember, is a twofold enormity. It is a base consent to the promptings of our corrupt nature to the lower instincts, to that which is gross and beastlike; and it is also a turning away from the counsel of our higher nature. (p. 127)

Stephen's sense of self is thus linked with major image groups connoting all that he finds personally abhorrent as well as more general negative concepts such as sin.

It is not surprising that *light*, the opposite of *darkness*, should carry opposite connotations. *Light* is used in a highly emblematic way throughout the section. For example :

Saint Thomas, the greatest doctor of the church, the engelic doctor, as he is called, says that the worst damnation consists in this that the understanding of man is totally deprived of divine light and his affection obstinately turned away from the goodness of God. (p. 127)

The loss of grace is indicated by one's losing sight of "the shining raiment of the blessed spirits" (p. 123). Similarly, the prelapsarian state is characterized by light imagery: "Adam and Eve were then created by God and placed in Eden, in the plain of Damascus, that lovely garden resplendent with sunlight and colour, teeming with luxuriant vegetation" (p. 117).

While pure light characterizes religious ideality, the reality of the church proper appears in a different light. Sitting in the chapel before the sermon begins, Stephen observes :

The chapel was flooded by the dull scarlet light that filtered through the lowered blinds; and through the fissure between the last blind and the sash a shaft of wan light entered like a spear and touched the embossed brasses of the candle-sticks upon the altar that gleamed like the battleworn mail armour of angels. (p. 116)

Again, before the final sermon :

The daylight without was already failing and, as it fell slowly through the dull red blinds, it seemed that the sun of the last

day was going down and that all souls were being gathered for the judgment. (pp. 126-27)

The light here is red or scarlet; earlier, *red* was used in conjunction with images of green to suggest the dichotomy between church and country. That association between *Catholicism* and *red* is maintained here. Later, thinking of Emma, Stephen's imagination wanders: "In the wide land under a tender lucid evening sky, a cloud drifting westward amid a pale green sea of heaven, they stood together, children that had erred" (p. 116). Because of their associative links with church and heaven, the functioning of *red* and *green* as opposite images suggests that the same distance relation holds for *church* and *heaven* as well. This metaphoric broadside at institutional Catholicism is expanded by the link between *scarlet light* and *fire* that follow.

In the passage above, *green* is linked with *sea* as well as *heaven*. That association is expanded in the following passage:

Rain was falling on the chapel, on the garden, on the college. It would rain for ever, noiselessly. The water would rise inch by inch, covering the grass and shrubs, covering the trees and houses, covering the monuments and the mountain tops. All life would be choked off, noiselessly: birds, men, elephants, pigs, children: noiselessly floating corpses amid the litter of the wreckage of the world. Forty days and forty nights the rain would fall till the waters covered the face of the earth. (p. 117)

The paradoxical redemptiveness of rain falling and consuming all foreshadows in opposite terms the imagery of falling ashes that Stephen notes as he enters the church to make his confession in 3.3. Here, as in Chapter I, *fire* and *water* carry opposite connotations. The strong associations among *red*,

fire, hell, and Catholicism is parallel and opposite that among *green, water, and heaven*. This latter group becomes a major pattern in Chapter IV that follows; here it mainly establishes a basis of opposition for the other complex.

Closely associated with *light* imagery are *eye* images. In the present context, *eyes* most often indicate awareness of Stephen by some other person or by God. The preacher characterizes the retreat as "a most salutary practice for all who desire to lead before God and in the eyes of men a truly christian life" (p. 109). A little later :

Time was to sin and to enjoy, time was to scoff at God and at the warnings of His holy church, time was to defy His majesty, to disobey His commands, to hoodwink one's fellow man, to commit sin after sin and sin after sin and to hide one's corruption from the sight of men. (p. 112)

Earlier, *eyes* were associated with fear of physical vulnerability; in this context, the basis for fear has become moral and psychological. This transformation from concern for the physical to concern for abstract fears reflects the general shift toward the novel's preoccupation with Stephen's phenomenal world. The most important use of *eyes* is to indicate God's awareness of man and man's vulnerability to Him. The first sermon ends with the admonition: "He who remembers the last things will act and think with them always before his eyes" (p. 111). In the conclusion of the first hell sermon, the preacher characterizes hell as the state where one is being forced to depart from God's sight. Thus, *heaven* is characterized by *light, eyes, and the presence of God*; hell is characterized by the deprivations of these images: *darkness and dismissal from sight and awareness*.

In Chapters I and II the imagery was largely direct and immediate, part of Stephen's perception of the physical

world; in Chapter III, particularly with *light* and *eye* imagery, it is increasingly metaphoric or abstract. More and more Stephen dwells in his own thoughts. He explores these mental images, related and embedded in languagelike patterns of associations, by examining the semantic and auditory similarities of the words associated with them. The affective dimension of Stephen's experience is thus moving away from experiences of physical reality—objective experience—toward greater preoccupation with his own thoughts and with language itself. Because *language* grows steadily in importance through the rest of the novel, Stephen's early awareness of its function and power demands attention.

As the series of sermons opens, the preacher defines the word *retreat*:

—Now what is the meaning of this word *retreat* and why is it allowed on all hands to be a most salutary practice for all who desire to lead before God and in the eyes of men a truly christian life? A retreat, my dear boys, signifies a withdrawal for a while from the cares of our life, the cares of this workaday world, in order to examine the state of our conscience, to reflect on the mysteries of holy religion and to understand better why we are here in this world. (p. 109)

The withdrawal process described is similar to the cycle of empathic projection that Stephen followed with the equations. Each sermon begins the same way—with a quotation from the Bible. Typical is the following:

—Remember only thy last things and thou shalt not sin for ever—words taken, my dear little brothers in Christ, from the book of Ecclesiastes, seventh chapter, fortieth verse. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. (p. 108)

The preacher continually emphasizes the words of the passage; for example, the reality of the trinity is closely related to its constituent names.

As Stephen stares out the window, the letters of a word epitomize his morbid image: "The letters of the name of Dublin lay heavily upon his mind, pushing one another surlily hither and thither with slow boorish insistence" (p. 111). The letters' hither-and-thither movement foreshadows the dream of section 3.3, where Stephen's self-concept is linked associatively with the excremental fiends of hell.

The capacity of language to characterize reality is evident in the first sermon on hell. Near the end, after vividly outlining hell's sensual horrors, the preacher attempts to consolidate the cumulative effect:

—Last of all consider the frightful torment of those damned souls, tempters and tempted alike, of the company of the devils. These devils will afflict the damned in two ways, by their presence and by their reproaches. . . . They mock and jeer at the lost souls whom they dragged down to ruin. It is they, the foul demons, who are made in hell the voices of conscience. Why did you sin? Why did you lend an ear to the temptings of fiends? Why did you turn aside from your pious practices and good works? (p. 123)

He continues:

Such is the language of those fiendish tormentors, words of taunting and of reproach, of hatred and of disgust. . . .

—O, my dear little brothers in Christ, may it never be our lot to hear that language! (p. 124)

For Stephen, languages focuses and characterizes experience with great personal impact and significance. At the climax of the sermon, the experience is concentrated in the shriek Stephen hears in his own mind: "Hell! Hell! Hell! Hell!"

(p. 125). One of the major functions of language in general is to characterize and represent experience, but seldom is the reader given a more direct and sustained example of a single word characterizing and representing such a large complex of experience. The ramifications of this experience extend through the rest of the novel; the immediate effect on Stephen is a clearer sense of language:

The voices that he knew so well, the common words, the quiet of the classroom when the voices paused and the silence was filled by the sound of softly browsing cattle as the other boys munched their lunches tranquilly, lulled his aching soul.

...

The English lesson began with the hearing of the history. Royal persons, favourites, intriguers, bishops, passed like mute phantoms behind their veil of names. (p. 125)

The power of language to embody, define, and reflect the unconscious associations of experience is now raised to the level of consciousness. Stephen's awareness of the role of language in shaping experience prepares us for the aesthetic theory and his choice of vocation.

Before turning to section 3.3, we should note briefly one last image cluster. To give a sense of the concept of eternity, the preacher uses a *bird* image:

Now imagine a mountain of that sand, a million miles high, reaching from the earth to the farthest heavens, and a million miles broad, extending to remotest space, and a million miles in thickness: and imagine such an enormous mass of countless particles of sand multiplied as often as there are leaves in the forest, drops of water in the ocean, feathers on birds, scales on fish, hairs on animals, atoms in the vast expanse of air: and imagine that at the end of every million years a little bird came to that mountain and carried away in its beak a tiny grain of that sand. How many millions and millions of

centuries would pass before that bird had carried away even a square foot of that mountain, how many eons upon eons of ages before it had carried away all. (p. 132)

The image is realistic, but birds have carried special significance for Stephen. Earlier, they were associated with fear and Stephen's feelings of physical inadequacy; here, that motif is sustained but in an abstract form.

Section 3.3 consists of two major parts—the scene in Stephen's room the night following the retreat, and his confession the next day. The density of imagery reflects the high level of emotional intensity. The rhythmic patterns of *rise* and *fall* present in 3.2 are continued in this section with two complete cycles: the first build-up leads to the dream; the second corresponds with Stephen's search for a chapel. The chapter ends with the epiphanic confessional followed by a denouement of two less intense scenes at home. These scenes complete the undulating pattern of increasing emotional intensity that began with the first sermon. At the moment of epiphany, Stephen's image of himself and his relation with religious ideality are redefined; he is a different person. The changes that have occurred are marked—almost emblematically—by the imagery in the last two brief scenes.

As the section begins Stephen is going to his room for the evening:

He waited in fear, his soul pining within him, praying silently that death might not touch his brow as he passed over the threshold, that the fiends that inhabit darkness might not be given power over him. He waited still at the threshold as at the entrance to some dark cave. Faces were there; eyes: they waited and watched. (p. 136)

The repeated references to the "dark room," the "visual gloom," and the cavelike atmosphere of the room set the tone for the scenes there. The rather ambivalent associations of *darkness* before the sermons have been replaced by the strong association with *hell*. The sense of fear evoked by *darkness* earlier in the chapter is present in this passage. That fear is centered, however, in *face* and *eye* images. In Chapter I, particularly the pandybat section, Stephen felt that his face indicated, almost masklike, his true character; the image *eyes*, the central organ of perception, has been metaphorically linked with religious acceptance. Here, the older connotations of fear and vulnerability associated with *eyes* and *face* in Chapters I and II are present, but complicated by more recent associations. The specific fears are revealed in the dream that follows.

The dream sequence begins with a description of setting:

A field of stiff weeds and thistles and tufted nettlebunches. Thick among the tufts of rank stiff growth lay battered canisters and clots and coils of solid excrement. A faint marshlight struggled upwards from all the ordure through the bristling greygreen weeds. An evil smell, faint and foul as the light, curled upwards sluggishly out of the canisters and from the stale crusted dung. (p. 137)

The "solid excrement" image links the passage with the *filth/excrement* motif developed concurrently and associatively with Stephen's visit to the brothel in Chapter II. Inhabiting this scene are:

Goatish creatures with human faces, hornybrowed, lightly bearded and grey as indiarubber. The malice of evil glittered in their hard eyes, as they moved hither and thither, trailing their long tails behind them. A rictus of cruel malignity lit up greily their old bony faces. (p. 137)

Their circling movement is similar to Stephen's earlier habit of slowly circling the brothel district, awaiting an impulse to resolve his indecision. Here the image of circling creatures carries similar connotations of personal shame—with an added association with the fiends of hell. This close relation of *hell*, *fiends*, *excrement*, and *self* is articulated in the next paragraph.

He flung the blankets from him madly to free his face and neck. That was his hell. God had allowed him to see the hell reserved for his sins: stinking, bestial, malignant, a hell of lecherous goatish fiends. For him! For him! (p. 138)

The abstractions of hell have been transformed by Stephen's imagination into images with strong, personal associations that go to the core of his sense of identity.

Earlier in the chapter, *heavy foods* were linked with *bestiality*. The convulsive vomiting that follows functions as an exorcism, cleaning the corruption that Stephen believes has filled his bowels. Having rid himself of this, he rushes to the window:

The rain had drawn off; and amid the moving vapours from point to point of light the city was spinning about herself a soft cocoon of yellowish haze. Heaven was still and faintly luminous and the air sweet to breathe, as in a thicket drenched with showers; and amid peace and shimmering lights and quiet fragrance he made a covenant with his heart. (p. 138)

Unlike earlier associations of stagnant water, the rain connotes redemption in its association with light. For the first time in the novel Stephen feels that he can pray sincerely, and he does.

Stephen searches for a church in which to make his confession:

He walked on and on through the illit streets, fearing to stand still for a moment lest it might seem that he held back from what awaited him, fearing to arrive at that towards which he still turned with longing. (p. 140)

Earlier he circled through dark streets to the brothel; here his course is straight, suggesting purpose and direction.

The chapel experience is similar in form to the earlier epiphanic experiences. The intensity of imagery builds steadily (see II.5); many of the images present carry strong associations with earlier experiences. The exact moment of epiphany, however, is indicated by striking images used only casually before.

The narrative focuses on Stephen's sensations and self awareness :

His blood began to murmur in his veins, murmuring like a sinful city summoned from its sleep to hear its doom. Little flakes of fire fell and powdery ashes fell softly, alighting on the houses of men. They stirred, waking from sleep, troubled by the heated air. . . . Little fiery flakes fell and touched him at all points, shameful thoughts, shameful words, shameful acts. Shame covered him wholly like fine glowing ashes falling continually. To say it in words! His soul, stifling and helpless, would cease to be. (p. 142)

The tone of the passage suggests a gentleness similar to the redemptive rain; also present, however, are *fire* and *ash* images with their strong negative associations from the sermons. The image *murmuring* connotes fear, from its earlier association with the faces Stephen saw in his darkened room. Thus, the tone of redemption and gentleness is mixed with images suggesting fear and hell.

As Stephen begins his confession, he "repeats the *confiteor* in fright" (p. 143). The *confiteor* was the prayer

Stephen mockingly repeated when commanded to confess by Heron. There the *confiteor* was a shield used to protect the integrity of his aesthetic beliefs from submission to his tormentors; here he repeats it in submission to the orthodoxy of Roman Catholicism.

As he makes his confession,

His sins trickled from his lips, one by one, trickled into shameful drops from his soul festering and oozing like a sore, a squalid stream of vice. The last sins oozed forth, sluggish, filthy. There was no more to tell. He bowed his head, overcome. (p. 144)

Sin and personal shame were associated with *excrement* and *filth* in the dream sequence. Just as the foul matter was purged from his stomach there, these elements are purged from his personality here. Religious epiphany follows: "The old and weary voice fell like sweet rain upon his quaking parching heart. How sweet and sad!" (p. 145).

His confession concludes:

He knelt to say his penance, praying in a corner of the dark nave: and his prayers ascended to heaven from his purified heart like perfume streaming upwards from a heart of white rose. (p. 145)

The suggested purity of the rose contrasts sharply with the *excrement* motif so strongly associated with Stephen in this chapter. The only undercurrent to the ideality of this epiphany is the dark knave, perhaps a realistic, descriptive image, perhaps carrying an ominous note. Nevertheless, Stephen's experience is one of ideality and purity symbolized by the rose.

The repetition of *white* sustains this tone through the next two scenes. In the first, the squalor of his life disappears before Stephen's eyes as he thinks of his confession. The

next scene, a prayer that Stephen dreams, is characterized by *light* images and the white flowers on the altar.

The epiphany grows out of a dream and ends with a dream, but the dreams are as opposite from one another in connotation and form as possible. This symmetry of organization is remarkably like that of the pandybat episode. Stephen is a different person after his epiphanic experience here also. Associations among images have reformed, coalesced, and become more complex. Stephen's sense of religious redemption marks a psychological state the opposite of that at the beginning of the chapter.

Stephen's present self-image is closely associated with images of religious ideality: *light*, *heaven*, and *water*. This last image is particularly interesting; although its proximity to images of heaven marks a shift in connotations, the exact nature of that shift remains ambivalent until Chapter IV. Earlier, Stephen's negative self-image was marked by a complex of images that eventually included *beasts*, *darkness*, *hell*, and *fire*. This state was marked by Stephen's overwhelming sense of isolation; the distance between his own inner nature and the rest of the physical and spiritual universe was too great to traverse.

His attempts to break through this barrier take several different forms. One in particular, his rhythmic attempts to emphatically project his consciousness out through physical distances, is important; this thematic pattern is similar to structural rhythms that give aesthetic coherence to the novel. After section 3.1, the remainder of the chapter consists of regularly alternating narrations of sermon followed by reaction. The last section of the chapter marks a single sustained reaction that culminates in the religious epiphany.

Reflecting and supporting this pattern is an undulating modulation of image intensity. The final height of intensity and the length of the build-up suggest that this epiphanic experience is stronger than the preceding one involving the prostitute.

Taken as a whole, the chapter is the first to exhibit the basic thematic structure found in succeeding chapters. The matter of the preceding epiphanic experience—submission to physical sensuality—is rigidified into habit early in Chapter III. After that, it continually diminishes until it disappears before the chapter's end. Concurrent with the decreasing importance of this theme is the rise of a new theme—identification with religious ideality—that culminates in epiphany. Similarly this experience—fresh and personally meaningful here—is reduced to habit before being replaced by a major new development in Chapter IV.