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Chapter 2. The Secular Religion

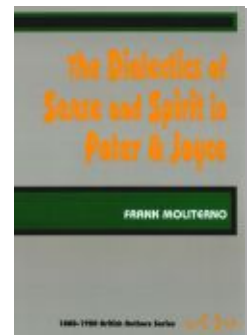
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CHAPTER 2

The Secular Religion

There are some unworldly types of character which the world is able to estimate. It recognizes certain moral types, or categories, and regards whatever falls within them as having a right to exist. The saint, the artist, even the speculative thinker, out of the world's order as they are, yet work, so far as they work at all, in and by means of the main current of the world's energy.¹

The religious and sensual tensions that Pater and Joyce experienced during their youth are present throughout their fiction. Their autobiographical personae appear in several works. Taken together, Florian Deleal in “The Child in the House” and the eponymous figure in *Marius the Epicurean*, which many regard as the story’s sequel, comprise this autobiographical figure in Pater’s fiction. In *Stephen Hero*, *Portrait*, and *Ulysses*, Stephen Dedalus represents the young Joyce at different stages of his development. An examination of the development of the autobiographical figures in these works reveals that a sense/spirit division operates as a dialectical principle in both Pater and Joyce. Florian and the child Stephen are immersed in the world of sensation. Marius at the beginning of *Marius the Epicurean* and Stephen in Part III of *Portrait*, both pious adolescents, recall Pater at Canterbury and Joyce at Belvedere College (both of whom considered holy orders during these periods). Marius at Pisa and Stephen at University College in *Stephen Hero* mirror Pater’s and Joyce’s transition from childhood piety to artistic theory while at university. These transitions, which often occur during moments of epiphany and synthesis, culminate in a reconciliation between sense and spirit late in *Marius* and in *Ulysses*. Marius experiences this reconciliation through Cornelius and Cecilia in their house; Stephen does so through Bloom and Molly in theirs.

The Hegelian model of sense/spirit dialectic that McGrath finds in *Portrait* and that Ellmann detects in *Ulysses* also underlies Pater's autobiographical fiction. Like Joyce in the first two chapters of *Portrait*, Pater depicts early childhood experience as exclusively sensuous. Neither Florian nor the child Stephen has the capacity for abstract thought. This changes during adolescence. At the beginning of *Marius the Epicurean* and during Stephen's penitent phase, the two autobiographical personae move from sensuous to self-denying religious experience. During this stage, Stephen and Marius both plan to enter the priesthood—Stephen as a Jesuit, Marius as a priest of the religion of Numa. They abandon these plans, however, move back toward a sensual appreciation of the world, and become aesthetic theorists. Pater's Marius adopts a philosophy of materialism and trusts only empirical experience; but he forges from this position an aesthetic which, like the one Stephen espouses on the strand, stresses the re-creation of life out of life. He and Stephen must develop their aesthetic theories in environments hostile to both sensual pleasure and artistic independence—Stephen in Catholic Ireland, Marius in Stoic Rome. Although they abandon the religions of their youth, ascetic religious codes have influenced nearly every aspect of their development, particularly their aesthetics. Towards the end of *Marius the Epicurean* and *Ulysses*, the two maturing protagonists' movement toward a balance of sense and spirit occurs. Marius's new aesthetic seeks to reconcile sensual beauty with Christian idealism. Stephen, after his meeting with Bloom, seems ready to engender a Joycean art that unites sense and idea, the body and the intellect as the Shakespeare of his theory had done. In both novels, such visionary syntheses are conferred during epiphanic moments.

This sense/spirit cycle in both writers is indebted to Giordano Bruno as well as to Hegel. Pater was well acquainted with the works of both the eighteenth-century German idealist and the late-Italian Renaissance theologian. Joyce also read and greatly admired Bruno, whom he called "the father of modern philosophy," and McGrath suggests that he had some familiarity with Hegel. Pater was intrigued by Hegel's dialectical synthesis between sense and intellect, which is implicit in Hegel's belief that art is the sensuous manifestation of the "Ideal." Joyce may have had Hegel in mind when composing *Portrait*, since the epiphany on the strand involves a similar reconciliation between the sensual and the ideal. This synthesis leads to Stephen's rebirth as an (embryonic) artist. Stephen and Marius pass through sense/spirit cycles which are analogous to those that Hegel believes civilizations pass through, as in the historical transition from paganism to Christianity in Europe. Hegel argues that such transitions occur within the individual as well. Working from this premise, Pater locates a historical synthesis of pagan sensuality and Christian spirituality during the Italian

Renaissance, and he dramatizes an analogous personal synthesis late in Marius's life. Joyce probably derived his sense of personal and historical dialectic more from Vico than from Hegel, whom many regard as a precursor to the German idealist.

Vico, like Hegel, believed that these processes take place both in history and within individuals. According to Vico, history unfolds during three sequential stages: theocratic, aristocratic, democratic. These are followed by a phase of chaotic breakdown before the threefold cycle begins again. Ellmann discerned that Joyce not only used Vico's structure as the underlying organizational principle of *Finnegans Wake*, but also applied these stages to his own life. Joyce "saw himself as having begun in fear of God, then basking in family and personal pride, and finally, dispossessed, discovering a sufficient value in the ordinary and unassuming."² This is partly true of Stephen's experience. After hearing Father Arnall's sermon during early adolescence he fears God's wrath. He goes through society in proud disdain and isolation because of artistic hubris and his guilt over his mother's death. By the end of *Ulysses*, he is potentially able to join the world of men because of his contact with Bloom.

With Hegel, culture begins on a primitive, sensuous level and evolves gradually through a series of sense/spirit cycles towards the appreciation of art, religion, philosophy. This is the phase of history where society approaches absolute spirit. He differs from Vico in his claim that history progresses through sense/spirit cycles towards an ideal stage and achieves absolute spirit. (In *Ulysses*, Garrett Deasy echoes this notion when in "Nestor" he says that "all history moves towards one great goal, the manifestation of God."³)

Vico says that these historical processes occur in unending cycles. The final stage of the tripartite process does not progress towards a transcendent terminus, but ends in a primitive, barbaric *ricorso* which introduces a new cycle. This may explain why the sense/spirit dialectic in Stephen's development recurs in *Ulysses*, which indicates that Stephen's evolution is cyclical, as in Vico's scheme, not linear as in Hegel's.

Still, the sensuous and abstract phases that Florian, Marius and Stephen pass through recall the developmental processes of the mind in Hegel's *Phenomenology of the Spirit* and can be explained in terms of Hegelian dialectic. Hegel holds that empiricism determines the cognitive processes of infancy and early childhood. The processes of intellection later evolve, enabling one some day to appreciate, within Hegel's metaphysics, the "Ideal." Throughout this encompassing process, alternating phases of sense and spirit periodically occur, and there are moments of temporary synthesis.

As McGrath has observed, this is analogous to Stephen's development. Pure sensation characterizes his childhood experience. These experiences intensify, culminating in his encounter with the prostitute. In Parts III and IV, he enters a period of asceticism. At the end of Part IV, he experiences a moment of synthesis on Sandymount. By the end of the novel, he reaches an abstract phase of "absolute spirit." He does not experience a final Hegelian transcendence, but his progression from simple sensation at the beginning of the novel, to his intellectual disputations at the end, particularly on art, religion and philosophy—the subjects appropriate to this highest level of consciousness—recalls the evolutionary processes from sense to spirit in *Phenomenology of the Spirit*.

While Joyce never formally admitted the influence of Hegel, he did acknowledge that of Giordano Bruno, the "terrible heretic" who was burned by the Catholic Inquisition and whom Joyce discovered during his university years. In a 1903 review of a book on Bruno, Joyce echoes Pater's celebratory vision and style in *The Renaissance* when he speaks of Bruno's efforts to reconcile matter and spirit:

His system by turns rationalist and mystic, theistic and pantheistic is everywhere impressed with his noble mind and critical intellect, and is full of that ardent sympathy with nature as it is—*natura naturata*—which is the breath of the Renaissance. In his attempt to reconcile the matter and form of the Scholastics—formidable names, which in his system as spirit and body retain little of their metaphysical character—Bruno has hardly put forward an hypothesis, which is a curious anticipation of Spinoza. Is it not strange, then, that Coleridge should have set him down a dualist, a later Heraclitus, and should have represented him as saying in effect: "Every power in nature or in spirit must evolve an opposite as the sole condition and means of its manifestation; and every opposition is, therefore, a tendency to reunion"?⁴

In its allusive method and wide-ranging claims, this passage recalls several of Pater's principal theses in *The Renaissance*. In "Pico della Mirandola," Pater describes how the fifteenth-century neo-Platonist sought to reconcile matter and spirit, stating that "Everywhere there is a system of correspondences. Every object in the terrestrial world is an analogue, a symbol or counterpart, of some higher reality in the starry heavens."⁵ The "ardent sympathy with nature" that Joyce notes in Bruno is also evident in Pico, where it functioned as "a counterpoise to the increasing tendency of medieval religion to depreciate man's nature."⁶

Even in Joyce's day Bruno was an obscure figure, but Pater wrote a piece on Bruno a decade before Joyce discovered him. Not surprisingly, Pater also discusses Bruno's concern with "the affinities, the unity, of the visible and

the invisible, of earth and heaven, of all things whatever.”⁷ Joyce would later echo the assessment of Bruno’s philosophy that Pater expresses in his last book, *Gaston de Latour* (1896):

Its more immediate corollary was the famous axiom of “indifference,” of “the coincidence of contraries” The differences in things, those distinctions, above all, which schoolmen and priests, old or new, Roman or Reformed, had invented for themselves, would be lost in the length and breadth of the philosophic survey: nothing, in itself, being really either great or small; and matter certainly, in all its various forms, not evil but divine. . . . If God the Spirit had made, nay! was all things indifferently, then, matter and spirit, the spirit and the flesh, heaven and earth, freedom and necessity, the first and the last, good and evil, would be superficial rather than substantial differences.⁸

Unlike Hegel and most neo-Platonic idealists, who see sense and spirit as antithetical and sequential, Giordano Bruno sees them as possessing an underlying kinship or identity: they inhere simultaneously in one another. This naturally evolves from his pantheism. Since all things are part of God, flesh is divine. In this, he approaches an Aristotelian rather than a Platonic metaphysical model. While Plato taught that spirit transcended phenomena, Aristotle argued that since all matter proceeds from God, there is no transcendence. Joyce, by nature an Aristotelian, could embrace Bruno warmly.

Ellmann explains how to “Bruno, all contraries are coincident. Hot is opposite to cold, but they are both aspects of a single principle of heat, and their kinship can be seen in the fact that they are united at their minima, the least hot being the least cold. The deepest night is the beginning of dawn.”⁹ He reveals how Joyce applies Bruno’s idea of the kinship of contraries to *Ulysses*: “In the [first] three chapters involving Bloom, Joyce again follows Bruno. The first joins food and faeces which will one day be food once more....”¹⁰ Within the larger sense/spirit paradigm, Ellmann observes that both Stephen and Bloom “pursue a mean between pure mind and mindlessness, mere body and bodilessness.”¹¹

Although Bruno’s influence on Pater’s spirit/sense dialectic is less pronounced, we find traces of it. Late in *Marius the Epicurean*, Pater describes his hero’s developmental history in which he finally reconciles the spirit with the flesh. He adopts a Brunoesque conclusion about the underlying kinship of matter and spirit when he witnesses the beginnings of the Roman Church during a pre-Manichean era of Christianity.

Both Hegel’s and Bruno’s paradigms of sense and spirit are integral to the dialectical frameworks of individual development in the works of Pater and Joyce. Pater’s use of Hegel is well documented, as is Joyce’s use of Bruno,

but neither Pater nor Joyce fully accepts the metaphysics of either philosopher. Pater borrowed from Hegel his belief that art is the sensuous manifestation of the “Ideal” without incorporating his metaphysics. Hegel was an idealist who believed in a transcendent Absolute. In his essay on Coleridge, a follower of German idealism, the relativist Pater denies the existence of an Absolute. For Pater, “art is the sensuous manifestation” of the abstractions that exist in the artist’s mind, not of Hegel’s Eternal “Ideal.” Similarly, Joyce found Bruno’s idea of the kinship of contraries useful, but he does not incorporate Bruno’s pantheism in his fiction.

Pater’s use of Hegel in his fiction begins in “The Child in the House” and continues in *Marius the Epicurean*: Florian Deleal is twelve when “The Child in the House” ends, Marius fourteen when *Marius the Epicurean* begins. Like Stephen, who between Parts III and IV of *Portrait* has moved from sensual riot to ascetic self-denial, Pater’s hero undergoes a transition from sense experience to religious ritual between the end of “The Child in the House” and the beginning of *Marius*. Such similarities prompt Perry Meisel’s contention that Joyce’s *Portrait* is “a lengthy rewriting of Pater’s first imaginary portrait, ‘The Child in the House.’”¹² In the early chapters of *Portrait*, Joyce, like Pater, focuses on the myriad sensations of his child protagonist. One of Joyce’s concerns in the first two chapters is with what one might call “*aisthesis*.” Harold Bloom defines “*aisthetes*” or “*aesthete*” as “one who perceives.”¹³ But the word for aesthete comes from this Greek word *aisthesis*, which specifically means “sense perception” as opposed to intellection or the perception of ideas.

For Joyce, as for Pater, apprehension through the senses, be it rough or refined, is the precondition for the making of the artist. Among the early sense impressions that Joyce describes are the distinguishing odors of Stephen’s parents, the colors and textures of Dante’s two brushes, the sounds of the cricket bats at Clongowes, the sound and sensation of Father Dolan’s pandy bat on Stephen’s palm, the cold water of the square ditch, and the impression of the fire’s shadow on the infirmary wall. No less vivid are the numerous sensations that Stephen experiences in the church. Like Pater’s Marius, the young Stephen is drawn to Christianity largely because of its sensual appeal: the charcoal in the censor, the sweet incense, the crisp white altar cloth, and the consecrated wine hold him in awe. As the novel progresses, his desire for sensual immersion increases, culminating in his synesthetic encounter with the prostitute in which touch, sound and odor unite in a moment of erotic release.

The young Florian Deleal in “The Child in the House” experiences a similar sensory assault in his early phase of consciousness. Pater and Joyce

portray early childhood as a period when empirical experience predominates over any awareness of the spiritual or abstract. Like the child Stephen, Florian is a passive receptacle of sensations. Pater observes that there was a “predominance in his interests, of beautiful things, a kind of tyranny of the senses over him.”¹⁴ Florian “seemed to experience a passionateness in his relation to fair outward objects, an inexplicable excitement in their presence, which disturbed him, and from which he longed to be free.”¹⁵ Florian’s perceptual experiences, like the young Stephen’s, are sensible, not intelligible. He can receive knowledge only through sensation and, despite his initial unease, learns to value the process. Even when he reaches adulthood, Florian prefers the sensible manifestation of any abstraction to its conceptualization:

In later years he came upon philosophies which occupied him much in the estimate of the proportion of the sensuous and the ideal elements in human knowledge, the relative parts they bear in it; and, in his intellectual scheme, was led to assign very little to the abstract thought, and much to its sensual vehicle or occasion. Such metaphysical speculation did but reinforce what was instinctive in his way of receiving the world, and for him, everywhere, that sensible vehicle or occasion became, perhaps only too surely, the necessary concomitant of any perception of things. . . .¹⁶

As he develops, the child Florian can understand ideas only by discovering their sensible analogue. Stephen evinces the same youthful incapacity for abstraction—or the same “instinctive” “way of receiving the world”—in Part I. He cannot comprehend that the term “Tower of Ivory”¹⁷ from the litany symbolizes the sinless purity of the Virgin Mary. He can only perceive this notion of ideal womanhood in its sensuous counterpart: an actual female, Eileen, an early love interest whose “long thin cool hands” were “like ivory.”¹⁸ Stephen’s approach to religious mysteries recalls Florian’s “protest in favour of real men and women against mere grey, unreal abstractions.”¹⁹ Florian too comes to love the immaterial through the material and “remembered gratefully how the Christian religion, hardly less than the religion of the ancient Greeks, translating so much of its spiritual verity into things that may be seen, condescends in part to sanction this infirmity, if it so be, of our human existence, wherein the world of sense is so much with us. . . .”²⁰

For Pater and Joyce, the empirical process of acquiring knowledge and the sensuous relationship between the self and the world in early childhood help shape the artist’s memory and identity. In “The Child in the House,” Pater states that “I have remarked how, in the process of our brain-building, as the house of thought in which we live gets itself together, like some airy bird’s-nest of floating thistledown and chance straws, compact at last, little

accidents have their consequence."²¹ These "little accidents" are moments of sensation that inscribe consciousness and give rise to a sense of self. Pater describes this development as a Lockean process:

How insignificant, at the moment, seem the influences of sensible things which are tossed and fall and lie about us, so, or so, in the environment of early childhood. How indelibly, as we afterwards discover, they affect us; with what capricious attractions and associations they figure themselves on the white paper, the smooth wax, of our ingenuous souls, as 'with lead in the rock for ever,' giving form and feature, and as it were assigned house-room in our memory, to early experiences of feeling and thought, which abide with us ever afterwards, thus, and not otherwise. . . . A system of visible symbolism interweaves itself through all our thoughts and passions; and irresistibly, little shapes, voices, accidents—the angle at which the sun in the morning fell on the pillow—become parts of the great chain wherewith we are bound.²²

Such "accidents" of remembered sensation also color the life of the young Stephen. The square ditch episode and the epiphany in the infirmary are experiences that "indelibly" affect Stephen and become part of a system of private symbols. They are "capricious attractions and associations" that mold his fears and aspirations. Pushed into the square ditch, Stephen transforms the dirty water into a symbol of corruption, both physical and moral. This is evident in Part III, where Stephen laments his soul's sexual contamination in the images of hell engendered not merely by Father Arnall's fire sermon but by the remembered decay of grey liquid. The shadow of the fire in the infirmary, which gives Stephen the impression of flickering waves, and the nearby priest's impassioned denunciation of Parnell, induce his vision of the Irish leader's funeral. Henceforth, Parnell becomes for Stephen, throughout *Portrait* and *Ulysses*, a shadowy symbol of Ireland's betrayal of its own sons—a betrayal that he himself feels in Dublin.

In Parts III and IV of *Portrait* and in Chapter 1 of *Marius*, religion gains ascendancy over sense experience for the adolescent protagonists. Stephen is about sixteen when he turns to the blessed virgin after his encounter with the prostitute, and *Marius*, who replaces Florian as Pater's autobiographical persona, is fourteen when he contemplates becoming a priest of Numa. In the throes of Catholic guilt, Stephen becomes preoccupied with transcendental communion and sensual self-denial, not with *aisthesis*: "Sunday was dedicated to the mystery of the Holy Trinity, Monday to the Holy Ghost, Tuesday to the Guardian Angels, Wednesday to Saint Joseph, Thursday to the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, Friday to the Suffering Jesus, Saturday, to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Every morning he hallowed himself anew in the presence of some holy image or mystery."²³ This opening to Part

IV contrasts with the opening paragraphs of Parts III and V, in which Stephen, free of self-flagellation, contemplates meals with a healthy bodily consciousness that anticipates Bloom's in *Ulysses*. Here, however, as in much of *Ulysses*, Stephen denies the life of his body and renounces sense experience in atonement for his sins of the flesh. This involves a mortification of the senses so extreme that he denies himself any avenue of sensual pleasure. He mortifies his eyes by avoiding eye contact with women and his hearing by giving up singing. He mortifies the tactile sense by sitting and lying in uncomfortable positions. He even abstracts from his rosary beads any sensual beauty they may possess: "The rosaries too which he said constantly—for he carried his beads loose in his trouser pockets that he might tell them as he walked the streets—transformed themselves into coronals of flowers of such vague unearthly texture that they seemed as hueless and odourless as they were nameless."²⁴ During this ascetic phase, Stephen abjures the phenomenal world, and just as the rosaries take on an unearthly aspect, so to "the world for all its solid substance and complexity no longer existed for his soul save as a theorem of divine power and love and universality."²⁵

Lurking within Stephen's asceticism is the sensuality that he labors to suppress, the sensuality that will reappear late in Part IV. Joyce ironically describes his spiritual experiences in a language rife with sensual connotations. Stephen's religious ecstasies emerge as if they were physical, even orgasmic moments. By the same token, Joyce had similarly described Stephen's earlier sexual experiences in a language of sacred "transfiguration" and religious mystery. Joyce depicts the brothel setting of Part II as if it were a place of religious ritual: "The yellow gas flames arose before his troubled vision against the vapoury sky, burning as if before an altar. Before the doors and in the lighted halls groups were gathered arrayed for some rite."²⁶ The prostitute approaches him not with the wiles of a whore, but with "serious calm";²⁷ "tears of joy and relief" rather than sexual ecstasy accompany Stephen's "transfiguration." Trafficking again in the contrapuntal and oxymoronic in Part IV, Joyce states that Stephen's aspiring soul experienced "a sensation of spiritual dryness."²⁸ Paraphrasing Stephen's thoughts, Joyce uses the word "ejaculation"²⁹ on two occasions to describe his prayers and spiritual exclamations." The oddity of this is striking, since a principal concern of the pious Stephen is to avoid fornication. In his daily devotions, Stephen senses that "an inaudible voice seemed to caress the soul." His soul's surrender to this irresistible voice recalls his surrender to the prostitute at the close of Part II:

An inaudible voice seemed to caress the soul, telling her names and glories, bidding her arise as for espousal and come away, bidding her look forth, a spouse, from Amana and from the mountains of the leopards; and the soul seemed to answer with the same inaudible voice, surrendering herself: "*Inter ubera mea commorabitur*" ["He shall lie between my breasts"].³⁰

Like the scene in the brothel, the ironic subtexture of Joyce's language here in Part IV enables him to maintain the dialectical tension of sense and spirit in a chapter where Stephen immerses himself in Catholic ritual. The Latin quote describes the soul anticipating its spouse between its breasts. The fact that Stephen is the "prefect of Our Blessed Lady's sodality" at Belvedere College—ironic considering his sexual history—suggests that for Joyce, sense and spirit are both oppositional and co-existent principles. In suggesting the submerged presence of spirit in sense and sense in spirit, Joyce echoes Bruno's notion of the kinship of opposites in *Portrait*, as he will later in *Ulysses*.

Marius's adolescent devotion to the "religion of Numa" in the beginning of *Marius the Epicurean* is as austere as Stephen's Catholic piety. T. S. Eliot held that paganism is the subject of the first half of Pater's novel and Christianity is the subject of the second half. Yet Marius's early paganism would not have interested a modern pagan like Swinburne—or his Joycean devotee Buck Mulligan. Although the people of his village make sacrifices to Bacchus and Demeter, there are no Dionysian rites, no efforts to rise to Nietzschean apotheosis through dance or intoxication. There is only a decorous feast during which Marius is careful to remain sober. Pater's description of the cult as a "religion of conscience" and of the boy's "puritanical" sensibility recall both the Victorian ethos of Pater's day and Stephen Dedalus's severe code of conduct:

A sense of conscious powers external to ourselves, pleased or displeased by the right or wrong conduct of every circumstance of daily life—that conscience, of which the old Roman religion was a formal, habitual recognition, was become in him a powerful current of feeling and observance. The old-fashioned, partly puritanic awe, the power of which Wordsworth noted and valued so highly in a northern peasantry, had its counterpart in the feeling of the Roman lad. . . .³¹

Like the austere Catholicism of Father Arnall's sermon, the worship of Numa is "a religion for the most part of fear, of multitudinous scruples, of a year-long burden of forms."³² Like Stephen, Marius is fearful "lest he should fall short at any point of the demand upon him of anything in which deity was concerned."³³ The piety of the "unworldly"³⁴ Marius leads him to avoid the aestheticism that was then prevalent in the Roman world. This refers to the

doctrine of sensation that he would later follow. During this period, the religion of Numa “kept him serious and dignified amid the Epicurean speculations which in after-years so engrossed him. . . .”³⁵ Instead of cultivating exquisite impressions, Marius leads a life of “strenuous self-control and *ascesis*.”³⁶

There are intriguing similarities and differences in Stephen’s and Marius’s experiences with the clergy. Marius’s pagan asceticism is preparatory for the priesthood, “the sacerdotal function hereditary in his family.”³⁷ Like Stephen, who considers becoming a Jesuit in Part IV, Marius is aware of the “immemorial authority which membership in a local priestly college would confer upon him.”³⁸ For a brief time, he and Stephen are both attracted by this hierophantic power. Stephen eventually grows discouraged by the atmosphere of a “priestly college,” in which “a grave and ordered and passionless life”³⁹ awaited him. Following his epiphany on the strand, he declines holy orders, rediscovers sensual life, and declares his artistic destiny to “re-create life out of life.” Marius also begins to move away from religion and toward an art rooted in the senses when he visits a pagan monastery. Unlike Stephen, he begins to break from his childhood religion not because he finds its environment oppressive and austere, but rather because he is impressed by the priests’ teachings about the value of the body and sense experience. In Chapter 3, aptly titled “Change of Air,” Marius visits this monastery, the Temple of Aesculapius, which is famous for its medical practice. He goes there to be cured of a physical illness; but he discovers that the priests of the temple reject a Manichean conflict between body and soul that so haunts Stephen in his Christian fervor and that underlies the faith of Numa. Instead, they promote bodily health through the belief that “the maladies of the soul might be reached through the subtle gateways of the body.”⁴⁰ The various elements of the medical art, such as healing herbs and “all the varieties of the bath,” “came to have a kind of sacramental character” at the temple.⁴¹ Pater’s suggestion of ritual vitality in the ordinary experience of bathing recalls *Ulysses*, where Stephen’s refusal to bathe reveals not merely his unwillingness to wash away familial guilt but also his denial of the body as a site of pleasure.

When Marius discovers that the priests value sense experience and the comeliness of the visible world, his inveterate guilt for an aesthetic love of beautiful landscapes declines. During his stay at the monastery, his “morbid religious idealism” achieves a synthetic oneness with “his healthful love of the country.”⁴² He is freed from this “morbid” idealism just as Stephen briefly is on the strand in Part IV of *Portrait*. The temple awakens in Marius “an aesthetic sense of mere bodily health,” which “operated afterwards as an influence morally salutary.”⁴³ Pater adds that this healthy and balanced

aesthetic sense contrasts with “the less desirable or hazardous tendencies of some phases of thought through which he was to pass.”⁴⁴ This refers to Marius’s later Epicurean and materialist phases. Marius, in short, here integrates body and spirit, sense experience and religious idealism. At the temple, he discovers what Pater defines as “the very genius of old Greek temperance.”⁴⁵

Another important result of Marius’s visit to the temple is that his valuation of simple sensation prepares him for later epiphanies which have their origin in ordinary life. The temple preaches that sense experience is an early and necessary phase in the mind’s gradual discovery of the intelligible or the spiritual. During a lecture, one of the priests states that we “must be ‘made perfect by the love of visible beauty.’”⁴⁶ One must always be certain

to keep the eye clear by a sort of exquisite personal alacrity and cleanliness, extending even to his dwelling-place; to discriminate, ever more and more fastidiously, select form and colour in things from what was less select; to meditate much on beautiful visible objects, on objects, more especially, connected with the period of youth. . . ; to avoid jealousy, in [one’s] way through the world, everything repugnant to sight.⁴⁷

This aesthetic discrimination of material beauty is preparatory for potential visions of the transcendent: “the possibility of some vision, as of a new city coming down ‘like a bride out of heaven,’ a vision still indeed, it might seem, a long way off, but to be granted perhaps one day to the eyes thus trained, was presented as the motive of this laboriously practical direction.”⁴⁸ Marius later comes still closer to such visions during his exposure to Christianity.

Stephen’s epiphany on the strand at the end of Part IV of *Portrait* frees him from the same kind of “morbid religious idealism.” While contemplating the artificer “Daedalus,” his mystic namesake, Stephen receives intimations of his artistic destiny. “Near to the wild heart of life”⁴⁹ by the shore, he can now appreciate sensual beauty, which he had previously shunned:

A girl stood before him in midstream, alone and still, gazing out to sea. She seemed like one whom magic had changed into the likeness of a strange and beautiful seabird. Her long slender bare legs were delicate as a crane’s and pure save where an emerald trail of seaweed had fashioned itself as a sign upon the flesh. Her thighs, fuller and soft-hued as ivory, were bared almost to the hips where the white fringes of her drawers were like featherings of soft white down. Her slate-blue skirts were kilted boldly about her waist and dovetailed behind her. Her bosom was as a bird’s, soft and slight, slight and soft as the breast of some dark-plumaged dove. But her long fair hair was girlish: and girlish, and touched with the wonder of mortal beauty, her face.⁵⁰

The extent to which the bird-girl represents a balanced fusion between sensuality and spirituality has generated much debate. McGrath sees a sense/spirit synthesis in Stephen's experience with the girl, which recalls Marius's reconciliation of sensuality and his piety at the temple of Aesculapius. McGrath regards the wading girl as a figure of "idealized sensuality"⁵¹ who merges Stephen's notions of the prostitute and the iconographic virgin females who precede her in his experience. One might add that she embodies idealized sensuality in another sense: not only does her unclad physical beauty move him erotically, but she evokes the bird image that has long been Stephen's private symbol for the artist. Kenneth Burke similarly maintains that to Stephen, she is a symbol, a Platonic signature and a fleshy reality: "Insofar as the bathing girl stands for Stephen's new vocation, she is a 'mythic' image, as distinct from a purely 'sensory' image. She is 'enigmatic,' or 'emblematic' of the motives that transcend her meaning as a 'natural object.'" ⁵² Ellmann calls the girl on the strand a symbol "of a more tangible reality"⁵³ than the Virgin or "the fleshless face of the beckoning priest"⁵⁴ in the parlour at Clongowes. For Ellmann, the scene indicates a reconciliation between body and soul that will eventually make possible Stephen's creative integration of sensation and form in enacted art.⁵⁵ Hugh Kenner, by contrast, argues that the girl is less an ideal form in sensuous life than she is a fleshless vision. Although the girl reveals to Stephen his artistic vocation, "he does not 'see' the girl who symbolizes the revelation; 'she seemed like one whom magic had changed into the likeness of a strange and beautiful sea bird,' and he confusedly apprehends a sequence of downy and feathery incantations."⁵⁶

Kenner's reading ignores Joyce's promising suggestion that the gazing Stephen could now feel "the earth beneath him, the earth that had borne him, had taken him to her breast."⁵⁷ Prior to this epiphany and during his days of piety, "the world for all its solid substance and complexity no longer existed for his soul save as a theorem of divine power and love and universality."⁵⁸ Stephen's sudden view of the girl, at once a creature of visionary "magic" and "mortal beauty," frees him from the religious guilt and shame toward his own body that had begun with his glimpse of the word "foetus" months before. Joyce suggests this consequence in the opening paragraph of Part V where Stephen is eating and enjoying fried bread and tea. This vaguely Eucharistic meal implies that Stephen has rediscovered, if only briefly, the simple pleasures of the body that had characterized his experience in Parts I and II. The meal also anticipates the time when, in his own formulation, the "priest of the eternal imagination" will convert the bread of daily life into the body of art. In a minor key, the opening of Part V also anticipates the opening of "Calypso," in which Joyce first presents the earth-bound Bloom to us by describing the foods that he relishes. As the

increasingly abstract Stephen of Part V reveals, however, the strand epiphany is only a momentary balancing of spirit and sense.

Stephen's renewed connection to the sensate world proves to be fleeting, and if the moment suggests his future potential to "re-create life out of life," it does so only briefly. Nonetheless, Stephen here is moving towards the kind of consciousness that Bloom typifies and the kind of aesthetic that Joyce celebrates. No longer fearful that experience may lead to sin, Stephen here feels free to immerse himself in the "tide of life"—however "sordid" it may be. The bird-girl is, simultaneously, a vision of sensate life and immortal art, a symbol of the beginning and end of Stephen's creative process and, ultimately, of the Daedeleian artist he hopes to become:

Her image had passed into his soul forever 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 re-create 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.⁵⁹

Although Kenner believes that "this riot of feelings corresponds to no vocation definable in mature terms,"⁶⁰ it seems clear that Stephen's vocation is specifically the aesthetic life—an artistic vocation that includes a sensuous appreciation of life. Read in the context of Stephen's earlier mortification of the senses, such phrases as "to live, to err, to fall" and later "the reality of experience" suggest his rediscovery of the body and Joyce's view that sense experience is the precondition for creation.

By describing Stephen's sensual and spiritual experiences in a language that suggests their co-existence in one another, Joyce adopts Bruno's idea of the kinship of contraries more fully than Hegel's doctrine of opposition. On the strand, Stephen is drawn to religious language to describe the girl's image of "mortal youth and beauty." He experiences a "holy silence" of ecstasy, which accompanies his discovery of an artistic rather than a religious vocation. The girl is an "angel," but instead of being a messenger from heaven, she is an "envoy from the fair courts of life." The gates that she opens are not heaven's but the gates "of all the ways of error and glory," and the open revelation she offers is, at once, symbolic and erotic: a trail of emerald seaweed on her ivory thigh. The passage typifies Joyce's vision of sense and spirit—art and religion—as part of a dialectical engagement that moves toward a synthesis, even an identification, of polarities. Just as Marius reconciles his religious idealism with his aesthetic appreciation of the countryside at the temple of Aesculapius, so too Stephen unites these antinomies on the beach at Sandymount.

Whereas Stephen makes a decisive break with Catholicism at the end of Part IV, Marius's experience at the temple of Aesculapius only initiates his journey from ascetic religion to sensual aestheticism. The process continues when he returns home from the temple and discovers that his mother is ill. Like Mrs. Dedalus, she dies without achieving a reconciliation with her son: "For it happened that, through some sudden, incomprehensible petulance, there had been an angry childish gesture, and a slighting word, at the very moment of her departure, actually for the last time. Remembering this he would ever afterwards pray to be saved from offences against his own affections; the thought of that marred parting having peculiar bitterness for one, who set so much store, both by principle and habit, on the sentiment of home."⁶¹

This "marred parting" and its consequent guilt find their analogy in Stephen's refusal to kneel in prayer by his dying mother's bedside. But whereas Mrs. Dedalus's death plunges the Stephen of *Ulysses* into abstract brooding after an abortive attempt at aesthetic liberty in Paris, the death of Marius's mother has the opposite effect on him: "the death of his mother turned seriousness of feeling into a matter of the intelligence: it made him a questioner; and, by bringing into full evidence to him the force of his affections and the probable importance of their place in his future, developed in him generally the more human and earthly elements of character."⁶² Whereas Stephen retreats from humanity in the Martello tower, Marius seeks to cultivate the human in himself through contact with sensate life. Associating all sense experience with paralyzing guilt and the "bitter mystery" of his love for his dead mother, Stephen turns away from "human and earthly" elements. In his Linati schema, Joyce noted that Stephen has "no body" at the beginning of *Ulysses*, a pun pointing both to his isolation and his denial of the body's experience. Marius, however, increasingly values the bodily consciousness that is so intrinsic to Bloom. Unlike Stephen, who clings rather affectedly to a *non serviam* credo that cuts him off from church, family, and all aspects of life in Dublin, Marius grows open and sensately impressionable to the human and natural environment.

The death of Marius's mother also makes him "a questioner" of the phenomenal world without making him a skeptic about its existence (as Stephen is in his Berkeleyian meditations in "Proteus"). Instead, Marius now questions the validity of his childhood religion and its notion of transcendence. Pater describes this new state of *aisthesis* and Marius's emphasis on sensuous appreciation as "absolutely real, with nothing less than the reality of seeing and hearing. . . ."⁶³ Marius contrasts this phase with his religious childhood, which was "vague, shadowy, and problematical" by comparison:

“Could its so limited probabilities be worth taking into account in any practical question as to the rejecting or receiving of what was indeed so real, and, on the face of it, so desirable?”⁶⁴ Here the chapter title “The Tree of Knowledge” implies—ominously perhaps—this break with religion and his quest for phenomenal experience beyond the synthetic discoveries at the temple of Aesculapius.

In “The Tree of Knowledge,” Marius develops his aesthetic philosophy while a student in Pisa, just as Stephen first develops his own aesthetic at University College. Marius’s friend Flavian becomes the symbol of his sensual aestheticism: “Flavian, in his mobility, his animation, in his eager capacity for various life, was so real an object, after that visionary idealism of the villa. His voice, his glance, were like the breaking in of the solid world upon one, amid the flimsy fictions of a dream.”⁶⁵ In his love for Flavian’s beautiful flesh, Marius rejects even the delicately balanced sense/spirit synthesis revealed in the temple of Aesculapius. In his growing materialism, he believes only in the empirical reality of the present and denies the possible existence of a spirit world and the immortality of the soul. In short, the reconciliation of sense and spirit that Marius develops at the temple is as short-lived as Stephen’s own, but the new theses born from the breaking of the sense/spirit union moves the young men in opposite extremes. While Marius adopts a philosophy of Lucretian materialism, Stephen in Part V withdraws from the stream of life in Dublin and fabricates a new aesthetic that denies sensate life. This phase culminates in his writing of the villanelle, a Symbolist imitation of pure sound and musical form that only pretends to be about his desire for a shadowy female. Far from illustrating Stephen’s earlier artistic ambition “to re-create life out of life,” the villanelle is a poem that celebrates death as the perfection of aesthetic form.

In discussing the analogous development of Marius and Stephen, it is advantageous to turn now to *Stephen Hero* and consider a phase of Stephen’s development that Joyce scarcely treats in *Portrait*. It occurs chronologically before Stephen’s withdrawal from life in Part V of *Portrait*. While Marius is a student at Pisa and Joyce’s protagonist in *Stephen Hero* is one at University College, both discover a contemporary literary figure who influences their transition from religion to a sensual aestheticism or to an aesthetic rooted in reality. Pater in *Marius* calls this type of literary discovery while at university “truant reading.”⁶⁶ It falls outside the prescribed canons of their curricula and challenges the norms of their cultures. The aesthetic theory that Stephen in *Stephen Hero* develops arises from his reading of Ibsen. The Norwegian playwright inspires the life-bound phase of Stephen’s youthful aesthetic. By contrast, the obsessive veneration of form that Stephen exhibits

in the last chapter of *Portrait* finds its inspiration in Flaubert. In *Portrait*, Joyce includes only Stephen's adaptation of Flaubertian aesthetics in the theory he expounds to Lynch. In the process of ironically distancing himself from the Stephen of Part V of *Portrait*, Joyce deleted from the novel the Ibsen phase of his own experience. The aesthetic theory that Stephen bases on Ibsen in *Stephen Hero* pervades Joyce's fiction. That Joyce did not intend the dilettante Stephen of Part V of *Portrait* to be a spokesman for his own mature theories on art is evident not merely in the aesthetic formulation he included, but in the one he left out.

The two artistic theories that Stephen develops successively are as disparate as the writers who shaped them. Ibsen's aesthetic, which attracts him first, is founded upon the sensuous and the quotidian. Flaubertian impersonality, however, removes the god-like artist from life. In *Stephen Hero*, Stephen champions Ibsen, who some clerics at University College fear is sexually depraved and atheistic. Stephen saw in Ibsen an example of what Joyce in his essay "Drama and Life" said was essential to art: "Life we must accept as we see it before our eyes, men and women as we meet them in the real world, not as we apprehend them in the world of faery."⁶⁷ Joyce was reacting against what Pater calls "the flimsy fictions of a dream." For Stephen, as for Joyce, these abstract delusions were inherent in both the Catholicism of Ireland's priests and the mystical art of Irish Revival writers such as George Russell, Yeats, and Lady Gregory. In *Stephen Hero*, Ibsen is to Stephen the consummate modern artist because he is the most faithful to the world he finds around him: "Here and not in Shakespeare or Goethe was the successor to the first poet of the Europeans, here, as only to such purpose in Dante, a human personality had been found united with an artistic manner which was itself almost a natural phenomenon: and the spirit of the time united one more readily with the Norwegian than with the Florentine."⁶⁸ As Ellmann puts it, "for [Joyce] and for Ibsen, truth was more an unmasking than a revelation"⁶⁹ that a mystic might obtain through visions.

Marius's "truant reading" at the university leads him to discover Apuleius, who becomes his idol in art as Flavian is in life. As he and Flavian read Apuleius's *The Golden Ass*, Pater describes the book as one "which awakened [Marius's] poetic or romantic capacity as perhaps some other book might have done, but was peculiar in giving it a direction emphatically sensuous. It made him, in that visionary reception of every-day life, the seer, more especially, of a revelation in colour and form."⁷⁰ At the temple of Aesculapius, the priests taught that sense perception was valuable principally as a preparatory stage for later visions of transcendent beauty and truth. After reading Apuleius, however, Marius begins to develop an aesthetic through

which he seeks beauty in the here and now: "He was acquiring what is the chief function of all higher education to impart, the art, namely, of so relieving the ideal or poetic traits, the elements of distinction, *in our everyday life* [emphasis added]—of so exclusively living in them—that the unadorned remainder of it, the mere drift or debris of our days, comes to be as though it were not."⁷¹ Although Pater says that Apuleius maintains an "almost insane preoccupation with the materialities of our mouldering flesh, that luxury of disgust in gazing on corruption,"⁷² the story of Cupid and Psyche briefly reawakens in Marius the yearning for a balance between sense and spirit. The tale revives the pleasure that he first experienced at the temple of Aesculapius. The "true gem" of Apuleius's book, Marius realizes, is "the tale of Cupid and Psyche, full of brilliant, lifelike situations, *speciosa locis*, and abounding in lovely visible imagery (one seemed to see and handle the golden hair, the fresh flowers, the precious works of art in it!) yet so full of a gentle idealism, so that you might take it, if you chose, for an allegory."⁷³

If the story of the marriage of Cupid and Psyche—the conjunction of the divine and the mortal—gives Marius a brief sense of balance between a "gentle idealism" and materialism, the influence remains only latent and does not yet transform his materialist ideology. Apuleius's book contains a "tradition of somewhat cynical pagan experience, from Medusa and Helen downwards,"⁷⁴ that enforces itself on the fascinated Marius. The "cynical pagan" influence of the book and Flavian's death strengthen Marius's materialism. The living body of Flavian had been an epiphanized object for Marius. It embodied the kind of "mortal beauty" that Stephen sees in the girl on the strand. Both Pater and Joyce describe this beauty in erotic and spiritual terms. Marius admired his "beautiful [pagan] head";⁷⁵ but Flavian's body also possessed "that indescribable gleam upon it which the words of Homer actually suggested, as perceptible on the visible forms of the gods."⁷⁶ "The human body in its beauty, as the highest potency of all the beauty of material objects, seemed to him just then to be matter no longer; but, having taken celestial fire, to assert itself as indeed the true, though visible, soul or spirit in things."⁷⁷ Like "Cupid and Psyche," Flavian's living body tempts Marius to a vision of external spirit in a fabric of flesh. This would suggest that the book's influence and Flavian lead Marius to reconcile body and spirit, just as Stephen does on the strand. But Flavian's early death disrupts this potential reconciliation:

Flavian was no more. The little marble chest with its dust and tears lay cold among the faded flowers. For most people the actual spectacle of death brings out into greater reality, at least for the imagination, whatever confidence they may entertain of the soul's survival in another life. To Marius, greatly agitated by that event, the earthly end of Flavian came like a final revelation of

nothing less than the soul's extinction. Flavian had gone out as utterly as the fire among those still beloved ashes. Even that wistful suspense of judgment expressed by the dying Hadrian, regarding the further stages of being still possible for the soul in some dim journey hence, seemed wholly untenable, and with it, almost all that remained of the religion of his childhood.⁷⁸

After Flavian's death, Marius concludes that sense experience is the only register of reality or beauty in the world. More generally, for Marius, as for Stephen, the apprehension of "mortal beauty" in the human body extinguishes the last vestiges of their old religious principles.

Like the Bloom of *Ulysses*, Marius becomes a believer in the "here and now—here or nowhere."⁷⁹ Just as the girl on the beach leads the aroused Stephen to discover his artistic vocation, so too the death of Marius's beloved Flavian leads directly to the development of his doctrine of art. Both follow an aesthetic that emphasizes the sensuous and the everyday and that moves both young men away from a religious vocation. Although Stephen's cult of Ibsen reflects this commitment to sensual and secular life, Part V of *Portrait* makes clear that much of Stephen's subsequent aesthetic is distinctly unsensual and unPaterian. The elaborate aesthetic theory that Stephen propounds in Part V explicitly repudiates the sensuous appreciation of life that he experiences on the strand at the end of Part IV and that he champions throughout *Stephen Hero*. Stephen's later theory replaces the artist's re-creation of "life out of life" with his notion of art as an alternative to life. His denial of the lyrical as a self-expressive form in art and his concept of authorial impersonality lead to a vision of the artist as one who "refines himself out of existence" completely. Far from advocating immersion in the Heraclitean flux, Stephen advocates an art that strives to get beyond the impure kinesis of human feelings and the concrete objects that arouse them.

After Flavian's death, Marius immerses himself in materialist philosophy. He begins by reading Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura* in order to learn about Epicureanism. From Epicurean philosophy he develops the view that the soul merely consists of particles that nature distributes throughout the body and is consubstantial with it; thus, as an Epicurean, Marius believes that when the body dies, the soul dies also. His inquiry then leads backward to Heraclitus, the precursor to Lucretius and Epicurus, who contributes an element of skepticism to Marius's materialism. If the material world is the only reality, its existence is contingent upon time, space, and individual perception. Hence, through Heraclitus, Marius develops a philosophy in which "the individual is to himself the measure of all things."⁸⁰ In the chapters "Animula Vagula" and "The New Cyrenaicism," Pater describes Heraclitus's maxim that "all things change and nothing remains the same."

This principle of phenomenal flux becomes central to Marius's emerging aesthetic. Heraclitus pervades the "Conclusion" to *The Renaissance*, just as Pater's Heraclitean celebration of the "weaving and unweaving" of reality permeates Stephen's thoughts in the "Proteus" episode in *Ulysses*. Reading Heraclitus, Marius becomes an advocate of the same cult of the "gem-like flame" that "certain young men" discerned in the "Conclusion" when the first edition of *The Renaissance* appeared.

Marius extends Heraclitus's skepticism about the integrity of matter to larger doubts about what Pater's contemporary Matthew Arnold called seeing "the object as in itself it really is." In the "Conclusion," Pater questions whether "modern philosophy" believes it is possible to realize Arnold's counsel: "Experience, already reduced to a group of impressions, is ringed round for each one of us by that thick wall of personality through which no real voice has ever pierced on its way to us, or from us to that which we can only conjecture to be without."⁸¹ Marius accepts this point after his inquiry into skeptic philosophy: "those eternal doubts as to the criteria of truth reduced themselves to a skepticism almost dryly practical, a skepticism which developed the opposition between things as they are and our impressions and thoughts concerning them—the possibility, if an outward world does really exist, of some faultiness in our apprehension of it—the doctrine, in short, of what is termed 'the subjectivity of knowledge.'"⁸²

While both Epicurus and Heraclitus deny the immortality of the soul and an immaterial world beyond the flesh, they offer Marius antithetical epistemologies: for Epicurus, the world is irreducibly real, while for Heraclitus, it is a purely mental construction. Out of these competing philosophies Marius evolves his own. Since nature is perpetually in flux, the only thing one can perceive as knowable is the moment. And since reality is subjective—"we are never to get beyond the walls of the closely shut cell of one's own personality,"⁸³ as Pater reiterates in *Marius* what many feel is the message of the "Conclusion"—what we perceive is our impression of the moment. In such a philosophy, *aisthesis*, sense perception, becomes all-important for Marius, especially since a Platonic imagination in quest of transcendent forms would be useless: "the ideas we are somehow impelled to form of an outer world, and of other minds akin to our own, are, it may be, but a day-dream, and the thought of any world beyond, a day-dream perhaps idler still."⁸⁴ The only thing that one can regard as real, therefore, is momentary sensation: "our knowledge is limited to what we feel,"⁸⁵ Marius reflects. Marius's aesthetic philosophy, therefore, consists of "the expansion and refinement of the power of reception; of those powers, above all, which are immediately relative to fleeting phenomena, the powers of emotion and sense. In such an education,

an ‘aesthetic’ education, as it might now be termed, and certainly occupied very largely with those aspects of things which affect us pleurably through sensation, art, of course, including all the finer sorts of literature, would have a great part to play.”⁸⁶

Yet art is not the only principle with “a great part to play” in Marius’s new philosophy—life, as a field of fleeting phenomena, is no less important. While art enhances experience, neither its production nor reception is the primary end of subjective life. Rather, “life as the end of life” is Marius’s larger goal:

Not pleasure, but fullness of life, and “insight” as conducting to that fullness—energy, variety, and choice of experience, including noble pain and sorrow even, loves such as those in the exquisite old story of Apuleius, sincere and strenuous forms of the moral life, such as Seneca and Epictetus—whatever form of human life might be heroic, impassioned, ideal.⁸⁷

Instead of devaluing life for the higher pleasure of art, Marius comes to regard vivid sensations as a species of aesthetic experience in and of themselves. This aesthetic philosophy as a mode of life calls for a frank acceptance of experience without the imposition of a “misrepresentative doctrine.”⁸⁸ (Pater likens such ideologies—whether it be Stoicism or Christianity—to one of Bacon’s idols as impediments to free experience.) The goal is to “be perfect in regard to what is here and now,”⁸⁹ to “count upon the present”⁹⁰ only, and to “fill up the measure of that present with vivid sensations.”⁹¹ In *The Aesthetic Moment*, Wolfgang Iser summarizes Pater’s ideas here as follows: “The only ideas tolerated are those that help us to be ecstatic and allow us forever to be open to new experience. This aesthetic way of life is dependent on what emerges in the constant flux of time, and to shut oneself off from the workings of chance is to shut oneself off from life itself.”⁹²

Stephen approaches such an attitude toward experience once he frees himself from Catholic guilt near the end of Part IV. Even at the very end of the novel, he welcomes the flux of experience, at least rhetorically: “Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience. . . .”⁹³ Ironically, Stephen’s aesthetic theory in Part V contradicts this free cultivation of sensate multiplicity. Earlier, in Parts III and IV, Stephen’s fear of sin prevents him from “throw[ing] himself into the stream”⁹⁴ of life, as Marius yearns to do. Prior to his epiphany on the strand, the “stream of life” for Stephen is the “sordid tide”⁹⁵ of Dublin experience that he carefully tries to avoid. But the Stephen of *Stephen Hero*, who champions Ibsen, and the Stephen who gazes at the bird-girl in *Portrait* affirm that experience in the “here and now” is the material out of which the artist must create. In the chapter “New Cyrenaicism,” Pater states Marius’s artistic goals in a language

that finds its echo in Stephen's vow to "live and create:" "Could he but arrest, for others also, certain clauses of experience, as the imaginative memory presented them to himself! In those grand, hot summers, he would have imprisoned the very perfume of the flowers. *To create, to live* [emphasis added], perhaps, a little while beyond the allotted hours, if it were but in a fragment of perfect expression:—it was thus his longing defined itself for something to hold by amid the 'perpetual flux.'"⁹⁶ These thoughts on the interdependence of art and life anticipate Joyce's description of Stephen's ecstasy on the strand in Part IV, where he vows "To live, to err, to fall, to triumph, to re-create life out of life!"⁹⁷ In both cases, the protagonists become aware of the transitoriness of "mortal beauty," which Stephen finds embodied in the girl and which Marius sees in the Heraclitean flux of his daily life. Both men affirm sensate experience as the well-spring of their art—an art they have yet to actualize.

Stephen and Marius's trust in the "here and now" makes them increasingly skeptical about the transcendent ideologies of either Christianity or Platonism. They base their aesthetics on the experience of the quotidian that Bloom celebrates in *Ulysses*—although Stephen, who appears like Marius to enter an empirical phase at the close of Part IV, returns to a "spirit" phase in Part V where he espouses an aesthetic that denies the body and sense experience. But the Paterian aesthetic that Stephen embraces on the strand, in which a reciprocal relationship exists between life and art, remains latent in Stephen. In the final part of *Ulysses*, Bloom serves to liberate that potential.

This latent aesthetic must operate against the hostility of the cultural environment. Both Marius and Stephen hear public denunciations of their emerging aesthetics (though in Stephen's case, the declamation comes before his experience on the strand and well before the liberation of his aesthetic by Bloom). When Marius goes to Rome, an aspect of his early religious asceticism returns in the person of the Stoic emperor Marcus Aurelius, a disciple of the religion of Numa. Soon after Marius's arrival in Rome, Aurelius gives a speech about the transitoriness of life and matter. Pater calls the speech "a discourse almost wholly *de contemptu mundi*."⁹⁸ For Aurelius, all non-Spartan endeavors, especially artistic ones, are vain and hollow. Although Marius and Aurelius base their philosophies on the flux of creation, they have developed antithetical ways of living within it. "The world within me and without, flows away like a river,' [Marius] had said; 'therefore, let me make the most of what is here and now.'" Pater juxtaposes this statement with Aurelius's pronouncement: "The world and the thinker upon it, are consumed like a flame. . . , therefore will I turn away my eyes from vanity: renounce: withdraw myself alike from all affections."⁹⁹ Since

all things perish, Aurelius holds that nothing on earth is worthy of reverence. He urges his listeners to “consider how quickly all things vanish away—their bodily structure into the general substance: the very memory of them into that great gulf of abysm of past thoughts. Ah! Tis on a tiny space of earth thou art creeping through life—a pigmy soul carrying a dead body to its grave.”¹⁰⁰

Much of the neo-Platonic devaluation of sensate life is implicit in Aurelius’s speech, and his brand of Stoical contemplation seeks the soul’s transcendence no less than Father Arnall’s militant Christianity. We all are part of the “universal mind”; therefore, one’s thoughts should be on the numinous and eternal rather than on the temporal. In unfolding the dualism of sense and spirit, Aurelius extols the soul and denigrates the body: “Let death put thee upon the consideration both of thy body and thy soul: what an atom of all matter hath been distributed to thee; what a little particle of the universal mind. Turn thy body about, and consider what thing it is, and that which old age, and lust, and the languor of disease can make of it.”¹⁰¹ Hence, unlike the materialist Marius, who lives for the “here and now,” Aurelius’s Platonic imagination seeks to escape time and mutability: “When, when shall time give place to eternity?”¹⁰²

Stoicism began, in part, as a reaction against Epicureanism, and Marius feels in Rome an instinctive antagonism toward his own hybrid aesthetic. Aurelius manifests this antagonism in preaching that death should always be welcome. We should not fear death because it will not separate us from the “universal mind.” Even if it were to do so and produce non-existence, at least it would free us from the burden of sense and experience: “Thou climbedst into the ship . . . go forth now! Be it into some other life: the divine breath is everywhere, even there. Be it into forgetfulness for ever; at least thou wilt rest from the beating of sensible images upon thee . . . from thy toilsome ministry to the flesh.”¹⁰³ These words challenge Marius, who desires to live in the present and “fill up the measure of that present with vivid sensations.”¹⁰⁴

Father Arnall preaches a more vigorous kind of self-abnegation than Marcus Aurelius. Although Stephen hears his sermon before he commits himself exclusively to an artistic vocation, the sermon is emblematic of Catholic Ireland’s aversion towards all aesthetic experience. Father Arnall’s Irish Catholicism is one of the “nets” from which Stephen later desires to escape. The fire sermon is not only divided into two parts but is informed throughout by a sense/spirit duality: there is a fire that punishes both body and soul. In both sections, the punishment that Father Arnall says awaits the unrepentant sinner is a particular nightmare for the sensual aesthete. The physical torment includes punishments for each of the five senses: “Every

sense of the flesh is tortured and every faculty of the soul therewith: the eyes with impenetrable utter darkness, the nose with noisome odours, the ears with yells and howls and execrations, the taste with foul matter, leprous corruption, nameless suffocating filth, the touch with red-hot goads and spikes, with cruel tongues of flame."¹⁰⁵ Spiritually, the sinner's imagination or "fancy" will be punished as well as the five senses: "Just as every sense is afflicted with a fitting torment, so is every spiritual faculty."¹⁰⁶ The mind will be tormented by "horrible images" and "an interior darkness more terrible even than the exterior darkness which reigns in that dreadful prison."¹⁰⁷ All forms of Epicureanism, whether intellectual, artistic, or vulgarly sensual, lead to damnation. The memories of the pomp of a proud king's court, the "libraries and instruments of research" of the "wise but wicked man," the "marbles and pictures and other artistic treasures" of an aesthete, and the recollection of the "gorgeous feasts"¹⁰⁸ of a coarse epicure will cause much gnashing of teeth amidst the flames of woe.

Clearly, Stoic Rome and Catholic Ireland are hostile to the belief that life's greatest experiences are conveyed in moments of sensation. As embryonic artists, neither Marius nor Stephen would seem to fall entirely into the categories that Aurelius and Father Arnall condemn. Since their narrow moralities do not distinguish between aesthetic pleasure and sensual gratification, however, these cultural high priests would regard Marius and Stephen as decadents. Marcus Aurelius and Father Arnall see no analogue between religious and aesthetic ecstasy, which is typified by the epiphany. The two aesthetic theorists are not vulgar epicures, not "wise but wicked men," nor are they aesthetes of the Des Esseintes or Dorian Gray type. But the reigning ideologies of their cultures are so pervasive that neither Marius nor Stephen can flourish under them. Joyce makes this clear in *Stephen Hero* when, after considerable debate, the University College authorities grudgingly grant Stephen permission to read his essay on Ibsen and explain his own aesthetics. Pater implies a similar kind of environmental hostility in *Marius* when Marcus Aurelius, the spiritual and temporal leader of Rome, tries to instill in his people an aversion towards Epicureanism.

One must also consider that the hostility in Stephen's environment is also due implicitly to the notoriety of Oscar Wilde, an important intervening figure between Pater and Joyce. Stephen, who says that art should be neither pornographic nor didactic—an idea that reiterates Wilde's notion of "art for art's sake"—and who discourses frequently on beauty, often echoes the rhetoric of the author of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. The downfall and infamy of the most famous aesthete, which was still resonant in the early 1900s, resulted in the further debasement of the term "aestheticism." In *Dorian*

Gray, Wilde's hero propounds a dangerous sense/spirit synthesis in which he desires "to cure the soul by means of the senses, and the senses by means of the soul."¹⁰⁹ To many, Wilde's own life and his novel, which is saturated with paraphrases from Pater, confirmed their disapproval of the theories that Pater presents in *The Renaissance*. Pater sought to reconcile body and soul. This was the goal of the Renaissance in his view. Wilde declared that "those who see a difference between body and soul have neither." Such views would scandalize Stephen's college authorities, who represent a church that, as Pater had noted of the Anglican Church, has never emerged from the Manicheanism of the Augustinian era. Father Arnall and Marcus Aurelius represent societies that are governed by this kind of ideology, which is hostile to the developing aesthetics of Marius and Stephen.

Ironically, Marcus Aurelius's religion of Numa and Father Arnall's rigid Catholicism remain latent forces within Marius and Stephen. Despite their renunciations, neither is capable of fully exorcising the religious tenets of his upbringing. The dormant religious idealism in Marius will later create an incipient synthesis between his philosophy of sensation and Christianity. Throughout the novel, Pater gives us indications of the pervasiveness of Marius's childhood religion. Marius "hardly knew how strong that old religious sense of responsibility, the conscience, as we call it, was still within him."¹¹⁰ Even during his phase of skepticism about the soul and about the possibility of transcendence, Marius reveals how much his thought is shaped by his childhood piety. The death of Flavian further distanced him from religious idealism and "had made him a materialist, but with something of the temper of a devotee."¹¹¹ His devotion to life in the "here and now" is paradoxically akin to a religious conviction, and Pater employs theological language to describe Marius's desire to live in the moment:

Such manner of life might come even to seem a kind of religion—an inward, visionary, mystic piety, or religion, by virtue of its effort to live days "lovely and pleasant" in themselves, here and now, and with an all-sufficiency or well-being in the immediate sense of the object contemplated, independently of any faith, or hope that might be entertained as to their ulterior tendency.¹¹²

Even as he repudiates the Numa doctrine, Marius both aestheticizes his childhood religion and treats art as if it were a solemn religion: "There were days when he could suspect, though it was a suspicion he was careful at first to put from him, that that early, much cherished religion of the villa might come to count with him as but one form of poetic beauty, or of the ideal, in things."¹¹³ Marius's cult of artistic sensation becomes "so pronounced as to make the easy, light-hearted, unsuspecting exercise of himself, among the

temptations of the new phase of life which had now begun, seem nothing less than a rival religion, a rival religious service."¹¹⁴

Stephen's aesthetics also are "a rival religion" to the prevailing Catholicism of Ireland, and Marius's attempts to aestheticize religion anticipate Stephen's use of religious metaphors to describe the artistic creations he plans. Late in the novel, Stephen calls himself "a priest of eternal imagination, transmuting the daily bread of experience into the radiant body of everliving life."¹¹⁵ He famously describes the process through which he wrote the "Villanelle of the Temptress" as one whereby "in the virgin womb of the imagination the word was made flesh."¹¹⁶ These religious metaphors are those of the young Joyce himself. Ellmann relates how Joyce incorporated into his notion of epiphany the "*epicleti*" (in Latin, "*epicleses*," in Greek, "*epicleseis*"), which "referred to an invocation still found in the Mass of the Eastern Church . . . in which the Holy Ghost is besought to transform the host into the body and blood of Christ. What Joyce meant by this term, adapted like 'epiphany' and 'Eucharistic moment' from ritual, he suggested to his brother Stanislaus: 'Don't you think there is a certain resemblance between the mystery of the Mass and what I am trying to do? I mean that I am trying . . . to give people some kind of intellectual pleasure or spiritual enjoyment by converting the bread of everyday life into something that has a permanent artistic life of their own'. . ."¹¹⁷ Hence the epiphany, which produces "a luminent silent stasis of aesthetic pleasure," and, as put forth in *Stephen Hero*, is analogous to Marius's search for "flamelike" moments, has its origin in the consecration of the Eucharist.

Catholicism remains a powerful force in Stephen even beyond the aesthetic sphere, and what Pater says of Marius is also applicable to Stephen: "He hardly knew how strong that old religious sense of responsibility, the conscience, as we call it, still was within him." Stephen reveals this in his conversation with Cranly towards the end of *Portrait*. Like Buck Mulligan at the start of *Ulysses*, Cranly perceives that "it is a curious thing" how "your mind is supersaturated with the religion in which you say you disbelieve."¹¹⁸ The "old religious sense of responsibility, the conscience" that Pater mentions is present in this conversation where Cranly here plays the role of confessor. Near the end of their talk, Stephen says to Cranly, "You have made me confess to you," and Cranly, with priestly irony, responds, "Yes, my child."¹¹⁹ This exchange is superficially humorous, but the conversation was precipitated by "an unpleasant quarrel" between Stephen and his mother regarding his Easter duty. Without openly acknowledging his guilt, Stephen seeks out Cranly in order to alleviate some of it.

Joyce dramatized the quarrel itself in *Stephen Hero*, where Stephen tells Mrs. Dedalus that he believes that Christ's miracles are like something out of "Barnum" and that the accounts of his birth and resurrection in the Gospels are "drivel."¹²⁰ His mother perceives that he is no longer a believer, yet Stephen continues to goad her: "And yet you wanted me to receive Holy Communion." Her doctrinal response is "Of course you cannot receive it now."¹²¹ The sense of finality in her response strikes Stephen acutely: she closes the argument by telling him that he cannot perform his Easter duty even if he desired it. Cranly in *Portrait* perceives the fear that her words have engendered in Stephen:

"And is that why you will not communicate," Cranly asked, "because you are not sure of that too, because you feel that the host too may be the body and blood of the son of God and not a wafer of bread? And because you fear that it may be?"

"Yes," Stephen said quietly. I feel that and I also fear it."¹²²

Stephen then adds that this is unimportant because he fears many things. Yet this dismissal is unconvincing because Stephen expressly draws Cranly apart from a crowd of students in order to confess to him his quarrel with his mother over this issue of making a "sacrilegious communion"—receiving the communion wafer on Easter without first having gone to confession.

Throughout Part V of *Portrait*, Stephen is unable to reconcile sense and spirit, art and Catholicism, despite his appropriation of Christian metaphors to describe his aesthetics. Marius, by contrast, moves towards a synthesis between sense experience and religion late in the narrative. At the temple of Aesculapius, which denied a Manichean division between body and soul, Marius had experienced a brief balance between sensuous reality and religion. While foreshadowing his Epicureanism, the temple also taught Marius to seek out visual impressions, not for their own sake, but in order one day to experience mystical visions. "The possibility of some vision, as of a new city coming down 'like a bride out of heaven,'"¹²³ was the goal of this kind of aesthetic training at the temple. Late in the novel, Marius does not see a mystical vision of "the City of God," but he does experience an epiphany during a Mass in an underground Christian church in Rome. Marius's materialistic philosophy begins to change when, with his friend Cornelius, he frequents the church in Cecilia's house. Here he finds refuge from the gladiatorial spectacles that Aurelius' court finds so entertaining:

. . . [his] old longing for escape had been satisfied by this vision of the church in Cecilia's house, as never before. It was still, indeed, to the eye, to the visual faculty of mind, that those experiences appealed—the peaceful light and shade, the boys whose very faces seemed to sing, the virginal

beauty of the mother and her children. But, in his case, what was thus visible constituted a moral or spiritual influence, of a somewhat exigent and controlling character, added anew to life, a new element therein, with which, consistently with his own chosen maxim, he must make terms.¹²⁴

After this epiphany, Marius feels he “must make terms” between “his own chosen maxim” of living only in the “here and now” and the “moral or spiritual influence” that he experiences at Cecilia’s house. After the death of Flavian, Marius had not regarded the soul or the personality as a transcendent entity. To Marius, it was dependent upon and subordinate to the body. Now, the body and aesthetic experience become servants to the aspiring soul: “Some transforming spirit was at work to harmonize contrasts . . . because the world of sense, the whole outward world was understood to set forth the veritable unction and royalty of a certain priesthood and kingship of the soul within.”¹²⁵ At the church, Marius senses that in the world “a regeneration of the body by the spirit had begun—and was already gone a great way, the countenances of men, women, and children alike had a brightness on them which he could fancy reflected upon himself.”¹²⁶

As Pater makes clear, Marius discovers Christianity at a time when it was least renunciative and hostile to the flesh: “For a little while, at least, there was no forced opposition between the soul and the body, the world and the spirit, and the grace of graciousness itself was pre-eminently with the people of Christ.”¹²⁷ Pater believes that in the history of the Christian Church, two ideals have been increasingly in conflict: “the ideal of asceticism” and “the ideal of culture”:

The ideal of asceticism represents moral effort as essentially a sacrifice, the sacrifice of one part of human nature to another; that it may live the more completely in what survives of it; while the ideal of culture represents it as harmonious development of all the parts of human nature, in just proportion to each other. It was to the latter order of ideas that the church, and especially the church of Rome in the age of the Antonines, freely lent herself.¹²⁸

During this pre-Manichean era in the church, therefore, Marius’s sensualist aesthetics can co-exist more harmoniously with Christianity than with Aurelius’s Stoicism. He begins to value sense experience no longer for its own sake, but as an intimation of a higher spiritual reality. As such, the body becomes a signifier for the soul, and the phenomenal world a signifier of the transcendent. From this perspective, sense experience functions as it does in Platonic dialectics: sensation becomes a preliminary but necessary stage in the intellection of the “World of Ideas” or of the beatific vision. Up until his death, Marius remains a passive receptacle for whatever impressions the world would breathe upon him. Although he dies without becoming a Chris-

tian convert, among all the ideologies that he entertains throughout his life—the religion of Numa, Epicureanism, Cyrenaicism, Stoicism, the Platonism of Apuleius, and Christianity—the last has the strongest influence upon him. The “genius of Christianity” seems best able to synthesize the sensual longing of his aesthetic sense with the numinous inclinations of his soul.

Stephen’s meeting with Bloom late in *Ulysses* does not reconcile the aesthetic of sensation and re-creation with his childhood Catholicism; however, their evening together points to a potential reconciliation of sense and spirit in Stephen’s future that is analogous to the one Marius finds. Whereas Marius moves from materialism towards a reconciliation with spirit, the guilt-ridden and fearful Stephen of *Ulysses* must move from the abstract towards the sensorial. Marius’s aesthetic philosophy begins at the temple of Aesculapius; Stephen’s rediscovery of the body occurs on the strand in Part IV of *Portrait*. The latter’s reawakening is short-lived, however, for Stephen cannot remain open to all varieties of experience. Marius’s most enduring characteristic is his impressionability, which allows him to absorb the Epicurean, Stoic, Platonic, and Christian influences of his environment. By contrast, Stephen’s *non serviam* credo severs him from the ideological strains of Dublin—Catholicism, Irish nationalism, the Gaelic League, theosophy and the Irish Literary Revival, comprise some of the “nets” from which he says he must flee. Thus, the Stephen of Part V of *Portrait* and the beginning of *Ulysses* is hardly a Paterian aesthete seeking out heightened moments of sensation. His fearful renunciation of Dublin life separates him from the stream of life in general. The guilt over his mother’s death and his aesthetic hubris plunge him into Hamlet-like abstract brooding and monastic solitude. The ecstasies of the body that close Parts II and IV of *Portrait* are experiences that he both fears and consigns to the category of impure art.

In Part V of *Portrait* in particular, the apostate Stephen inhabits the realm of “spirit” only in so far as he has abstracted himself from the tides of life. Ironically, however, his confessions to Cranly, his self-torture over refusing to kneel at his mother’s bedside, and his fear of thunder (a fear he shares with Marius) suggest that despite his rebellion, he is not completely free of his Catholic past. Joyce’s other protagonist, Bloom, lives in the “here and now,” celebrates the body, and rarely entertains thoughts of transcendental realities. In “Ithaca,” Joyce’s narrator holds that he represents the “scientific” to Stephen’s “artistic.” Whereas Stephen imagines the wrath of God in a clap of thunder, Bloom reduces it to merely a “phenomenon” of nature. Whereas Stephen has attended a university where he filled his mind with “two pages apiece of seven books” every night, Bloom attended “the university of life” where he has observed everyday experience closely. Stephen rediscovers his sensual nature through his spiritual father, Bloom, whose

philosophy of life resembles Marius's in the chapter "New Cyrenaicism" and Pater's philosophy in the "Conclusion" to *The Renaissance*. Bloom, "never acquiescing in a facile orthodoxy,"¹²⁹ whether it be nationalism or religion, emerges as a Paterian sensualist capable of relishing pork kidneys and Shakespeare alike. He is conscious of "the splendour of our experience and of its awful brevity,"¹³⁰ and throughout the novel is always "courting new impressions." What Alan Perlis says of Molly is no less true of Bloom: "Both Joyce and his Molly are 'amoral' because they choose to view the world without prior conceptions as to how it should look. Thus Molly is the embodiment of that Aesthetic Hero of Pater's who would allow sensations to flow unimpeded to him."¹³¹

Some direct evidence may be present in *Ulysses* that Joyce intended Bloom to function as Stephen's Paterian *Pater*. In "Circe," Stephen recalls for the third time his dream of an Eastern man bearing a watermelon through a street of harlots. Suddenly, Stephen realizes that the dream corresponds to this scene in "Circe:" in Bella Cohen's brothel, where he is surrounded by prostitutes, and the Eastern man—Bloom. Previous scholars have suggested that the melon that the Eastern man carries represents a sense/spirit synthesis since it represents "both an intellectual and a libidinal attraction" for Stephen.¹³² More significantly, the "fruit is linked with a kind of voluptuous and previously forbidden experience,"¹³³ pointing towards Molly's "plump melanous hemisphere."¹³⁴ The dream foreshadows Bloom's desire to return Stephen to the "stream of life" by offering him Molly.

Stephen recalls a new part of the dream when he sees Bloom in the whore house: "No, I flew. My foes beneath me. And ever shall be. World without end. (He cries.) *Pater! Free!*"¹³⁵ Stephen's recollection of the first dream before he fell identifies Daedalus as his father and teacher of flight—the maker of his artist's wings, the old artificer himself. Now Stephen sees Leopold Bloom as the Daedalean spiritual father to his fallen Icarus. Bloom might be able to revitalize Stephen the would-be artist through his friendship and through the sexual experience with Molly that he offers. The Latin *Pater* certainly refers to Bloom, but one must never underestimate the breadth of Joycean reference. *Pater* may also refer to Pater. Bloom is a Paterian figure who seeks "not the fruit of experience, but experience itself," and the melon symbol with which he is associated expresses this maxim. Hence on some level, Joyce might have consciously intended Bloom to be a Paterian hero who is immersed in the stream of sense experience and who seeks to rescue Stephen from the sterile "spirit" phase into which he has fallen.

Concrete Bloom and abstract Stephen not only influence one another, but move towards a psychological fusion throughout "Eumaeus" and "Ithaca."

Of particular significance are the moments when Stephen sings the German song “*Mein junges Leben hat ein End*,” the Gaelic and Hebrew extracts that Bloom and Stephen exchange, and just before Stephen departs from Bloom. Stephen translates the song as “Youth Here Has End.” Ellmann sensibly maintains that, since old age and fatigue dominate the last three chapters, Stephen here regards June 16, 1904, as the last day of his youth. It is also potentially the last day of his immaturity and the first day of his evolution as a creative artist. Through Bloom’s fatherly assistance, Stephen may “give up the moody brooding,” regain the world of men and women, rediscover his bodily consciousness, and act upon his desire for love. For Joyce, these are the prerequisites for artistic creation. June 16, the day that Joyce first walked out with Nora Barnacle, through whom he finally discovered love, divides the young Joyce, typified by Stephen, from the mature Joyce, typified by Bloom. This further suggests that the kind of sense experience that Bloom seeks to awaken in Stephen is, above all, sexual. Joyce reiterates this idea in “Ithaca” when Bloom inscribes for Stephen an extract from the Song of Solomon: “thy temple amid thy hair is as a slice of pomegranate.”¹³⁶ The passage comes from a bridegroom’s song of love to his new bride. Bloom’s paraphrase of the verse makes the image phallic. Like his offering of Molly’s photograph, his choice of a phallic image implies that he is inviting Stephen to experience the mysteries of erotic love through Molly. Perhaps this will lead Molly’s own bridegroom back to her bed of love as well.

Later the two men, now bound together as “Stoom” and “Blephen,” stand urinating as they gaze at the light in Molly’s window. For a moment they are “Silent, each contemplating the other in both mirrors of the reciprocal flesh of theirhisnothis fellow faces.”¹³⁷ Here, as John McGowan argues, Joyce departs from Pater by redefining the epiphany in *Ulysses*. Many of Pater’s epiphanies are sublime, climactic moments of the kind Joyce describes in *Portrait*. They are instances of solemn and dramatic disclosure. Pater describes the sense/spirit synthesis in Marius at the temple and his reconciliation of his aestheticism with Christianity late in the novel as lyrical, rarefied moments. By contrast, the urination scene in *Ulysses* is an appropriate quotidian climax to Joyce’s “Human” rather than “Divine Comedy.” Ellmann, in Joycean fashion, fittingly employs Biblical metaphors to describe this secular process:

The ‘fusion’ that Joyce spoke of now occurs between Stephen and Bloom—not atomic but Adamic fusion: together they must form between them the new Adam and convey intimations of a terrestrial paradise. But to do so another element is needed, and this is Molly, who constitutes the third in a new, three-in-one being, a human improvement upon the holy

family as upon the divine trinity. To confirm it, she is accorded the same birthday as the Virgin Mary.¹³⁸

Joycean irony is everywhere evident: just as the sexually profligate Stephen in *Portrait* is chosen as the “prefect for the sodality of the blessed Virgin,” so Joyce identifies the sexually emancipated Molly with Mary by having her share her birthday. Joyce uses the mystery of the religious Immaculate Conception to describe the secular—not to mock human experience, but rather to reveal that the extraordinary resides in the most common and elemental processes of life: in eating, in urination, and, above all, in sexual love. Despite the lyricism with which Pater dramatizes most of the epiphanies in *Marius*, many of them have their origin in the quotidian. Marius came closest to seeing the mystical vision that the priests of the temple of Aesculapius intimated to him of the new city coming down “like a bride out of heaven” when he witnessed an ordinary Mass in a house in Rome. So too, Joyce imbues this climax in *Ulysses* with a quasi-divine significance. While Joyce’s novel mixes sanctity with irony in ways that Pater avoids, the experience of exalted moments in both works often occurs through sense experience and is rooted in the “here and now.”