

行政院國家科學委員會補助專題研究計畫成果報告

Bloody Grace: Wronging the Right in Joyce's "Grace"

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計畫編號：NSC 89 - 2411 - H - 003—060—BB

執行期間：89年8月1日至90年12月30日

計畫主持人：梁孫傑

共同主持人：

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赴國外搜尋資料心得報告一份

執行單位：國立台灣師範大學 英語系

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一、中文摘要

"Grace" as a title does not entirely live up to the reader's expectation. No salvation, no redemption. What we find is a grace in its fallen state, deeply in complicity with a commercialized world helplessly dominated by paralysis and simony. The discrepancy between the title and the story, however, is nothing unusual in *Dubliners*, as Bernard Benstock observes, "The directness of most of them [story titles] is deceptive," but he immediately adds, "but a handful are highly elliptical and ambiguous" (1988: 538). In this project, what I'd like to discuss is the ambiguous aspects of grace, from which the Joycean Logos (Word) is born. I'll argue that the story seemingly devoid of grace is Joyce's textual strategy on the basis of negative principle to reinforce the fact that grace is actually too ubiquitous to be sensed. Then I'll go on to argue that grace, in a particularly Joycean perspective, is represented in the story as something scatological.

Jackson and McGinley, among many other Joycean scholars, have observed, "the title of the story has two ironically opposing meanings" (1993: 156), and probably because it is very obvious to note that the spiritual dimension of grace is totally devoid in the short story, most critics have devoted their discussions on Joyce's irony of grace, while the "un-ironical" aspect of grace is left undiscussed. Nothing positively spiritual is there, so it is impossible to approach things not there. The consensus, however, needs a further investigation, if we ask ourselves whether the spiritual meaning of grace is originally not there, or whether it is too un-ironically visible in an abject creature to be acknowledged as God's free gift. In other words, is it true that all of the characters in "Grace" are, as Martin Cunningham jokingly puts it, "a nice collection of scoundrels" (*D* 163)? Or as the critic Morse says in a serious manner, they are all of them "spiritually pusillanimous" (1959:

108-09)?

We will have to know what grace is within a Catholic context before we apply any moral parameter to these Dubliners. According to *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, grace, in general, “is a supernatural gift of God to intellectual creatures (men, angels) for their eternal salvation” (online) and it can be divided into two levels of meaning: actual grace and sanctifying grace. But obviously, grace in Joyce’s “Grace” is nothing like that. Joyce’s version of grace is directly associated with tea-taster Tom Kernan, grocer Fogarty, and Fr. Purdon. The word is initially used in conjunction with Mr. Kernan’s clothing: “He had never been seen in the city without a silk hat of some decency and a pair of gaiters. By grace of these two articles of clothing, he said, a man could always pass muster” (*D* 154). The second use of the word occurs in connection with the grocer, Mr. Fogarty: “He bore himself with a certain *grace*” (*Dubliners* 166). The third occurrence of “grace” is found at the end of Father Purdon’s sermon when he urges the recalcitrant men to set straight their accounts with God, rectifying them with the help of God’s grace. The word “grace” in the short story occurs three times, each of which ironically designates the fallen state of divine grace (a consensus among Joycean scholars) as being

incarnated in three characters, representative of the three different Dublin social estates: the grocer Fogarty (the commoners), the tea-taster Tom Kernan (the once-wealthy-and-powerful bourgeois now deteriorating into a state of petty significance), and the priest Fr. Purdon (the clergy). Marvin Magalaner is probably the first critic to point out that “Grace” is Joyce’s severe condemnation of “the Philistines of Dublin” (1959: 132), because the holy status of grace has fallen from God’s free gift to a profane amalgamation of commercial decoration and political power: “Appeal must be made to social prestige, self-interest, personal vanity, before the religious ritual will be embraced” (1959: 132-33), and many Joyceans follow the critical vein of moral parameter; J. M. Morse even concludes that all “Grace” characters are “presumptuous” and “spiritually pusillanimous” (1959: 109).

All kinds of moral paralysis seem to converge on Kernan the Everyman, who falls from the stairs when the story begins. The explicit implication of the fall, among many other textual clues, naturally predicates that every Dubliner has been thrown into a postlapsarian world, and the means for them to redemption and salvation can only be granted in the light of God’s grace. According to catholic doctrine, man’s fall leading to the destruction of belief

directly defies the well-being of God's creation; no wonder Kernan, as well as his sinful fallen entourage, is beyond the hope of redemption since the divine grace is powerlessly to be born.

This is however an interpretation viewed from the orthodox Christian perspective, no matter how unanimously it is endorsed. Apart from the biographical fact of Joyce's overt animosity against Roman Catholic Church, we should also pay attention to Joyce's idea of the fall, not so much to deny the contribution made by the past "Grace" criticism, as to supplement to it another dimension of possibility. I argue that the fall of Tom Kernan is the prototype of Tim Finnegans' fall; they are essentially of the same kind, though technically and stylistically different in degree.

Joyce's relentless and indefatigable critique of the Irish Church is well-known. Cheryl Herr for one says, "Readers who find here primarily a critique of the church rather than an anatomy of its cultural function attribute to Joyce an underlying belief in religion as the vessel of truth; they ignore his identification of the church as an economic institution" (1986: 244), and Hope H. Hodgkins for another observes, "Joyce frequently presents the Irish Church as overwhelmingly, fatally materialistic and power-hungry" (1995: 429). Hodgkins

regards Joyce as a man of faith, who turns himself away from the Church precisely because of "the incongruity between the spiritual claim and the actual functioning," and the incongruity "outrage[s] Joyce" (1995: 430). A small piece of biographical information recorded by Joyce's brother Stanislaus reveals the nature of Joyce's anger: "The strange doctrine of actual and sanctifying grace and its relation to original sin, which last was to be the subject of *Finnegans Wake*, had puzzled and fascinated my brother, as he found it in the teaching of the Church, and in his reading of St. Augustine, and even viewed from outside the Church it held his interest. He had, in fact, gone to listen to a sermon on the subject preached in Gardiner Street Church or University College Chapel, and had conic away angry and disgusted at tile inadequacy of the exposition. He said the preacher had not even tried to know what lie was talking about, but assumed that anything was good enough for his listeners. It angered him that such shoddy stuff should pass for spiritual guidance" (1958: 224-25). Stanislaus then suggests that because of this experience, Joyce's intention in "Grace" is to demonstrate his anger of the complicity between materialistic social religion and theological ignorance.

What outrages Joyce is not really

materialistic social religion and theological ignorance per se, but rather a religion that caters to the needs of a materialistic society, and a people who choose to be theologically ignorant. Religion, politics, and the business world become the new trinity in dear dirty Dublin. The theological dimension of grace has been totally displaced by simony, power and financial profits. In a point of the story when Martin Cunningham picks up the topic of “65, catch your cabbage!” (*D* 161) and the conversation around the sickbed swerves to the bantering of the rookie policeman in the training depot, these male cronies as a matter of fact are carefully taking a pre-planned strategy to throw spoonfuls of spiritual cabbage at Kernan. The cabbage of grace is meant to be caught, and Kernan cannot help but catch it, as Magalaner points out, “It is not so much that Kernan wishes to attend a church service as that he is unwilling to be left out of anything in which his friends are active” (1959: 132). To these endeavoring male friends, the restoration of Kernan back to the socially acknowledged life is a reassurance of “the myth of a coherent masculine identity” (Leonard 1993: 273). If Kernan fails to catch the cabbage, unconsciously or not, he will remain out of the circle of his friends, who represent the social respectability.

He will be ostracized as other-worldly a being as we first find him in the beginning of the story.

Therefore, I may venture to say that an injured mouth is symbolic of the fallen grace. The mouth is the grace. In spite of the fact that Joyce has shifted his subject matter from childhood to social life, the essential concern remains the same as the verbal obsession of the boy narrator of “The Sisters,” with the words *paralysis*, *gnomon*, *simony*, which have “always sounded strangely in [his] ears” (*D* 9). It is absolutely true for Senn to propose that “Grace” is “very much about speeches and talking, the skill of persuasion. Grace, the ‘gift’ related to the Holy Ghost and ‘the gift of tongues’ (see Acts 2: 4, 38, etc.), can be replaced by the gift of the gab, the ability to handle words” (1980: 122). I’d like to further pursue this issue by suggesting that “Grace”/grace (the world and the word, the story and what constructs the story are by now reciprocally implicated in such a complicated way that it is not necessary nor desirable to tear them apart) is very much about the ability to handle the birth of words, or more specifically, the birth of the Word.

Abstract

“Grace” as a title does not entirely live up to the reader’s expectation. No salvation, no redemption. What we find is a grace in its fallen state, deeply in complicity with a commercialized world helplessly dominated by paralysis and simony. The discrepancy between the title and the story, however, is nothing unusual in *Dubliners*, as Bernard Benstock observes, “The directness of most of them [story titles] is deceptive,” but he immediately adds, “but a handful are highly elliptical and ambiguous” (1988: 538). In this project, what I’d like to discuss is the ambiguous aspects of grace, from which the Joycean Logos (Word) is born. I’ll argue that the story seemingly devoid of grace is Joyce’s textual strategy on the basis of negative principle to reinforce the fact that grace is actually too ubiquitous to be sensed. Then I’ll go on to argue that grace, in a particularly Joycean perspective, is represented in the story as something scatological.

Keywords: Joyce, grace, “Grace,” theology, scatology, negative principle

二、計畫成果：

本論文為預計於九十一年二月初由書林出版社出版之專書中的一章。

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四、赴國外搜尋資料心得報告一份

我在七月十六日搭乘長榮(Eva)班機由台北出發，經西雅圖到紐澤西轉機，改搭乘美國國內航線的Continental班機，於七月十七日抵達水牛城。此行目的主要是在紐約州立大學水牛城分校的圖書館內，搜尋和喬伊斯的《芬尼根罪昇夢始記》(*Finnegans Wake*)相關的資料，並訪談該校的喬伊斯專家學者。

資料搜尋主要在Lockwood圖書館和位於大學部圖書館上方樓層的Rare Book and Poetry Section。Lockwood圖書館已全面網際網路化，其上網搜尋資料的速度和廣度在幾年前曾一度高居全美第一，許

多資料都可直接從網路下載或列印出來，十分快捷方便。因為是州立學校，所以在圖書館內使用電腦資源、列印資料等都不必付費。不是該校的職員師生若要使用圖書館電腦，得先申請“Library Work Station Access Card”，方可取得使用電腦的個人密碼。申請方式：可先在入口處的circulation desk出示附有照片的身份證明，填寫申請表（一些個人基本資料）即可。該卡使用有效期限為一年。若有館內資料需要影印，得先購買影印卡。在二樓和三樓各有一架影印機。館內圖書均開架式陳列，可自行取閱需要的圖書資料。

該校是研究喬伊斯重鎮之一，圖書館藏有豐富的喬學資料，尤其是早期的史料，雖不能說全備，也算十分齊全。我主要的資料包括1984年停刊的*A Wake Newslitter*，David Hayman所編的*A First Draft Version of Finnegans Wake*，Thomas Connolly撰寫的*Scribbledehobble: The Ur-Workbook for Finnegans Wake*，都順利找到，並將其中和研究有關的章節都一一影印下來。另一部份的資料屬於喬伊斯的手稿，存放於Rare Book and Poetry Section，主要是《芬尼根罪昇夢始記》編為B.45的筆記，喬伊斯題為“Confucius”，記載他對孔子和儒家的一些認識。該校Joyce Archive的典藏全世界數一數二，時有來自全球各地的學者來此藉閱手稿或喬伊斯相關文件資料等。除了閱讀並將相關資訊抄錄下來

外，我還訪談駐校喬伊斯學者(Joyce resident scholar) Luca Crispe，詢問他們(另一位駐校學者是 Sam Slote)研究工作狀況。Crispe 表示，研究喬伊斯，尤其是他的《芬尼根罪昇夢始記》的相關資料龐雜浩瀚，他們從 genetic studies 的角度整理，希望能在未來五年內稍微呈現喬伊斯最後這本巨著的寫作輪廓。現在主要的工作是整理喬伊斯的筆記手札，一一分類對比，希冀能找出該書文本內相對應的部分。除了 Crispe 和 Slote 外，我還訪談喬學專家英語系的 Mark Shechner 教授，交換研讀該書心得和方法。

此行十分順利，需要的資料約百分之九十都如期取得，也和該校專家學者交換心得意見，獲益匪淺。