

## 6

# Analysis of Chapter IV

Chapter IV is almost identical in structure to Chapter III. It consists of three sections: the first continues the subject matter of the previous epiphanic experience; the middle section is a transition toward what is to follow; and the final section is the build-up and epiphanic experience that marks another developmental level for Stephen. The epiphanic experiences of II and III—the encounter with the prostitute and Stephen's confession—mark opposite psychological states. In Chapter IV Stephen once again finds himself at a stage of development opposite that of the preceding chapter; however, he is not back where he started from in II. The substance of the experience, the sensual data for his mind, is somewhat similar to that of the earlier epiphany—both involve a girl and Stephen's immediate reactions to her—but his point of view and self-image have expanded. He has progressed one-half of a cycle, one turn of the screw, in a pattern that is helical, not circular.

Although the first section of Chapter IV is dominated by religious imagery, a comparison of the most frequent images of Chapters III and IV reveals an important shift in the nature of that religious concern:

## Chapter III

God  
sin  
soul  
hell  
dark  
pray  
heart  
child  
day  
eye  
fire  
word  
hand  
body  
heaven  
saint  
confess  
death  
face

## Chapter IV

soul  
priest  
sin  
eye  
face  
voice  
God  
pray  
air  
silence  
spirit  
name  
day  
faint  
order  
sea  
slow  
water  
light

In terms of prominence, *God* has dropped from position one to position seven; *soul* has risen from three to one; *priest*, the second most frequent image in IV, is not among the twenty most frequent images of III at all; *hell* has similarly disappeared from the list of IV. These repositionings suggest that the shift in religious concern from the abstract and distant of 3.2 to the more personal and immediate of 3.3 has continued with increasing emphasis on the personal and institutional aspects of religious experience as opposed to the mythic and abstract. At the same time the growing importance of *eye*, *face*, *voice*, *air*, and *name*—all images associated earlier with identity—suggests an increasing, secular self-awareness. The relative low position in the list for Chapter IV of *sea* and *water* is deceptive; collectively,

with other images denoting water, they comprise a major thematic group (see Appendix E).

The transformation in 4.1 of Stephen's religious epiphany is similar to the change that took place in 3.1 with regard to his previous epiphanic experience: the matter of personal, meaningful experience is transformed into action. The religious fervor Stephen felt after his confession is formalized here through various frameworks of time used to partition the day into devotional areas.<sup>1</sup> For example:

Sunday was dedicated to the mystery of the Holy Trinity, Monday to the Holy Ghost, Tuesday to the Guardian Angels, Wednesday to Saint Joseph, Thursday to the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, Friday to the Suffering Jesus, Saturday to the Blessed Virgin Mary. (p. 147)

Overlaying the partitioning of the week is another division based on the hours of the day:

His daily life was laid out in devotional areas. . . . Every morning he hallowed himself anew in the presence of some holy image or mystery. (p. 147)

And later:

Every part of his day, divided by what he regarded now as the duties of his station in life, circled about its own center of spiritual energy. His life seemed to have drawn near to eternity; every thought, word and deed, every instance of consciousness could be made to reverberate radiantly in heaven; and at times his sense of such immediate repercussion was so lively that he seemed to feel his soul in devotion pressing like fingers the keyboard of a great cash register and to see the amount of his purchase start forth immediately in

heaven, not as a number but as a frail column of incense or as a slender flower. (p. 148)

The emphasis on the temporal dimension of experience is interesting in several respects. In the context of religious experience, *time* was associated with the image of a bird moving mountains of sand. Earlier, *birds* connoted fear and feelings of physical inadequacy; these associations, while not apparent here, may lie beneath the surface of Stephen's mind. In evaluating his present state of religious grace, Stephen is haunted by the doubt that his confession may have been motivated primarily by fear rather than true repentance. Thus, the abstractions of time and space are linked, somewhat precariously here, through *bird* images and fear. The temporal side of this complex is developed in 4.1; the spatial, in 4.3. Their final coalescence within Stephen's experience plays a major role in the epiphany on the beach.

In Chapter III, images of flower and the frail column of incense were closely related to Stephen's religious epiphany; in the context of the *giant cash register in the sky*—a highly grotesque image—they appear wooden and awkward. Other images of flowers and roses are literally transformed into wooden forms through a cultural pun:

The rosaries too which he said constantly—for he carried his beads loose in his trouser's pockets that he might tell them as he walked the streets—transformed themselves into coronals of flowers of such vague and unearthly texture that they seemed to him as hueless and odourless as they were nameless. (p. 148)

That Joyce appreciated the pun is strongly suggested by the association between rosaries and flowers in this passage. The transformation of a vivid image with strong, personal connotations into one with awkward and grotesque associations is

parallel to the larger process of transforming a personally meaningful religious experience into a collection of habitual actions.

Like the catalogue of senses in the hell sermon, Stephen lists the mortifications affecting each of his five senses :

Each of his senses was brought under a rigorous discipline. In order to mortify the sense of sight he made it his rule to walk in the street with downcast eyes, glancing neither to right nor left and never behind him. . . . To mortify his hearing he exerted no control over his voice which was then breaking, neither sang nor whistled and made no attempt to flee from noises which caused him painful nervous irritation such as the sharpening of knives on the knifeboard, the gathering of cinders on the fireshovel and the twiggling of the carpet. To mortify his smell was more difficult as he found in himself no instinctive repugnance to bad odours. . . . He found in the end that the only odour against which his sense of smell revolted was a certain stale fishy stink like that of longstanding urine: and whenever it was possible he subjected himself to this unpleasant odour. To mortify the taste he practised strict habits at table, observed to the letter all the fasts of the church and sought by distraction to divert his mind from the savours of different foods. But it was to the mortification of touch that he brought the most assiduous ingenuity of inventiveness. He never consciously changed his position in bed, sat in the most uncomfortable positions, suffered patiently every itch and pain, kept away from the fire, remained on his knees all through the mass except at the gospels, left parts of his neck and face undried so that the air might sting them and whenever he was not saying his beads, carried his arms stiffly at his sides like a runner and never in his pockets or clasped behind him. (pp. 150-51)

Again, the intensity of the images and the experience is reduced: the fires of hell have been transformed into the itch of wool. The last image of the passage—the runner with

stiffened arms—suggests the rigid, overly formalized stance that Mike Flynn insisted upon in Chapter II.

Another group of images important in both Chapters III and IV is that concerning mathematical equations. In 3.1 equations were directly related to Stephen's sense of contact with the physical world through his empathic projections outward to the limits of the universe and then inwards to the center of his being. This set of images associated with the relation between inner and outer realities is present here and grows in importance through the rest of the novel. In 4.1, however, the group appears in a distinctly religious context:

He saw the whole world forming one vast symmetrical expression of God's power and love. Life became a divine gift for every moment and sensation of which, were it even the sight of a single leaf hanging on the twig of a tree, his soul should praise and thank the Giver. The world for all its solid substance and complexity no longer existed for his soul save as a theorem of divine power and love and universality. (pp. 149-50)

Stephen's idealism borders on solipsism: the physical world exists for him only as part of some abstraction or model within his own mind. Opposing this isolation are his attempts at mortification, making him more aware of sensual stimuli from the external world. The resolution of these inner and outer forces in religious terms seems doomed to failure through a ceaseless cycle of confession, repentance, absolution, sin, confession. . . Stephen is acutely aware of his ambivalent motives:

A restless feeling of guilt would always be present with him: he would confess and repent and be absolved, confess and repent again and be absolved again, fruitlessly. Perhaps that

first hasty confession wrung from him by the fear of hell had not been good? Perhaps, concerned only for his imminent doom, he had not had sincere sorrow for his sin? But the surest sign that his confession had been good and that he had had sincere sorrow for his sin was, he knew, the amendment —I have amended my life, have I not? he asked himself. (p. 153)

This ambivalence—which he sees as weakness in this context—reflects the complexities of association and connotation that underlie all images and experiences. Stephen's realization of this fact, formalized in the aesthetics, grows experientially through the remainder of the chapter.

Section 4.1 thus introduces few new images or themes; primarily, it reveals the reduction of an experientially meaningful experience into a formalized set of rituals devoid of personal relevance. This process prepares us for Stephen's rejection in 4.2 of a clerical life.

Section 4.2 is an important transition: religious imagery declines in importance while images associated with language, perception, and aesthetics emerge as major motifs. Stephen listens to the priest's bid to join the order and then, almost on a whim, turns down the offer. During the section, the dichotomy between *inner* and *outer reality* assumes added personal importance for Stephen as the narrative focuses at the interface between them: Stephen's perceptual awareness. The resolution of the distance between *inner* and *outer*, here a matter of personal experience, becomes in Chapter V the basis of Stephen's theory of aesthetics, repeating once again the pattern of formalizing the material of one chapter into habit or abstraction in the succeeding chapter.

On an experiential level, the interface between subjective and objective is a matter of conscious concern for Stephen :

The director stood in the embrasure of the window, his back to the light, leaning an elbow on the brown crossblind and, as he spoke and smiled, slowly dangling and looping the cord of the other blind. Stephen stood before him, following for a moment with his eyes, the waning of the long summer daylight above the roofs or the slow deft movements of the priestly fingers. The priest's face was in total shadow but the waning daylight from behind him touched the deeply grooved temples and the curves of the skull. (pp. 153-54)

And a bit later :

Stephen smiled again in answer to the smile which he could not see on the priest's shadowed face, its image or spectre only passing rapidly across his mind as the low discreet accent fell upon his ear. (p. 155)

Where senses fail, the context of experience, the subjective continuum, completes the picture. Ordinary experiences blend into and alter slightly the fabric of mind, but only at moments of epiphanic intensity is the continuity broken and major realignments of associations established.

That the rector stands with "his back to the light" and that his eyes are hidden from Stephen's view is particularly suggestive since *eyes* and *light* were emblems for the ideality of God in the preceding chapter. It is impossible to tell whether Joyce intended to place the priest and, by implication, the order in an associative position opposite God and His ideality or whether this portrayal is merely realistic; the imagery strongly suggests the former. The negative tone of the passage is extended by the deathlike image *skull*.

Concern for the perceptual process is continued through



the section, particularly in relation to language. The role of language in formalizing and retaining the data of experience is evident in the following passage :

The names of articles of dress worn by women or of certain soft and delicate stuffs used in their making brought always to his mind a delicate and sinful perfume. As a boy he had imagined the reins by which horses are driven as slender silken bands and it shocked him to feel at Stradbrook the greasy leather of harness. It had shocked him too when he had felt for the first time beneath his tremulous fingers the brittle texture of a woman's stocking for, retaining nothing of all he read save that which seemed to him an echo or a prophecy of his own state, it was only amid softworded phrases or within rosesoft stuffs that he dared to conceive of the soul or body of a woman moving with tender life. (p. 155)

*Words* or auditory images focus the various experiences and images embedded within the mind; the auditory dimension of language here forms the associative link between the image of woman and the soft clothes Stephen imagines. *Soft words* reconcile the ideality within his mind and the reality of his sense impressions.

The proposition to join the order evokes for Stephen images of the various clerics he has known.

He had assumed the voices and gestures which he had noted with various priests. He had bent his knee sideways like such a one, he had shaken the thurible only slightly like such a one, his chasuble had swung open like that of such another as he had turned to the altar again after having blessed the people. (p. 158)

In many respects, this reverie represents Joyce's primary mode of creation—the rearrangement of the components of experience followed by retrospective examination of that

arrangement.<sup>2</sup> These images, originally coming from objective experience, are drawn here from his subjective. A link between psychological isolation and social isolation comes in the same paragraph: "In vague sacrificial or sacramental acts alone his will seemed drawn to go forth to encounter reality" (p. 159). This theme is continued as he leaves the school:

Stephen passed out on the wide platform above the steps and was conscious of the caress of mild evening air. Towards Findlate's church a quartet of young men were striding along with linked arms, swaying their heads and stepping to the agile melody of their leader's concertina. The music passed in an instant, as the first bars of sudden music always did, over the fantastic fabrics of his mind, dissolving them painlessly and noiselessly as a sudden wave dissolves the sand-built turrets of children. (p. 160)

It is through his auditory sense that his thoughts are interrupted and his attention directed toward the physical world; the fabric of mind dissolves to allow perception of the objective to replace reverie. The image of mind developed in the aesthetic theory is similar to this but with the difference that epiphanic experiences rend and re-form this fabric instead of simply blending into it.

The dilemma Stephen faces in choosing between life in the "real" world and a life as a cloistered Jesuit is focused by his name: The Reverend Stephen Dedalus, S.J. Stephen's mind encompasses a wide variety of associations, but it is inevitably drawn toward images of reality, not the abstractions of Roman Catholicism:

His name in that new life leaped into characters before his eyes and to it there followed a mental sensation of an undefined face or colour of a face. The colour faded and became strong like a changing glow of pallid brick red. Was it the

raw reddish glow he had so often seen on wintry mornings on the shaven gills of the priests? The face was eyeless and sourfavoured and devout, shot with pink tinges of suffocated anger. Was it not a mental spectre of the face of one of the jesuits whom some of the boys called Lantern Jaws and others Foxy Campbell? (p. 161)

The image of himself as a priest, a composite of gestures, grows more detailed and Stephen sees the origin of the image's components. The choice he will make is determined; the interesting aspect of the passage is the role his name plays. In section 4.3 the prophetic nature of his name is extended further, emphasizing the power of language to resolve the dichotomy between inner and outer experiences within perception itself. On an experiential level, this resolution occurs in the epiphany itself; the formal or philosophic resolution comes in the following chapter.

Section 4.2 is thus a thematic crossroads for the chapter. Images associated with institutional and conventional religion virtually disappear after this point in the narrative while images associated with the perceptual process, particularly language, steadily grow in importance through the scene that follows. This same pattern was present in Chapter III with regard to images of the brothel and religious images, and a similar pattern will be seen again in Chapter V.

Section 4.3 consists of a single continuous action that culminates in one of Joyce's most beautiful epiphanies. It begins:

From the door of Byron's publichouse to the gate of Clontarf Chapel, from the gate of Clontarf Chapel to the door of Byron's publichouse and then back again to the chapel and

then back again to the publichouse he had paced slowly at first, planting his steps scrupulously in the spaces of the patchwork of the footpath, then timing their fall to the fall of verses. (p. 164)

The repetitive walk between Byron's pub and Clontarf Chapel marks Stephen's inability to choose between a life as a cleric and a life as an artist. The indecisive oscillation between polar opposites, implying no sense of resolution, is one form of the *hither/thither* motif present throughout the section. The linearity of the motion offers an interesting contrast to the cycle images of Chapters II and III. During the period when Stephen visited the brothels regularly, cycle images reflected his indecision; here, indecision is marked by the linear pattern. In the epiphany to come, when Stephen is able to see clearly the choice he must make, the linear, *hither/thither* motif disappears and cycle images are associated with the vitality of the great life cycle.

As Stephen walks through town the narrative enters his thoughts, revealing an interesting and important cluster of images associated with music:

It seemed to him that he heard notes of fitful music leaping upwards a tone and downwards a diminished fourth, upwards a tone and downwards a major third, like triple-branching flames leaping fitfully, flame after flame, out of a midnight wood. It was an elfin prelude, endless and formless; and, as it grew wilder and faster, the flames leaping out of time, he seemed to hear from under the boughs and grasses wild creatures racing, their feet passed in pattering like rain upon the leaves. Their feet passed in pattering tumult over his mind, the feet of hares and rabbits, the feet of harts and hinds and antelopes, until he heard them no more and remembered only a proud cadence from Newman: *Whose feet are as the feet of harts and underneath the everlasting arms.* (p. 165)

Experientially, *music* exists in time, its essence defined in terms of ratios of vibrations on the microscopic level and in terms of intervals and pauses on a larger scale. This image group is linked in Stephen's imagination first with flames and then with dreamlike animals. Both associations link this passage with the preceding chapter. The *flame* image suggests a tie with the theme of religion; *the dreamlike animals* suggest the figures Stephen dreamed about in section 3.3, but purified, perhaps by the *rain* images. In the preceding chapter, the dream was the immediate cause propelling Stephen toward his religious epiphany. Here, the music of language, associated with dreamlike animals of opposite connotations, is one of several factors that lead to the aesthetic epiphany. Both experiences come from internal forces: the first is motivated largely by fear, the second by insight and choice. The links between these passages suggest that the secular epiphany to come should carry levels of emotional intensity at least equivalent to those of the religious experience. This expectation is confirmed by the graph in II.6.

In the passage that follows, Stephen examines for the last time the choice of assuming a religious life:

All through his boyhood he had mused upon that which he had so often thought to be his destiny and when the moment had come for him to obey the call he had turned aside, obeying a wayward instinct. Now time lay between: the oils of ordination would never anoint his body. He had refused.  
(p. 165)

Time, a major characteristic of music, is given a degree of spatiality in the words *lay between*. This union of time and space foreshadows the epiphanic fusion that takes place later on the beach.

The changes occurring in Stephen are reflected in the

image that follows: "He turned seaward." Earlier, *fire* and *religion* were closely associated; in Chapter I *fire* carried connotations opposite those of *water*. In turning *seaward* Stephen is turning away from religious institutions and toward something else. *Sea* images have often been interpreted as archetypal symbols for the deepest aspects of man's subconscious. In turning seaward, Stephen may well be seeking those aspects of himself that are most personal, most universal; such is the role of the artist. As yet, Stephen has not seen clearly his vocation.

The interplay between *fire* and *water* imagery begun in Chapter I is completed here. There *fire* and *water* carried highly positive and negative connotations, respectively. In the pandybat episode they were fused in the image of scalding tears. In Chapter III, *fire* was linked with images of hell, implying connotations opposite the earlier security of the hearth. This pattern of reversal is completed here with *sea*, carrying highly positive connotations. The respective dominance in Chapters III and IV of these two themes is evident in the graphs of Appendix E. While they have changed drastically in connotations, the earlier associations that they still carry makes them much more complex. This changing blend of associations is more complete than earlier polar qualities and is indicative of the maturation process itself.

The accumulation of images with distinct temporal or spatial qualities is continued. Two groups with strong spatial dimensions are *sea* and *cloud* images. In this short section occur twelve of the twenty-five references to sea found in the entire novel; nine other images (such as *seaborne* and *seabird*) contain *sea* as a prefix. Eight of the twenty-four occurrences of *cloud* also occur here. Together, *cloud* and *sea* encapsulate the space between them and suggest opposite aspects of reality and experience. The clouds floating over-

head carry for Stephen a number of associations, including suggestions of removal and ideality. The sea, closer to Stephen, seems more immediate and personal, as its archetypal associations would suggest. Together they focus the inner and outer facets of experience. Stephen's attempts to reconcile the distance between them may be interpreted as another attempt to reconcile the subjective and objective components of perception, a theme most recently manifest in his sense of isolation. This union takes place experientially in the epiphany to come.

A number of images and events prepare Stephen for this experience. One important group of images concerns language itself: "A day of dappled seaborne clouds" (p. 166). The proximity of *seaborne* and *clouds*, we have seen, foreshadows the epiphany; here, they remain separate, although close. The medium in which they can approach one another is not space or air, but language:

The phrase and the day and the scene harmonised in a chord. Words. Was it their colours? He allowed them to glow and fade, hue after hue: sunrise gold, the russet and green of apple orchards, azures of waves, the grey-fringed fleece of clouds. No, it was not their colours: it was the poise and balance of the period itself. Did he then love the rhythmic rise and fall of words better than their associations of legend and colour? Or was it that, being as weak of sight as he was shy of mind, he drew less pleasure from the refraction of the glowing sensible world through the prism of a language many-coloured and richly storied than from the contemplation of an inner world of individual emotions mirrored perfectly in a lucid supple periodic prose? (pp. 166-7)

*Language* serves a triple role. It enables Stephen to organize his immediate experience: it provides a context of both space and time—suggested by day—for the two dominant

components of his experience, the images *clouds* and *sea*. Second, the phrase evokes a number of associations within his mind, linking the experience with other images and experiences. Finally, the phrase has an auditory dimension independent of semantic meaning or association. The cadence of the various sounds augments Stephen's immediate experience; his perceptual experience, here and now, would be different if he did not think these words. Thus the conceptual component of this phrase draws these two spatial images closer together while the auditory component draws together the temporal and spatial modes of perception. This unifying role of language grows in importance throughout the remainder of the novel.<sup>3</sup>

Two other *cloud* images follow. The first, a "flying squall" that appears on the horizon, suggests an earlier, metaphoric use of *cloud*. Feeling betrayed by his mother's opposition to his attending the university, Stephen remembers that

a dim antagonism gathered force within him and darkened his mind as a cloud against her disloyalty: and when it passed, cloudlike, leaving his mind serene and dutiful towards her again, he was made aware dimly and without regret of a first noiseless sundering of their lives. (pp. 164-65)

The second contains a number of other images important in this scene:

Disheartened, he raised his eyes towards the slowdrifting clouds, dappled and seaborne. They were voyaging across the deserts of the sky, a host of nomads on the march, voyaging high over Ireland, westward bound. The Europe they had come from lay out there beyond the Irish Sea, Europe of strange tongues and valleys and woodbegirt and citadelled and of entrenched and marshalled races. He heard a confused music within him as of memories and names which he was almost conscious of but could not capture even for an in-



stant; then the music seemed to recede, to recede, to recede: and from each receding trail of nebulous music there fell always one long-drawn calling note, piercing like a star the dusk of silence. Again! Again! Again! A voice from beyond the world was calling.

—Hello, Stephanos!

—Here come The Dedalus! (p. 167)

The phrase *a day of dappled, seaborne clouds* links the predominantly spatial image, *cloud*, with *day*, a temporal image in this context. Another temporal image, *music*, organizes names and images within his memory, implying that the structure of Stephen's mind is a harmonious and organic composition where inner and outer realities, time and space, subjective and objective can merge in the perceptual process.

The scene dissolves in a set of images linking the inner and outer components of this experience. The shouts Stephen hears come from without, but they blend into his train of thought before submerging into his subconscious memory. The specific images he hears are his name fractured into its components: Stephen and Dedalus. These names come from different cultures and signify different aspects of his personality. In 3.2, the rector addressed his attention and prayers to one facet of Stephen's self. He instructs him: "And let you, Stephen, make a novena to your holy patron saint, the first martyr, who is very powerful with God, that God may enlighten your mind" (pp. 159-60). Stephen is exhorted to adhere to religious dogma as the earlier Stephen adhered to religious ideality to the point of martyrdom. That aspect of Stephen's identity has passed; it is the other aspect, suggested by his inherited name, that is dominant here:

Now, as never before, his strange name seemed to him a prophecy. So timeless seemed the grey warm air, so fluid and impersonal his own mood, that all ages were as one to him. A moment before the ghost of the ancient kingdom of the Danes had looked forth through the vesture of the haze-wrapped city. Now, at the name of the fabulous artificer, he seemed to hear the noise of dim waves and to see a winged form flying above the waves and slowly climbing the air. What did it mean? Was it a quaint device opening a page of some medieval book of prophecy of the end he had been born to serve and had been following through the mists of childhood and boyhood, a symbol of the artist forging anew in his workshop out of the sluggish matter of the earth a new soaring impalpable imperishable being? (pp. 168-69)

The name *Dedalus* links Stephen with the ancient myth of Icarus and Daedalus, who fled the labyrinth on waxen wings. Earlier, the physical distance between *sea* and *clouds* characterized the psychological distance between inner and outer. The image of the "hawk-like man flying sunward" who is able to fly literally from the sea to the clouds helps to resolve this dichotomy. The connotations of courage and artistic potency present in these *bird* images is opposite the earlier associations of fear and physical inadequacy. The image of *hawklike man* also links Stephen's self-image with the artificer, creating in his own soul works of art from the materials of experience. His awareness of the vocation he will follow is clear :

Yes! Yes! Yes! He would create proudly out of the freedom and power of his soul, as the great artificer whose name he bore, a living thing, new and soaring and beautiful, impalpable, imperishable. (p. 170)

That "thing" he will create is art. The process being described, the movement from experience to formalization,

reflects the same process operating in the narrative: the process in which experiential matter of epiphany is formalized into habit and ritual.

Empathetically, Stephen's imagination takes him one step further:

His soul was soaring in an air beyond the world and the body he knew was purified in a breath and delivered of incertitude and made radiant and commingled with the element of the spirit. (p. 169)

Stephen identifies with Icarus, son of Daedalus; earlier he had identified with Daedalus. The fusion of father and son (in Stephen's imagination) foreshadows Stephen's quest for father in *Ulysses*. In the present context, this empathic association represents another instance of the *space/time* motif: by identifying with both father and son, Stephen has fused cause and effect, preceptor and follower; the role of Icarus/Daedalus in resolving the spatial dichotomy has already been discussed. These thematic strands involving *sea, clouds, birds, Icarus/Daedalus, space/time, inner/outer* all

fuse in the epiphanic experience on the beach.

From this point in the narrative the level of emotional intensity builds steadily toward climax. The transition from preparation to resolution is marked by an important image; as Stephen starts towards the sea, "he clambered down the slope of the breakwater" (p. 170). The image *breakwater*, a realistic detail, represents on another level the boundary or choice in Stephen's mind between the religious life and life as an artist. It also links this passage with an earlier epiphany. Prior to this section the image occurred only in Chapter II, where Stephen sought to erect a barrier between himself and the sordid life that surrounded him. Here Stephen will-

ingly crosses the breakwater, indicating his readiness for fundamental change.

As he walks along the inlet he looks down into the sea around his feet and sees

the endless drift of seaweed. Emerald and black and russet and olive, it moved beneath the current, swaying and turning. The water of the rivulet was dark and endless drift and mirrored the highdrifting clouds. The clouds were drifting above him silently and silently the seatangle was drifting below him; and the grey warm air was still: and a new wild life was singing in his veins. (p. 170)

The surface of the water reflects the clouds, but Stephen can also look through the reflection on the surface and see an endless motion of vague but distinguishable forms below. If we explore the archetypal associations of this set of images as well as those actually present in *Portrait*, this complex suggests the model of mind developed in the aesthetic theory. Taking the sea as a metaphor for *mind*, the surface—the interface between *water* and *air* or *water* and *reflected sky*—corresponds to the perceptual interface between the subjective and objective levels of experience. These physical stimulæ interact with images and associations already present in the mind. Some external images are reflected while others make more impact and are absorbed into the subjective continuum of the personality. The long strands of seaweed floating in the current suggest the trains of associations that float within the flux of experience. Firmly rooted, these strands shift constantly but slightly. Only during stormlike agitation are they uprooted and their fundamental structural relations changed.

The level of emotional intensity builds toward epiphany as Stephen walks on the beach, becoming more and more

aware of his surroundings. The very height of the experience is marked by the image of a girl standing in the water. At that moment a number of associative relations fuse; emblematic of this process is the image *seabird*, in which two important thematic groups, *sea* and *bird*, are welded together in language just as *scald* fused *fire* and *water* in Chapter I. *Seabird*, however, plays an even larger role in integrating the major themes of the chapter and the novel. Clouds, with this connotation of the ideal, the distant, are reflected in the sea, suggestive of the mind itself. Earlier, the ideal was linked with images of blue and religious images, both sets too distant psychologically to be attained. Here, Stephen's projection to his birdlike namesakes flying between these two limits of reality suggests at least the possibility of their fusion within Stephen's perception of reality; however, their actual fusion comes not through the image of Daedalus/Icarus but through the medium of language—the fusion of *sea* and *bird* into *seabird*. When this juxtaposition of the components of experience fuse experientially, when Stephen *sees* their union, this entire complex of association fuses into a unified structure embodying a number of themes.

In addition to *seabird*, other images with dialectical connotations are also present here. One in particular is noteworthy: near the height of the epiphany a cry comes to Stephen's lips: "—Heavenly God! cried Stephen's soul, in an outburst of profane joy" (p. 171). This invocation of religious imagery in a secular utterance recalls the two previous epiphanic experiences. The "outburst of profane joy" links this passage with that concerning the prostitute—sound imagery was used metaphorically there also; "Heavenly God," similarly, links it with the religious epiphany. Their juxtaposition at the very moment of epiphany suggests a

fusion of opposite epiphanic experiences. On one level, Stephen is closer to his earlier, "profane" state than to his "religious" state; from a more comprehensive perspective, however, we see that he has progressed to an entirely new level, embodying most of his past, but transcending it also. The pattern of development is thus helical, not circular. Experientially, he has now realized his vocation as artist, creator, aesthetician.

The result of this experience on the structure of Stephen's mind is apparent in the following passage:

He closed his eyes in the languor of sleep. His eyelids trembled as if they felt the vast cycle movement of the earth and her watchers, trembled as if they felt the strange light of some new world. His soul was swooning into some new world, fantastic, dim, uncertain as under sea, traversed by cloudy shapes and beings. A world, a glimmer, or a flower? Glimmering and trembling, trembling and unfolding, a breaking light, an opening flower, it spread in endless succession to itself, breaking in full crimson and unfolding and fading to palest rose, leaf by leaf and wave of light by wave of light, flooding all the heavens with its soft flushes, every flush deeper than the other. (p. 172)

The indecisive *hither-and-thither* movement has been replaced by the cyclical process inherent in life and art. Stephen's awareness of this motion pattern leads him to a new level of awareness—"uncertain as under sea, traversed by cloudy shapes and beings." The *cloud/sea* images echo the *cloud/sea* group as Stephen, earlier, walked on the beach. There the metaphoric relation with mind was implicit; here it is explicit. Structurally, the group provides continuity for the entire experience—buildup, epiphany, denouement—by framing it symmetrically. A similar structural pattern was present in the *pandybat* episode in the

*pick, pack, pock, puck* sound images which, in turn, were linked with the *brimming bowl*. The *flower* images link the experience with the earlier religious epiphany; their association with images of cyclical development, however, reflects Stephen's new level of awareness. *Light*, similarly, links the experience with Chapter III, where it symbolized the ideality of God; here, it has been transformed to suggest aesthetic inspiration. The imagery of the passage thus binds this particular epiphany to the other major epiphanies of earlier chapters; because so many rich and varied trains of association converge here, this particular epiphany may be the most important of the novel.

Stephen's sense of vocation is the matter for Chapter V and the ultimate cause for all subsequent actions portrayed. It is not surprising that the particular artistic medium he chooses for expression is language. Throughout section 4.3 there is a dependent relation between language and experience. The rise in emotional intensity was produced by the organic fusion of external stimuli with internal associations and stimuli evoked through language. As Stephen became more and more aware of objective reality, he became more and more emotionally aroused and hence able to focus more attention on his experiences, thus producing even greater excitement, and so on. At the height of the experience, the phenomenological fusion of subjective and objective is emblematically concentrated in the words that burst from his lips. *Language* both evokes and encompasses the experience; but *language* alone is not sufficient. There is the clear need of objective experience and the real world. It is the balance between *inner* and *outer* present in this particular epiphany that distinguishes it from the more physical epiphany with the prostitute and the more idealistic epiphany in the chapel. The momentum of this experience

carries over into Chapter V and culminates in Stephen's statement of aesthetic theory. There has been much critical discussion concerning the validity of that theory. The pattern we have seen, where meaningful personal experience is reduced if not destroyed by abstraction, suggests that Stephen's greatest aesthetic insights occurs here, not in Chapter V. It is ironic, perhaps paradoxical, that the later statement describes the perceptual process embodied in Stephen's experience and hence is important from a critical point of view while, within the fictive world of the novel, a walk on a beach carries greater personal meaning for Stephen.