

On Stephen's Epiphany

Nak-Hun Song

Almost every critical term is notorious for its ambiguity and lack of consensus among critics with regard to its definite meaning. This is especially the case with 'epiphany,' a term employed by James Joyce who is in turn the most puzzling of all literary artists. To many Joyce critics, epiphany is one of his major techniques by which, it is claimed, Joyce reveals the essence of things small and great, from a fragment of an inane conversation to the whole history of the human race. Thus Irene Hendry Chayes asserts that "Joyce's work is a tissue of epiphanies, great and small, from fleeting images to whole books, from the briefest revelation in his lyrics to the epiphany that occupies one gigantic, enduring 'moment' in *Finnegans Wake*,...."¹⁾ This statement can give rise to a series of such questions: "Is every detail, image, word, episode or scene in Joyce's works epiphany? if so, can it be sharply distinguished from the writings of other writers, for every writing is an attempt at showing some thing forth? or if otherwise, can epiphanic detail be distinguished from those which are not?" In short, such a sweeping generalization as Chayes's tends to be more confusing than elucidating. Some other critics equate epiphany with symbol. For example, William York Tindall, in describing the general nature of *Dubliners* says that "plainly Stephen's epiphany or radiance, a shining out or showing forth, is what we call symbolism and his

1) "Joyce's Epiphanies," *The Sewanee Review* (July, 1946), rpt. in Thomas Connolly, ed., *Joyce's Portrait: Criticism and Critique* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1962), p. 215.

radiant object a symbol."²⁾ And Marvin Magalaner, having introduced Stephen's theory of esthetics given in *Stephen Hero*, comments: "This is a rather complicated way for Joyce to say that he would present beauty in symbolic form. In essence it may be put thus: radiance equals epiphany equals symbol."³⁾ To these critics, therefore, Joyce is a symbolist and an epiphany is nothing but a symbol, probably the most common of all literary devices. The only reason Joyce or Stephen, who cannot have been ignorant of symbolism, substitutes 'epiphany' for 'symbol' may be that he is too arrogant and non-conforming, or that 'epiphany' sounds more highbrow than 'symbol,' as Tindall suggests: "Fussy about terms, Stephen prefers epiphany to symbol because the radiance of epiphany is ecclesiastical, that of symbol more secular nowadays, and Stephen, though far from innocent of literary tradition, is centered in the church and country he rejected."⁴⁾ These views, too, can raise some questions: Can we be quite content with equating epiphany with symbol? May there not be some characteristics of epiphany which are distinct from those of symbol? Why should Stephen, having rejected the church, cling to the terminology of the church? This paper is an attempt at clarifying and narrowing down the meaning of 'epiphany' strictly on the basis of Stephen's definition of it in *Stephen Hero*, for Joyce did not explain it anywhere, and all other talks may be merely critics' conjectures. Many excellent essays on Joyce's esthetics and epiphany have already been published, and it is highly regrettable that most of them are not referred to in this paper because they are not available. Especially Joseph Prescott's "Joyce's Epiphanies" and Morris Beja's *Evanescient Moments: The Epiphany in the Modern Novel* would have obviated in this paper much unnecessary groping in the mist. It is hoped, however,

2) *A Reader's Guide to James Joyce* (New York: The Noonday Press, 1959), pp.10-11.

3) Marvin Magalaner & Richard M. Kain, *Joyce: The Man, the Work, the Reputation* (New York: New York University Press, 1956), p.70.

4) Tindall, p.11.

that this paper will not be a total failure in spite of lack of references and information.

It seems necessary, in the first place, to inquire whether epiphany, whatever it may mean, is Joyce's own concept or it is part of his fiction, for there is very little evidence that Joyce himself has explained the meaning of the term. Ellmann's *James Joyce*, the most authoritative biography of the writer, reports that though young Joyce was humble about his poems, he was not so about his prose:

In his prose he thought he might achieve more subtlety than in meter. Accordingly he began in 1900, and continued until 1903, to write a series of what, because he was following no one, he declined to call *prose poems* as others would have done. For these he evolved a new and more startling term, 'epiphanies.'⁵⁾

This is the first mention of 'epiphanies' in the biography and relates the term with Joyce himself. It is certainly presumptuous to doubt the accuracy of Ellmann's report, but he might have done better to have indicated whether Joyce himself commented upon the term. In one of Joyce's letters to his brother Stanislaus he reports that he has written fifteen epiphanies,⁶⁾ but it is hard to find when Joyce himself explained the nature of his epiphanies. The term is not mentioned in "The Paris Notebook" nor in "The Pola Notebook" nor in any other critical writings of Joyce himself. Another term which is recorded as having been employed by Joyce himself is 'epicleti,' for it is mentioned in one of Joyce's letters: "I am writing a series of epicleti—ten—for a paper. I have written one. I call the series *Dubliners* to betray the soul of that hemiplegia or paralysis which many consider a city."⁷⁾ This term, epicleti, sounds and looks quite similar to 'epiphany,' but there is no guarantee that these are the same thing. The term 'epiphany' is mentioned and explained by one of Joyce's fictional characters,

5) Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966), p.87.

6) *Selected Letters of Joyce*, ed., Richard Ellmann (New York: The Viking Press, 1957), p.17.

7) Ellmann, p.169.

Stephen Dedalus. In *Stephen Hero*, Stephen gives a detailed explanation of epiphany as a part of his esthetic theory; in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*,⁸⁾ Stephen gives roughly the same explanation as in *Stephen Hero* but makes no mention of the term; in *Ulysses* Stephen thinks passingly of his epiphanies during the walk on the beach: "Remember your epiphanies on green oval leaves, deeply deep, copies to be sent if you died to all the great libraries of the world, including Alexandria?"⁹⁾ Therefore we must conclude, for the moment at least, that epiphany is more an idea of Stephen Dedalus than of Joyce, unless the fictional character is completely identified with its creator.

This raises the famous question regarding the relation of Joyce and Stephen. There have been a sea of arguments both for and against identifying Stephen with Joyce, and the truth seems to be somewhere between the two extremes; that is, we may answer the question by a seemingly inconsistent conclusion that Joyce *was* Stephen but *is* not Stephen at least in the *Portrait* and *Ulysses*. One of the heroes of young Joyce was Henrik Ibsen and the quality which Joyce most admired in the dramatist was impersonality, as a line from his letter shows: "I have shown what, as it seemed to me, was your highest excellence—your lofty impersonal power."¹⁰⁾ And Joyce's respect for and emphasis on the quality of impersonality and detachment in literary art, which is shared by Stephen in the *Portrait*, is strongly suggested in his Paris Notebook: "Desire is the feeling which urges us to go to something and loathing is the feeling which urges us to go from something; and that art is improper which aims at exciting these feelings in us whether by comedy or tragedy."¹¹⁾ This very quality is lacking in *Stephen Hero* and 'A Portrait of the Artist,' both

8) Hereafter cited as *Portrait* in the text; all references to this work are to Penguin Books paperbound edition.

9) *Ulysses* (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), p.40.

10) Ellmann, p.8.

11) *Critical Writings of James Joyce*, ed., Ellsworth Mason and Richard Ellmann (New York: The Viking Press, 1964), p.143.

of which are the forerunner of the final version. 'A Portrait of the Artist' was turned down by the editor of *Dana*, and *Stephen Hero* was discarded by the author himself. The most probable reason for this seems to be that Joyce felt that he did not achieve enough impersonality and detachment from his alter-ego, Stephen Dedalus, to make him the subject of a satisfactory work of art, as Joseph Prescott says:

But the young Joyce had not yet sufficiently detached himself from his own thoughts and feelings to give them to his not much younger creation. He failed, in other words, to achieve the "esthetic stasis" which Stephen regards as essential to the success of a work of art.¹²⁾

Therefore it may be said that Joyce was Stephen in *Stephen Hero*, and it is here that the nature of epiphany is most clearly stated and elucidated by Stephen. Accordingly we may conclude that the idea of epiphany together with the esthetic theory was that of young Joyce, developed before 1904, in which year he began writing *Stephen Hero*. His Paris Notebook bears the date of February to March, 1903, and Pola Notebook, November, 1904.

But what happens to epiphany in the *Portrait*, which was written almost a decade later and admittedly much more mature work than *Stephen Hero*? Although the esthetic theory in the *Portrait* is much more elaborate than in its earlier version, epiphany is nowhere mentioned. What is the reason for this elimination? A possible answer may be that Joyce had a second thought about the idea of epiphany. When he wrote *Stephen Hero*, he was very young and less prudent, and in his "Massive effort to wear his readers down," as William M. Schutte puts it,¹³⁾ he might have brought his proud idea of epiphany into relation with one of the three requisites of beauty which Joyce in fact formulated. However, by the time he was writing the fifth

12) "James Joyce's *Stephen Hero*," *The Journal of Germanic Philology*, LIII (April, 1954), rpt. in Thomas Connolly, ed., *Joyce's Portrait: Criticism and Critique* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1962), p.82.

13) William M. Schutte, "Introduction," *Twentieth Century Interpretations of A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (Englewood Cliff, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), p.6.

chapter of the *Portrait*, which must be around 1973, he might have felt that the equation of epiphany with 'claritas' or radiance was not logical enough and simply dropped the reference to epiphany in the final version. This hypothesis, it must be admitted, is very hard to prove, but no possibility should be overlooked,

A much more convincing theory can be advanced to solve this question: the author of the *Portrait* is clearly much more impersonal and detached from his subject than that of *Stephen Hero*, so that we can safely say that Stephen Dedalus of the *Portrait* is not James Joyce as was the Dedalus of *Stephen Hero*. This point is implied in Joyce's own remarks to Frank Budgen about the *Portrait*— "that he had not let this young man off very lightly,"¹⁴⁾ and that "the important words in the full title were the last four: *As a Young Man*."¹⁵⁾ Although author comments are totally lacking in the *Portrait*, and accordingly it is difficult to tell what is the attitude of Joyce to Stephen of the *Portrait*, it seems fairly clear that Joyce meant to be more ironical than sympathetic to his creation, and he suggests the ironical intent in a variety of indirect ways, of which the most famous is the use of motifs. For example, Joyce shows the happiness of Stephen after his confession of sins in the imagery of white things:

He sat by the fire in the kitchen, not daring to speak for happiness...On the dresser was a plate of sausages and white pudding and on the shelf there were eggs. White pudding and eggs and sauges and cup of tea. How simple and beautiful was life after all! The altar was heaped with fragrant masses of white flowers: and in the morning light the pale flames of candles among the white flowers were clear and silent as his own soul.¹⁶⁾

This is a painting in white, and no one who has read the novel with any care will fail to notice that to Stephen the white color is associated with disease and defeat. Therefore it is obvious that Joyce is

14) Frank Budgen, *James Joyce and the Making of Ulysses* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), p.52.

15) *Ibid.*, p.61.

16) *Portrait*, p.146.

ridiculing Stephen by showing him elated among the symbols of his defeat and failure. Another device of Joyce's irony is juxtaposition of Stephen's emotional state and his surroundings. Thus Joyce shows Stephen's terror-stricken soul at the retreat sermon on hell in juxtaposition with the familiar and matter-of-fact conversation of his friends:

He could not grip the floor with his feet and sat heavily at his desk,... A wave of fire swept through his body: the first. Again a wave. His brain began to glow. Another. His brain was simmering and bubbling with the cracking tenement of the skull. Flames burst forth from his skull like a corolla, shrieking like voices.

...Hell! Hell! Hell! Hell! Hell!

Voices spoke near him:

...On hell... Mr. Tate and Vincent Heron stood at the window, talking, jesting, gazing out at the bleak rain, moving their heads.¹⁷⁾

Here Stephen's terror is made ridiculous by a contrast with the nonchalant response of other boys. Such examples are so abundant throughout the novel that it is hard not to conclude that Joyce is not Stephen in the *Portrait*. Then the esthetic theory in the *Portrait* is not Joyce's. Hugh Kenner's comments also supports this conclusion: "But the reader insensitive to irony may still convince himself that Stephen is not Joyce simply by comparing the esthetic discourses in the early *Stephen Hero* version with the final dramatic presentation in the *Portrait*."¹⁸⁾ Then it can be said that the concept of epiphany is as important to Joyce in the *Portrait* as in *Stephen Hero*, but he deliberately omitted the mention of it in the ironical version in order to dramatically show the imperfection of Stephen. The esthetic theory in the *Portrait*, therefore, should not be taken seriously for Joyce's, but only as a fictional device to reveal the defective nature

17) *Ibid.*, p.125.

18) Hugh Kenner, "The *Portrait* in Perspective," *James Joyce: Two Decades of Criticism*, Seon Givens, ed., (New York: Vanguard Press, 1948), rpt. in Thomas Connolly, ed., *Joyce's Portrait: Criticisms And Critiques* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1962), p.43.

of its protagonist, for without epiphany the theory is imperfect.

This seems to be the essence of S.L. Goldberg's comment that "the [aesthetic] theory [in the *Portrait*] is primarily Stephen's, not Joyce's,"¹⁹⁾ and that the theory in the *Portrait* serves to reveal not so much the nature of art as the nature of Stephen Dedalus."²⁰⁾ He goes on to say:

In a sense this concept [of epiphany] is central to all [Joyce's] subsequent thinking about art and its relations with life, his understanding of his own activity as an artist and his whole conception of its meaning and value. But although his art embodies his developing understanding of the term, and although the art of the *Portrait* implies a fully mature grasp of what it involves, it is not until *Ulysses* that he can show Stephen reaching even a proper theoretical grasp of it.²¹⁾

Here Goldberg's grasp of Joyce's theory seems profound and his view convincing, but it may be another hypothesis. When we hear the internal monologue of Stephen referring to his epiphanies in *Ulysses*, where "Stephen [is] reaching even a proper theoretical grasp of it," we cannot but feel he is self-sarcastic and belittling his epiphanies:

Reading two pages apiece of seven books every night, eh? I was young. You bowed to yourself in the mirror, stepping forward to applause earnestly, striking face. Hurray for the Goddamned idiot! Huray! No one saw: tell no one. Books you were going to write with letters for titles. Have you read his F? O yes, but I prefer Q. Yes, but W is wonderful. O yes, W. Remember your epiphanies on green oval leaves, deeply deep, copies to be sent if you died to all the great libraries of the world, including Alexandria!²²⁾

In this piece of Stephen's stream of consciousness, he is looking back with a ridicule not only on his antics before the mirror but also

19) S.L. Goldberg, "Art and Life: The Aesthetic of the *Portrait*," *The Classical Temper* (London: Chatto & Windus, Ltd., 1961), rpt. in W.M. Schutte, ed., *Twentieth Century Interpretations of A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), p.64.

20) *Ibid.*, p.66.

21) *Ibid.*, p.73.

22) *Ulysses* (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), p.40.

on his epiphanies and the books he was going to write. This seems incongruous with Goldberg's comment quoted above. We feel rather that Joyce is showing Stephen grown or changed from the Stephen of *Stephen Hero* where he proudly shows off his theory of epiphany. In *Stephen Hero* and the *Portrait* Stephen was a university student but in *Ulysses* he has graduated from university and has been to Paris. It is quite possible that in the meantime his idea of epiphany has undergone a drastic change or even been given up. This may be what happened to Joyce himself. After the announcement of the immature and inconsistent theory of epiphany in *Stephen Hero*, (which might well have caused the author to destroy it), Joyce must have modified and elaborated upon the concept until it was so enlarged and deepened that it took on an entirely new character, as Goldberg suggests in the comment above, or its original concept had to be given up. In short we must say that the concept of epiphany explicitly given in the written form, i.e., in *Stephen Hero* was that of young Joyce's when he was a university student, but not that of older and maturer Joyce's. It will take a great scholarship to trace the development of the concept of epiphany in Joyce, if it did develop. This paper does not presume to undertake such a great task but limit the examination of the concept to Stephen's explicit definition in order to understand it in its incipient and original sense.

As is well known, Joyce borrowed the term from the church he had rejected. He might as well have borrowed a term from some other source, from Aquinas, for example, on whose theory of beauty his own esthetics relies, and since Stephen says, "*Claritas is quidditas*. After the analysis which discovers the second quality the mind makes the only logically possible synthesis and discovers the third quality. This is the moment I call epiphany,"²³⁾ he could have substituted *claritas* for epiphany. Joyce's intention in borrowing the term from

23) *Stephen Hero*, rpt., in Morris Beja, ed., *Dubliners and A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man: A Casebook* (London: The MacMillan Press, 1973), p.51-52. Hereafter cited as *Stephen Hero*.

the church might have been ironical; that is, he might have meant to secularize and deflate the dignity of religion. But this seems unlikely; though he left the church he seems to have retained a love for the ritual and symbolism of the church. In several letters to his brother Stanislaus, Joyce reports having attended church services though he says he is "incapable of belief of any kind."²⁴ In the *Portrait* Stephen speaks of the church as "a symbol behind which are massed twenty centuries of authority and veneration," to which he will not pay a "false homage."²⁵ In the same work when the director invites Stephen to join the Jesuits and tells of the power of the priest of God, he recalls he had seen himself a young priest performing the rites of the church. But "he shrank from the dignity of celebrant because it displeased him to imagine that all the vague pomp should end in his own person or that the ritual should assign to him so clear and final an office."²⁶ This means that Stephen does not love the dignity and the power of the priesthood but only its ritual. This love of the Catholic ritual and symbols must have remained with Joyce long after his apostasy, and may partly account for the adoption of the term 'epiphany' and 'epicleti.' It seems possible that Stephen and Joyce tried to replace the religious contents of the Catholic symbols with the artistic contents of his own making. And needless to say, Stephen-Joyce adopted the terms because there are essential congeniality between its ecclesiastical meaning and his concept of beauty.

Before examining the existence of any such affinity and the meaning of epiphany, it is an imperative to have a close look at the definition of the term given by Stephen:

By an epiphany he meant a sudden spiritual manifestation, whether in the vulgarity of speech or of gesture or in a memorable phase of the mind

24) *Selected Letters of James Joyce*, ed., Richard Ellmann (New York: The Viking Press, 1957), p.59. p.62.

25) *Portrait*, p.243.

26) *Ibid.*, pp.158-59.

itself. He believed that it was for the men of letters to record these epiphanies with extreme care, seeing that they themselves are the most delicate and evanescent of moments. He told Cranly that the clock of the Ballast Office was capable of an epiphany. Cranly questioned the inscrutable dial of the Ballast Office with his no less inscrutable countenance:

—Yes, said Stephen. I will pass it time after time, allude to it, refer to it, catch a glimpse of it. It is only an item in the catalogue of Dublin's street furniture. Then all at once I see it and I know at once what it is: epiphany.²⁷⁾

Here, it is clear that an element common to a church epiphany and Stephen's epiphany is a "spiritual manifestation." 'Epiphany' comes from Greek 'epiphainein,' which means "to display, make manifest," and in religion it means "an appearance or revelatory manifestation of God or of a divine being or a god."²⁸⁾ In the Western Church it is also the day of feast "commemorating the coming of the Magi as the occasion of the first manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles."²⁹⁾ To Stephen it is not a manifestation of God but of the essential nature or meaning of something as a later statement, "*Claritas is quidditas*," suggests. As a religious epiphany is made in earthly forms, so Stephen's is made "in the vulgarity of speech or gesture or in a memorable phase of the mind itself." It can be assumed therefore that the two types of epiphany are different in the contents of the manifestation but similar in the mode. There is, however, one fundamental difference; once a Christian epiphany reveals God or his truth in a certain form, the content and the form are permanently related to each other, while an esthetic epiphany, as Stephen's epiphany might be called, is "evanescent," and needs to be recorded. Once God's love is revealed through the cross, the cross always shows forth God's love to the believers. But Stephen's "clock of the Ballast Office" achieves its epiphany only for a moment. This evanescence of an epiphany is significant, yet seems to have been neglected by many

27) *Stephen Hero*, p.50.

28) *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*(Chicago: G. and C. Merriam Co., 1966), p.764.

29) *Ibid.*

critics in their consideration of the subject. Another character which is equally significant and closely connected with the evanescence is the abruptness or unexpectedness indicated by the word "sudden" in Stephen's definition. This quality seems to suggest the subjectivity of the revelation in spite of Stephen's insistence upon the objectivity of beauty. It is obvious that no beauty can exist either when there is no mind that perceives it or when there is no object that a mind perceives to be beautiful. An esthetic epiphany is, therefore, a product of the interaction between the subjective and the objective. On the other hand a religious revelation strongly connotes a one-way action on the part of the revealer or God, who chooses the moment of revelation. God's manifestation is usually made through miracles or unusual phenomena, but the things that can achieve Stephen's epiphanies are always there; they are the commonest of things which can be observed every day, as Stephen says, "I will pass it time after time, allude to it, refer to it, catch a glimpse of it." It is therefore for the observer to achieve the epiphany. It is an active performance of the observer.

In this respect, Stephen's epiphany looks very much like a sudden realization of a scientific truth, which might therefore be called a scientific epiphany. The simplest instance of this type of epiphany may be a sudden discovery of an answer to a crossword puzzle or a jigsaw puzzle. At the moment of discovery, the hitherto seemingly formless shape of the puzzle suddenly comes into a sharp focus and its meaning shines forth. A most famous example of this kind in history is the discovery of the Principle of Archimedes. When Archimedes was asked by Hiero, tyrant of Syracuse and his protector, to find out whether the crown which was given him as a present was really made of pure gold, he was at a loss. He knew the specific weight of gold, so if he could only measure the volume of the crown he would have the answer. But measuring the complicated shape of the crown without melting it into a simple form seemed quite beyond his capability. But one day he found the solution, not

when he was working at his desk, but when getting into his bath in order to relax. He was absent-mindedly watching the all too familiar phenomenon of the rising of water as he was immersing himself, when he realized suddenly and unexpectedly that the volume of water displaced by his body is the volume of his body, and that he could measure the volume of the crown by simply immersing it into the water. There must have been countless instances of such sudden realization of scientific truth revealed by the commonest of phenomena. Newton is said to have discovered the law of gravitation at the moment when he observed an apple falling from the tree, and Kekulé is said to have found in a dream the molecular structure of organic compounds in an image of a snake biting its own tail. In all these instances a sudden scientific revelation is made, just as Stephen's epiphany, in a most familiar experience of everyday life.

There are differences, to be sure. In the first place, like a church epiphany, once a scientific truth is revealed through a phenomenon, the relation between the truth and the phenomenon is firmly established and the latter can always represent the former, while in Stephen's epiphany the relation between what is revealed and what reveals is not so fixed, and needs to be recorded in order to retain what is manifested. And consequently, Stephen's epiphany is more subjective than a scientific moment of realization, which can be objectively explained and demonstrated. Stephen's epiphany cannot be so explained or demonstrated even if the content were an objective truth; it can be recorded in an artistic form if the recorder is a competent artist. The very fact that Stephen's epiphany requires to be recorded suggests its subjectivity. What is the meaning of the following epiphany, which set Stephen on explaining his idea of epiphany in *Stephen Hero*?

The Young Lady—(drawling discreetly)...O, yes...I was...at the...cha...pel...

The Young Gentleman—(inaudibly)...I... (again inaudibly)...I...

The Young Lady—(softly)...O... but you're...ve...ry...wick...ed...³⁰⁾

30) *Stephen Hero*, pp.49-50.

Stephen takes this fragment of conversation to be trivial and part of "the very incarnation of Irish paralysis," and Joyce employs a very similar piece of conversation in "Araby" to show the emptiness of romantic love. But must these conversations be necessarily a sign of paralysis and inanition? It seems quite possible that in another setting they may represent quite another thing, the mystery of romance, for instance. In other words there seems to be no essential connection in Stephen's epiphanies between the meaning and the form, as there is in a scientific epiphany, and the connection is only momentary, which is otherwise either in a religious or a scientific epiphany. This is the most distinctive feature of Stephen's epiphany.

What Stephen calls an epiphany seems much closer in the aspect of evanescence to the poetry of romantics, such as Wordsworth, in whose poems, common woods and valleys are revelation of the essence of nature and the world. Coleridge explains Wordsworth's purpose in the *Lyrical Ballads* as follows:

Mr. Wordsworth... was to propose to himself as his object to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention from the lethargy of custom and directing it to the loveliness and wonders of the world before us; an inexhaustible treasure, but for which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude, we have eyes yet see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand.³¹⁾

In a word, what Wordsworth aimed at in his poems was to reveal the beauty, which in Stephen's term is *claritas*, of common objects which is usually hidden behind the veil of everyday perception. And this revelation of beauty must be sudden and shortlived, as Coleridge suggests in another phrase: "A sudden charm which accident of light and shade, which moonlight or sunset diffused over a known and

31) Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, Chapter XIV, rpt. in M.H. Abrams, et al., ed., *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Vol.2 (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1962), p.240.

familiar landscape, . . ."32) The first stanza of the "Ode: Intimation of Immortality" sings of the glory which the poet sees no more:

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Appareled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore...
Turn whereso'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

Probably, the things which Wordsworth can see no more and which he wishes to see again may not be entirely without any relation to the evanescent spiritual manifestation of Stephen. Shelley's definition of poetry in "A Defense of Poetry" looks even closer to Stephen's definition of epiphany:

Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds. We are aware of evanescent visitations of thought and feeling sometimes associated with place or person, sometimes regarding our mind alone, and always arising unforeseen and departing unbidden but elevating and delightful beyond all expression.³³⁾

Here Shelley too speaks of "evanescence" of thought and feeling. Stephen's "in the vulgarity of speech or gesture" corresponds to Shelley's "associated with place or person," and "in a memorable phase of the mind itself" corresponds to "regarding our mind alone." In addition we find in both of them a reference to recording, which seems, as will be seen a little later, an important factor in consideration of Stephen's epiphany. One apparent difference seems to be that the poetic moment of Shelley is "happiest...elevating and delightful," while Stephen's moment of manifestation is not necessarily so; on the contrary, many examples of so-called epiphanies in *Dubliners* and the

32) *Ibid.*, p.239.

33) P.B. Shelley, "A Defense of Poetry," rpt. in M.H. Abrams et al. ed., *The Norton Anthology of English Literature, Vol.2* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1962), p.482.

Portrait are moments of distress and misery. It is significant that Joyce did not use in *Stephen Hero* Aquinas's definition of beauty: "that is beautiful the apprehension of which pleases."³⁴ But as Stephen says, "It is just in this epiphany that I find the third, the supreme quality of beauty,"³⁵ it is clear that he regards an epiphany as a kind of beauty. But to him it is not elevating and delightful." Probably this may be an important reason why any reference to epiphany is omitted in the *Portrait*, where Aquinas's definition is mentioned. While Shelley's poetry is a moment of elevated emotion, Stephen's epiphany is a moment of a recognition of truth. Interestingly enough, we find Stephen saying in the *Portrait* that "the true and the beautiful are akin," since they are both "static" and not "kinetic," though "truth is beheld by the intellect..." and "beauty beheld by the imagination..."³⁶ In the same place Stephen speaks of Plato's saying that "beauty is the splendour of truth," and thinks "that it has no meaning."³⁷ But it seems likely that in one and the same experience Stephen is more conscious of the aspect of "truth" while to Shelley the aspect of "splendour" is more conspicuous. Even at the moment of recognizing a scientific truth there is a disinterested feeling of exaltation and we sometimes hear of a "beautiful" theory.

To sum up the comparison of Stephen's epiphany with other similar experiences, it may be said that Stephen's "sudden spiritual manifestation" has something common with a church epiphany and a moment of scientific recognition in that what is revealed or recognized is a kind of truth, but differs from them in being evanescent. On the other hand, in its evanescence it is akin to a moment of poetic elevation, and enters into the genre of art and literature. The epiphany Stephen explains to Cranley in *Stephen Hero* is an inchoate state of, or a material for, literature; it is not yet a poem or a prose

34) *Portrait*, p.207.

35) *Stephen Hero*, p.50.

36) *Portrait*, p.207.

37) *Ibid.*

poem or any other piece of literature. To become a work of art it must be recorded, and to be a piece of literature it must be recorded in words. An epiphany as recorded in words is a work of literature. But the epiphany explained in connection with Stephen's theory of beauty, which reappears in the *Portrait* minus a reference to epiphany, is not a recorded epiphany. This point may be too obvious to be mentioned, yet most of the discussions concerning epiphany do not make this distinction and give rise to a great deal of confusion.

As Shelley says, "poetry is the *record* of the best and happiest moment (*italics mine*)," and not the moment itself. Preceding this statement, Shelley describes the process of poetic creation as follows:

Poetry is not like reasoning, a power to be exerted according to the determination of the will. A man cannot say, "I will compose poetry." The greatest poet even cannot say it; for the mind in creation is as a fading coal, which some invisible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness; this power arises from within, like the color of a flower which changes and fades as it is developed, and the conscious portions of our natures are unprophetic either of its approach or departure. Could this influence be durable in its original purity and force, it is impossible to predict the greatness of the results; but when composition begins, inspiration is already on the decline, and the most glorious poetry that has ever been communicated to the world is probably a feeble shadow of the original conceptions of the poet.³⁸⁾

Joyce must have read and been influenced by the above, for in the *Portrait* Stephen identifies the radiance or *claritas*, which is an epiphany in *Stephen Hero*, with "the transitory brightness" of the mind, employing the very words of Shelley:

The radiance of which he (Aquinas) speaks is the scholastic *quidditas*, the *whatness* of a thing. This supreme quality is felt by the artist when the esthetic image is first conceived in his imagination. The mind in that mysterious instant Shelley likened beautifully to a fading coal. The instant wherein that supreme quality of beauty, the clear radiance of the esthetic image, is apprehended luminously by the mind which has been arrested by

38) P.B. Shelley, "A Defense of Poetry," rpt. in M.H. Abrams et al. ed., *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Vol. 2 (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1962), pp.481-2.

its wholeness and fascinated by its harmony is the luminous silent stasis of esthetic pleasure, a spiritual state very like to that cardiac condition which the Italian Physiologist Luigi Galvani, using a phrase almost as beautiful as Shelley's, called the enchantment of the heart.³⁹⁾

As Stephen's radiance is epiphany, his epiphany is Shelley's poetry not yet recorded, "the original conceptions of the poet," or the germ of a poem. This germ will not always develop into a poem; it may become a story or some other form of literature. It may not develop into anything at all. And even if it did, what is materialized may be something different or far from the germ, "a feeble shadow of the original conceptions of the poet." In the *Portrait* Stephen himself distinguishes the process of artistic creation from the appreciation of beauty or from the original conception of beauty when he says, "So far as this side of esthetic philosophy extends, Aquinas will carry me all along the line. When we come to the phenomena of artistic conception, artistic gestation, and artistic reproduction I require a new terminology and a new personal experience."⁴⁰⁾ It seems strange why this point has been missed by so many Joyce critics, who seem to make no distinction between the epiphanies as written or recorded and those at the moment of manifestation or conception, which Stephen unmistakably defines as epiphanies. Strictly speaking those epiphanies which are said to have been collected by Joyce should be called recorded epiphanies instead of epiphanies.

Evanescence is the essence of Stephen's epiphanies. Because they are evanescent they are all the more valuable and in order to retain the value, they need to be recorded. This necessity for recording in turn calls for technique and art, and a creation is achieved when the recording is done by the combination of epiphany and art. An epiphany is, in the traditional term, an artistic inspiration. This inspiration is essential in the creation of art, and no man can hope to become a good writer without a keen sensibility for inspiration, whether it

39) *Portrait*, p.213.

40) *Ibid.*, p.209.

comes from the outside or the inside. In the passage quoted from Shelley above, "this power arises from within." But it does not come to the mind haphazardly however sensitive it may be. It comes to the mind which is mature and prepared for it. Not everyone could discover the law of gravity at the sight of a falling apple except a Newton who had already pondered upon the related matters with his profound knowledge and intellect. Stephen experiences his first epiphany on Eccles' Street one misty evening when he overhears a fragment of conversation between a man and a woman, out of which he received "an impression keen enough to afflict his sensitiveness severely."⁴¹ But this epiphany does not happen to him all of a sudden; until that moment he had been thinking of Emma and "the general attitude of women toward religion, and all those thoughts were "dancing the dance of unrest in his brain."⁴² In Chapter IV of the *Portrait*, Stephen finds a handsome girl standing in the water with her skirt "kilted boldly about her waist and dovetailed behind her."⁴³ According to Richard Ellmann this incident actually happened to Joyce about the time when the director of studies at Belvedere suggested to Joyce that he become a priest. There is little doubt that the sight of the girl is an epiphany because immediately following the recorded version of the sight, i.e., the description of the girl, Stephen excitedly regards her as "the angel of mortal youth and beauty, an envoy from the fair court of life."⁴⁴ Evidently this epiphany did not come to the empty mind of Stephen, for after rejecting the director's invitation, he awakens to another call, the human life and earthly beauty, and "no doubt he was looking for a symbol of 'profane perfection of human kind,'"⁴⁵ as Ellmann says.

The second essential of a good writer is the ability to record or

41) *Stephen Hero*, p.49.

42) *Ibid.*

43) *Portrait*, p.171.

44) *Ibid.*, p.172.

45) Ellmann, p.56.

translate an inspiration or epiphany into language. This is where the art or the skill of a writer must come into play. His task is like catching the momentary beauty of a firework with language. A camera may do the job with ease, but it only translates a visible image into another visible image; it can never translate it into language. Moreover an epiphany is chiefly a state of mind; it is true that an epiphany is often aroused by some outer object, but it is a response of the mind to the object that makes an epiphany. Therefore it can sometimes occur without relation to an outside object, "in a memorable phase of the mind itself," as Stephen says. The most conspicuous of this type of epiphany may be the mental vision of Gabriel Conroy at the end of "The Dead." The memorable phase of the mind in which an epiphany is achieved does not last long, for a mind is always moving, changing and flowing in a "stream of consciousness." The *Portrait* is a record of this fluctuation of Stephen's mind, which moves in "the dialectical process,"⁴⁶⁾ as Dorothy Van Ghent puts it. At the end of each chapter a new synthesis is achieved, which is shattered in the next chapter to move to a new synthesis. But between syntheses, there are also minor syntheses and their breakdowns, and it is these major and minor syntheses in the stream of consciousness that are epiphanies, as Van Ghent says:

Those moments in the dialectical process when synthesis is achieved, when certain phrases or sensations or complex experiences suddenly cohere in a larger whole and a meaning shines forth from the whole, Joyce called "epiphanies".⁴⁷⁾

An epiphany is, then, in other words, an elevated and significant point in the stream of consciousness, "a memorable phase of the mind." But in recording an epiphany effectively, its context must be

46) Dorothy Van Ghent, "On *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*," *The English Novel: Form and Function*, rpt. in Thomas Connolly, ed., *Joyce's Portrait: Criticism and Critique* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1962), p.65.

47) *Ibid.*

recorded as well; otherwise the meaning of the recorded epiphany tends to be obscure. So Joyce's collected epiphanies, the second type of epiphanies as Irene Hendry Chayes calls, are inscrutable. Joyce's recording of epiphanies together with their contexts is therefore a recording of a stream of consciousness, and this is his work of literature. The subject matter of most of Joyce's fiction is the mind of a character. The ultimate reality of life is not what happens in the world but what happens in the mind. Therefore to present the reality of life, which is the purpose of literature, the writer must show the world as reflected in the mind of characters. In fact a writer cannot paint the world as it is. This may be possible in a scientific description, which must strictly exclude human elements. Literature deals with the reality of the human life, which is the human mind. This human mind used to be perceived as consciousness, but around the turn of this century, the subconscious and even the unconscious came to gain recognition as significant factors in human life. The reality of human life cannot be represented without portraying the subconscious as well as the conscious. Joyce's task was to do this in literature, as Herbert Gorman says:

So much had come into this problem of living, so many misty awarenesses of inexplicable inhibitions, so many half-formed impulses, atavistic urges, semi-conscious cerebrations, mysterious enchantments of the heart, and involved mental gestures, that a steadily widening gap was splitting literature and life apart. It was the purpose of Mr. Joyce to fill this gap, to make possible a profounder exploration of reality in the novel form.⁴⁸⁾

What Gorman here refers to as an "exploration of reality" may be the aim of not only Joyce but every writer, especially the naturalists. The difference is that for Joyce and other stream-of-consciousness novelists reality meant the inner or psychic reality. In order to depict this psychic reality vividly and accurately Joyce records streams of consciousness as they are, without interposing his own voice or

48) "Introduction" to *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, (New York: The Modern Library, 1928) p. vi.

so-called author comments. This method is advocated in the famous saying of Stephen's:

The personality of the artist, at first a cry or a cadence or a mood and then a fluid and lambent narrative, finally refines itself out of existence, impersonalizes itself, so to speak. The esthetic image in the dramatic form is life purified in and reprojected from the human imagination. The mystery of esthetic, like that of material creation, is accomplished. The artist, like the God of creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails.⁴⁹⁾

One of the intentions of thus eliminating all the traces of the author's voice in the description of a stream of consciousness is obviously to give realism and objectivity. Robert Humphrey says, with regard to *Ulysses* that "one important achievement of Joyce's in *Ulysses* which is central to his whole purpose and which is greatly dependent on stream of consciousness technique is the marvelous degree of objectivity..."⁵⁰ But a more fundamental reason for this may be that there are few standard values in modern times upon which the author and the reader can agree. This point has been so convincingly elucidated by Van Ghent with regard to the *Portrait*, that her words deserve to be quoted at length:

The technique of the "stream of consciousness," or "interior monologue," as Joyce uses it, is a formal aspect of the book which sensitively reflects the boy's extreme spiritual isolation. There is a logical suitability in the fact that this type of technique should arise at a time of cultural debacle, when society has failed to give objective validation to inherited structures of belief, and when therefore all meanings, values, and sanctions have to be built up from scratch in the loneliness of the individual mind. When an author assumes the right to enter his novel in his own voice and comment on his characters—as Fielding does or George Eliot does—we are able to infer a cultural situation in which there are objective points of reference for the

49) *Portrait*, pp.214-5.

50) Robert Humphrey, "The Functions of Stream of Consciousness," from *Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel*, 1962, rpt. in James L. Calderwood and Harold E. Toliver, ed., *Perspectives on Fiction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), p.264.

making of a judgment; the author and reader enter into overt agreement, as it were, in criticizing and judging the character's actions; and where there is this assumption of agreement, we are in a relatively secure social world.⁵¹⁾

If it should be admitted that the recording of the stream of consciousness in the *Portrait* "sensibly reflects the boy's isolation," then the epiphanies scattered throughout the book are the records of the moments of Stephen's subjective realization of what appears to him as a truth. In other words, "a sudden manifestation," which is an epiphany by definition, is not a manifestation of a universal, absolute, and objective truth, but only a subjective opinion of the character whose stream of consciousness is being recorded, which may well be a wrong one even when a final synthesis, an ultimate epiphany is achieved.

An epiphany is an elevated moment in the stream of consciousness when the mind feels that it has achieved a recognition of some truth. It seems that a mind is always groping consciously or unconsciously for some meaning of life and the world, and that in this groping the unconscious plays the dominant role. An epiphany comes from within, from the unconscious, as Shelley's poetic "power arises from within." It may be assumed that the realization of a certain truth, a synthesis which is reached by the unconscious is too subtle and abstract to be expressed in any form, and accordingly cannot be directly revealed to the conscious. Probably this is why Maud Bodkin contradicts Spearman's law that "any lived experience tends to evoke immediately a knowledge of its characters and experiences."⁵²⁾ and supports S. Alexander's conclusion that "lived experience, which is of conative character—as distinct from sensation and images, the objects of the mind—can only be enjoyed."⁵³⁾ The unconscious is revealed to the conscious through "sensation and images, the objects of the mind."

51) Van Ghent, p.63.

52) Maud Bodkin, *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry* (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), p.6.

53) *Ibid.*, p.7.

Hence an epiphany is usually achieved through imagery, just as the imagery of dreams reveals the state of the unconscious. In fact not a few epiphanies in *Dubliners* and the *Portrait* are recorded in dream imagery. For instance, the intention of Father Flynn in "The Sisters" is intimated to the boy-narrator in a dream where the priest tries to confess something to the boy; the epiphany of Gabriel Conroy in "The Dead" is a vision, a dream in which imaginary snow falls all over the universe. In the *Portrait*, too, the meaning of Stephen's sin is revealed to him in dream images:

Creatures were in the field; one, three, six: creatures were moving in the field, hither and thither. Goatish creatures with human faces, horny browed, lightly bearded and gray as india rubber. 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 greyly their old bony faces. One was clasping about his ribs a torn flannel waistcoat, another complained monotonously as his beard stuck in the tufted weeds. They moved in slow circles, circling closer and closer to enclose, soft language issuing from their lips, their long swishing tails besmeared with stale shite, thrusting upwards their terrific faces...⁵⁴⁾

Later on, again, after rejecting the director's invitation to become a priest, Stephen sees his proper vocation as an artist in the imaginary figure of a winged man flying up above the sea. These are the instances in which the mind transforms and modifies the natural imagery, or invents imaginary figures so that these may reveal the unconscious to the conscious. This may be called a mythical method. In most cases, however, actual images as observed serve the purpose. A fragment of inane conversation overheard reveals the whatness of romantic love in "Araby"; groups of women and girls and the yellow gas flames in the street of brothels appear to Stephen as the temple of sexual religion; Stephen feels happiness of simple life at the sight of "white pudding and eggs and sausages and cups of tea"⁵⁵⁾ and the true vocation of Stephen is manifested in the image of an ordinary

54) *Portrait*, p.138.

55) *Ibid.*, p.146.

girl standing in the rivulet on the beach.

It seems that the mind is always unconsciously looking for some imagery which will convey or manifest to the conscious a new recognition formed in the unconscious, and at a certain moment some ordinary objects in the daily routine become free from their practical contexts and adaptable to the purpose of manifestation of the unconscious. This must be what Stephen means when he says that "the artist who could disentangle the subtle soul of the image from its mesh of defining circumstances most exactly and re-embody it in an artistic circumstances chosen as most exact for it in its new office, he was the supreme artist."⁵⁶⁾ An interesting example of this process of "disentangling the subtle soul of the image from its mesh of defining circumstances" is to be seen in the *Portrait*. Thinking of Cranley on his way to his morning class in the college, Stephen falls into a certain mental state and suddenly finds that the words on the signboards become devoid of their meaning:

...and he found himself glancing from one casual word to another on his right or left in stolid wonder that they had been so silently emptied of instantaneous sense until every mean shop legend bound his mind like the words of a spell and his soul shrivelled up sighing with age as he walked on in a lane among heaps of dead language. His own consciousness of language was ebbing from his brain and tricking into the very words themselves which set to band and disband themselves in wayward rhythms:

The ivy whines upon the wall,
And whines and twines upon the wall,
The yellow ivy upon the wall,
Ivy, ivy up the wall.

Did anyone ever hear such drivel? Lord Almighty! Who ever heard of ivy whining on a wall?⁵⁷⁾

Here, to be sure, it is not images but words that are disentangled from their practical contexts, but since words are only counters of images, we can say that the disentangling process is taking place in the images as well. What is meaningful and functional in the revela-

56) *Stephen Hero* (London: Jonathan Cape Limited, 1944), p.65.

57) *Portrait*, p.178.

tion of the unconscious is not the meaning of the words but their rhythms. Such is the case with many of major epiphanies in *Dubliners* and the *Portrait*. The fragment of conversation overheard by the boy-narrator of "Araby" has very little practical meaning; it is the tone of the conversation that reveals something to the boy. Gabriel Conroy's epiphany of the falling snow is all rhythm, with its magical cadence of "falling softly... softly falling" and "falling faintly and faintly falling." Harry Levin says about the bird-girl epiphany of Stephen that "this is incantation, and not description. Joyce is thinking in rhythms rather than metaphors."⁵⁸ In other words, Joyce avails himself of the musical rather than the semantic function of words, disentangling the former from the latter. As in the case of words, some aspect of an image is disentangled at some moment from the practical and routine context and functions as a means of conveying the unconscious to the conscious.

This disentangled aspect of an image is a symbol, in that it manifests the unconscious to the conscious. And in recording what is manifested, it is only too natural that this very symbol should be used. Strictly speaking, therefore, an epiphany should be distinguished from a symbol, for the former is a complex of the content and the attendant emotional state of a sudden manifestation, while the latter is what conveys or expresses the former. This can be seen quite clearly in Stephen's definition: "an epiphany" is "a sudden spiritual manifestation" itself, and "the vulgarity of speech or of gesture" is the symbol by which the manifestation is conveyed. Only when an epiphany is recorded it becomes a symbol, since the manifestation itself cannot be recorded without the imagery which is its symbol. However, the original concept of epiphany as defined by Stephen concerns itself with the content of an epiphany, not with a recorded epiphany or recording an epiphany. If Mark Schorer's words can be applied here, Stephen's

58) Harry Levin, *James Joyce: A Critical Introduction* (London: Faber and Faber, 1960), p.55.

epiphany is "the content or experience," and his recorded epiphany is "the achieved content,"⁵⁹⁾ which is achieved through technique. Yet most critics seem to be unaware of this distinction and speak of epiphany in either sense quite haphazardly. Thus Irene Hendry Chayes explains that there are four epiphany techniques by which *claritas* or *quidditas* is achieved, but at the same time she seems to be equating epiphany with *quidditas*, as can be inferred from such passages as: "His theme is, quite simply the life of man, and his own life was devoted to writing piece by piece a vast Human Tragedy, an epiphany of 'all mankind,...'"⁶⁰⁾ Since Chayes regards epiphany largely as technique, she naturally treats the content, "his theme," "quite simply." Yet the content deserves more attention. Nobody seems to be sure, for example, what is revealed by Epiphany No. 5, though it is placed in the context of the *Portrait* almost intact. Nor what Joyce wrote is definitely "a vast Human Tragedy"; it may well be a human comedy.

Of the four types of epiphany techniques Chayes speaks of, the last two she calls "generalized *quidditas*" and "individual *quidditas*." The generalized *quidditas* is etherealization or distillation of characters, and consists in "the division of a whole character into separate parts."⁶¹⁾ Thus for example, Emma Cleary is "never more than a shadowy presence, a provocative glance or speech, a shawled head, 'fresh warm breath,' laughter and tapping footsteps, a sash or a nodding hair ornament."⁶²⁾ The individual *quidditas* is also a divided part of a character but "its function is to identify rather than to abstract."⁶³⁾ Exactly what is the difference between the two is not quite clear but it is clear that they are not what Stephen defines as

59) Mark Schorer, "Technique as Discovery," *Hudson Review*, Vol. 1, No.1, Spring, 1948, rpt. in J.L. Calderwood and H.E. Toliver, ed., *Perspectives on Fiction* (New York; Oxford Univ. Press, 1968), p.200.

60) Chayes, p.213.

61) *Ibid.*, p.211.

62) *Ibid.*

63) *Ibid.*, p.216.

epiphanies. They are not sudden manifestations to Stephen of the essence of a character, but merely what Stephen is aware of at the moment his consciousness is being recorded. It may be said, to be sure, that Joyce reveals by this technique the essence of a character, but it must be remembered that it is Stephen, not other characters, that Joyce is revealing, and for this purpose Joyce does not use this technique. The evidence for this is that we find hardly any description of Stephen's appearance or clothings in the *Portrait*. But this is natural because what is shown is Stephen's consciousness and he takes his own outward appearance for granted. Likewise the other characters are distilled or broken into parts because Stephen takes the rest of the parts for granted.

Chayes classifies as the second type those epiphanies which were collected and termed as such by Joyce himself, and therefore are without any doubt of being epiphanies. A number of these epiphanies are employed in the *Portrait*, but according to Chayes "this particular technique was a regression from the method of *Dubliners* from the standpoint of eliminating the artist's personality from his work."⁶⁴ This observation is a gross misunderstanding; there is no artist's or Joyce's subjective comment in the novel; the epiphanies are Stephen's and not Joyce's; and Stephen is not trying to show something to the reader. Epiphanies are personal by nature, but Chayes seems to regret it and asserts that Joyce gave narrative bases to this type of epiphany (which "Joyce originally experienced in a very personal fashion"),⁶⁵ in order to make it impersonal. The result is what Chayes calls "the *Dubliners* 'block' technique."⁶⁶ But Chayes seems to forget that the entire narrative of the *Portrait* is the narrative base of the epiphanies in the novel. The difference between the *Portrait* and *Dubliners* is that in the former the flow of consciousness of one character is consistently recorded throughout the novel. This

64) Chayes, p.209.

65) *Ibid.*, p.208.

66) *Ibid.*, p.207.

is not the case in every story of *Dubliners*, and here not many characters experience a sudden spiritual manifestation. An epiphany certainly comes to such characters as the boy of "Araby" and Gabriel Conroy of "The Dead," but in "Clay" Maria is totally blind throughout the story. The characters in "Two Gallants," "Ivy Day in the Committee Room," and "Grace" are no better. In most stories of *Dubliners*, the revelation is primarily for the reader and not for the characters. An epiphany, as Stephen defines it, is a moment of recognition on the part of a character in the flow of his consciousness, and where there is no such recognition recorded in a story, it may be doubted whether the story can be called an epiphany as Stephen originally meant. That Joyce uses a certain pattern or technique of showing in *Dubliners* is beyond all doubt, but whether the technique should be called epiphany may be questioned. This may be why Joyce called the *Dubliners* stories *epicleti*, instead of epiphanies. In this regard Florence L. Walzl's remark is much more to the point: "Though *epicleti* and *epiphanies* are related words, they are not synonymous. The *epicleti* are the creative processes; the epiphanies, the resulting manifestations."⁶⁷ Even though Stephen's epiphanies are not exactly "the resulting manifestations" but the original manifestations, Walzl at least points out that epiphany is the manifestation itself and differs from the creating process or technique.

It seems quite confusing and misleading to assert, as Chayes does, that everything Joyce did in his works is epiphany. The meaning of epiphany, since Joyce himself does not define it anywhere, ought to be understood and restricted on the basis of Stephen's definition and discussion of it in *Stephen Hero*, which clearly indicates that an epiphany does not concern itself with technique nor with what is directly revealed to the reader. It is what is suddenly and evanescently

67) Florence L. Walzl, "The Liturgy of the Epiphany Season and the Epiphanies of Joyce," *PMLA*, LXX (1965), rpt. in William M. Schutte, ed., *Twentieth Century Interpretations of A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968) p. 171.

recognized by a perceptive mind, like Stephen's, and may or may not be made into a piece of literary work by being recorded. It is a raw material of literature, very like Shelley's moment of poetry. In practice, Joyce's collected epiphanies are the raw material of the *Portrait* and artistically transformed to constitute the significant moments in the stream of consciousness of Stephen Dedalus, and the reader may share his epiphanies by participating in his consciousness.