

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

[selected incidences of the word 'soul']

[There are 97 incidences of the word “soul” in A Portrait. Broadly speaking, the novel takes us from a confessional (or religious) sense of the term as meaning the subjectivity of the believing and obedient Catholic to a materialist-imaginative sense as meaning the organising principle of mind and body. Joyce arrived at this dynamic revision of the religious term under the influence of Aristotle’s *De Anima* and the modern ethical realism which he discovered in modern writers. It was really the chief originality of his intellectual development though the originality of his stylistic progress in many ways outruns it. There are some examples of “soul” in the older and the newer sense. You can judge the difference by comparing the earliest with the last while, in between, Joyce anatomised the religious sense in the morbid scene of the Hellfire Sermon (Chapter Four). It is characteristic of the temper of the book that Stephen escapes from the ambit of religious puritanism by throwing himself into the arms of a prostitute and much of the writing around this point is recognisably that of the fin de siècle decadence. It is not the final position that Joyce adopted and his ability to mimic that style is highly illustrative of his ‘impersonal’ art. T. S. Eliot wrote that Joyce had no style but [was] the vacuum through which all styles rush.’ In Joyce’s works, accordingly, there is no authorial style – only the styles of the persons and things described. / BS Oct. 2021.]

Chap. 1

*Stephen Dedalus is my name,
Ireland is my nation.
Clongowes is my dwellingplace
And heaven my expectation. [16]*

[...] the song that Brigid has taught him.

*Dingdong! The castle bell!
Farewell, my mother!
Bury me in the old churchyard
Beside my eldest brother.
My coffin shall be black,
Six angels at my back,
Two to sing and two to pray
And two to carry my soul away. [24]*

Chap. 2

He often wondered what his granduncle prayed for so seriously. Perhaps [62] he prayed for the souls in purgatory or for the grace of a happy death or perhaps he prayed that God might send him back a part of the big fortune he had squandered in Cork.

The ambition which he felt astir at times in the darkness of his soul sought no outlet. A dusk like that of the outer world obscured his mind [...] He wanted to meet in the real world the unsubstantial image which his soul so constantly beheld. He did not know where to seek it or how ... [66]

His soul was still disquieted and cast down by the dull phenomenon of Dublin. [80]

Mr Tate withdrew his delving hand and spread out the essay.

—Here. It's about the Creator and the soul. Rrm ... rrm rrm ... Ah! ... without a possibility of ever approaching nearer. That's heresy. [81]

Nothing stirred within his soul but a cold and cruel and loveless lust. His childhood was dead or lost and with it his soul capable of simple joys and he was drifting amid life like the barren shell of the moon. [98]

Chap. 3

a sudden movement of his own will or a sudden call to his sin-loving soul from their soft perfumed flesh. Yet as he prowled in quest of that call, his senses, stultified only by his desire, would note keenly all that wounded or shamed them [105]

The dull light fell more faintly upon the page whereon another equation began to unfold itself slowly and to spread abroad its widening tail. It was his own soul going forth to experience, unfolding itself sin by sin, spreading abroad the balefire of its burning stars and folding back upon itself, fading slowly, quenching its own lights and fires. [105]

A cold lucid indifference reigned in his soul. At his first violent sin he had felt a wave of vitality pass out of him and had feared to find his body or his soul maimed by the excess. [106]

no part of body or soul had been maimed but a dark peace had been established between them. [107]

His days and works and thoughts could make no atonement for him, the fountains of sanctifying grace having ceased to refresh his soul. [107]

The glories of Mary held his soul captive: spikenard and myrrh and frankincense, symbolizing her royal lineage, her emblems ... If ever his soul, reentering her dwelling shyly after the frenzy of his body's lust had spent itself, was turned towards her whose emblem is the morning star ... [108]

[Loyola Xavier] wished then to go to China to win still more souls for God but he died of fever on the island of Sancian. ... Ten thousand souls won for God in a single month! That is a true conqueror ... [111]

Stephen sat in the front bench of the chapel. ... The figure of his old master ... brought back to Stephen's mind his life at Clongowes[.] ... His soul, as these memories came back to him, became again a child's soul. [112]

And remember, my dear boys, that we have been sent into this world for one thing and for one thing alone: to do God's holy will and to save our immortal souls. All else is worthless. [113]

What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world if he suffer the loss of his immortal soul? [113; 129]

if, as may so happen, there be at this moment in these benches any poor soul who has had the unutterable misfortune to lose God's holy grace and to fall into grievous sin, I fervently trust and pray that this retreat may be the turning point in the life of that soul. [114]

His soul was fattening and congealing into a gross grease, plunging ever deeper in its dull fear into a sombre threatening dusk while the body that was his stood, listless and dishonoured, gazing out of darkened eyes, helpless, perturbed, and human for a bovine god to stare upon. [115]

[God] had long been merciful, would then be just. He had long been patient, pleading with the sinful soul, giving it time to repent, sparing it yet awhile. [116]

One single instant after the body's death, the soul had been weighed in the balance. The particular judgement was over and the soul had passed to the abode of bliss or to the prison of purgatory or had been hurled howling into hell. [116]

At the last blast the souls of universal humanity throng towards the valley of Jehoshaphat, rich and poor, gentle and simple, wise and foolish, good and wicked. [117]

The preacher's knife had probed deeply into his disclosed conscience and he felt now that his soul was festering in sin. Yes, the preacher was right. God's turn had come. Like a beast in its lair his soul had lain down in its own filth but the blasts of the angel's trumpet had driven him forth from the darkness of sin into [118] the light.

When the agony of shame had passed from him he tried to raise his soul from its abject powerlessness. God and the Blessed Virgin were too far from him [119]

Hell is a strait and dark and foul-smelling prison, an abode of demons and lost souls, filled with fire and smoke.[122]

but each lost soul will be a hell unto itself, the boundless fire raging in its very vitals. ... As the waters of baptism cleanse the soul with the body, so do the fires of punishment torture the spirit with the flesh. ... And through the several torments of the senses the immortal soul is tortured eternally in its very essence amid the leagues upon leagues of glowing fires kindled in the abyss by the offended majesty of the Omnipotent God [124]

The voices that he knew so well, the common words, the quiet of the classroom when the voices paused and the silence was filled by the sound of softly browsing cattle as the other boys munched their lunches tranquilly, lulled his aching soul. / There was still time. [129]

His soul sank back deeper into depths of contrite peace, no longer able to suffer the pain of dread, and sending forth, as he sank, a faint prayer. [129]

At the very instant of death the bonds of the flesh are broken asunder and the soul at once flies towards God as towards the centre of her existence. Remember, my dear little boys, our souls long to be with God. [131]

He went up to his room after dinner in order to be alone with his soul, and at every step his soul seemed to sigh; at every step his soul mounted with his feet, sighing in the ascent, through a region of viscid gloom. [139]

Was that then he or an inhuman thing moved by a lower soul? His soul sickened at the thought of a torpid snaky life feeding itself out of the tender marrow of his life and fattening upon the slime of lust. [142]

How beautiful must be a soul in the state of grace when God looked upon it with love! [143]

Frowsy girls sat along the curbstones before their baskets. Their dank hair hung trailed over their brows. They were not beautiful to see as they crouched in the mire. But their souls were seen by God; and if their souls were in a state of grace they were radiant to see: and God loved them, seeing them. [144]

And the glimmering souls passed away, sustained and failing, merged in a moving breath. One soul was lost; a tiny soul: his. It flickered once and went out, forgotten, lost. The end: black, cold, void waste. [144]

His soul was foul with sin and he dared not ask forgiveness with the simple trust of those whom Jesus, in the mysterious ways of God, had called first to His side ... [145]

—Were they married women, my child? / He did not know. His sins trickled from his lips, one by one, trickled in shameful drops from his soul, festering and oozing like a sore, a squalid stream of vice. [148]

He had confessed and God had pardoned him. His soul was made fair and holy once more, holy and happy. ... The altar was heaped with fragrant masses of white flowers; and in the morning light the pale flames of the candles among the white flowers were clear and silent as his own soul. [149] ... His hands were trembling and his soul trembled as he heard the priest pass with the ciborium from communicant to communicant. [150]

Chap. 4.

By means of [150] ejaculations and prayers he stored up ungrudgingly for the souls in purgatory centuries of days and quarantines and years ... he drove his soul daily through an increasing circle of works of supererogation ... He offered up each of his three daily chaplets that his soul might grow strong in each of the three theological virtues [151]

God had loved his soul from all eternity, for ages before he had been born into the world, for ages before the world itself had existed. [152]

he could no longer disbelieve in the reality of love, since God Himself had loved his individual soul with divine love from all eternity. Gradually, as his soul was enriched with spiritual knowledge, he saw the whole world forming one vast symmetrical expression of God's power and love. [153]

To merge his life in the common tide of other lives was harder for him than any fasting or prayer and it was his constant failure to do this to his own satisfaction which caused in his soul at last a sensation of spiritual dryness together with a growth of doubts and scruples. His soul traversed a period of desolation in which the sacraments themselves seemed to have turned into driedup sources. [155]

...

—I mean, have you ever felt within yourself, in your soul, a desire to join the order? Think. [160]

the sacrament of Holy Orders is one of those which can be received only once because it imprints on the soul an indelible spiritual mark which can never be effaced. [163]

He was passing at that moment before the jesuit house in Gardiner Street and wondered vaguely which window would be his if he ever joined the order. Then he wondered at the vagueness of his wonder, at the remoteness of his own soul from what he had hitherto imagined her sanctuary ... His soul was not there to hear and greet it and he knew now that the exhortation he had listened to had already fallen into an idle formal tale. [165]

The snares of the world were its ways of sin. He would fall. He had not yet fallen but he would fall silently, in an instant. Not to fall was too hard, too hard; and he felt the silent lapse of his soul, as it would be at some instant to come, falling, falling, but not yet fallen, still unfallen, but about to fall. [165]

The faint dour stink of rotted cabbages came towards him from the kitchen gardens on the rising ground above the river. He smiled to think that it was this disorder, the misrule and confusion of his father's house and the stagnation of vegetable life, [165] which was to win the day in his soul.

he thought coldly how he had watched the faith which was fading down in his soul ageing and strengthening in her [his mother's] eyes. [169]

Ennis without his scarlet belt with the snaky clasp, and Connolly without his Norfolk coat with the flapless sidepockets! It was a pain to see them, and a swordlike pain to see the signs of adolescence that made repellent their pitiable nakedness. Perhaps they had taken refuge in number and noise from the secret dread in [172] their souls.

His heart trembled in an ecstasy of fear and his soul was in flight. His soul was soaring in an air beyond the world and the body he knew was purified in a breath and delivered of incertitude and made radiant and commingled with the element of the spirit. An ecstasy of flight made radiant his eyes and wild his breath and tremulous and wild and radiant his windswept limbs. [173]

This was the call of life to his soul not the dull gross voice of the world of duties and despair, not the inhuman voice that had called him to the pale service of the altar. An instant of wild flight had delivered him and the cry of triumph which his lips withheld cleft his brain. [173]

His soul had arisen from the grave of boyhood, spurning her graveclothes. Yes! Yes! Yes! He would create proudly out of the freedom and power of his soul, as the great artificer whose name he bore, a living thing, new and soaring and beautiful, impalpable, imperishable. [173]

Where was his boyhood now? Where was the soul that had hung back from her destiny, to brood alone upon the shame of her wounds and in her house of squalor and subterfuge to queen it in faded cerements and in wreaths that withered at the touch? Or where was he? [175]

—Heavenly God! cried Stephen's soul, in an outburst of profane joy. [176]

Her image had passed into his soul for ever and no word had broken the holy silence of his ecstasy. Her eyes had called him and his soul had leaped at the call. To live, to err, to fall, to triumph, to recreate life out of life! A wild angel had appeared to him, the angel of mortal youth and beauty, an envoy from the fair courts of life, to throw open before him in an instant of ecstasy the gates of all the ways of error and glory. [176]

His soul was swooning into some new world, fantastic, dim, uncertain as under sea, traversed by cloudy shapes and beings. A world, a glimmer or a flower? Glimmering and trembling, trembling and unfolding, a breaking light, an opening flower, it spread in endless succession to itself, breaking in full crimson and unfolding and fading to palest rose, leaf by leaf and wave of light by wave of light, flooding all the heavens with its soft flushes, every flush deeper than the other. [178]

[of Davin:] the rude Firbolg mind of his listener had drawn his mind towards it and flung it back again drawing it by a quiet inbred courtesy of attention or by a quaint turn of old English speech or by the force of its delight in rude bodily skill—for Davin had sat at the feet of Michael Cusack, the Gael—repelling swiftly and suddenly by a grossness of intelligence or by a bluntness of feeling or by a dull stare of terror in the eyes, the terror of soul of a starving Irish village in which the curfew was still a nightly fear. [184]

— A thing happened to myself, Stevie, last autumn, coming on winter, and I never told it to a living soul and you are the first person now I ever told it to. [185]

The last words of Davin's story sang in his memory and the figure of the woman in the story stood forth reflected in other figures of the peasant women whom he had seen standing in the doorways at Clane as the college cars drove by, as a type of her race and of his own, a batlike soul waking to the consciousness [186] of itself in darkness and secrecy and loneliness and, through the eyes and voice and gesture of a woman without guile, calling the stranger to her bed.

—The language in which we are speaking is his before it is mine. How different are the words *home*, *Christ*, *ale*, *master*, on his lips and on mine! I cannot speak or write these words without unrest of spirit. His language, so familiar and so foreign, will always be for me an acquired speech. I have not made or accepted its words. My voice holds them at bay. My soul frets in the shadow of his language. [194]

—The soul is born, he said vaguely, first in those moments I told you of. It has a slow and dark birth, more mysterious than the birth of the body. When the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets. [207]

Mother is putting my new secondhand clothes in order. She prays now, she says, that I may learn in my own life and away from home and friends what the heart is and what it feels. Amen. So be it. Welcome, O life, I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race. [257]

