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The Revelation of the Artist's Self in Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young
Man*

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Recommendation Letter

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Abstract

This study on James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* focuses on the revelation of the artist's self. When Stephen becomes an artist, he can reconcile all of his disorder, alienation and loneliness through his aesthetic revelation. Before he becomes an artist, he is divided into multiple selves, such as family, school, nation and church. He raises some of the fundamental questions of life that constitute his major argument or point of departure from the mainstream society. His contemplations of such thoughts isolate him from mainstream thoughts. This makes him displaced rebel. So, in charting out his own course of principles and searching for his distinct identity, he ends up becoming a social and artistic rebel.

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I. The Disintegrated Self in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*

This research work examines a protagonist's disintegrated self in James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916). Joyce's Stephen Dedalus, in a process to become an eminent artist, undergoes a process of transformation of consciousness. This study investigates an impact of the oppressive British norms and values on Stephen with a special focus on a schizophrenic self of the young artist. Schizophrenia is a mode of knowledge, or ways of interpreting the modern literary work and viewing the 'self.' The experience of Stephen's fragmented self needs to be understood through Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's notion of schizophrenia. The protagonist Stephen Dedalus becomes a "schizo" who wanders and rebels against his family and society for his own distinct identity. For Deleuze and Guattari, a schizo is a "radical, revolutionary, nomadic wanderer who resists all forms of oppressive power" (qtd. in Peretti 264). In this act, Stephen becomes a schizophrenic person. His individual self is eclipsed by the British society, its customs and philosophy. So, he is frustrated with his own life and leaves himself alone for the search of self and identity. Stephen's perception of the nation, culture and religion and his rebellious attitude towards them are explored in this novel. Stephen loses faith in the family and country, and thus, distancing himself from the world. With the process of transformation from an innocent child into a conscious artist, Stephen succeeds to reintegrate multiple selves. He experiences and reintegration of the self as an artist only through his aesthetic revelation.

Stephen's family and socio-political conditions cause his disintegration of the self as his large family runs into financial difficulties. As he grows up, Stephen struggles with the issues of nationality, religion, family, and morality, and finally decides to reject all socially imposed values and instead tries to live freely as an

artist. Stephen undergoes several important transformations over the course of his life.

Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* portrays the oppressing impact of Irish culture on a growing writer at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. The events of the story trace Stephen's growing alienation from a rigid social trouble, the cultural environment that threatens and suppress an imagination of the young artist, which pave the way for his forceful exile. This thesis explores how the social convention, Catholicism and Irish nationalism determine Ireland's progress and the reasons behinds the Irish writer's decision to go into a voluntary exile.

In Joyce's narrative, the protagonist's disintegrated 'self' according to time, place and money which are the cause of alienated and frustrated mind. Stephen's activities in this novel replicate the protagonist disintegrated self. His instant emotional impulse to indulge with Dublin prostitutes, failure of his father's economy and his meaningless wanderings reflect his schizophrenic self. The different transitional phases that occur in his life show his schizophrenic mind.

In a hopeless situation, Stephen seeks his identity and coherence in the whirlpool of modern experience of life through art, rather than accepting the identity he receives from the traditional social and cultural values. Stephen is seen as a revolting person against his family, his race, society and the political establishment in Ireland. He rejects all the Irish traditional values which have become ideologies. Therefore, he seeks his own meaning of life by intellectual means rather than accepting the rules of society. In this endeavor, he becomes a fragmented self because he chooses a separate path.

The protagonist's split self is caused by the growing capitalist and materialist Irish society. The materialistic values have caused a severe sense of alienation and fragmentation to people. In a long run, they disturb him, making him a schizophrenic patient.

Joyce was born and lived at a time when science and religion competed for supremacy of each other. By the turn of the nineteenth century, it was evident that the foundation on which the morality of the world stood was being shaken by important scientific discoveries and intellectual explosion of knowledge. One of the main consequences of this was the breakdown of the family unit and the brutal quest for both national and personal economic survival. Ultimately, this led at the national levels to alliances between nations, which unwittingly resulted in tensions in Europe that led to the two World Wars before the mid-twentieth century that left an indelible mark in our collective consciousness. The psychological consequences of these wars reach deep into the collective psyche of the world, giving spaces to all forms of the psychic disintegration. The world was therefore seen as a prison from which escape was necessary, even though to some, it remained the only place where one could define his or her self.

At the time the kind of persona used in literary works resembled the real alienated or displaced man in the society in the nineteenth century. So, it was evident that the persona in literature was undergoing some form of transformation towards self-affirmation since it seems this was the only outlet for individuals to affirm their own personalities and give meaning to their lives.

In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* Stephen becomes a product of social attack of this period. In this connection, Athanasius A. Auk claims:

Joyce's personal life and its fictionalization in is a product of the social convulsion of this period. The structure of the novel, especially its disintegrated ending is the reflection of this sick and wearied society from which Stephen wants to tear himself. The hero's disintegration like that of the text is his direct failure to come to terms with the process of maturation. Stephen develops through the three stages of childhood, young manhood and adulthood in full cognizance of the values of each. (143)

Joyce's novel is structurally built in line with Stephen's social self-destruction. The embodiment of the disintegrated self, Stephen replicates an infected Irish culture, and broken international relationship. Joyce's hero represents a split between individuals, nations and cultures.

Around the time Joyce was born, the Irish nationalist Charles Stewart Parnell was leading the movement for Irish independence. In 1890, Parnell's longstanding affair with a married woman was exposed, a tarnish in the Catholic Church. Many Irish nationalists blamed Parnell's death, which occurred only a year later, on the Catholic Church. An emotional Christmas dinner argument among members of the Dedalus family in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* resonates this blasphemy in Christianity. By 1900, the Irish people felt largely united in demanding freedom from the British rule. In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, the young Stephen's friends at University College frequently confront him with political questions about this struggle between Ireland and England.

One of the most influential modern writers, Joyce constantly explores the total resources of language in all of his writings. His narrative technique influences

many of the writers early in the twentieth century, including traditional realists to experimental postmodernists.

In the novel, the experiences that Stephen goes through disintegrate his 'self' because the socio-political condition of that time is the major source of his disintegrated 'self'. He realizes that there are no certain boundaries to construct the 'self' rather we ourselves have been affected by the socio-political boundaries, which become the means of alienation of modern man. The ignorance negligence about one's religious and spiritual values in the face of modern lifestyle has caused the modern man a great anxiety.

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man was published in 1916. On its publication, it showed how the novel could be given added power through a new concentration of vision. So far as the subject matter of the novel is concerned, it is a kind of novel which describes a character's struggle from childhood towards maturity. The book had a mixed reception when it appeared. Some reviewers have criticized it with bitter remarks. Some have hailed it as one of the most remarkable confessions outside Russian and French literature. Ezra Pound says, "It contains the best prose of decade and is one of the few works that showed creative invention" (9). Similarly, Catherine Akca, a renowned critic from Kafka University, tries to study this novel from psychoanalytical viewpoint. In his article, "Religion and Identity in James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*", he claims:

For writers such as Joyce, influenced by Freud's work on psychoanalysis, there was no such thing as a stable normative self to which everyone might conform; rather, the self was evolving, fluid, discontinuous and fragmented. So, in *A Portrait*, key moments in Stephen Dedalus' emotional, spiritual and aesthetic development are

given as a fluid succession of presents, through which what Joyce calls the curve of an emotion, is drawn out, culminating at the point where Stephen affirms his identity as a young artist. (54)

In this way, Akca claims that Stephen is unable to sustain this level of spiritual values. He only looks for trivial happiness. His efforts to find coherence and meaning end in meaningless struggle and search.

Mohammed Akoi, in his article "Stephen and the Technique of Symbol-switching in Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man and Ulysses*" interlinks language with identity. He said that language has a crucial role to create the identity of an individual. He argues:

Stephen's linguistic endeavor begins with a quest for self-definition in the language and the world that determines his identity. Perhaps religion is among the most difficult hurdles in front of Stephen towards self-realization. In turn, Stephen's attempt to unravel the whole language system of religion, including its signs and symbols, and transforming the elements of religion into the domain of art seems to be the only solution if he wants to become an artist. (305)

He argues that Stephen successfully manages to perform that duty. Stephen's desire to perform that duty manifests itself in his first encounter with language wherein he adds his signature to his father's fairy tale, and it climaxes in his attempt to forge himself into the Holy Trinity and become the creator.

Similarly, Harika Bapinar claims that Stephen Dedalus as a Nietzschean Character who felt himself more guilty and punishable man in the world in his article "Nietzsche's Influence on Modernist Bildungsroman: the Immoralist, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, And Demian*". He argues:

During his school years, Joyce himself adopted doubts about Irish Catholicism, and slowly repudiated it. His rejection of its values and desire for total freedom, therefore, found their place as autobiographical elements in the *Portrait*. Stephen, like the novel's author, gains his identity as an artist by shaking off the same values. However, before emancipating himself wholly, he lives through a stage when he is controlled and created by Irish culture and Catholicism. Thus, on his way to becoming an artist, he goes through a phase of oscillation between obedience to the voices controlling him and fulfilling his human desires. (51)

Ba pinar argues that the protagonist is a typical modernist character who shows a rebellious characteristic and strives for freedom and authenticity. Pointing out the importance of Nietzsche in the modern context, it tries to show his influence on Joyce, and Hesse by revealing the Nietzschean elements found in this novel.

Although all the critics have examined James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist As a Young Man*, from different perspective, none of them have explored and examined the issue of alienation and disintegration of the self. So, the present study examines the theme of alienation and identity in the novel to unravel the disintegrated self.

The 'self' is seen as the experience collected by an individual. For the individual person, the meaning of self is an object of consciousness. In other words, the self is the subject of one's own experiences of phenomena: perception, emotions and thoughts. The 'self' is studied from different viewpoints such as philosophical, psychological, religious as well as other viewpoints. For the fulfillment of the

objective of this project, the present researcher focuses on the definition of 'self' from psychoanalytical viewpoint.

Sigmund Freud views the 'self' as a multi-tiered entity consisting of both the conscious and unconsciousness realms. Consciousness refers to the mental thought of which we are aware. Unconsciousness, on the other hand, refers to the mental process of which we are usually not aware. The study of the conscious 'self' was nothing new, but it was Freud's treatment of the unconsciousness that made him famous. According to Freud,

Our unconsciousness self is the dominating influence in our lives including how we act and think. It contains all of our basic and primal instincts including sexuality, aggressiveness, and our bent toward self-destruction and death. These primal desires always seek instant gratification or release. These primal instinct needs to be channeled in an appropriate way neurotic behavior will ensue. Our conscious self, on the other hand, cooperates according to the reality principle and tries to control our unconsciousness self. (qtd in Vlach 1)

Freud talks about conscious and unconscious mind in his theory of self. the unconsciousness self consistently dominates our lives including how human being act and think. The above mentioned paragraph leads us toward the three different layers of 'self' described by Freud in his theory of psychoanalysis.

On the other hand, one's sense of 'self' can be changed if they become part of a group that they consider stigmatized. According to Cox et al., in their article "Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Depression: The Integrated Perspective" claims: "if an individual has prejudice against a certain group, like the elderly and then later

becomes part of this group this prejudice can be turned inward causing depression i.e. deprejudice" (428). So, in *A Portrait of the Artist As A Young Man*, Stephen has grievances towards his society, but this grievance turns inwards and he becomes a fragmented personality.

Search for the self is a recurrent theme in much of the twentieth century American and European fiction. Many writers have tried to sketch the confusion, frustration, alienation, disintegration and estrangement of modern man in their fiction. In Indo-English literature also alienation or rootlessness is a very common theme. The protagonists are misfit in their society largely because of their some defects in themselves or some evils in society. The Indo-English novelist is not so much interested in making philosophical statements as in presenting the plight of an alienated individual and expressing `compassion for him and disapproval for society.

The primary objective of this project is to study disintegrated self and schizophrenic response of the character Stephen Dedalus in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. The socio-economic condition of that time caused social disintegration and dislocation of the protagonist. The strict religious norms and values are also the cause for this disintegration. Deleuze and Guattari see the schizophrenic as capitalism's exterminating angel as schizo is a radical and revolutionary rebel who resists all forms of oppressive power. They believe that radical political movements should "learn from the psychotic how to shake off the Oedipal yoke and the effects of power, in order to initiate a radical politics of desire freed from all beliefs" (qtd. in Seem xxi). Schizophrenic sensibilities can replace ideological and dogmatic political goals with a radical form of productive desire. This "desiring-production" brings the unconscious into the real, and unleashes its

radical world-making possible. Productive desire need not be solipsistic, and includes the "group psychosis" induced by radical postmodern artistic creations and political movements. Neither is desiring-production limited to clinical schizophrenics. Desiring-production marks the schizophrenic potential in everyone to resist the power of despotic signifiers and capitalist reterritorialization. Thus, Deleuze and Guattari see schizophrenia as a central part of a subversive postmodern politics with the radical potential to bring down the oppressive form of capitalism.

In this way, the major character of the novel, Stephen, in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, has disintegrated but schizophrenic self. As he was brought up in materialistic and capitalistic socio-economic conditions, Stephen Dedalus searches for his identity and his dissatisfaction in everything makes him schizophrenic as he rebels against all forms of oppression in the society.

II. Stephen's Schizophrenic Self in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*

This thesis on Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* examines schizophrenic self of the major character, Stephen. He is a rebellious hero who rebels against all forms of oppressive power in the capitalist society. Stephen is a young man who struggles to define his self in relation to his surroundings. He raises some of the fundamental questions of life that set him apart from the mainstream social, cultural, religious and philosophical thoughts of his generation. His reflection of such thoughts isolates him from mainstream thoughts. So, in course of choosing his own course of principles and searching for his distinct identity, he ends up becoming a fragmented and schizophrenic personality. So, Stephen goes through alienation and disintegration of 'self' before he affirms his self through artistic creativity.

In Stephen, we can observe the rebellious nature which goes beyond the fixity of the traditional perception of identity. In this connection, Artur Schouten in his thesis, "A Cycle of C-changes: a working model for the literary epiphany" tries to define self-identity via describing its title. He focuses on the efforts of Stephen Dedalus to differentiate his identity with the other Irish people. The novel portrays a process of self-actualization of the protagonist, of becoming what one already is in essence. Schouten further argues:

As the title suggests, the protagonist is destined to become an artist as he comes into this world – it could even be said that he is born as an artist even though he may not yet be aware of it. The novel portrays a process of self-actualization, of becoming what one already is in essence. The novelty of Joyce's prose is that this process is described in leaps and bounds, recounting only the most

significant episodes and leaving out most of what comes in between these defining moments. (40)

Stephen, even in very young age, decides to stay away from all his social, familial, and religious constraints to live a life devoted to the art of writing. He finds himself and like many young people at that time, in confusion. For everything around him is maze.

Like Dedalus, a mythological hero, everything around Stephen in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* in Dublin is a maze. It is through his mind that Stephen roams the labyrinth searching for answers to the questions of his life. The only thing he can do to free from oppressive society for Stephen is to follow Dedalus and his son and to soar above the narrow confines of the prison-like society and soar in the realm of art. Stephen proves himself to be a courageous hero, who breaks free from the forms and conventions of society as he declares about his vast location:

Stephen Dedalus

Clongowes Wood College

Sallins

County Kildare

Ireland

Europe

The World

Stephen Dedalus is my name,

Ireland is my nation.

Clongowes is my dwelling place.

And heaven my expectation. (15)

Stephen is not a complacent person, as a rebel from the very young of his age he searches his self in the vast location of the socio-political milieu. He means to say that he will create something from himself and Ireland that is not created, “When the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets” (184). This means Stephen tries his best to free himself from all nets of his family, nation, and above all the church. According to Stephen, Ireland oppresses the people and he claims that “Ireland is the old sow that eats her farrow” (185). This shows the oppressive regime of Ireland.

Stephen remembers his school days, when a group of young men in the evening walk with their arms joined, and the music is heard. “His lungs dilated and sank as if he were inhaling a warm moist unsustaining air and he smelt again the warm moist air which hung in the bath in Glongowes above the sluggish turf-coloured water” (145). Stephen's such experiences make him suffer from the narrow orthodoxies of a Jesuit boarding school and its brutalities. His painful stress, his sexual initiation make him feel an overwhelming sense of fragmentation with the catholic doctrine.

Stephen's three-day journey leads him to physical or mental crisis. It is a voyage to a mythic underworld, and like the hero of myth, Stephen comes back from his journey with a changed consciousness. “His sensitive nature was still smarting under the lashes of an undivided and squalid way of life. His soul was still disquieted and cast down by the dull phenomenon of Dublin” (72). Stephen talks to Cranly informing him about the injustice at school, about his family dissention, politics, and church authorities he faces:

Look here, Cranly, he said. You have asked me what I would do and what I would not do. I will tell you what I will do and what I will not do. 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 wholly as I can, using for my defense the only arms I allow myself to use—silence, exile, and cunning (222).

Stephen rejects all the family relationship in the way an artists do. For Stephen, silence is verbal only in the sense that he will be using the written rather than the spoken word. Timothy Webb notes that *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is a novel which "explores with great intensity both the restrictive influences of family, church and country and the possibilities of freedom, which include the heroic artifice of Daedalian flight or the Icarian plunge through space" (34). Joyce practices silence, exile, and shrewdness while leaving Ireland to practice his art on the Continent.

He would never swing the thurible before the tabernacle as priest. His destiny was to be elusive of social or religious orders. He was destined to learn his own wisdom apart from others or to learn the wisdom of others himself wandering among the snares of the world. (146)

Stephen has no interest in practicing any religious values. He is bent on charting out his own course of life in the narrow boundary of religious society. In order to affirm his self as an artist and discover what it means to be Irish—free of the oppressive regime—he must ultimately “free his feet from the fetters of the reformed conscience” (180) and leave Ireland for the distant but independent mind.

Such an action shows not only a desperate act on the part of Stephen but also a revolt against entire Irish society.

Stephen is an ambitious character who has personal desire to move forward in life, so Stephen imagines himself flying in the sky like that ancient Daedalus and he begins to tremble with excitement:

a hawk like man flying sunward above the sea, a prophecy of the end he had been born to serve and had been following through the mists of childhood and boyhood, a symbol of the artist forging anew in his workshop out of the sluggish matter of the earth a new soaring impalpable imperishable being? (154)

But it is the capitalist society which creates a maze around Stephen. His father loses his property to auction. The auctioning of the family property is a depressive symbol of dispossession for Stephen. “He felt that he was hardly of the one blood with them but stood to them rather in the mystical kinship of fosterage, foster child and foster brother” (90). Joyce comments ironically on modern man Stephen's father fails in being a kind person who should guide his son Stephen into the larger adult world. Therefore, Stephen remains till the end an unforgiving son who views his father as a negligent foster-parent. It is towards the end of the novel that Stephen discovers his identity as an artist. “27 April: Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead” (228). Finally, Stephen is able to free himself from the narrow confines of the capitalist society.

Capitalism extends its tentacles in all state apparatuses making them oppressive for the people. As Deleuze and Guattari write,

the State has at its disposal a violence that is not channeled through war – either it uses police officers and jailers in place of warriors,

has no arms and no need of them, operates by immediate, magical capture, “seizes” and “binds” preventing all combat – or, the State acquires an army, but in a way that presupposes a juridical integration of war and the organization of a military function. (388)

Though the state does not wage war against its people, it unleashes violent activities through its law enforcing agencies. A nexus between war and the military institution becomes of subject of many of the narratives in the twentieth century.

Stephen fights any injustice and exploitation, so he experiences encounters and hostility with authorities which keep on reappearing in various guises. We find this process earlier, and the patterns of behavior and relationships shown here are repeated elsewhere. Stephen has a tendency towards rebellion. As a young child he plans to marry a Protestant girl from his neighborhood, and when his mother and Aunt Dante scold him for this, he defiantly hides under the table. This innate drive stays with him throughout his life; he presents his defiant attitude in mature intellectual terms with his statement 'I will not serve . . . ' (248). This shows his rebellious nature.

Even when he was a young boy, Stephen experiences rejection and isolation at school. On the playground around school, Stephen "felt his body [too] small and weak amid the [other] players" (8). His schoolmates even poked fun at his name. In response to his rejection by the other boys Stephen makes a conscious decision to "[keep] on the fringe of his line, out of sight of his prefect" and the other boys. Stephen is later depicted as choosing the "warm study hall" rather than the playground with his friends outside (10). His rejection at school leads him to isolate himself in his schoolwork. Although it makes him alienated for the

time being, this event provides him with the intellectual skills necessary for the artist within him to rebel and achieve power to face further problems.

When Stephen grows young, he is forced to stay at home due to his father's financial problems causing him to reject his schoolmates and isolate himself in his family. He spends most of his time with his father and great-uncle and found that "the noise of children at play annoyed him? their silly voices made him feel? That he was different from others" (64). When Stephen returns to school, however, he "became aware of his failure to establish communication with his father and the other members of the family. Increasingly conscious of the "intellectual abyss" between him and his family, he learns to cherish his solitude (69). Only after challenging his father and refusing to obey his mother's last wishes, Stephen completely rejects his family and finds freedom from the ties to his youth.

According to Deleuze and Guattari the priest is one of the most insidious obstructers of desire and "deterritorialisation." They argue that every time "desire is betrayed, cursed, uprooted from its field of immanence, a priest is behind it. The priest cast the triple curse on desire: the negative law, the extrinsic rule, and the transcendent ideal. (qtd. in Peretti 154). At school, Stephen isolates himself from his "relationship to authority and conformity and his rebellion against it. In the classroom Stephen is beaten with a cane and accused of being a "lazy little schemer" by a Jesuit priest for not completing his homework due to his broken glasses (50). In rebellion, Stephen reports the injustice to the rector the rector takes the incident as a joke.

During his college years, Stephen rejects society and isolates himself in religious activities. At a religious place, he is overwhelmed by the priest's sermon of the horrors of hell and eternal damnation and realizes his own sin. It seems as

if "[e]very word of it was for him. Against his sin, soul and secret, the whole wrath of God was aimed. The preacher's knife had probed deeply into his disclosed conscience and he felt now that his soul was festering within" (115). Stephen's burden of guilt and shame and the confession that follows leads him to a life of religious deeds. Stephen, however, rejects his religious beliefs after the director of the college directs his attention to the Jesuit order. He realizes that he cannot isolate himself from society through religion because he would rather participate in the world:

The snares of the world were its ways of sin. He would fall. He had not yet fallen but he would fall silently, in an instant. Not to fall was too hard, too hard; and he felt the silent lapse of the soul, as it would be at some instant to come, falling, falling, but not yet fallen, still unfallen, but about to fall (162).

Stephen's rejection of society helps him to discover that he must not retreat from the world but rather participate and revolt for his space.

Stephen's rebellion against strict social values and his rejection of his family and religion makes him a rebel himself but also allows him to free himself from his ties to childhood and his restrictions as an artist. His freedom becomes evident as the narrator describes the

winged form flying above the waves and slowly climbing the air? a prophecy of the end he had been born to serve and had been following through the mists of childhood and boyhood, a symbol of the artist forging anew in his workshop out of the sluggish matter of the earth a new soaring imperishable being. (169)

Stephen breaks with his past to achieve freedom and an unrestricted artistic vision that allows him to connect to the world that he had rejected.

The quest of identity is according to Ericson, the central theme of life. He defines the word as a subjective sense of efficient uniqueness as well as a remarkable predicate of personal continuity. For him,

Identity is a continuous work of self. One of the most prominent properties of identity is the sense of continuity and sameness.

Identity is a subjective sense and noticeable quality of personal sameness and continuity, lined to some beliefs in the sameness and continuity of some shared world image. Although one can have change in social or personal relation, in the context and family. (qtd. in Ghernout 16)

Apparently, identity is said to be an individual characteristics by which a person is recognized. Philosophically, the identity of a person is the properties through which it is that person. The question over identity is not only interpreted by who am I. it is something more valuable than this interpretation.

Ireland has entered into the political domain of the Britain and adopted the language of the conquerors. However, it not only continued to maintain its distinct identity but also refused to adopt the British culture. Joyce 'considers the Church an opponent of ambitious youth such as himself' and, therefore, he "embraced a position of humanism, or more precisely, a humanism-of-one: himself " (Fisher 4). Joyce's attempt was to restore a true identity of his country, a reflection of her true identity, an embodiment of Stephen in struggle.

Rejecting this trap, he wants to contribute to the redemption of his country in his own way – by means of art. He chooses voluntary exile and looks upon it as

the condition for the fulfillment of his artistic mission. Stephen's mission is not to renew the cultural life of his country and place his people on the landscape of European art, but "to appraise the consciousness of his own racial experience and to convert it through art into a permanent vital expression of his soul" (Blades 115). In this sense he becomes social rebel.

Religion is also taken as the factor which hinders the way of creating self of an individual. Religious views on the self vary widely according to the perception of the people. Manly P. Hall tries to see the self as a complex and core subject of spirituality. He separates the religious view of self into two different parts. In his own words:

The self is a complex and core subject in many forms of spirituality. Two types of self are commonly considered - the self that is the ego, also called the learned, superficial self of mind and body, an egoist creation, and the Self which is sometimes called the "True Self", the "Observing Self", or the "Witness". (115)

Moreover, the living shadow of Parnell, Irish political leader, falls across Stephen's awakening consciousness. In his boyhood, Stephen sees his elders as bitterly divided in their consciousness in terms of religion and politics. At his first Christmas dinner table during the Christmas vacation, for example, he listens silently but vigilantly to Mr. Casey, Uncle Charles, Dante, his father and mother while they are talking and arguing about religion and politics. There are bitter disputes between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. Dante is a widow who was brought into the Joyce household to be a governess. She is a fierce partisan of the clergy. In his early life, Stephen is influenced by her religious views.

Stephen's daily routine is based on religious activities. "His day began with a heroic offering of its every moment of thought or actions for the intentions of the sovereign pontiff and with an early mass" (152). He dedicates all his time to religion and forgot for some moments that what exactly he is. Sunday was "dedicated to the mystery of the Holy Trinity, Monday to Holy Ghost, Tuesday to the Guardian Angels, Wednesday to saint Joseph, Thursday to the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Alter, Friday to the Suffering Jesus, Saturday to the Blesses Virgin Marry" (152). Although Stephen is aware of the oppressive effects of religion on the individual, he engages himself in religious activities. He hopes that by chasing this path his "soul might grow strong" (153) and he would be able to avoid alienation. Therefore, he thinks of religion, practiced religion and committed his life for religion.

Joyce indicates at crippling effect of religion and ideology on the individual. In this connection, a renowned critic, Ali GÜNE , in her essay entitled Crisis of Identity in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* writes:

Joyce gives further the crippling effect of religion upon Stephen's consciousness. Stephen leaves Clongowes Wood College due to the severe financial problem of his family. A friendly priest arranges for him to get a free place at Belvedere, a Jesuit day school in Dublin.

Like the previous one, however, this school is also full of conventional and religious values. (41)

In this college as well, Stephen does not get his own distinct identity. Religion always tries to dominate the individual value. All colleges try to impose the conventional and religious values upon the students which help to suppress the value of individualism and the individual identity is disintegrated.

When Stephen grows up, Stephen begins to realize that his future cannot be in subjection to an ordered system as in Church. In his view, the Irish Catholic Church is provincial, narrow and hostile to what he considers important: "freedom and justice". Gradually his soul becomes unable to harbor religious principles or views for any time though he forces his lips to utter them with conviction. It gives rise to a view of crisis in Stephen, since he thinks that the fixity of religious rules both confines individuals and cripples their feelings. Hence a sense of sickness and unrest begins again to irradiate his being and consciousness making him alienated. Joyce writes:

Stephen gathered his impressions of religion and priesthood as well as of the division which religion and politics have brought about in the consciousness of Irish people. At once, .a feverish quickening of his pulses followed. And a din of meaningless words drove his reasoned thoughts hither and thither confusedly. (166)

Moreover, Stephen's boredom of life becomes more obvious when he starts university. He views the life as dull and painful, so that he hopes of better things in life. As soon as he leaves his father at a public house, Stephen walks towards the river and sea. There he perceives other aspects of life different from what he is offered:

The university! So he had passed beyond the challenge of the sentries who had stood as guardians of his boyhood and had sought to keep him among them that he might be subject to them and serve their ends. Pride after satisfaction uplifted him like long slow waves. The end he had been born to serve yet did not see had led him to escape by an unseen path and now it beckoned to him once more and

a new adventure was about to be opened to him. It seemed to him that he heard notes of fitful music leaping upwards a tone and downwards a diminished fourth, upwards a tone and downwards a major third, like triple branching flames leaping fitfully, flame after flame, out of a midnight wood. (170)

Stephen's views are fluid; they are leaping, wave-like, then flames, racing creatures. All these views suggest the variety and diversity of his perception of life.

In the moment of the vision on the beach, therefore, he sees his destiny as clear; he realizes his destiny; Stephen hears his name, Dedalus, called out, and the name seems to be prophetic:

At the name of the fabulous artificer, he seemed to hear the noise of dim waves and to see a winged form flying above the waves and slowly climbing the air . . . a hawk like man flying sunward above the sea, a prophecy of the end he had been born to serve and had been following through the miss of childhood and boyhood, a symbol of the artists forging anew in his workshop out of the sluggish matter of the earth a new soaring impalpable imperishable being. (175)

Stephen thus becomes elusive of social or religious order, because he notices gradually that both religious order and Dublin, which are the tangible and centers of his nationality, have failed to provide him with a vision of reality corresponding with his own experience. He seeks a vision beyond the actual experience of life; it is adventurous, mysterious and flying.

In this way, Stephen has lost the faith derives mainly from the fact that religion suppresses and confines individuals within its certain and authoritative

rules. In his views, these rules make them unable not only to express themselves freely, but they also prevent individuals from seeing other facets of life as well as other beautiful things beyond them.

As discussed above, the major character of the novel Stephen tries to escape himself from group identity but he is unable to do so because of the society. The religion, culture and society try to guide him and his lifestyle. He wants to escape from this all social bondage and adverse social norms and values. So, the above mentioned theory is really applicable this context. The Irish identity and nationalism always guide him to the national identity but he always wants his own individual identity. Therefore, his identity is disintegrated.

As Dorothy Van Ghent in his book named *The English Novel: Form and Function* makes a comment:

In a time of crisis, traditional values no longer seem to match at any point with the actualities of experience, and when all reality is therefore thrown into question, the mind turns inward on itself to seek the shape of reality there - for the thinking and feeling man cannot live without some coherent schematization of reality. Here at least - in one's own memory, emotion and thought - is empirical ground for such an investigation. (263)

Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* conveys its own apparent implication that it marks a time of shocking disclosure of the failure of the social environment as a trustworthy carrier of values.

Indeed, Joyce develops a view of the rebellion of the artist in the complexity of the early twentieth century. For him, the artist must be outside all the conventions and all normal society. Ali Gunes comments the views on alienation

by separating it into two parts in his article on *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. She writes:

This view has two reasons. First, those conventions and society that Joyce found in Dublin represented a 'paralysis', a dead set of gestures having no meaning in terms of genuine human experience. Secondly, the artist must be outside society in order to be objective: he must be objective if he is to adopt the peculiar microcosmic view, which is the way that enables Joyce to solve the complex modern problems.

(43)

Therefore, Stephen as a modern artist wants to remain outside and thus be critical of nets of society without integrating himself into its limiting and narrowing rules. He rejects them deeply and thoroughly. Moreover, as an outsider he is also disinterested in rituals and moral values, which confine him to a certain boundary.

The oppressive institutions of society make him restless. So he becomes a rebel; he prefers walking all alone, without the company of any other individual. In doing so, he finds some soothing pleasure. The author maintains that “The peace of the gardens and the kindly lights in the windows poured a tender influence into his restless heart” (66). At the children's party he tries to escape from the prevailing condition of his life and also “tried to share their merriment” but his wounded soul cannot permit him (70). Joyce further writes, “He felt himself gloomy” because he was not doing this from his own free will (70). He knows that his loneliness is there to soothe him therefore he leaves the party and starts relishing the “joy of his loneliness” (70). This reveals his condition.

Stephen thinks that he is different from others; therefore, he always prefers to be alone. This loneliness is his true companion. Being a young boy, he must

have liked playing in the company of different girls and boys and must have preferred to spend his time without any worry or tension but it is not the case with Stephen. He, at the very beginning, is acquainted that “he was different” (66). The crying noises of the children cannot take him back to his innocence of childhood but rather he is “annoyed” (66). In the company of other children “He did not want to play” (66). Because of his sensitive nature, he recognizes it easily that he has really distinctive nature from others.

He can never ignore his condition, that is, isolation. He has to move forward and work for finding out his true self. Actually he is entangled in the thought of Mercedes so deeply that he longs to meet her. A girl comes to impact not only on his mind but on his soul. Stephen was a child who used to ponder upon the situations deeply which were there in his life or around him. His senses have always been active; therefore, he suffers mentally a lot. Whenever Uncle Charles visits Church and prays there, he looks at him very seriously and “wondered what his grand uncle prayed for so seriously” (63). He always reflects on several matters with seriousness so that he can describe what real world is all about. Stephen remains busy the whole day with his uncle and father but “his evenings were his own” (63) to release from stifling environment of society.

Even in his imagination, the image of Mercedes brings a kind of “strange unrest” in his blood and this unrest “led him to rove alone in the evening along the quiet avenue (66). He is always preoccupied with the “unsubstantial image” (66). And he chooses being lonely than being in the crowd because he is hoping that he “would meet quietly as if they had known each other” (66). Although at this stage, his life is not so very much complicated and vague and still he wants to be changed.

The problem of his life is that he is not only in conflict with his inner world, but with the troubles of the outer world as well. In fact the outer world plays an important role in increasing his tensions and also burdens his mood. Due to the financial crisis which his family faces and shifts from the comfortable home to “gloomy foggy city” he lives with his “heart heavy” (114). Before this shift at least he was there in physically comfortable shelter but when the situation changes he is forced to live in physical and spiritual tension. This surely leads him to more miserable conditions.

As time passes, he needs to make struggles for finding the solutions to the problems of his life, requires taking some measures for making his life better and cheerful. “In the beginning he contended himself with circling timidly round the neighboring square” (67). Again he feels “strangeness” in his life and started wandering in search of Mercedes (68). He knows that there is something wrong in his life, “A vague dissatisfaction grew up within him” (68). This restlessness and dissatisfaction does not let him stay at home but rather compels him to keep on moving from one place to another. Again by meeting with a girl in children's party he feels something different. Joyce describes Stephen's behaviors, “His heart danced upon her movements like a crop upon the tide” (72). The girl becomes a means of escape from his isolation. His girl gives him joy. His interest in girls is not just because he wants physical relation. He is in a great search for what he is. All this shows his dejected self.

As he reaches adolescence, another woman begins to rule Stephen's imagination; he becomes extremely fascinated by Mercedes, the heroine of Alexander Dumas's *The Count of Monte Cristo*. He imagines that one day he would meet Mercedes, the epitome of all virtues and during the meeting, "He

would fade into something impalpable under her eyes and then in a moment, he would be transfigured . . . in that magic moment" (66). Mercedes, the woman of his fantasy, lives in a house surrounded by rose bushes. She is the angel that guides him through the labyrinth of his uneasy adolescent life. Her association with the roses reminds one of Dante's Beatrice who leads Dante to the mystical rose of heaven, the Virgin Mary. The rose is the traditional symbol of the Virgin Mary in particular, and womankind in general. It is significant that Stephen's vision of the bird-like girl unfolds myth and mystery:

A world, a glimmer, or of a flower? Glimmering and trembling,
trembling and unfolding, a breaking in full crimson and unfolding
and fading to palest rose, leaf and wave of light, flooding all heavens
with its soft flushes, every flush deeper than the other. (179)

Alluding to Dante's vision of Paradise, Stephen's vision of this mysterious rose in the evening sky emphasizes his escape from his fragmented self to serenity of mind. So, Stephen indulges in the enjoyment of the world of fantasy. This is also a kind of revolt.

Stephen's condition worsens as the intensity of estrangement makes him helpless. It has been mentioned in novel as, "The wasting fires of lust sprang up again" (102). And he thinks it compulsory to satisfy his physical need so that he could appease his soul. He is really helpless. In this condition, he can surely do whatsoever can be done by him, without having clear sense of right or wrong because in that condition nothing seem wrong to him. In desperation, he starts visiting brothels and it shows that he wants peace and solace out of fragmentation.

In order to avoid pain, Stephen gets much involved in women. This predicament of protagonist is reflected in lines, "He moaned to himself like some

baffled prowling beast” (102). His condition is really irresistible and to bring calmness to step inside “another world” (102). This step is taken in intense need of healing himself. “Tears of joy and relief shone in his delighted eyes” (103). He thinks that he has found his identity which is his actual intention, “he became strong and fearless and sure of himself” (103). His condition is so bad that he feels joy and satisfaction in committing sin. The alienation and fragmentation from which he is suffering and which increases his fear, restless, and powerlessness force him to do so just to please himself. Stephen continues to visit the dirty streets. But somehow along with joy he has “fear” as well (103). This fear has been envisioned in the novel as, “He would pass by them calmly waiting for a sudden movement of his own will or a sudden call to his sin-loving soul from their soft perfumed flesh” (103). But he knows that it is a sin and he will have to give answer for that.

Stephen's life is full of struggles and rebellion. To remove his guilt he has to move forth but “certain pride, certain awe, withheld him from offering to God” (107). He feels proud because he regards this act to be his very right for the fulfillment of his need. For a while, he becomes rebellion in front of God but his soul cannot ignore God. His pride is very soon changed into fear by the retreat. The words of father during the retreats put big impact on Stephen’s mind. “Banish from your minds all worldly thoughts and think only of the last things, death, judgment, hell, and heaven” (114). As he desperately wants a “good life” (121), he ends up being a torn personality. But what occurs in his life is not what he wished for. He keeps working for the improvement of his life, yet the contradiction is that he feels miserable. He knows that the happenings of his life are not pleasing him and that he has to find another solution for it. He cannot quit the war, which he has been

fighting for a long time. He cannot very easily accept his failure. So, he has to struggle.

Joyce makes use of his fictional character, Stephen to critique the state ideology. He explores an oppositional way of perceiving the world to that of religion and nationalism and to offer a modernist representation of personality as complex, diffuse and unfixed. Stephen's fluid uncertainty is the opposite of Dante and Cranly's coherent views of life, religion and politics. The uncertainty and complexity of Stephen's view derives predominantly from his deep concern about life. Indeed, the novel explores the culturally determined view of life in the early decades of the twentieth century. As he explains to his friend, Davin, Stephen desires to escape from this dim view of Irish culture:

This race and this country and this life produced me The soul is born . . . It has a slow and dark birth, more mysteriously than the birth of the body. When the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, and religion. I shall try to fly by those nets.

(210)

Joyce focuses upon two such nets in terms of the construction of identity in society. On the one hand, he emphasizes that they are prescribed specific rules in the late nineteenth-century Victorian Irish society, which shape individuals as autonomous and fixed. Individuals have to admit a particular identity given to them by society and culture, and thus they are not allowed to be free to determine their own lives, to express themselves freely, but the existing nets of society force them to accept what they are given.

Joyce focuses upon the subjective experience of his character, which transforms his life into art. The fragmentation and vacillation is a basic condition of Joyce's artistic creativity. He is in the process of re-constructing and re-working these fragments into the essence of beauty. Joyce sees the task of the modernist writers as creating out of fragments. *In A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man*, for example, Stephen explains Joyce's view of art to Lynch:

We are right . . . and the others are wrong. To speak of these things and to try to understand their nature, and having understood it, to try slowly and humbly and constantly to express, to press out again, from the gross earth or what it brings forth, from sound and shape and color which are the prison gates of our soul, an image of the beauty we have come to understand - that is art . . . is human disposition of sensible or intelligible matter for an aesthetic end (214).

In A Portrait of an Artist of a Young Man, the representation of Stephen becomes a means for Joyce to represent a view of self in crisis in the early decades of the twentieth century. He does not represent Stephen as complete and coherence throughout the novel. Stephen is continuously seen either as revolting against the cultural, political, family and religious establishment in the late nineteenth-century Irish society or as fragmented and fluid in his desires of freedom, intellectual beauty and harmony.

Joyce's Stephen recurrently fails to secure politics and catholic values in the process of becoming an artist. He remains in a whirlpool where all possible descriptions are broken down, and all his struggles are not to find himself in any pre-given framework of life. He rejects all ideological, cultural and religious

pressures and nets of society to express himself freely, because these traditional values demand a sense of identity, which is limited, fixed and static with boundaries surrounding people. Stephen thus isolates himself from society.

In matters of artistic creation, Stephen brings a sense of rebellion. In his conversation with Lynch towards the end of the novel, Stephen clearly states that in order for him to become an artist, he needs to invent his own character and language: “When we come to the phenomena of artistic conception, artistic gestation and artistic reproduction I require a new terminology and a new personal experience” (217). Stephen knows that one of his duties as an artist is to first understand the language, and second, to re-create that same language. Stephen finds his place in the world of the narration: "He was baby tuckoo" (5). Thus, becomes different rebel in artistic creation.

The ‘wild rose’ in the song signifies a green rose for Stephen although the possibility of having a green rose exists only in the area of language. Stephen associates his personal experience with the sign system of the society. At school Stephen’s identity is determined by a rose, a white rose when he competes with the red rose team. As such, Stephen’s attempt to create a green rose can be understood as a quest for self-definition, the sort of identity of which he is in need more than when he chooses his career as an artist.

Joyce's transition to journal entries at the end of the novel is a formal change that highlights Stephen's continuing search for his own voice. The journal entry form explores the problem of representing a person through words. Stephen is no longer being talked about by an external narrator, but is now speaking in his own voice. This form also frames the final section of the novel with the first, which opens with a different external voice—Mr. Dedalus telling his son a story.

26 April: I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race.

27 April: Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead. (263)

Throughout the novel, Stephen has continued his search for a voice, first drawing on others' voices—citing Aquinas and Aristotle as authorities and quoting Elizabethan poems—and later realizing that he must devise a language of his own because he cannot be happy speaking the language of others.

Contrary to the identity and meaning constructed by traditional values, Stephen strives to discover his own vocation as subjective in life. He tries to find out his own meaning of life by means of intellectual analysis, rather than accepting blindly the 'nets' of society. *In A Portrait of the Artist As a Young Man*, Joyce suggests that the traditional stability of character dissolves and disappears, giving way to a view of identity as indeterminate, unfinished, insubstantial, vague and inconclusive. Towards the end, Stephen articulates loud and clear that he has to leave Ireland to free himself from its oppressing atmosphere. This acts as a hindrance towards his intellectual development.

Finally, the protagonist's protests against the social boundary of his society are a source of freedom for him. The structure of the novel parallels well with the internal and external conflict that shapes the protagonist's thoughts. The novel develops from an expression of the simple thoughts of a young man trying to understand the thoughts and worries of his parents, and later his teachers' and religious authorities to the moment when he begins to follow his own way of life. Stephen's complete refusal to adhere to any political, cultural or social position is

the final expression of his inability to control the psychic turmoil that destabilizes his ability to come to terms with the life in his society. In an attempt to create a philosophy of his own, he becomes alienated and isolated. However, he has the merit of having understood the inhibiting forces surrounding him. This understanding enables him to disagree with the imposed values of British society.

III. Affirmation of Individual Identity

In Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, the protagonist Stephen goes through severe sense of disintegration of the self though he ultimately rebels and breaks through the restrictions of family, church, and nation to shape his own destiny. He overcomes the limitations of his culture and hostile environment as he tries to search his 'self'. As a he has disintegrated 'self', he seems self-absorbed and even arrogant, refusing to be sociable or to blend in with his community. He seems obsessed with his own theories of art and beauty, which separate him from human community rather than uniting him with it. All this abnormality, results from his rebellious nature which ultimately makes him make him an independent person.

As an adolescent, he begins to resist the claims of external world, setting up his own subjective values and interest against the values and interest of social institutions. He is an introvert; that is why, he feels easily isolated from others. Stephen's isolation, his alienation from family, school, religion, nation, culminating in his voluntary exile is the result of his rebellious nature. He seeks and finds his own identity by making resistance to all shared relationships in society.

As he grows up, Stephen questions the generally held notions of nationality, religion, family, and morality, and finally decides to reject all socially imposed bonds and instead live freely as an artist. Stephen undergoes several transformations while experiencing life. Finally, Stephen's greatest transformation is from near fanatical religiousness to a new devotion to art and beauty. By the end of his time in college, Stephen has become a fully formed artist, and his diary entries reflect the independent individual he has become. He channelizes his rebellion through creativity in arts.

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