



The Women in James Joyce's "The Dead" and in John Huston's filmic adaption

Lena Spiekermann

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Seminar paper from the year 2008 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Culture and Applied Geography, grade: 1,3, Ruhr-University of Bochum, course: Ireland, North and South, in Film, language: English, abstract: James Joyce's Dubliners is a famous collection of short stories, which introduces its readership to the life of Irish middle class people at the beginning of the 20th century. Especially the final of these short stories named The Dead, which simultaneously is the longest, received a brought reception. It is "the story of Gabriel Conroy who attends the Christmas dinner party of his aunts, the Morkans, accompanied by his wife Gretta" (Brannigan 56, 57). Here, he is confronted with his pro-British existence, in contrast to some nationalist attitudes. In the end, he discovers that his wife fell in love with a boy in Galway once, who died, and that their relationship is not, and never was, as passionate as he wants it to be. In general it can be said that "Joyce presents people in their relation to both nationalism and love" (Manganiello 94) It arouse interest over seventy years after its first publication, when John Houston made it into a movie in 1987. This essay will analyze the changes that happened through the conversion from short story to film. Because the paper has a limited number of pages, the special focus will be on the women Gretta Conroy, who is next to her husband Gabriel the main actor, Miss Ivors, who stays in mind because of her strong feelings for her home country Ireland and Lily, a minor character but the first woman appearing in the story. After giving a description of their characters in the novella, the third chapter of this paper will deal with these women in the movie. It will be shown that they nearly all went through a kind of transformation and, in contrast to Joyce's outline, were strenghtened by John Houston in various respects.

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