*CALLAGHAN, JOYCE, AND THE DOCTRINE OF INFALLIBILITY.**

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The thesis of this article is a simple one: the novel *Such is My Beloved* by Morley Callaghan has a distinct relation to the story "Grace" in *Dubliners* by James Joyce, and the relation throws light on Callaghan's influences, on the interpretation of his novel, as well as the part played by the Roman Catholic Church in his fiction.

Both authors are concerned with what Callaghan, on the first page of his novel, calls "the inevitable separation between Christianity and the bourgeois world,"[1] both are concerned with what 'grace' is as an assistance to virtuous action (whatever it may be in theological definition), and both use a character called "Dowling" in the works in question. Acceptance of the thesis presented here might well invite Callaghan scholars to look more closely at Joyce as a source and influence in matters of style and ironic form as well as, perhaps, in matters of situation and character out of which his fiction has sometimes been modelled.

In *That Summer in Paris* Callaghan is somewhat equivocal about his relation to Hemingway and the influence of Hemingway upon his work. He is not equivocal about Joyce. At their first meeting, Callaghan was apparently ready to praise Joyce for his achievement. But Joyce and his wife prevented him from doing so. As Callaghan writes:

> They were both so unpretentious it became impossible for me to resort to Homeric formalities. I couldn't even say, 'Sir, you *are the greatest writer of our time. . . .*'

Later, discussing the nature of exile among the writers in Paris — and rejecting exile — Callaghan discusses his own case with his wife.

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[1]Morley Callaghan, *Such is My Beloved* (1934; rpt. Toronto: New Canadian Library, 1966), p. 4.

[2]Callaghan, *That Summer in Paris*, (Toronto: MacMillan, 1963), p. 138.

> . . . I might have to forge my own vision in secret spiritual isolation in my native city. Joyce in exile had gone deeply, too deeply, into himself. But what if he had stayed in Dublin?[3]

Put simply, a key to one way of seeing the conflict and the philosophical dilemma in *Such is My Beloved* seems to be handed to the reader in Joyce's story "Grace".

The story deals with a drunken Dubliner who falls down the lavatory stairs of a bar, is returned to his home and his suffering wife by a friend who subsequently works with two others to make up a foursome — including the drunken protagonist, Tom Kernan — in order to attend a retreat where it is hoped "a new man" might be made of the drunkard.

At the end of "Grace," the bitter twist Joyce introduces comes at the first meeting of the retreat group. Before the address by Father Purdon, who has been described by one of the foursome as "a man of the world like ourselves," people in the church are identified for Tom Kernan by the strongest and most impressive man in the group. Joyce makes very clear from the passage "the inevitable separation between Christianity and the bourgeois world":

> In a whisper Mr. Cunningham drew Mr. Kernan's attention to Mr. Harford, the money-lender, who sat some distance off, and to Mr. Fanning, the registration agent and mayor maker of the city, who was sitting immediately under the pulpit beside one of the newly elected councillors of the ward. To the right sat old Michael Grimes, the owner of three pawnbroker's shops, and Dan Hogan's nephew, who was up for the job in the Town Clerk's office. Farther in front sat Mr. Hendrick, the chief reporter of *The Freeman's Journal,* and poor O'Carroll, an old friend of Mr. Kernan's, who had been at one time a considerable commercial figure.[4]

The list of people involved in the retreat includes Mr. Harford, one of the "friends" who abandoned Mr. Kernan on the lavatory floor. The others include types whose worldliness is without question. Father Purdon allows no question about Joyce's intention, for he takes (out of context) a quotation "for business men and professional men," chosen, clearly to put them at ease about the state of their spiritual condition.

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[3]*That Summer in Paris,* p. 230.

[4]James Joyce, "Grace," *Dubliners* (1914, rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1956), pp. 172-3.

> *For the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. Wherefore make unto yourselves friends out of the mammon of iniquity so that when you die they may receive you into everlasting dwellings.* (Luke 16:8-9)

Father Purdon backs up his quotation with disarming comments about Jesus Christ as a gentle taskmaster. Indeed, the priest says he is going to set before his audience "as exemplars in the religious life those very worshippers of Mammon who were of all men least solicitous in matters of religion".[5] He is not going to excoriate the worldly, he is going to praise the greatest of them. The men in the audience are only asked "to be straight and manly with God," and each is asked to say, "I will set right my accounts." The quotation from Luke is developed in Chapter 16, Verse 13 to make one of the significant points of both "Grace" and *Such Is My Beloved:*

> No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.

Behind the priest's easy handling of the men, of course, lies the reader's knowledge of Mrs. Kernan's hard life, her children's deprivation, and the irony that the priest is preparing a retreat that will condone the present life of the men rather than providing a basis for a determination by any of them to "turn over a new leaf." Mrs. Kernan is not in the condition of Ronnie and Midge, the prostitutes in *Such Is My Beloved,* but, like them, she is a victim of an institution that attempts to serve God and Mammon, that is dedicated to Christianity but serves the bourgeois world.

In general scope, the story deals with the relation of the Roman Catholic Church to Christian ideals of unworldliness. It deals with the concept of grace. It deals with the audience the Church really seeks support from and the souls it really wishes to serve. All those concerns are significant also in Callaghan's *Such Is My Beloved.* If we need a reminder, one quotation from Callaghan's novel should serve. Father Dowling is being reprimanded by Bishop Foley, who is quite properly addressed as "Your Grace" throughout. When the Bishop rebukes Dowling for his relation with the two prostitutes, Dowling argues.

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[5]Joyce, p. 174.

> "If I start hating prostitutes, where am I going to stop?" Father Dowling asked. "These girls have prostituted their bodies. All around us are all kinds of people prostituting their souls and their principles for money. I know people in this city who prostitute our faith for the sake of expediency. I watch it going on all around and wonder how corrupt our faith can become before it dies. So if I can't have charity for those girls, certainly I can have no love for many others in higher places."[6]

The Bishop manipulates the social forces in the city to have Ronnie and Midge sent away because they have, he believes, threatened his charity drive. Father Dowling believes the hope for them has been destroyed by the Bishop's act on behalf of the success of his plans for material gain. And so when Father Dowling says he knows "people in this city who prostitute our faith for the sake of expediency," he is commenting directly on the Bishop himself.

The similarity of theme in the two works by Callaghan and Joyce in informative. But a small passage in "Grace" brings them into much closer contact. The passage invites examination because the name Dowling appears and because the passage deals with the Roman Catholic dogma of infallibility. Also, though no madness appears in "Grace," Mr. Fogarty's misquotation of Alexander Pope, just before the passage I will quote, that *"Great minds are very near to madness,"*[7] may have application to *Such Is My Beloved.*

The men discuss Pope Leo, Popes who have been "not exactly . . . up to the knocker," and, as an extension of that, the dogma of infallibility. During that discussion a link seems to be made with Callaghan's novel that is indisputable. For that reason I quote all of the relevant passage.

> — Papal infallibility, said Mr. Cunningham, that was the greatest scene in the whole history of the Church.
> — How was that, Martin? asked Mr. Power. Mr. Cunningham held up two thick fingers.
> — In the sacred college, you know, of cardinals and archbishops and bishops there were two men held out against it while the others were all for it. The whole conclave except these two was unanimous. No! They wouldn't have it.
> — Ha! said Mr. McCoy.
> — And they were a German cardinal by the name of Dolling . . . or Dowling . . . or —

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[6]*Such Is My Beloved,* p. 132.
[7]Joyce, p. 168.

> — Dowling was no German, and that's a sure five, said Mr. Power, laughing.
> — Well, this great German cardinal, whatever his name was, was one; and the other was John MacHale.
> — What? cried Mr. Kernan. Is it John of Tuam?
> — Are you sure of that now? asked Mr. Fogarty dubiously. I thought it was some Italian or American.
> — John of Tuam, repeated Mr. Cunningham, was the man. He drank and the other gentlemen followed his lead. Then he resumed:
> — There they were at it, all the cardinals and bishops and archibishops from all the ends of the earth and these two fighting dog and devil until at last the Pope himself stood up and declared infallibility a dogma of the Church *ex cathedra*. On the very moment John MacHale, who had been arguing and arguing against it, stood up and shouted out with the voice of a lion: *Credo!*
> — *I believe!* said Mr. Fogarty.
> — *Credo!* said Mr. Cunningham. That showed the faith he had. He submitted the moment the Pope spoke.
> — And what about Dowling? asked Mr. M'Coy, The German cardinal wouldn't submit. He left the Church. Mr. Cunningham's words had built up the vast image of the Church in the minds of his hearers. His deep raucous voice had thrilled them as it uttered the word of belief and submission.[8]

Cardinal Dowling did exist, but was Johann Döllinger. He was excommunicated in 1871 for opposing the dogma of infallibility. A friend of another renegade Catholic, Lord Acton (who believed that he, too, would be excommunicated, but wasn't), Dollinger was distinctly a liberal and rejected the idea of submission to the teachings of the Church as well as rejecting the doctrine of papal infallibility.

The priest hero of *Such Is My Beloved* is, of course, Father Stephen Dowling. He will not *believe*. He cannot shout as John McHale is said to have done: *Credo!* Father Dowling agrees to *obey*, which is not — as the Bishop recognizes — a declaration of the Christian spirit of submission to the teachings of the Church. Moreover, Callaghan makes Father Dowling's first name "Stephen". Saint Stephen has, for his time, characteristics of Döllinger and Dowling. He was the first Christian martyr, ordained by the Apostles to do works of charity and to take care of the temporal relief of poorer members of the congregation. He was accused of criticising

[8]Toner, pp. 169-170.

the Law and of questioning the traditions of the holy place. In short, he was critical of the institution and he preached salvation through Christ not through rule, law, and institutional hierarchy. The Bishop in *Such Is My Beloved* stands for temporal power in the Church, sacrifices Ronnie and Midge to a fund-raising campaign, and is ironically called "Your Grace." He decides he must discipline Father Dowling:

> The Bishop saw that he was making no impression on Father Dowling with his arguments so he said impatiently, "I've tried to state the matter clearly. I say you can't go on in this way. You'll have to obey me in this matter."
>
> "I will do whatever Your Grace advises."
>
> "Except agree with me, eh? I'll have to think of something to do about it most certainly, something in the way of discipline."[9]

Father Dowling is not excommunicated. But he, like Dollinger is faced with the dogma of infallibility, not simply with a problem of obedience. He is not in conflict with the Christian's need to recognize and conform to the will of God. He is concerned with the Church in the world whose interpretations and machineries seem to prevert the service of God. In Roman Catholic belief the dogma of infallibility is not alone the prerogative of the Pope, but extends to the Bishops as well. It is the supernatural prerogative by which "the Church of Christ is, by a special Divine assistance, preserved from liability to error in her definitive dogmatic teaching regarding matters of faith and morals."[10] The range of infallibility is recorded simply in *The Catholic Encyclopedia:*

> the bishops dispersed through the world in union with the Holy See; oecumenical councils under the headship of the pope; and the pope himself separately.[11]

Father Dowling, then, is not simply refusing to agree with — though he will obey — his Bishop. He is, in fact, in serious conflict with the Church as an institution. He is concerned for Ronnie and Midge, but he is also deeply concerned with the general problem of infallibility and the obstructions to human love, the impediments to

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[9]*Such Is My Beloved*, p. 132.
[10]P. J. Toner, "Infallibility", *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 7, p. 790.
[11]Toner, p. 798.

the holy life. After the reprimand, his friend Charlie Stewart cannot stir his active interest in the two girls, for Father Dowling is determined to write a commentary on the Song of Solomon, that peculiar work included in the Bible which most powerfully exalts human love and which has been interpreted so carefully as a celebration of the marriage between Christ and his Church. Father Dowling is going to interpret "verse by verse and show how human love may transcend all earthly things. . . ."[12] He is sent to an institution for the insane, and a reader cannot, now, help remembering Mr. Fogarty's misquotation in "Grace", that *Great minds are very near to madness.*

Father Dowling and the "German cardinal by the name of Dolling . . . or Dowling . . ." have much in common. Callaghan, however, shapes the concept in Joyce to his own vision. Joyce had gone too deeply into himself, Callaghan said. But the Canadian writer also saw that a part of the hegemony of institution, law, and hierarchy in Christianity served to keep modern Christians from love in the flesh as well as in the spirit. He wrote of the need, in his youth in Paris, to accept "a gay celebration of things as they were," and he went on:

> Why couldn't all people have the eyes and the heart that would give them this happy acceptance of reality? The word made flesh. The terrible vanity of the artist who wanted the word without the flesh. I can see now that I was busily rejecting even then [in 1928-29] that arrogance of spirit, that fantasy running through modern letters and thought that man was alien in this universe. From Pascal to Henry Miller they are the children of St. Paul.[13]

The case for direct influence upon *Such Is My Beloved* by "Grace" seems to be a strong one. Other similarities appear, which I won't pursue in this article. For instance, Father Purdon is like Bishop Foley in stature as well as in attitude to life:

> A powerful figure, the upper part of which was draped with a white surplice, was observed to be struggling into the pulpit. . . . The priest's figure now stood upright in the pulpit, two thirds of its bulk, crowned by a massive face, appearing above the balustrade.[14]

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[12]*Such Is My Beloved*, p. 139.
[13]*That Summer in Paris*, pp. 148-149.
[14]Joyce, p. 173.

Bishop Foley, too, in *Such Is My Beloved,* is very powerfully present as a material being:

> The Bishop was nearly seven feet tall, with great broad shoulders and thick dark hair . . . He had a big, round, heavy, dark threatening face. . . .[15]

Father Purdon is described as "a man of the world like ourselves."[16] Bishop Foley has had "many fine conversations" with wealthy Mr. Robison, "especially when they were planning a financial campaign."[17] Such comparisons might be pursued. But the relation to Joyce which seems present in *Such Is My Beloved* suggests even more exciting avenues of investigation and comparison, in style, in uses of irony, and in Callaghan's relation to Christian belief and the Roman Catholic Church.

Both Joyce and Callaghan set themselves to examine — within Roman Catholic terms — the problems presented by the conflict of the letter and the spirit of the law. Both find the institution of the Church seriously wanting. In "Grace" Joyce takes Cardinal Cöllinger and re-names him Dowling as a part of his use of papal infallibility as an image of the Church as bourgeois institution. Callaghan uses the name Dowling in his later fiction, adds the name Stephen to Dowling and works out the life of a priest in conflict with the infallible upper hierarchy, once more to show "the inevitable separation of Christianity and the bourgeois world." Callaghan thought Joyce "the greatest writer of our time." Joyce appears to have influenced Callaghan's use of the Catholic world as well as his creation of character, his style, and his employment of irony to show values in conflict. Perhaps we should look more closely at the work of the two authors to see to what degree Joyce is a source of inspiration and an influence on Callaghan who decided not to exile himelf but to stay in his own Dublin.

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[15]*Such Is My Beloved,* p. 98.
[16]Joyce, p. 164.
[17]*Such Is My Beloved,* p. 99.