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JAMES JOYCE'S *THE DEAD*: FROM ANASTOMOSIS TO EPIPHANY

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Obsession with the past is one of the dominant features of James Joyce who is known to have a nostalgic view toward Ireland. This haunting by the past is also traceable in *The Dead*, the prominent short story in the *Dubliners*; the past of Gretta's relationship has tinged her present marital relationship. For Gretta, the absence of the deceased lover is more tangible than the presence of her husband. In this study, the psychic dynamics of this love relationship will be analyzed in terms of Lacanian psychoanalysis. The questions the article asks are how the desire is addressed, and whether Gretta as a woman in love yearns for an Other jouissance. Joyce's Lacanian deconstruction sketched a pretty image of love which underscored the inevitability of love after death and the apathetic status of love despite apparent living.

Keywords: *Lacan, Jouissance, anastomosis, Objet petit a, epiphany*

Introduction

James Joyce represents a *Wendepunkt*—a decisive turning point—in European literature, so much so that the term "Joycean" denotes a style uniquely his own. While this stylistic innovation is most famously exhibited in the technical originality of *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, through their use of stream of consciousness, puns, and linguistic experimentation, his earlier work in *Dubliners* is no exception. The collection's culminating story, "The Dead", is a masterful example of Joyce's particular genius. He is not a conventional writer with a straightforward, "stereotypical function," but rather, in the terminology of Roland Barthes, an *écrivain*—an intransitive writer. As J.A. Cuddon (1977) explains, such a writer "does not intend to take the reader beyond his writing but to call the

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attention of the reader to the activity of writing itself" (p. 270). This contrasts with the *écrivant*, or transitive writer, for whom language is a mere tool to describe an external reality (Cuddon, 1977, p. 270). The resulting textual experience is akin to a dream which, as Anthony Burgess notes, "is not intended for total elucidation, since it is a dream, and it has been decreed that dreams may only partially be understood" (1975, p. 7).

This dreamlike quality is deeply connected to a mystical undercurrent in Joyce's work. Biographical and critical evidence confirms that Joyce approached realistic affairs with a mystic's sensibility; as Attridge (1990) argues, "the realism of *Dubliners* was mystical" (p. 30). His interest in William Blake's idealism further illuminates this, as Joyce valued the "irrationalism, mysticism, and spiritualism" that Blake championed over stark realism (Attridge, 1990, p. 29). For Joyce, this spirituality is intimately tied to the human condition, particularly the relationship—and frequent disharmony—between the soul and the body. This internal conflict manifests in his characters as a pervasive sense of paralysis, which Anthony Burgess identified as "a keyword for the whole volume" (1975, p. 63). Yet, what is truly revelatory in Joyce's work, and especially in *The Dead*, is the concomitant relationship between this paralysis and its opposite: epiphany. It is precisely at their moment of greatest stagnation that his characters often stumble upon a sudden spiritual manifestation, a moment of profound insight that lends meaning to their painful existence.

Review of literature

The article is located at the crossroad of Joyce studies, psychoanalytic theories in literature and the philosophical critique of modernity. The current critical field on James Joyce, *The Dead* is tremendous yet this study focuses on three predominant strands.

First is that it is a continuation of the tradition of the interpretation of epiphany and paralysis in *Dubliners*. According to such critics as William York Tindall (1950) and Anthony Burgess (1975), the characters in Joyce have a tendency to be in a state of stagnation, interrupted by moments of revelatory self-understanding. This paper agrees with this underlying binary, but attempts to elaborate on it by examining the ontology of the epiphany of Gabriel, beyond a purely psychological or social interpretation.

Second, the study is extensively inspired by Lacanian psychoanalysis, which brings the main theoretical application. Its argument revolves around the issues of *jouissance* (Fink, 1997; Lacan, 2011), the *object petit a*, and the point *capiton* (Wolfreys et al., 2002). It is in agreement with other scholars such as Ehsan Azari

(2008) who have managed to use the Lacanian theory in the texts of literature to deconstruct the vicissitudes of desire and mystical enjoyment. This paper applies this to *The Dead*, on the view that Gretta is in love with an Object that she cannot have, and transcendent Object *jouissance* but Gabriel is forced to the realization of his deficiency.

Third, the article reacts to philosophical and postmodernist readings, which discuss the ontological issues in the story. It is based on the postulate of Brian McHale (1987) that postmodernist fiction (and the modernist predecessors, such as Joyce) is characterized by ontological questions, *i.e.* *What is this world?* which is in every way appropriate to the discussion of how boundaries between the living and the dead have been blurred in the story. This is additionally backed by the idea of the elusive literal level, introduced by Fredric Jameson (2013) in a way that makes it possible to view the spectral presence of Michael Furey as the literal memory and presence as a metaphorical power at the same time. In the analysis, the philosophy of memory and intuition by Henri Bergson (1988) is also used to explain the non-linear and retrogressive nature of the recollection power that characterizes the experience of Gretta.

The synthesis of these imperative traditions brings this study beyond a single interpretation. It makes *The Dead* not only a narration of marital disillusionment, but a multifaceted experiment with desire, ontology, the mystical interrelationship of life and death, what the article, following Miller, calls anastomosis.

Method

The paradigm of this paper is based on a synthesis of textual analysis and psychoanalytic criticism, relying in the major part on the theoretical basis of Jacques Lacan to question the psychic processes of love and desire in the short story *The Dead* by James Joyce. This question is not a strict, step-by-step process of theoretical application to text, but an aggregated, hermeneutic process in which the story and the theoretical model are enlightening of each other.

This analysis will start with a close reading which will pay attention to the linguistic, symbolic and emotional texture of the story, to the ambivalent symbolism of the snow, to the catalytic role of the ballad *The Lass of Aughrim*. This reading-between-the-lines is then subjected to discussion with major concepts of Lacan to help in diagnosing the structure of the desire that operated on the characters. The key component of this approach is the use of Lacanian triad of *objet petit a*, *jouissance*, and *point de capiton*.

The discussion explores the ways in which the desire of Gretta to the dead Michael Furey is the embodiment of the *objet petit a* the constantly absent and

unreachable object-cause of desire and how this penetrates into the marital relations between Gretta and Gabriel. Also, the paper investigates whether her bond represents a desire of a transcendental Other *jouissance*, a mystical and indefinable enjoyment beyond phallic pleasure as presented by Lacan in *Encore*. On the other hand, Gabriel epiphany is explored as a transfiguration *moment de capiton* - a quilting moment where the slipping signification is stalled and he is sewn into a new albeit discomforting perception of his subjective status.

This Lacanian mainstay is enhanced and contextualized by incorporating complementary philosophical systems: the postmodernist emphasis on ontological questions of Brian McHale (1987) assists in putting the confusion of the worlds of the living and the dead in the story to perspective, and the concept of the elusive literal level of Fredric Jameson (2013) offers a prism through which to discuss the presence of ghosts in the story as part of a literal retrospective and as an effective metaphor. In the end, this methodology attempts to illustrate how the text by Joyce carries out a Lacanian deconstruction of love and how it is a force that thrives on absence and is directed towards a *jouissance* that is beyond the presence or absence of the beloved.

Results and discussion

The epiphany that Gabriel experiences when the story ends, which according to Tindall (1950) is the realization or awareness (p. 4), is a moment of temporary unity between his soul and his body. At the start of the story, he is arduously divided into two halves, when he gets to know about Gretta and her previous love. But in reflections, he reaches the voice of his inner being that enables him to overcome his cantankerous nature and decide to become peaceful instead of angry.

This is a radical change in the character who has never felt as an outsider being alienated even in the midst of the crowd of the party. His endless seeking of the true sounds under the noise of the society demonstrates his expensive desire to identify with the true ones. He finds that his sense of alienation is a mirage; he is not alone in the party as he dies, but in fact part of a group of many dead, as the party is itself a dance of death, full of the muddier aspects of life. The spiritual renaissance is summed up in the well-known passage of the story:

Generous tears filled Gabriel's eyes. He had never felt like that himself towards any woman, but he knew that such a feeling must be love. 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. (Joyce, 2005, p. 205)

Apparently, Gabriel is like he is on the verge of an existential crisis. But on a different plane he is reasserting himself in his submissiveness, and conquering a sense of failure through the means of the disintegration of boundaries between the living and the dead. He does not hate the world of the dead but simply is swept up in the sublime mystery of it and perceives a higher consciousness in the interconnection and intercommunication between worlds. The theme of the power of the story is this motif of the dead returning to the living. John V. Keller (1965) suggests basing on Stanislaus Joyce that the novella is the one about ghosts, about the dead people who returned and were jealous of the living ones (p. 415).

This is evidently similar to the concept of the fantasy of a person who is not prepared to be dead but returns over and over again to bring a threat to the living (Žižek, 1999, p. 170). Joyce situates *The Dead* within a Lacanian in-between space, the liminal zone between the two deaths: the corporeal death of Michael Furey and the spiritual or symbolic death of Gabriel Conroy. Through this framing, Joyce allows Furey to escape the second, metaphorical death by preserving his memory within Gabriel's consciousness. At the same time, Gabriel's own acceptance of his symbolic death becomes the catalyst for his transformation and potential rebirth.

This symbolic transformation reaches its culmination in the story's final and most powerful image — the falling snow. As Rajan (2020, p. 3) observes, the snow carries an ambivalent symbolism: it signifies both innocence and despair, renewal and grief, mirroring Gabriel's own divided emotional state. The story concludes with a placid yet sweeping vision, suggesting a moment of transcendence in which life and death, hope and resignation, are gently reconciled. Joyce captures this vision in his closing passage:

Several taps on the pane had made him turn to the window. It had begun to snow again. He stood lazily and gazed at the flakes, silver and black, as they slipped obliquely upon the lamplight. It was now time to start his journey to the west. The newspapers were correct, and the snow fell on the ground everywhere in Ireland. It was sinking into every bit of the dark

central plain, into the bare hills, sinking gently on the Bog of Allen and, still farther west, gently into the dark mutinous Shannon waves. It was descending, too, on all sides of the solitary churchyard in the hill where Michael Furey was interred. It was thickly overlaid on the crooked crosses and headstones, on the spears of the little gate, on the barren thorns. He could hear the snow falling gently through the universe and gently falling, like the fall of their final end, upon all the living and the dead, and his soul swooned amid this. (Joyce, 2005, p. 205)

In this meditative moment, Gabriel experiences a fleeting sense of solidarity with the dead as the falling snow erases the distinctions between worlds. His fixation on epistemological questions—such as why the dead return—is displaced, as Žižek (1992, p. 23) notes, by a more profound ontological inquiry: *What is this world? What is the other world?* This shift aligns with Brian McHale's (1987) argument that modernist innovators like Joyce established the ontological dominant later taken up by postmodernism, which foregrounds questions of being and worldhood.

As McHale (1987, p. 10) observes, the dominant concern of postmodernist fiction is ontological. In other words, postmodernist texts employ strategies that foreground questions of being and worldhood—what Dick Higgins terms “post-cognitive” questions: *Which world is this? What is to be done in it? Which of my selves should do it?* Other recurring postmodernist questions address the ontology of the literary text itself or of the world it depicts: *What is a world? How are worlds made, and how do they differ? What occurs when worlds collide or when boundaries between them are transgressed?*

This crisis of ontology reveals a universe in which the self, disintegrates before an unintelligible reality, and where the transcendental intrudes upon the earthly. The secretive silence of the other world is visually mirrored by the flickering snow, which reflects the fragile boundary between the real and the unreal. For Gabriel, Gretta's recollection of Michael Furey is deeply unsettling: as she listens to “*The Lass of Aughrim*,” he first imagines her lost in fantasy, only to realize that the song has momentarily resurrected her dead lover. This paradox—Furey both dead and yet alive within Gretta's memory—pulls Gabriel into a state where, as Jameson (2013, p. 11) writes of modernist literature, “the literal level is elusive.” The ghost of Michael Furey thus functions as both a literal and a

figurative presence: at once a revenant from the past and a symbol of how memory collapses temporal and existential boundaries.

This ambiguity shatters Gabriel's prior sense of knowledge and stability. His world becomes chaotic and indeterminate; the living man is spiritually entombed, while the dead possess a kind of afterlife in consciousness. Yet, from this fragmentation emerges illumination: Gabriel turns inward, listening not to noise but to the world's silence. His soul, like the falling snow, expands toward a state beyond binary oppositions—beyond good and evil, life and death—where all distinctions dissolve into a quiet universality.

Gabriel wishes to remain suspended between heaven and earth—a liminal state where life and death, the real and the supernatural, converge. In the story's closing moments, these realms unite to reveal that the efficacy of the dead may surpass that of the living, opening a mesmeric plane of perception. This phantasmagoric mutuality—the interpenetration of the visible and the invisible, the living and the dead—is what J. Hillis Miller, through her notion of anastomosis, identifies as a fundamental Joycean principle. In Joyce's work, anastomosis denotes the deep continuity among past, present, and future; the interrelatedness of each individual with the collective history of humanity; and the inherent communication that binds life, sex, and heredity (Wolfreys et al., 2002, p. 9).

Consequently, Gabriel's epiphany does not represent suicidal surrender but rather a phoenix-like rebirth. By yielding to the memory of Michael Furey and acknowledging his own weakness, Gabriel relinquishes the defenses of a fragile ego and, in that act of surrender, attains self-recognition. This transformation resonates with a Lacanian interpretation of love and desire, in which the beloved is not valued for its concrete form but for its place within the subject's structure of desire. In *Seminar XX (Encore)*, Lacan describes an indefinable experience he calls *Other jouissance*—a mode of enjoyment akin to the mystic's ecstasy, existing beyond the limits of the phallic function. His well-known maxims—*desire is the desire of the Other* and *the Other is the treasure trove of signifiers*—reveal that desire is always mediated by the symbolic order and is fundamentally insatiable. In this sense, love in *The Dead* does not depend on presence; indeed, it often intensifies through absence, as Gabriel's awakening shows.

The fact that Michael Furey died does not diminish Gretta's love for him; rather, it perfects it, imbuing it with a sublime and unimpeachable quality that Gabriel, as a living and imperfect man, could never attain. Lacan's esoteric exploration of desire resonates with this dynamic, adopting, much like Joyce, a non-linear and intensely mystical approach to reality, in which the deepest truths

lie not in possession but in deprivation, and not in life itself but in its intimate connection with death.

This interplay is particularly evident in Lacan's *Seminar VII: The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, where he examines courtly love through a formalized and instrumental lens. In this framework, the beloved (the Lady) is positioned as an unattainable object of desire, creating a dynamic in which physical possession is desacralized and desire is sublimated into an idealized form of love. The seminar thus provides a theoretical mirror for the relationship between Gretta, Michael, and Gabriel: desire, loss, and absence define the intensity and sublimity of love. Lacan distinguishes between the simple pleasure (*plaisir*) of physical love and the transcendent—and often painful—condition of *jouissance* toward which sublimated desire aspires. In *Seminar XX: Encore*, he develops this concept further, describing an indefinable, transcendent pleasure (*je ne sais quoi*) that cannot be fully symbolized (Lacan, 2011). Here, he famously analyzes the ecstasy of the statue of Saint Theresa, attributing a particular form of *Other jouissance* to the woman, marking a historic contribution to Lacanian studies of mysticism (Lacan, 2011, p. 78).

Using this framework, the sublimated and paradoxical form of love experienced by Gabriel in *The Dead* can be better understood. As Ehsan Azari (2008) demonstrates, the Lacanian model applies effectively to literary explorations of mystical *jouissance* and desire (p. 135). From a Lacanian perspective, Gabriel confronts the realization that his understanding of love is flawed: he cannot comprehend how longing for someone absent can eclipse the desire for a present lover. The story's true tension lies not in jealousy of the dead *per se*, but in the profound effects of absence on desire. Throughout her life, Gretta has sought a physical substitute for Michael Furey, perpetually chasing the *objet petit a*, the unattainable object-cause of desire.

According to Wolfreys et al. (2002), this object may take any form, yet desire is inherently transient, and the object is therefore always unattainable (p. 73). Gretta's marriage only amplifies her sense of loss, as the absence of her original object cannot be replaced. Her name, meaning "pearl" in Greek, symbolizes the secret, cherished love she preserves in memory and loss. Though she may pretend to have forgotten Michael, the phantom of her first love continuously haunts her consciousness. In this way, the memory of love becomes more ambrosial and sublime than its lived experience.

The phantom is mastered in retrogressive gesture, and what is wanting in the present relationship is blamed on the past one. This is exactly what Henri Bergson (1988) explains and states that the way to knowledge frequently asks us to go

round and round again, and to amend, particularly by regenerating memory, which has gone astray (p. 117). His ideal of perception is similar to intuitional vision of Joyce's characters. According to Bergson (1988), immediate intuition, which as we perceive the world is momentary, is insignificant in comparison with what memory can add to it since the recollection of past similar intuitions is more helpful than it is in itself since it is tied to the entire sequence of subsequent events (p. 117). This is exactly what happens to Gretta when she is in love with the dead Michael and the memory of this love is a precursor to the living world, not only hers but at the end, Gabriel who is resurrected in his encounter with this very absence.

Gretta's affection for the deceased Michael Furey is felt intuitively, recalled in a retrogressive glance that evokes a prefigurative moment of vitality for both her and, ultimately, Gabriel. Throughout this episode, Gabriel undergoes a profound rebirth, though at first, he perceives himself as spiritually dead. Readers, too, are drawn into Gabriel's emotional experience, sharing in his confusion and revelation. The ballad "*The Lass of Aughrim*" serves as the catalyst for this epiphany, revealing the depth of Gretta's hidden love for Michael Furey. As Kapus (2017, p. 1) observes, the song marks the turning point of the story: it intensifies the tension in Gabriel and Gretta's marriage and resonates with broader human experiences of love and loss.

In this moment, Gabriel feels emptied, almost as if he were dead, while Michael Furey, though absent, seems more vibrant than he is. Yet he simultaneously realizes that he has been "dead" in a psychic sense all along. This recognition does not provoke blame; instead, it allows him to embrace his own transformation. He experiences a profound humility and a newfound openness to life. The falling snow becomes a metaphor for this ambivalent truth: both ruinous and salvific, it embodies the liminal space between presence and absence, life and death.

Joyce's treatment of absence and presence reflects a deconstructive sensibility reminiscent of Derrida, for whom binary oppositions are never absolute. As Derrida (quoted in Stoker, 2008, p. 65) observes, a *pharmakon* is simultaneously remedy, poison, and scapegoat, demonstrating that what appears good can also harm. Similarly, the absence of Michael Furey cannot be considered a lesser condition than presence; the story suggests that meaning, vitality, and desire emerge precisely through such ambivalence.

In the process of becoming, the human self must confront its own absence to achieve a more authentic presence. Before his epiphany, Gabriel commemorated the absence of the dead in his party speech:

“But yet,” continued Gabriel, his voice falling into a softer inflection, “there are always in gatherings such as these sadder thoughts that will recur to our minds: thoughts of the past, of youth, of changes, of absent faces that we miss here tonight. Our path through life is strewn with many such sad memories”.

(Joyce, 2005, p. 186)

At that point, he framed the dead as deprived of the living's presence. However, his transformation leads him to feel apathetic toward his own living self and to glorify the absence of the dead Michael. In his existential flight, he confronts a reality that initially exasperates him but soon reveals that he could not fill his own absence with a powerful presence. He discovers that, irrespective of biological life or death, we are all constituted by both absence and presence. The ultimate horror for a person is to be surrounded by absence despite being alive, while the ultimate glory for a dead person is to be surrounded by presence. In the end, Gabriel embraces a significant *anagnorisis*; his appreciation of absence signals a deconstructive thought that rejects conventional priority granted to presence. This is crystallized in his reflection that it is “Better pass boldly into that other world, in the full glory of some passion, than fade and wither dismally with age” (Joyce, 2005, p. 204).

Here, quite intuitively, Gabriel becomes like a perfect sage. Instead of hatred and anger, he feels love and inner tranquility—a vague feeling neither of sadness nor happiness, perhaps an experience of divine freedom. Gabriel was a true lover; he was enchanted but not enchain. This stands in marked contrast to the cynical view that Joyce was obsessed with the idea that matrimonial love is a failure, as critic Boysen (2008) contends when stating that in *Dubliners*, “matrimony, is nothing but state institutionalized prostitution that ties the married couple to life in mutual bitterness and unhappiness” (p. 157). Yet, in *The Dead*, we witness a profound exception. Gabriel remains faithful to his love for Gretta, even in his disillusionment. He understands that she is both soul and body, and her tears for a lost love do not denigrate their marriage but instead glorify the very nature of love itself in his eyes. He recognizes that even when the body is deprived of desire's fulfillment, the soul's yearning is inevitable when love is authentic. Gabriel comes to see Gretta as a figure who truly comprehends the essence of love. This sublimated vision—unchanged by time, separation, or death—intensifies his curiosity about the other world, suggesting that death itself confers ultimate prestige on love.

Yet, this depiction arises within the societal conditions Joyce critiques. As Boysen (2008, p. 157) observes, “The repression of love, which is brought about through the miserable social conditions and the Christian persecution of sexuality, results in a degradation of love life.” In *The Dead*, the characters briefly transcend this repression; love is revealed without fear of ostracism, and they accept fragmented subjectivities, understanding that unity can only be approached through acknowledgment of fragmentation. Gabriel’s realization functions as Lacan’s *point de capiton* or quilting point, “moments in the psyche where signifier and signified are gathered, or stitched together, thereby momentarily bringing to a halt the slippage of signification by which subjectivity is constituted” (Wolfreys et al., 2002, p. 79). At this juncture, Gabriel can no longer securely perceive himself as the subject or as the object of Gretta’s desire, and his subjective reality is reorganized. Fixed roles of “lover” and “beloved” become unstable, giving way to a pursuit of what Fink (1997, p. 120) calls *Other jouissance*—the asexual, transcendent jouissance Lacan (2011, p. 79) associates with feminine experience beyond the phallic order.

Gretta’s desire, therefore, is not simply for Michael Furey as a person, but for the Lacanian Other—the symbolic order and the void of desire itself—a desire that ultimately supersedes her individual self. She attempts to fill the absence left by Michael with a manifestation of love, yet this longing is ultimately a chimera, a foundational fantasy. Joyce’s narrative thus highlights the complex interplay between signification, desire, and gendered jouissance, showing how characters’ deepest yearnings are shaped by, and in turn shape, cultural and psychoanalytic structures.

Gretta herself does not consciously control the workings of her memory; the hidden love story emerges involuntarily, triggered by the ballad *The Lass of Aughrim*. A psychic treasure surfaces unconsciously, surprising even Gretta, revealing a facet of her being with which she cannot easily identify. This moment demonstrates that profound awareness—akin to a fleeting glimpse of an eternal truth—does not require memory, fixed identity, or logical causality. Instead, it arises from an intuitive, visceral realm. Her sudden awareness functions as a Lacanian quilting point, temporarily halting the slippage of signification and allowing her to confront a disquieting truth about desire.

The epiphanic structure is central to the story’s impact. As Rajan (2020, p. 3) observes, *The Dead* epitomizes the epiphany: a jolting revelation in which one’s perception of self is radically disturbed by reality. While the narrative leaves Gabriel’s future actions ambiguous, it immerses the reader in the same existential choice he faces: to embrace a life of passion or succumb to a “deadening,

paralyzing” existence. Through his journey, Gabriel learns to accept the fundamental *lack* that constitutes human subjectivity. Rather than reacting with fear or denial at the revelation of Michael Furey, he becomes reflective and neutral, realizing that biological death does not constitute absolute annihilation. He recognizes that the true hero is Michael, who, though unseen, becomes a pure source of love for another. This marks a monumental shift in Gabriel’s understanding of selflessness and the transcendent power of love.

In contrast, Gretta’s search for an object of love reveals her inability to embrace this same lack. She remains trapped in longing, seeking the external object—the *objet petit a* of Michael Furey—to fill the void within her, rather than confronting the void itself. Where Gabriel finds paradoxical plenitude in accepting his own insignificance and the inevitability of death, Gretta remains defined by unfulfilled desire. This divergence underscores the story’s profound exploration of how individuals navigate loss. It highlights the significance of accepting the limitations of the physical world and the power of selfless love while also portraying the deep complexity of grief and the variety of human responses to it.

Conclusion

In the final analysis, the promise of *The Dead* lies not in the destruction of Gabriel’s ego, but in its radical reconstruction. Gretta’s mystical devotion to Michael Furey does not annihilate Gabriel; rather, it catalyzes his most profound illumination. What initially appears as a *coup de grâce* to his identity—the revelation that his wife’s passion belongs to a ghost—soon transforms into a total absorption of awareness. He recognizes that to envy the dead is to surrender to a petty, fragile self. In a moment of profound self-confrontation, he feels shame for his reactive jealousy and understands that such defenses reveal the limits of ego. Choosing reflection over reaction, Gabriel arrives at a transformative realization: biological death does not constitute absolute annihilation, and the fundamental *lack* he experiences is not a void to be filled by another, but the very structure of his own being. He triumphs when he ceases searching for wholeness outside himself and instead embraces the lack within. In this, Gabriel becomes the true hero of his own story. He acknowledges that Michael Furey is the story’s “true hero”—a figure who “did not need to be seen to be loved” and who exists as a pure source of love rather than a demand for it. Gabriel shifts from an economy of possession and recognition to one of selfless acknowledgment. In stark contrast, Gretta’s forlorn search for an external object to fill the void left by Michael demonstrates her inability to traverse the same psychic terrain. Where Gabriel discovers paradoxical plenitude in embracing his lack, Gretta remains defined by unfulfilled desire,

perpetually seeking a love that remains unattainable. The story thus concludes by presenting two antithetical responses to loss: one that transcends the ego through acceptance, and one eternally bound to it through yearning.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no ethical issues or conflict of interests in this research.

Ethical standards

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

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**ԶԵՅՍՍ ԶՈՅՍԻ «ՄԵՇՅԱԼՆԵՐԸ» ԱՆԱՍՏՈՄՈՁՔ ՄԻՒԶԻ
ԱԱՏՎԱԾԱՀԱՅՏԱԼԻԹՅՈՒՆ**

Նարջես Զաֆարի Լանգրույի

Զեյս Զոյսի՝ անյալի հանդեպ ունեցած մոլեզին հետաքրքրությունը նրա ստեղծագործական մտածողության բնորոշ գծերից է: Նա հայտնի է իր հայրենի Իռլանդիայի նկատմամբ նոստալգիկ վերաբերմունքով: Անցյալի այդ հետևողական ներկայությունը ակնհայտ է նաև «Մեղյաները» պատմվածքում, որը «Դուբլինցիներ» ժողովածուի ամենանշանակալի գործերից է: Գրետայի անյալ սիրային պատմությունը խորը ազդեցություն է թողնում նրա ներկա ամուսնական հարաբերությունների վրա. մահացած սիրեցյալի բացակայությունը նրա համար ավելի իրական ու շոշափելի է, քան ամուսնու ներկայությունը: Այս ուսումնասիրությունում սիրո այդ հարաբերության հոգեբանական դինամիկան վերլուծվում է Լականի հոգեվերլուծական տեսության շրջանակում: Զոյսի լականյան ապակառուցումը ստեղծում է սիրո մի պատկեր, որն ընդգծում է մահից հետո սիրո անխուսափելի շարունակականությունը:

**Բանալի բառեր՝ Լական, հաճույք, անաստումոց, փոքր օրյեկտ,
էպիֆանիա**