



Shedding New Light on the Epiphany: A Comparative Analysis on the Literary Epiphany Used in James Joyce's *Stephen Hero* and *A Portrait*, and Marcel Proust's *Recherche*

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to explore the different ways in which the epiphany as a literary device manifests in James Joyce's *Stephen Hero* and *A Portrait of the artist as a young man*, and in Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*. It will be argued that Joyce's concept of the epiphany is profoundly based upon the notions of perception and light as they denote moments when the essence of objects reveals itself to the observer and triggers a sense of new intrinsic insight. In comparison, Proust's epiphanies often stress the importance of other senses such as touch, smell, taste and sound, because they are based on the experience of involuntary memory — the idea that a present sensation can recall long forgotten memories. Because Proust's epiphanies function by memory and recollection, they are based upon *recognition* instead of *revelation*, as is the case with Joyce.

Keywords: Joyce, Proust, Epiphany, Literary Modernism, Involuntary Memory

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Introduction

The literary epiphany has become the acceptable term to denote particularly acute and exceptional moments of new insights, glimmerings of transcendent truths, illuminating experiences and expressions of the attainment of a new moral awareness as experienced by a character or narrator presented in fiction and poetry.¹ Although these illuminating moments already occurred in the works of Romantic writers and poets such as William Wordsworth and Percy B. Shelley, it is mainly through the Irish modernist writer James Joyce (1882–1941) that the phenomenon became a substantial notion within literature studies and interpretative literary criticism, while often presenting Joyce as the originator of this concept and deploying it to read a variety of contemporaneous modernist novels.

In his early novel *Stephen Hero* (1905), which serves as the early version of *A portrait of the artist as a young man* (1916), Joyce provides a first definition of “*epiphany*” as the main protagonist Stephen Daedalus, who will later reappear in *A Portrait*, famously describes it as a ‘sudden spiritual manifestation, whether in the vulgarity of speech or of gesture or in a

¹ Liebrechts “A Little Light,” 233, and Brown, *Supreme fictions*, 11.

memorable phase of the mind itself.’² By the end of the 1920s, the works of many notable modern European writers, such as Proust, Pound, Woolf and Mann, demonstrate a similar tendency to build toward such climactic moments of sudden and unexpected processes of self-discovery produced by apparently trivial and arbitrary causes.³ In this sense, Gerald Gillespie has underscored that the epiphany can serve a broader purpose in comparative literary criticism because it marks an intersection of shared key traits in the works of many modernist writers.

In comparison, this paper does not emphasize the commonalities amongst these writers and the overarching aspects of the epiphany that they enclose, but rather examines the different ways in which the epiphany manifests in the works of two key writers within literary modernism. This will be done by exploring the employment and functioning of the epiphany in James Joyce’s *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) and his earlier novel *Stephen Hero* (1905) in comparison with Marcel Proust’s *À la recherche du temps perdu* (‘In Search of Lost Time’, 1913–22). Both in themes and structure, these works display important similarities which enables a useful comparison. First of all, both novels revolve around a semi-autobiographical protagonist, Stephen Daedalus in *A Portrait* and *Stephen Hero*, and Marcel in *Recherche*, respectively. Furthermore, both works can be regarded as a *bildungsroman*, as they circle around the inner growth and personal development of the main protagonist from youth to adulthood, while the narrative is constructed towards the realization of the protagonist’s inner aspiration to become a writer. Finally, a last commonality can be found in the fact that both Stephen and Marcel consciously reflect and theorize about the epiphany, which allows one to grasp the different meanings Joyce and Proust attach to the epiphany and the way this literary device functioned in their respective novels. By studying their different concepts of the epiphany, this paper hopes to bring more fully into view the various ways the epiphany can work as a mode of manifestation, while at the same time providing a departure point for gaining a more nuanced view of the epiphany in modern literature.

In the first chapter, Joyce’s notion of epiphany will be explored by providing a brief outline of the way the epiphany is defined and elaborated upon in *Stephen Hero*, and further developed in *A Portrait*. Based on that analysis, two of the most important epiphanies will be explored that are presented in *A Portrait*, as a way of demonstrating the way the epiphany works in these scenes. The second chapter will go into Proust’s concept of ‘*moments bienheureux*’ and involuntary memory and their connection to moments of epiphany, followed by an analysis of the way they operate in *Recherche*, while pointing out the most significant differences with Joyce’s notion of the epiphany. Following this approach, this paper aims to demonstrate that Joyce’s moments of epiphany manifest in many circumstances on the basis of radiance (light) and vision, while various of Proust’s moments of epiphany function in many instances on all the senses *except* vision and emphasize the dark and the hidden.

Radiance and Vision in ‘A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man’

To fully understand the functioning of the epiphany in Joyce, it is worth taking a closer look at the meaning of the spiritual in the definition of an epiphany as a ‘spiritual manifestation’ which Stephen Dedalus presents in *Stephen Hero*. In the novel, Joyce makes Stephen explain what he means by this when Stephen remarks to a friend that he has passed the Ballast Office clock many times, but never paid much attention to it. Then one day, Stephen attains sudden insight into its essence: ‘[W]e recognize that it is *that* thing which it is. Its soul, its *whatness*, leaps to us from the vestment of its *appearance*. The *soul* of the commonest object, the structure of

² Joyce, *Stephen Hero*, 110.

³ Gillespie, *Proust, Mann, Joyce*, 51.

which is so adjusted seems to us *radiant*. The object achieves its epiphany.⁴ In this sense, a ‘spiritual manifestation’ indicates the revelation of the spirit of an object, that is, the ‘revelation of the beautiful’ and that of ‘the truth of the being of the *visible* world.’⁵ Consequently, Stephen recognizes all moments of epiphany as being profoundly true, to such an extent that they culminate into a similar sudden process of self-discovery in its most literal sense, in the attainment of insight of his own essence, his true self, and eventually to the realization that it is his inner call to become a writer.⁶ It is for this reason that for Stephen, these radiant epiphanies start to form the basis of his own work of art.

The epiphany as the revelation of truth in objects, reappears again in *A Portrait*, now integrated into Stephen’s aesthetic theory which is bound up with three main conditions of beauty: wholeness, harmony and radiance.⁷ Regarding these principles, it is the third principle of radiance, ‘the supreme quality of beauty’ which Stephen found in the epiphany.⁸ For Stephen, the epiphany implied ‘the instant wherein that supreme quality of beauty, the clear *radiance* of the esthetic *image*, is apprehended *luminously* by the mind which has been arrested by its wholeness and fascinated by its harmony is the *luminous* silent stasis of esthetic pleasure, a *spiritual* state.’⁹ The epiphany denoted the moment when the mind discovered the “claritas”, that is, the radiance and beauty of an object, which in turn could be equated with its essence or spirit, its “whatness” or “quidditas” as he calls it in *A Portrait*.¹⁰ This process in turn, would culminate into a feeling of exalted joy and new insight.¹¹

Given the importance Joyce attached to the process of revelation, he laid an equal emphasis on the role of human perception in this process as well.¹² Already in a 1902 essay on the Irish writer James Clarence Mangan (1803–1849), Joyce pointed out the significance of the role of vision in the process of revelation, as he expressed his belief that truth could reveal itself as a ‘self-reflective turn of imagination on (...) the *visible* world: the world as it *reveals* itself to *perceptual vision*.’¹³ According to Joyce, one was only capable of achieving an epiphany when the object was perceived through ‘a spiritual eye’ which had the ability to grasp the object’s essence as it adjusted ‘its vision to an exact focus.’¹⁴ As such, vision was for Joyce the a mayor sense capable of attaining true insight, and formed a significant element in the achievement of an epiphany as such.¹⁵

Because of Joyce’s great focus on revelation, radiance and the visible, his concept of epiphany closely resembles the original ancient Greek theological verb *epiphaneia*, which literally means ‘coming into light.’¹⁶ In Greek mythology, the term denoted the ‘striking appearance’ or ‘manifestation’ of a deity to an individual or a group of people.¹⁷ While in Joyce

⁴ Joyce, *Stephen Hero*, 196. Italics added by J.O.

⁵ Joyce, *Stephen Hero*, 71 and 72.

⁶ Kim, *Constellations of the Soul*, 3.

⁷ Joyce, *A Portrait*, 263. Joyce was inspired in the use of these principles by the same terms used by Aquinas: *integritas*, the “wholeness”, the perception of an aesthetic image as one thing; *consonantia*, “harmony”, the object as being made up of different parts that form one harmony and *claritas*, radiance. See also: I. Hendry, “Joyce’s epiphanies,” 449–450.

⁸ Joyce, *Stephen Hero*, 80.

⁹ Joyce, *A Portrait*, 265. Italics added by J.O.

¹⁰ Joyce, *A Portrait*, 265: ‘The radiance of which he speaks in the scholastic QUIDDITAS, the WHATNESS of a thing.’

¹¹ Concilio, “Things that Do Speak,” 28 and Irene Hendry. “Joyce’s epiphanies,” 451.

¹² Joyce, *Critical Writings*, 212, and Scotto, ““Visions” and “Epiphanies,”” 47.

¹³ Levina, “The Aesthetics of Phenomena, 198–199, italics added by J.O.

¹⁴ Joyce, *Stephen Hero*, 69.

¹⁵ Levina, “The Aesthetics of Phenomena,” 195.

¹⁶ Liebrechts “A Little Light,” 252.

¹⁷ Liebrechts “A Little Light,” 252 and Petridou, *Divine epiphany*, 3.

the strictly religious connotation had disappeared, the notion of revelation, together with the significance of radiance, light and sudden insight of truth certainly remained. Moreover, the origin of the word itself is closely connected to these same notions as well. Derived from the verb “*phaino*” which means ‘to reveal, to make known, to make visible,’ it conveyed the idea of something hidden was being made visible to the observer, hereby showing an important similarity to Joyce’s concept of epiphanies.¹⁸ The verb “*phaino*” in turn, is founded upon the root “*pha*” which means ‘to shine,’ ‘to radiate,’ ‘to sparkle,’ and ‘to glow.’¹⁹ Hence, light and radiance, are inextricably connected to Joyce’s very notion of “epiphany.”

It is because of these reasons, that the imagery of light, revelation and vision tends to take center stage in moments of epiphany presented in *A Portrait*. At the end of the third chapter, for instance, the eloquent and extremely detailed sermons on Hell spoken by Father Arnall, greatly encapsulates all of these aspects. The page long flow of images and descriptions of the hellfire create such an autonomous and concrete existence of hell that they almost materialize as another reality, appearing in front of Stephen’s consciousness so horrifically *visible* that ‘his brain was simmering and bubbling within the cracking tenement of the skull. Flames burst forth from his skull like a corolla, shrieking like voices.’²⁰ In addition to the predominance of fire in this speech, light and radiance will reappear again at the end of the epiphany when Stephen believes his soul is saved again: ‘The boys were all there, kneeling in their places. He knelt among them, happy and shy. The altar was heaped with fragrant masses of *white* flowers; and in the *morning light* the *pale flames* of the *candles* among the *white* flowers were *clear* and silent as his own soul.’²¹

While at first sight, the sermon of hell predominantly evokes feelings of terror and torment in Stephen, it does however, quite unexpectedly deliver him new insights and forms of inspiration in two indirect ways. First, this can be found in the idea that ‘in hell all laws are overturned — there is no thought of family or country, of ties, of relationships.’²² This idea greatly appeals to Stephen, as it is his constant struggle throughout the novel to obey the authority of systems of nationalism, politics, religion, family, and education, while attempting to liberate himself from the weight of it all and to find his own identity. Secondly, and very closely connected to this theme of liberation, is the sermon which provides Stephen a highly important role model. Most importantly, it should be noted that this figure is clearly linked up to the notion of light and radiance as well: the fallen angel Lucifer Morningstar, who stood up against the authority of God. The rebellious character of Lucifer who took the risk of refusing to obey to all forms of authority, is described in *A Portrait* as the one who ‘(...) was hurled with his rebellious angels into hell. What his sin was we cannot say. Theologians consider that it was the sin of pride, the sinful thought conceived in an instant: NON SERVIAM: I WILL NOT SERVE. That instant was his ruin.’²³ Lucifer greatly speaks to Stephen as it provides him an example whom he can mirror himself to. Even his name, literally meaning “light bringer” or “shining one”, already alludes to the notion of light, this way literally representing the very embodiment of it. He objectivizes Stephens’ personal truth, and brings him the light in order to *see* what he must do. Evidently, the epiphany brought Stephen the inspiration for his ultimate decision at the end of the novel, as he speaks: ‘I will not serve that in which I no longer believe, whether it call itself my home, my fatherland, or my church: and I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as whole as I can (...).’²⁴ Cutting his ties with

¹⁸ Petridou, *Divine epiphany*, 3.

¹⁹ Petridou, *Divine epiphany*, 3.

²⁰ Joyce, *A Portrait*, 153.

²¹ Joyce, *A Portrait*, 180. Italics added by J.O.

²² Joyce, *A Portrait*, 150.

²³ Joyce, *A Portrait*, 143.

²⁴ Joyce, *A Portrait*, 191.

his family and his homeland, no longer obeying any forms of authority, will turn out to be his final resolution in order to obtain his freedom and become the artist he had always aspired to be. As such, it is the epiphany of the hellfire and of Lucifer, the epiphany in which light plays a key role, that delivers Stephen the truth he was looking for.

Then, during the final and climactic epiphany of the novel, as Stephen is strolling on the beach, he finally meets his wild angel personified as a girl bathing at the sea, wearing a white dress, with skin ‘soft-hued as ivory’, she is described in radiant angel-like imagery.²⁵ Again the elements of the epiphany of vision, radiance and revelation come together in this scene: ‘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 recreate life out of life! A wild *angel* had appeared to him, the *angel* of mortal youth and beauty, an envoy from the fair courts of life, to throw open before him in an instant of ecstasy the gates of all the ways of error and glory.’²⁶ While the penultimate epiphany revealed to Stephen the decision he had to make in order to obtain his freedom, this final epiphany, shows to him how the word becomes flesh, how Lucifer as the angel of light, appears in front of him in the shape of the girl, and reveals to him his inner essence and personal truth, both of which lie in his being to become an artist.

Proust’s Hidden Epiphany of Time and Memory

Like Joyce’s *A Portrait*, Proust’s vast novel *A la recherche du temps perdu* (‘In Search of Lost Time’) is built upon moments that one could call epiphanic. However, there is a difference within the narrative structure, which lies in the notion of time. Like Stephen, the unnamed narrator in Proust, who we will further refer to as ‘Marcel’, greatly aspires to become a writer. Whereas Stephen’s personal development is told as it unfolds however, ‘Marcel’ presents his story from the perspective of an adult looking back on his life. This causes his memories to form the building blocks of the narrative.²⁷ After a long period of struggling to discover the subject of the artwork he seeks to create, the revived memories of his past self ultimately cause Marcel to attain the new insight that his art should be devoted to his own life and in particular, the way he has come to understand his present self. For this reason, both time and memory play a central role in the establishment of moments of new insight in Proust.

There are two major concepts which Marcel employs in the context of epiphanic episodes: *mémoire involontaire* and *moments bienheureux*.²⁸ Both terms require some commentary. The first refers to the notion of involuntary memory, the idea that a present sensation such as a sight, touch, smell, taste, sound, or bodily movement can be the catalyst that recalls past memories, and transport one back into a previous moment that they had long since forgotten.²⁹ The term *bienheureux* is closely connected to this and means blissful, favourable, lucky, fortunate or full of joy, referring to the attained feeling of joy that is reached at the moment of epiphany. At the same time, the term is also connected to the concept of time, as it is the superlative form of *heureux*, which is derived from the word *heure*, meaning hour. In this sense, the expression literally also means timely.³⁰ Additionally, the term can also have a religious connotation as well. The plural form *les bienheureux* after all, means the blessed, or the saved, indicating those lucky ones who have been fortunate enough to have received the grace of salvation. Thus, for

²⁵ Joyce, *A Portrait*, 212. Italics added by J.O.

²⁶ Joyce, *A Portrait*, 213.

²⁷ Hägglund, *Dying for time*, 46.

²⁸ Brown, *Supreme fictions*, 54.

²⁹ Martens, *The promise of memory*, 57.

³⁰ Martens, *The promise of memory*, 57.

Proust, a *moment bienheureux* meant a moment of intense joy, which occurrence was not in one's control but only by the grace of salvation. Only involuntary memory — memory recollected without one's will in contrast to voluntary memory — is capable of causing such *moments bienheureux*.

These involuntary memories do not only recall the past event but more importantly, they also revive the self during that point in time. As Marin Hägglund has rightly noted, the experience of involuntary memory is able to revive the past self to emerge in the present once again. For this reason, they can also be understood as time transcending moments in which the past returns and overwhelms the present.³¹ Proust's epiphanies are therefore based upon memory and recollection, which are provoked by a present event but occur after the original past experience, which was not an epiphany itself.³² This is why involuntary memory is also based on *recognition* instead of *revelation*, as is the case with Joyce. For Marcel, these moments of recognition are immediate and total; they temporarily erase the division between past and present, providing him with a sense of eternity.³³ In this sense, as Miguel de Beistegui argues, Proust does not espouse as much the idea of the transcendence of time, but rather its insistence, because he emphasizes that part of the past that does not pass away.³⁴ Consequently, involuntary memory and *moments bienheureux* are necessarily authentic and true, and provide Marcel with a sense of a new awareness and truth. In particular, this is the truth of the self, of 'our *true* life, our *reality* as we have felt it'.³⁵ Accordingly, Marcel stresses the true value of art in its ability to capture the particular way one perceives and experiences the world.³⁶

Regarding the notion of truth, another difference can be identified between Proust and Joyce. Whereas in Joyce, truth often shows itself to the observer by way of a radiant revelation of the essence of objects to the observer, in Proust truth is explicitly not connected to objects, not only because they are connected to *time* rather than *materials*, but also because 'it is plain that the *truth* I am seeking lies not in the cup but in *myself*'.³⁷ The essential knowledge revealed by the *moment bienheureux* is not of things, but of Marcel himself, rooted in time. Connected to the notion of radiance, it is striking that the highly prevalent theme of light in Joyce's *A Portrait*, is in strong contrast with the idea of hiddenness, darkness and blindness used recurrently in Marcel's descriptions of his memories, as he speaks of the 'storehouse of memory,' and of memories '[raising] up out of the very depths of my being' that have '*sunk back into its darkness*, from which who can say whether it will ever *rise* again.'³⁸

Whereas the visual plays an important part in Joyce's notion of epiphany, Proust's use of epiphanic moments are often triggered by other sensations. While perception is direct, according to Proust, it can also show the *errors* of our vision, thus forming a source of distortion and inaccuracy.³⁹ Aside from the literal apprehension, this distortion applies to social views as well. This shows in Proust's prominent focus on perspectivism in *Recherche*, the notion that we do not see ourselves or others as they really are, which is again connected to the theme of hiddenness and darkness. This is clearly exemplified in the character of Swann, who is described in many different perspectives at the beginning of the novel: whereas it was Marcel's grandparent's conviction that Swann took part of the French bourgeoisie, he was at the same time an active member of the French aristocracy culture due to his close contacts to the

³¹ Langbaum, "The Epiphanic Mode," 43.

³² Langbaum, "The Epiphanic Mode," 37.

³³ Bersani, *Marcel Proust*, 11.

³⁴ De Beistegui, *Proust As Philosopher*, 49.

³⁵ Hägglund, *Dying for time*, 46. Italics added by J.O.

³⁶ Hägglund, *Dying for time*, 46–47.

³⁷ Proust, *Lost Time*, 61–62.

³⁸ Proust, *Lost Time*, 63. Italics added by J.O.

³⁹ Shattuck, *Proust's Binoculars*, 18.

inheritors of the throne. But it was this side, which was completely hidden from Marcel's grandparents.

The insufficiency of sight is further exemplified at the end of the book, just before Marcel reaches an accumulation of *moments bienheureux* during the Guermantes' reception. In this scene, Marcel is trying to recall previous experiences which he might write about. But mere images and pictures do not provide him the matter he needs in his aim to become a writer: 'I now tried to bring out from the storehouse of my memory other "snapshots," particularly those I had taken in Venice, but instead just the word "snapshot" alone made it all as wearisome to me as an exhibition of photographs, and I felt within myself no more inclination or talent for describing now what I had seen years before than I felt yesterday for describing what I was at that very moment gazing upon with a painstaking and listless eye.'⁴⁰

A similar process is at stake in one of the most well-known epiphanies in *Recherche*. The taste of the madeleine soaked in the tea unexpectedly evokes a feeling of immense joy in Marcel, combined with him completely regaining the memories of his childhood spent in Combray. Although Marcel had *seen* the madeleine cakes many times on the trays of the pastry-cooks' window, they had never recalled any moment of revelation in his mind; only until the moment he had *tasted* it.⁴¹ As such, he writes that 'I sensed that it was connected with the *taste* of the tea and the cake.'⁴² As Marcel tries to rely on the visual memory of the madeleine, vision once again proves to be insufficient: 'its struggles are too far off, too confused and chaotic, scarcely can I perceive the neutral glow into which the elusive whirling medley of stirred-up colours is fused, and I cannot distinguish its form, cannot invite it, as the one possible interpreter, to translate for me the evidence of its contemporary, its inseparable paramour, the taste, cannot ask it to inform me what special circumstance is in question, from what period in my past life.'⁴³

In the same vein, Marcel's epiphany at the end of the novel is once again caused by the physical sensation of the unequal paving stones he steps upon: '(...) I had entered the courtyard of the Guermantes' mansion and in my distraction, I had not noticed an approaching carriage; (...) and in stepping backwards I stumbled against some unevenly placed paving stones behind which there was a coach-house. As I recovered myself, one of my feet stepped on a flagstone lower than the one next it. In that instant all my discouragement disappeared and I was possessed by the same felicity which at different moments of my life had given me (...) the savour of the madeleine dipped in my tea and so many other sensations of which I have spoken.'⁴⁴ Following this scene, it will be the auditory sensation of the spoon against a plate together with the sense of touch of the napkin against the lips which provide Marcel moments of epiphany. When it comes to the recollection of past experiences, Marcel claims that 'when from a long-distant past nothing subsists, after the people are dead, after the *things* are broken and scattered, *taste and smell alone*, more fragile but more *enduring*, more *immaterial*, more persistent, more *faithful*, remain poised a long time, like souls, remembering, waiting, hoping, amid the ruins of all the rest; and bear unflinchingly, in the tiny and almost impalpable drop of their essence, the vast structure of recollection.'⁴⁵ The particular choice of words in this fragment may reveal why Marcel prefers other senses over sight, because they represent exactly those elements which are exemplary for the *moments bienheureux*: they are after all, long-lasting in time, immaterial and involuntary.

⁴⁰ Proust, *Lost Time*, 2529.

⁴¹ Proust, *Lost Time*, 63.

⁴² Proust, *Lost Time*, 61–62. Italics added by J.O.

⁴³ Proust, *Lost Time*, 62.

⁴⁴ Proust, *Lost Time*, 2530.

⁴⁵ Proust, *Lost Time*, 64. Italics added by J.O.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to examine the different ways in which the literary epiphany functions and manifests in James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Stephen Hero* and Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*. Based on that analysis, both significant similarities and differences could be drawn between the employment of the epiphany in Joyce and Proust.

It can be argued that for both Joyce and Proust, the *result* of the reached epiphany is similar; namely the attainment of new, profoundly true insight into the self; which in turn provides the building blocks for the protagonist's journey into fulfilling his vocation to become a writer. However, there are important differences to be discerned regarding the nature of the epiphany as well as the way it manifests. Joyce's concept on epiphanies is generally founded upon the notions of revelation, radiance (*claritas*) and vision. These epiphanies denote a moment when the *claritas*, the radiance and beauty of an object, which in turn could be equated with its essence or spirit, shows itself to the observer, this way culminating into a feeling of new insight. Consequently, Joyce frequently tends to attach great importance to the role of perception, when the revelation is completely dependent on the human eye.

By comparison, Proust's epiphanies function based on memory and recollection. For this reason, there is no *revelation* or *discovery* of truth in Proust, as is the case in Joyce, but rather a *rediscovery of truth*, of lost and forgotten moments, of the times passed. In addition, while Joyce believes truth to be encapsulated in objects, Proust pertains that truth is located in the immateriality of time and the human soul, hidden away for one to *see*. For his main protagonist, Marcel, the sense of truth which he experiences after the madeleine epiphany, does not lie in the tea or madeleine, but within himself. Hence, whereas the sense of sight is prevalent in the epiphanies of Joyce, throughout *Recherche*, non-visual sensations such as smell, sound, and touch seem to prevail due to their ability in retaining a *moment bienheureux* often over visual experiences. In line with this, there is a recurrent theme in Proust who emphasizes the dark and the hidden, while Joyce puts his focus on radiance and light.

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