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Naming and Other Apprenticeship Devices

Background

Since naming is a function assigned to Adam and Eve, we may assume both its venerability and its religious connection. Even Romantic artists, whose orthodoxy in religion might be suspect, seem intuitively to have adopted the concept. Ralph Waldo Emerson, who can serve as an example, says the poet is “the sayer, the namer and [he or she] represents beauty.”¹ Clearly, the act of naming gives reality and existence to that which is named. This must be especially true of the study of music, for one learns that art form note by note, chord by chord, and interval by interval. To keep these features distinct from one another, as well as to communicate their nuances, musicologists have had to assign recognizable names to them. Even a genius such as Joyce had to learn his music in this way; but, having learned it, he felt free to use it to suggest ideas, to serve as a model for prose, and to provide a guide to fictional structure.

In the early works, he used the names of musical pieces as a kind of tonal filler so often that the reader must be careful to distinguish ironic allusions from those that are just sentimental. While individual songs and other works resonated in the mind of the artist at the time of creation, the reader must make sure that the same resonance is present in his or her mind. This is likely to be true only if the naming or allusion is in an unsophisticated setting or circumstance, not often the case even in Joyce’s early writings. When such is true, however, one need only remember that the images will appear later in other circumstances in which several contrasting interpretations are possible. Joyce’s “parsimony” with imagery (Hugh Kenner’s phrase)² guarantees such recurrence, however we explain the practice.



8 Joyce's Music and Noise

Early in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Stephen Dedalus places himself in the Class of Elements, at Clongowes Wood College, in County Kildare, on the continent of Europe, on planet Earth, and in the universe. This ordered process of naming (which is also rhetorical classification) helps Stephen to identify himself, to make connections with objects, and to distinguish conditions such as cancer and canker in animals and plants. Because these activities illustrate the growth and development of the mind of the future artist, they serve as frame for every subject-matter area that Joyce has his protagonist(s) exposed to. In this spirit, one should likely approach *Chamber Music*, Joyce's first effort.

In the poems, the narrator mentions strings and other sections of an orchestra and is content simply to suggest their effects. One can suspect that a more confident poet/musician, a more mature writer, might have attempted to reproduce sounds of particular instruments, as do John Davies in "Orchestra" and Sidney Lanier in "Symphony." Lanier, in fact, alternates the instruments, giving the impression that they are playing both a harmony and a counterpoint in his particular musical form. As W. B. Yeats said of Joyce's poems,³ however, they are the works of a young man, a "young man trying his instrument." As Ellmann reminds us (1982, 100), Joyce was no more than twenty years old when he showed the poems to A.E. and then to Yeats, both of whom recognized his talent. It may be that Yeats also unconsciously noted that the poems had been partially inspired by his own *Wind among the Reeds*.

Music in *Chamber Music*

Whatever the explanation, in *Chamber Music* Joyce is largely content to suggest music by allusion to winds and the naming of musical instruments. The strings are in the air and earth and in willows by the river (I); the harp is played by the night winds (III); winds lament the absence of the beloved (IX); "odorous winds" weave a magic of sighs (XIV); the winds whistle merrily (XXX); and, instead of the turtle dove, the "voice of winter is heard at the door" (XXXIV). A piano magically appears for accompaniment (II), there is singing (IV), the winds "dance . . . on the sea" (IX), and, from the concluding vision, an army charges out of the ocean, "clanging" and "shouting" (XXXVI). Joyce also uses a small amount of musical terminology—for example, "antiphon" (that is, choral response; III), and "chant" (IV)—to give the impression of a score. The names of two instruments may even be punningly submerged in "unconfortable one" (XXI) and "mien so virginal" (VIII), but the poet is more obviously telling the lady he wishes

her to be his consort and to surrender her virginity to him. So, the minstrel/cavalier performs his music in hopes of spending the night with the lady in her chamber. (In *Stephen Hero* [SH] young Dedalus simply propositions Emma Clery, asking for one night of passionate love.)

Since this is Joyce, the reader will need to remember the association of sex and music, as well as that of love and friendship. Still, such rhetorical concerns do not address the issue of what is and what is not “musical” in *Chamber Music*. While individual poems are “cantabile” (that is, singable), there is still little that a musician will recognize as music. It is clear that Joyce is in love with language; but, to many people, language is not music unless it is more sound than meaning. (As we will see, Joyce, who argued with Vincent O’Brien in favor of the content of music as opposed to its form, would not agree with this limitation.) Still, such poetic expressions as “enailed” (XX), “dappled grass” (XXIV), and the “malice of thy tenderness” (XXVII) come close to communicating sound instead of meaning. The “army charging upon the land from the sea” (XXXVI) is not intended to suggest amphibious invasion, I think, but rather Ireland’s mythic past, with hints of Tir’ na n’ Og, Firbolgs, and Milesians. As myth, it prefigures Stephen’s “night of troubled dreams” (25 March diary entry, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*), although in the context of the novel the “dreams” may be explained in other ways. Archetypally, too, this passage suggests, in *Ulysses*, the nightmare of history from which Stephen wishes to awaken and the controlling Irish myth in *Finnegans Wake*. As part of the final poem in *Chamber Music*, however, it sets up expectations about probable subject matter for Joyce’s next work—an idea that will be laid to rest by the tawdry and modern setting of *Dubliners*. The beginning reader must learn that Joyce will not be party to the concept of “Celtic twilight,” that sentimental treatment of nature and myth found in early Yeats, so attractive to Little Chandler in “A Little Cloud,” and so pompously rejected by Gabriel Conroy in “The Dead.” The beginning reader must also learn that Joyce will set up an expectation at the end of each work that the next work will either ignore or frustrate. Perhaps we can suggest that this practice, as well as themes from *Chamber Music*, will resonate through the rest of the corpus.

In Joyce’s mind, however, *Chamber Music* is also to be regarded as a musical form—a “diminuendo suite.” In musicology, a diminuendo suite is one whose dynamics soften or lessen by the work’s end. Here the dynamics are rhetorical. Persuasion and seduction occupy some two-thirds of this little book. The buildup in psychological intensity can be likened to a gradual increase in volume of sound until the crescendo of consummation

is reached. The abatement of interest, awareness of a rival, and the resulting melancholy near the book's conclusion serve as psychological diminution. With the passage of time (both a year and twenty-four hours are implicit), the speaker worships from afar, but notifies his beloved of the worship, and then suggests sensuality by means of allusion (for example, references to the Song of Solomon abound in poems VII, XIII, and again in XIV). As composer-performer, the lover is both Jester and Minstrel (X; are young men in love inevitably both?) or "comedian Capuchin" (XII; that is, hooded monk), who invites the lady to loosen her virginal snood. Evidently she does let her hair down (XI and XIII), but the physical relationship quickly fades. A friend interferes in the relationship (XVII and XVIII; compare Stephen's situation with E.C. in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*). The beloved is false to the speaker (see *Ulysses*). He is jealous (XXVII and XXVIII; see *Ulysses* and *Exiles*). They accuse each other (XXIX; compare *Exiles*), and their love ends (XXX) as winter begins. As treatment of themes Joyce will explore later, those in *Chamber Music* furnish materials for his future variations. As with distant music (Gabriel Conroy's phrase in "The Dead"), the reader is expected to remember the appearances of all of Joyce's motives, thus helping to make the "music" he or she also listens to. Because of the thinness of the subject matter and the brevity of Joyce's treatment, we can also label *Chamber Music* a lyric suite (one that is light and euphonious), if authorial intentions are sufficient to declare a work musical. Joyce does a better job in persuading us that *Finnegans Wake* is a suite, albeit one of cosmic proportions.⁴

According to John Minahan (1992, 50), musical intentions are sufficient to make rhetoric musical: "cataloguing, reminiscent of Dryden's St. Cecilia odes, had become by Keats's day a set of readily available equations between poetry and music." While Minahan argues for the musical equivalence of poetry with music, the principle of cataloging (which is simply another use of rhetoric) should also apply to fiction.

One should note in passing that Alban Berg also composed a "lyrical suite," according to the *New Grove Dictionary*, in honor of his mistress, Hannah Fuchs. In 1925 he used their joint initials as notes for his musical theme. For example, since B is B-flat in German notation and H is B, Berg had a working tetrad of BFAB-flat. According to Bruce Thompson, music theorist at Winthrop University (personal communication), Berg also built sexual movements into his suite. As with *Chamber Music*, the music begins slowly, builds to a crescendo, and then abates or lessens in dynamics—like Joyce's, a "diminuendo suite."

Since Berg's *Wozzek* also has some interesting parallels with Joyce's

Ulysses, one is tempted to seek “source and influence” in this relationship, but *Wozzek* is more sentimental and less formally structured than is Joyce’s novel.⁵ The coincidence of two lyric suites is easier to explain; each is the work of a young man in love—even if that “love” is with love itself. Since sincerity cannot be measured successfully (for example, in SH 174, Stephen attributes inspiration for the verses to Dante’s “La Vita Nuova” and, on 226, tells Maurice that he has burned them—presumably those same verses I have just commented upon), perhaps we should be content to recognize that Joyce is learning how to write, may occasionally contradict himself, and, as a young man, is subject to influences from many sources.

When he makes self-conscious use of Elizabethan stylization in some of his poems, this is a probable debt to John Dowland’s “Ayres.”⁶ Joyce knew these as both poetry and music and has Stephen play and sing some of them in *Stephen Hero* (155). Dowland, whose name is still pronounced “Doolin,” was thought to have been Irish and from Dalkey. Despite his good work for Queen Elizabeth I, Irish historians felt that, because he was Irish and Catholic, he was not suitably rewarded. While none of these “facts” were true (see the Dowland entry in the 1980 *New Grove*), they were believed by the Irish. The plight of poor “Doolin” could be used to prove the ingratitude of the British. For Joyce, Dowland served as still another example of the artist as martyr. Wherever allusions to his works appear in Joyce’s writings, we may assume the motif of artist/martyr is also intended, even if the reference is more rhetorical than musical.

Philosophical Reality in the Early Works

The 1904 essay “Portrait of the Artist” also is more rhetorical than musical, even if it is a collection of moods, themes, and images rendered through the consciousness of the *artist*. It appears likely, as Ellmann asserts (1982, 144–46), that the work is a prolegomenon, a summary of Joyce’s theories of consciousness and art, that “the stages of the artist are already delineated, and that the symbols he uses, hunter and deer,” not only evoke *Chamber Music* and its chief source of symbols, the Song of Solomon, but also indicate the mindset of the artist using those symbols. Since Joyce’s persona describes himself as the deer being hunted, another variation of the artist-as-martyr motif is suggested. What he implies about the dual nature of the artist may be even more important, however. The speaker/persona indicates that he had been trained in the Christian tradition by his Church and Jesuit teachers, but had “left it through the gates of Assisi” (362). Which “gates,” one wonders? The devout lover of nature, including its

animals, would seem not to be suggested, given Joyce's (or someone's) fear of dogs in the later works. While the poverty of Saint Francis offers a parallel, one must suspect that Joyce's was not intentional. Unlike bookish Stephen or Joyce, Saint Francis also preferred a more intuitive, nature-oriented inspiration. But perhaps the Assisi suggested is the one who believed in a Christ-centered mysticism and was, therefore, anti-hierarchical. While Joyce would not totally agree with this version either, this is the saint who wrote the "Hymn to the Sun," the one Dante has Aquinas praise in *Paradiso XI*, and Aquinas is as much a favorite of Joyce as is Bruno. If one can believe *Stephen Hero* (176–78), Joyce found Saint Francis and his followers in volumes at Marsh's Library. As Oliver Gogarty (1937) indicates, he and Joyce also developed their knowledge of heresies at the National Library on Kildare Street. (Perhaps access to such volumes was easier under British rule. To read them in 1988, I had to sign a statement promising not to use what I learned to attack either the Church or the state.)

In the essay, Dedalus, however, quickly replaced Assisi with other figures: "Joachim Abbas, Bruno the Nolan, Michael Sendivogius, all the hierarchs of initiation cast their spells upon him" (362). In one sense, these "hierarchies" are simply Gnostic heretics (see Stephen's exchange with Artifoni, SH 170, and later in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*) and represent a further rejection of the Church. However, Giordano Bruno also represents the Hermetic tradition, as Dame Frances Yates makes clear in her seminal volume (1964; see also Joyce, *Critical Writings* [CW], 175ff.). In the context of the essay, Hermeticism comes closer to explaining the protagonist's other pronouncements than does the appeal of Gnosticism: "His heaven was suddenly illuminated by a horde of stars, the signatures of all nature, the soul remembering ancient days. Like an alchemist he bent upon his handiwork, bringing together the mysterious elements, separating the subtle from the gross" (362). Joyce also alludes to Hermeticism twice in his first essay on James Clarence Mangan (1902),⁷ approvingly in both instances. Still, Gnosticism is mentioned in *Stephen Hero*, where the Jesus of Good Friday is conceived of as a scapegoat: "something between Socrates and a Gnostic Christ" (SH 116–17). Probably, Joyce is already consciously playing with opposites, though he has not yet learned to reconcile them in his fiction.

The messianic mission ascribed to the artist in this "Portrait of the Artist" essay does sound as if it may be indebted to Thrice Great Hermes: "to reunite the children of the spirit, jealous and long-divided, to reunite them against fraud and principality. A thousand eternities were to be reaffirmed, divine knowledge was to be re-established" (363). In fact, this is a near

paraphrase of the “Hymn of Regeneration” sung by Tat, son of Hermes (see Yates 1964, 30). As Yates notes of the tradition generally, “divine man through his divine intellect participates in the intellect infused throughout the living world of divine nature . . . the ideal philosophy for man as Magus” (35).

Hermeticism would also seem to be the ideal philosophy for the budding artist who wished to find non-Christian foundation for the concept of a divinely ordered universe. Such a universe has music everywhere: in the planets, angelic hosts, four elements, nature itself, and in the lives of people. To live, especially with intensity, is to hear music and to produce music, to discover “ladders of occult sympathies . . . through all nature” (Yates 1964, 249). Bruno’s “Egyptian truth” is that there is universal animation in an infinite universe. In a less philosophical context, Joyce suggests the same in *Chamber Music*, but the philosophy is obviously being narrated in “Portrait of the Artist.”

One must remember that also in 1904 Dr. Vincent O’Brien entered his pupil, James Joyce, in the Feis Ceoil, Dublin’s premier musical festival, as he had Count John McCormack in 1903 (Ellmann 1982, 138). According to Oliver O’Brien, who shared his father’s memories of the event with me, O’Brien senior thought Joyce “had a very good chance of gaining high distinction.” To prepare for the occasion, they rehearsed an aria by Handel, one of the test pieces, which “contained the sentence, ‘Whom God loveth he chastiseth’ . To Joyce these words seemed incomprehensible and during the lessons they often spent much time discussing them from their differing view points.”⁸ As in the 1904 “Portrait” essay, Joyce’s viewpoint, the same as Bruno’s, posited a benevolent deity, the polar opposite of that which Handel suggests. It also duplicated the advice Stephen received to learn “The Holy City” because it “has the religious sentiment, a touching melody, power,—soul, in fact” (SH 66; see Bowen 1995, 78). In all of these instances, Joyce and his narrator/character seem to be the same. All are interested in making connections with a higher force, and all want the content of the language/music to be both sensible and true. Still, “The Holy City” is a Protestant hymn, so Catholic Joyce may be making fun of the song even as he uses its connection of heaven and earth.

At this time, Joyce was also subject to the dictates of Symbolism, with its blend of the arts and senses. He and others identify his source as Mallarmé, who exemplifies it in “Afternoon of a Faun,” but the same philosophy is also expressed in Baudelaire’s “Correspondences,” the writings of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and W. B. Yeats’s “Symbolism in English Poetry.” This Romantic trend, which runs counter to the desires of Lessing, Sir Joshua

Reynolds, and others to keep the arts separate and distinct, dominates aesthetics throughout most of recorded history. It is also evident in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* when Stephen's aesthetic presentation to Lynch is interrupted by Donovan's more practical concerns and allusion to Lessing's *Laocoön*. Still, given Joyce's constant admiration for Bruno, he may have found the idea also in Bruno's "Explicatio Triginta Sigillorum." Said Bruno, "Philosophers are in some ways painters and poets; poets are painters and philosophers; painters and philosophers are poets. Whence true poets, true painters, and true philosophers choose one another out and admire one another" (in Yates 1964, 256). It may be that Joyce was even indebted to Bruno for some scheme to develop the memory (Joyce's 1903 review of J. Lewis McIntyre's *Giordano Bruno* mentions this phase of his achievement [CW 132ff.]; see also Yates [1964, 192], who mentions Bruno's "De Umbris Idearum" and "Cantus Circaeus" as his "first two works on magic memory"). But Bruno is even more important as another means of unifying disparate materials—the unity of the All in the One (Yates 1964, 248), as in the symbolisms of Bloom and Earwicker. In "Degli Eroicia Furori" (1585), Bruno even gave expression to the concept of the decadent Romantic aesthetic and anticipated Walter Pater, as well as Dedalus/Joyce, when he told the "passionate artist and hero" to:

Burn with an infinite love for perfection, transcend all bounds. . . .
 You will suffer, you will cry out with pain, but you will be living. Life is tragic, and you will go down in defeat: never can you attain your infinite goal. But if you are on fire with a yearning for the divine beauty, you will come as close to God as it is given mortals to ascend. "Even if the longed-for-goal be never reached, even though the violence of the striving consume the goal utterly, yet it is enough that it should have burned so nobly." (in Randall 1962, 338)

Such "naturalistic neo-Platonism" (Yates's term for Bruno) obviously appealed to decadents/Symbolists/Romantics of the 1880–1920 period, among them James Augustine Joyce.

Background for *Dubliners*

While one may suspect that Joyce's flirtation with Hermeticism was largely bookish and temporary, it gave him another subject matter, as well as an aesthetic. Yates suggests (1964, 407ff.) that Bruno may have helped to develop both Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism, as well as Hermeticism, and that Father Athanasius Kircher, rector of the Jesuit College in Rome in

1650, helped to popularize the mystical fusion. As though Joyce reached the same conclusions, he has a character in “The Sisters” call the unnamed boy a “Rosicrucian” and, in *Stephen Hero* (152), has his character “idle away an hour,” at Marsh’s Library, over an old work on music, perhaps one of Kircher’s. Joyce had a way of finding what he needed to synthesize his interests.

In the view of Robert Haas (1992), music in the volume of stories continues the emphasis on “music as content” that I noted in Joyce’s verbal exchange with Vincent O’Brien. Haas sees Joyce using music (1) to establish the reality of his characters, since turn-of-the-century Dublin was a musical city; (2) to suggest romance (“Araby” and “Eveline”); and (3) to reveal character, as Polly’s song about being a “naughty girl” makes evident in “The Boarding House.” Haas also devotes considerable space to the use of music in “The Dead,” which, because of its length and complexity, illustrates all three of the functions he found separately in earlier stories.

Haas’s article gives us yet another way in which Joyce uses music but does not eliminate my own focus. In *Dubliners* we see the music of the city and its inhabitants, even if both are described “with scrupulous meanness.” If there can be a music of emotions, the volume also modulates, as well, from innocent acceptance of children to growing frustrations of teenagers to bitter acceptance or rejection by adults. Because these are described in different stories, however, there can be no resolution of the conflicts within this volume, although “The Dead” does circle back to “The Sisters” in varied repetition of motives. In another use of theme and variation, Joyce repeats some of the same situations and reactions in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Because of the new and usually ironic context, the future reverberation has the effect of counterpoint instead of harmony.

Music in *Dubliners*

As did *Chamber Music*, *Dubliners* illustrates Joyce’s apprenticeship habit of naming specific pieces of music. While most of these have been identified by Ruth Bauerle (1982 and 1993) and others, it is likely that each meant more to Joyce than it possibly could to his readers. (Such meaning, as we have seen, suggests content, perhaps even emotional response, at this stage of Joyce’s artistic development.) The concept of “scrupulous meanness” that the author claimed for the volume may also mislead the reader into assuming either that any musical allusion is to be taken at face value as



“music of statement,” because this is early Joyce, or is to be read ironically even here, because of the manner in which Joyce will later use it. On a first reading, it is an either/or. The reader reaching *Ulysses*, however, is invited to “look back in retrospective arrangement,” to help the author make sense of the corpus. At this point, if the reader has a Joycean memory, he or she can recall the original allusion in its sentimental context and appreciate its counterpointing usage in a new environment. Such looking back and forth had a parallel in Renaissance music, where accidentals (that is, sharps, flats, and naturals) appeared in the middle of a work and required the performer to look in both directions in order to make sense of them. Such accidentals are also usually referred to as “retrospectives.” (See the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*.) With Joyce’s knowledge of music and his delight in “accidents” of all sorts, this analogy would not have escaped him.

Accurate music criticism is present in *Dubliners* (D) too, along with the song titles, musical imagery, and some approximation of the techniques of music. Some of the criticism is presented by the narrator of “A Mother,” who describes an aging soprano as “the poor lady who sang Killarney in a bodiless gasping voice, with all the old-fashioned mannerisms of intonation and pronunciation” (D 147). This is a perceptive critique of Victorian English stylization, in implied contrast to the purer and simpler Irish traditional singers. (See Tomas O’Canainn 1978, 36–37, for discussion of differences in English and Irish styles of singing.) Because of the song and the nationalistic occasion of the performance, one should expect a better rendition. The same distinction appears with even more irony in the thoughts of Anglophile Gabriel Conroy, who prefers the simple (that is, Irish) singing style of Aunt Julia to the overly ornate (Victorian English) piano style of Mary Jane and her “academy pieces” (D 186, 187). The narrator of “After the Race,” however, associates simplicity (appropriately) with “the beauties of English madrigals” as opposed to the “spurious lutes of romantic painters” (D 46). (This critique of the arts is in the same vein as Joyce’s 1903 review of Lady Gregory’s *Poets and Dreamers* in “The Soul of Ireland” [CW 102–5], where he classes her one-acters with the “dwarf-drama” and relates them to pictures that are nocturnes.) Since the Irishman Jimmy Doyle will be fleeced by Routh the Englishman, who, despite his name, will have no pity, the praise of English music must be taken ironically. Still, the critiques do reflect the taste of James Joyce, Irishman, at this point in his career. The aesthetic philosophy also parallels the simple style and aims of *Dubliners*; but in linking painting and music (“spurious lutes of romantic painters”), Joyce’s narrator looks back to the Symbolist aes-

thetic that the more mature Joyce will believe in and that he found also in the thinking of Giordano Bruno.

Song titles suggest that the music hall was one of Joyce's chief musical sources for this volume. Michael Balfe's operas, especially the "English Ring" ("Maretana," "The Bohemian Girl," and "The Lily of Killarney"), were wildly popular in Dublin, as Gráinne Yeats reminds me.⁹ In "Eveline," the song "The Lass That Loved A Sailor," from the opera "The Bohemian Girl," accurately describes the wishes of Frank, who wants Eveline to be daring; but the reader quickly recognizes that Eveline does not know how. Bettina Knapp's analysis of "Eveline" (1988, 95–109) suggests that some of the reader's recognition is nearly subliminal. She sees Joyce extracting rhetoric from his own subconscious to appeal to that of the reader and to suggest the plight of the young woman who is trapped by the promise made to her mother ("the great destructive mother"). These "unheard melodies," for Knapp, are archetypal music, and their presence and artistic functioning make "Eveline" Joyce's first fictional masterpiece. While this conclusion seems overstatement, Knapp's interpretation has considerable appeal. Joyce does use archetypes extensively in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and later works. Also, Knapp's nearly subjective analysis extends the realm of music to the point that almost anything is or can be music, a situation devoutly to be wished by the analyst of "music" in prose.

Balfe's "The Bohemian Girl," however, appears in another ironic context in "Clay," when Maria garbles a verse of its hit song, "I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls." Poor Maria, even more conventional than Eveline, will have only the grave for marble halls and death for a lover—since her status as witch and Virgin Mary are equally repellent to males, though more temporary than her mortality. (If all males are both lovers and clowns, are all females both saints and witches?) Balfe, however, appears yet again with the ballad "Killarney" (from *Inishtallen*), which the poor soprano had gasped in "The Mother." With Balfe, Joyce would seem to be enjoying his sentiment and parodying it, too, as he does with the more numerous allusions to songs of Thomas Moore. He will use the same Byronic tactics (those of "Don Juan") in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.

If allusion to Balfe necessarily suggests the music hall, music-hall atmosphere dominates the scenario-like language of "Ivy Day in the Committee Room." That language includes repetitive rhetoric, Shavian character descriptions, and only the "music" of popping corks from warming bottles of stout, while both "A Mother" and "The Dead" chronicle musical occa-



sions. In the latter, the guests of the Morkans keep up a running commentary about the merits of now-deceased singers, against the viewpoint of Bartel Darcy, who suggests that Caruso is as good as any of them. Ironically, it is Darcy, singing not opera but the ballad "Lass of Aughrim," who affects both Greta Conroy and her West Briton husband. Gabriel concludes, "the song seemed in the old Irish tonality and the singer seemed uncertain both of his words and voice" (D 210). The style, again, is that of Irish traditional music, like Simon Dedalus's Cork "come-all-ye" in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. No doubt Gabriel's conclusion about the tonality of the song is more vague than any by Joyce could have been, even at this time (that is, 1900–1907). The ballad was one of Joyce's favorites, as Stanislaus attests (see also Haas 1992). Gabriel, however, is anxious for him and Greta to leave, though he does admire her as part of the picture-tableaux on the stairs and does not yet know that the "distant music" he imagines is, in fact, being heard in memory by Greta and that her remembrance will change his part in their life together. In "The Dead," more than in most of the stories in *Dubliners*, music and musical language serve as still another means of connecting past and present.

The "vamping" (musical improvisation, as well as flirtation) of Polly in "The Boarding House" is suggested by her phrasing of "I'm a nau-gh-ty girl," a song comparable to those in the music hall and sung to out-of-work performers, according to Ulrich Schneider's "Joyce and the Music Hall" (1993). Even the plight of Bob Doran is implied by "Our Lodger's Such a Nice Young Man," and other music-hall songs suggested how Polly lighted her candle from Bob's and captured his fancy. Did Corley pick up his slavey in a music hall? We do not get to know her in "Two Gallants." We do, however, find an interesting use of music. Thomas Moore's "Silent O Moyle" is being performed in a dispirited manner as Corley and Lenehan walk down Kildare Street. The harp, which is described as female (from the seventeenth century on, Irish harps were pictured with a female bust at the harp's head), is also weary, probably of being used by this less-than-adequate male musician. In a reversal of the expected (in fact, a technical inversion, in the musical sense), "one hand played in the bass the melody . . . while the other careered in the treble after each group of notes" (D 54). Use of bass for melody and treble for accompaniment suggests what is surely happening with Corley and the unnamed girl. But, while it is happening off stage, we see Lenehan walking down Dawson Street past the Lord Mayor's mansion. Remembering the song, "he allowed his hand to run along [that is, the railing]. The air which the harpist had played began to control his movements. His softly padded feet played the melody while

his fingers swept a scale of variations idly along the railings after each group of notes" (D 56). In effect, Lenahan plays an organ with his dancing feet and a harp with his hands as he creates variations on what he has heard from the harpist. Presumably Corley is playing a similar variation upon the servant girl, who is, like the harp, both bored and ill treated. While we do not meet her in this story, she may appear as Lily the Caretaker's Daughter in "The Dead," who tells Gabriel "the men that is now is only all palaver and what they can get out of you" (D 178).

For rhetoric that not only suggests music but also approximates it, even "The Dead" cannot rival "A Painful Case," though James Duffy is simply a bachelor form of Gabriel Conroy. A creature of habit, Duffy lives in a monastic-like room, has a totally ordered life, and even looks at his own body from a distance. Like all Irish, however, he loves music. His favorite is Mozart, either in opera or concert form, and his attendance at such a performance enables Emily Sinico to make contact with him. In his initial description of her, Joyce's narrator uses rhetoric that functions as a theme of the story, serves as contrast to the description of the saturnine Duffy, and, in language and circularity, suggests music:

Her face, which must have been handsome, had remained intelligent. It was an oval face with strongly marked features. The eyes were very dark blue and steady. Their gaze began with a defiant note but was confused by what seemed a deliberate swoon of the pupil into the iris, revealing for an instant a temperament of great sensibility. The pupil reasserted itself quickly, this half-disclosed nature fell again under the reign of prudence, and her astrakhan jacket, moulding a bosom of a certain fullness, struck the note of defiance more definitely. (D 109–10)

Circularity, variation, and even musical retrograde (rhetorical "chiasmus") are indicated by reversal of words, as "defiant note" becomes "note of defiance." Since this is a musical occasion, use of the word "note" also conveys more than rhetorical meaning. The same must be said for the word "temperament," which suggests the manner in which the instrument is tuned. On the analogy of a musical instrument, again, we surmise that Mrs. Sinico is high-strung, or emotionally taut, whereas Duffy is of "equal" temperament. Rather like the modern piano, his D-sharp and E-flat are the same note. He is incapable of minute distinctions, especially of emotion, and he is embarrassed by emotion. What Emily Sinico needs is an emotional release such as might be expected from an affair, but the obtuse Mr. Duffy is incapable of appreciating this and, when he understands what she

desires, is unwilling to become sexually involved. More than likely, Joyce is thinking of the plot and music of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* at this point, although, according to Ellmann (1982, 133) he is indebted to an experience of Stanislaus, and even more to the account of that experience in Stanislaus's diary, for the motivating incident. Perhaps because of the prominence of the diary, critics have overlooked the opera, not to mention various Romantic uses (for example, E. T. A. Hoffmann's and Byron's) of its story or themes. Given Joyce's allusions to various parts of the opera in *Ulysses*, this seems unwise. However, because he gives no definitive allusions to *Don Giovanni* in "A Painful Case," we can only speculate about which part or parts he had in mind. Again, the text offers only minimal help.

Emily Sinico, her daughter, and Duffy have been attending a concert at the Rotunda, and Emily's remark about the performers singing to empty benches indicates that Joyce is not thinking of the overture, which is all instrumental. The use of Joyce's trio, two women and one man, might suggest a rhetorical inversion of act 1, scene 5, and its trio of the jilted and complaining Elvira, the Don, and Leporello, his servant. As Donald Grout describes it (1980, 518), Elvira's aria has "agitated runs and tremolos," and this "contrasts sharply with the tight-lipped, light-hearted, mocking tone of Don Giovanni." Leporello's role, if this is the scene that Joyce is remembering, however, is taken by the daughter, who is a nonentity in Joyce's story. Given Joyce's allusions in *Ulysses*, though, and because he loved to repeat and vary earlier references, a more likely allusion is to the duet of Don Giovanni and Zerlina (Emily's daughter is silent during the exchange!) of act 1, scene 3. There, the Don is attempting to seduce the innocent Zerlina (in this story, Joyce inverts the relationship), who becomes appropriately agitated. The Don's phrase, "La ci darem (la mano)," is thought of by Bloom often during the day of June 16. The approach, "There I will take you by the hand," is answered by Zerlina's "Vorrei e non vorrei" ("I would like to and I wouldn't like to"), indicating as much agitation as one could wish for. Since *Ulysses* has some fifteen allusions to this duet, according to the index to Gifford and Seidman (1974), and only another two or three to the minuet at the Don's home, one can suspect that Joyce wants us to think of that duet when we think specifically of Mozart in connection with "A Painful Case." Whether one finds the trio or duet, the situational inversion (two women and one man) supports the rhetorical retrograde ("defiant note" becomes "note of defiance"), and the two of them, given the musical setting and other clear musical language, suggest a musical inversion.

Since Emily's agitation is our major clue to what Joyce may have been thinking, however, one must consider other operatic possibilities. Donna Elvira sings (1.3) "ah! fug-gi il tra-di-tor!" ("fly from the betrayer!") and (2.3) "Mi tradi!" ("He betrayed me!"). Donna Anna (2.5) sings to Ottavio, "Non mi dir" ("Don't tell me"), and Ottavio sings of Anna to others, "Il mi tesoro in tanto" ("My treasure in everything") (2.2).¹⁰ Because it suggests male agitation and because the role of Ottavio was the favorite of Irish tenor Count John McCormack, while Joyce came to prefer tenor John Sullivan (Ellmann 1982), we can probably rule out Ottavio's aria. Still, the presence of agitation is our only objective key to identification, and grand opera is filled with melodramatic agitation.

Speculation aside, "A Painful Case" has even more musically suggestive rhetoric. Subsequent meetings during the husband's absence allow Duffy and Mrs. Sinico to develop a relationship of sorts. In the narrator's words, which contain balance, repetition, and a theme-and-variation structure, "Little by little he entangled his thoughts with hers. . . . Sometimes in return for his theories she gave out some fact of her own life. . . . Little by little, as their thoughts entangled, they spoke of subjects less remote" (D 110, 111). After her death, as he walks through Phoenix Park, his memories of her seem to evoke her presence, and he can feel momentary guilt for denying her the love she needed. In two rhetorical motives suggesting musical theme and variation, he notes that "At moments she seemed to be near him in the darkness. At moments he seemed to feel her voice touch his ear, her hand touch his" (D 117). But the self-blame quickly becomes self-pity: "he felt that he had been outcast from life's feast. . . . Noone wanted him; he was outcast from life's feast" (D 117). Then he returns to self-insulation: "he could not feel her near him in the darkness nor her voice touch his ear" (D 117). Despite Emily's tragic demise, the "painful case" is clearly Duffy's too. The situation is also a parody of Rubek's in Ibsen's "When We Dead Awaken," which Joyce had reviewed in the *Fortnightly Review* of 1 April 1900 (CW 47–67) and of which he said: "Rubek is dead, almost hopelessly dead until the end, when he comes to life." Unfortunately, Duffy's "death" has helped to cause the death of Emily Sinico, who will be remembered as "poor Mrs. Sinico" several times in *Ulysses*, but his present resurrection, unlike hers in the future, is short-lived. Fortunately, Duffy will be forgotten, even though Joyce uses his thoughts to indicate his own musical growth and to hint at man's state of aloneness in his universe. Use of death as musical epiphany connects "A Painful Case" with "The Dead," and prepares for Gabriel's aloneness as well.

That Joyce was growing musically and doing so consciously, a fact sug-



gested by our examples, is more strongly supported by David Michael Hertz (1987). While focusing largely upon Debussy's use of Mallarmé's "Afternoon of a Faun," Hertz demonstrates that the art forms were consciously blended by most of the Symbolists. In a letter to me early in 1988, he indicated that Joyce could have easily been part of his study, too. Since Joyce loved the writings of Mallarmé, as well as those of Baudelaire, and since he very likely alludes to Debussy in his first novel, it would seem that we can assume his use of music everywhere. His trip to the continent reinforced his natural interests; he was in the right place at the right time.

Musical Reality

As we have seen, Joyce, in his early works, explores various easy ways that language can be used with music, to suggest music, and even to replace music. Since these are initial experiments, I have called them apprenticeship techniques. This designation is not intended as denigration, though the earlier works are simpler than his later ones. In a rhetorical theme and variation that also suggests the same for music, he introduces various motives in *Chamber Music* that he will gather up and use as secondary notations in *Dubliners*, in a partial counterpoint with the primary motives or notations that dominate the work. (While these are largely rhetorical, all are mentioned in "The Sisters" and recur with such variety and frequency in the other stories that, in *Dubliners*, theme and variation is both a literary technique and a musical form.) *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* will repeat the process from *Chamber Music* and *Dubliners* and will, itself, furnish secondary notations for *Ulysses* (which benefits, as well, from its relationship with *Exiles* and *Giacomo Joyce*). In *Ulysses* the reader is invited to "look back in retrospective arrangement," to help the author further synthesize (harmonize or counterpoint) what increasingly becomes fragments, and to look forward to how *Finnegans Wake* will echo and include all the rest, as well as its own motives. This, ultimately, makes the music both progressive and retrogressive. Even in his early works, however, Joyce's arts seem to aspire more deeply to the condition of music than do those of most of his contemporaries—if we can define that condition as focus upon content as well as form, and if we content ourselves with techniques such as naming and allusion. As we move into *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and even later works, what Joyce has thought of as musical becomes a music that musicians can recognize and understand. These kinds of music, while continuing Minahan's "Music as Idea," will also include "Music as Prosodic Model" and "Music as Formal Principle."



In turning upon itself, *Dubliners* sets the pattern for future works and the Joycean corpus as a whole. In doing so, it also stamps in our minds the fact that theme and variation is Joyce's dominant musical technique. As Calvin S. Brown notes in "Theme and Variations as Literary Form" (in Cluck 1981, 72), the composer can "end a set of variations either by closing the circle or by flying off at a tangent." Since Brown (1948) refused to believe that a prose writer could achieve music, he also believed that critics could fly off at a tangent, too. Still, in his essay, he discussed Robert Browning's *Ring and the Book*, a poem that reads like a novel, as an outstanding example of "theme and variation." In fact, Brown said, to achieve such a structure, all one needed to do was "change settings of the theme" and "vary the content." To me, *Dubliners* would seem to be an excellent illustration of Brown's thesis.

