

The Use of Stream of Consciousness in Joyce's A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

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Abstract

Writers of the first decades of the twentieth century became fascinated by the inner lives of teeming impressions, and by the mental activities of meaning – making which constitute our private inner lives. The works of Irish writer James Joyce are distinguished by their keen psychological insight and use of various literary techniques; most notably "stream of consciousness" which is an attempt to write in the manner in which thoughts and memory actually work in our minds.

This study is an attempt to examine the 'stream of consciousness' as a technique used in Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) which is one of the greatest of modern novels. Joyce arranged his novel in five chapters which trace the protagonist's life, Stephen Dedalus, from boyhood to young manhood.

In this study, a careful examination of this technique is carried out through moving from the innocence of childhood to frenzied episodes of adolescent lust and then to a calm contemplation of women, aesthetic theory independence and art.

The study is divided into four chapters: chapter one is an introduction regarding the various meanings of 'the Stream of consciousness'; chapter two entitled Stephen's Childhood; chapter three deals with Stephen's adolescence; chapter four regards Stephen's manhood finally the conclusion of the study is offered briefly.

Introduction

' Stream of consciousness' is a narrative technique in non dramatic fiction intended to render the flow of myriad impressions-visual, auditory, physical, associative, and subliminal-that impinge on the consciousness of an individual and form part of his awareness along with the trend of his rational thoughts." (*Burkdall* , p. 24)

This term was first used by the psychologist William James in *The Principles of Psychology* (1890). James was formulating a psychological theory where he had discovered that " memories, thoughts and feelings exist outside the primary consciousness appear to one, not as a chain, but as a stream , a flow ." (*P.11*)

In his introduction on the use of this narrative technique, Robert Hurley shows that It was first used, as a literary term, in the late 19th century. This term is " employed to evince subjective as well as objective reality. It reveals the character's feelings, thoughts, and actions, often following an associative rather than a logical sequence, without commentary by the author. Widely used in narrative fiction, the technique was perhaps brought to its highest point of development in early twentieth century novels where stream of consciousness plays an important role" (*Hurley* , p.19) .

As far as the development of the English novel in the 20th century is concerned , John J. Richetti states that "some novelists attempted in their distinctive works to capture the total flow of their characters' consciousness, rather than limit themselves to rational thoughts. To represent the full richness, speed, and subtlety of the mind at work, the writer incorporates snatches of incoherent thought, ungrammatical constructions, and free association of ideas, images, and words at the pre- speech level .Amongst these works were ;William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) , Virginia Woolf's *The waves* (1931) , and James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young man* (1916)." (*Richetti* , p. 36) . He also adds : " Novelists of the early and mid-20th century had contributed greatly to modern literature by abandoning traditional narrative style and pioneering the use of stream of consciousness. The British writer Dorothy Richardson is considered

by some actually to be the pioneer in use of the device. Her novel *Pilgrimage*(1911-1938), a 12-volume sequence, is an intense analysis of the development of a sensitive young woman and her responses to the world around her." (p.41). With regard to this subject, Walter Allen explains in his essay in *The English Novel in 1924 and After* that :

the phrase Stream of consciousness was taken over- first , it seems , by May Sinclair, in 1918 reviewing Dorothy Richardson's novels- to denote the new method of rendering consciousness itself as it follows from moment to moment, a method used with varying degrees of intensity by Dorothy Richardson, Joyce and Virginia Woolf , though never by Lawrence. (p. 345)

It was felt that fiction should attempt to render in words character's inner worlds as experienced by the fictional characters themselves. Attempts were made to represent both the form and the content of the flow of " mind stuff ", employing a variety of newly explored and developed literary techniques . Writers such as Dorothy Richardson , James Joyce , Virginia Woolf , and William Faulkner writing during the same period, each developed distinctive uses of this technique.

Chapter One: The Meaning of Stream of Consciousness:

The term 'stream of consciousness' has become common in literary criticism and has a certain intuitive appeal , since it helps to identify in a rather general way what was that writers were aiming to achieve in their fiction . Professor Isaacs , in *An assessment of Twentieth Century Literature* , has provided us with a valuable gloss:

" Every definite image in the mind is steeped and dyed in the free water that flows round it . the significance ; the value of the image is all in this halo or penumbra that surrounds and escorts it Consciousness does not appear to itself chopped up in hits, ... It is nothing jointed ; it flows,... Let us call it the stream of thoughts , the stream of consciousness or of subjective life". (Allen, p. 353)

'Stream of consciousness' is a narrative technique attempts to reproduce the thought patterns of characters. A narrator does not tell us what ' Stephen ' is thinking ; the author uses stream of consciousness techniques to show what Stephen is thinking . There is no one technique, but various conventions that are employed by different authors to convey Cohn's *Transparent Minds* and Humphrey's *Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel*. In his assessment of new techniques in modern novels , Robert Humphrey defines this term as the following :

"Stream of consciousness is the continuous flow of sense-perceptions, thoughts , feelings and memories in the human mind ; or a literary method of representing such a blending of mental process in fictional characters, usually in an unpunctuated or disjointed form of interior monologue".
(p. 44)

However, there is no agreed precise definition of the term and no consensus has been arrived as to how it is best used . this has caused much muddle and confusion in discussions of modernist technique.

According to the 'American Heritage Dictionary', stream of consciousness (n.) , is (1) a literary technique wherein the thoughts of the character is presented to the reader as they go through the person's consciousness or (2) a conscious experience of an individual regarded as a continuous flowing series of images and ideas running through the mind.

In his discussion regarding *Stream of Consciousness in The Modern Novel*, Robert Hurley explains that "stream of consciousness is a technique that records the multifarious thoughts and feelings of a character without regard to logical argument or narrative sequence. The writer attempts by the stream of consciousness to reflect all the forces, external and internal , influencing the psychology of a character at a single moment. It presents directly the thoughts and feelings of a character as they occur. In other words it presents directly the uninterrupted flow of a character's thoughts, impressions , and feelings , without the conventional devices of dialogue and description". Hurley believes that " stream of consciousness as a narrative technique in non

dramatic fiction intended to render the flow of myriad impressions-visual, auditory, physical, associative, and subliminal-that impinge on the consciousness of an individual and form part of his awareness along with the trend of his rational thoughts." (*Hurley, p.27*)

'Stream of consciousness' writing comes in a variety of stylistic forms, most importantly narrated stream of consciousness and quoted stream of consciousness ('interior monologue') . Narrated 'stream of consciousness' is most often composed of a variety of sentence types including psycho-narration (the narrative report of character's psychological states), and free indirect style. Interior monologue is the direct quotation of character's silent speech, though not necessarily marked with speech marks.

This term is often used as a synonym of interior monologue , but they can also be distinguished, in two ways. In the first (psychological (psychological) sense, the stream of consciousness is the subject-matter while interior monologue is the technique for presenting it. In the second (literary) sense, stream of consciousness is a special style of interior monologue: while an interior monologue always presents a character's thoughts 'directly', without the apparent intervention of a summarizing and selecting narrator, it does not necessarily mingle them with the impressions and perceptions, nor does it necessarily violate the norms of grammar, syntax , and logic ; but the stream of consciousness technique also does one or both of these things.

In grammar , stream of consciousness is a kind of writing that presents the thoughts of a person or character as they occur. " It uses devices such as characters speaking to themselves, free association , and lists of words. In the twentieth century, writers attempting to capture the total flow of their characters' consciousness commonly used the technique of interior monologue, which represent a sequence of thought and feeling." (www. questia)

Who first invented the stream of consciousness technique ? and what were its sources ? are questions more interesting than important . Something like it occurs intermittingly in many novelists of the past when dealing with characters whose mental control is lax; there are obvious instances in Richardson, Smollett, Maria Edgeworth and of

course Dickens . James Joyce, whose talents were so much greater, will be regarded as much more than this.

Chapter Two : Stephen's Childhood

In this chapter, , we are essentially given a window into Stephen's consciousness, and the whole is unveiled to us through that single aperture. The narrative prose follows and reflects the stages of Stephen's intellectual development, whether imitating the childlike simplicity of his earliest memories or the thrilling awareness of his artistic awakening. It swoops when Stephen is high; it crashes when he is brought low. the beginning of the book-describing Stephen's experiences as a baby-represents the thoughts of an infant as well as other people's so-called baby talk to an infant:

“Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road and this moocow...His father told him that story: his father looked at him through a glass: he had a hairy face. (A Portrait, ch. 1, p. 7)

Through the artistic use of the stream of consciousness , Joyce exposes us directly to Stephen's interior world. We are given no clues how to feel or react ; we have no privileged position outside of the narrative_ Stephen's environment is just Stephen's environment, Stephen's thought's are just Stephen's thought's :

"A development of the single point of view in which reality appears only as it is mirrored in the observations , sensations , and memories of a single character . " (Milligan, p . 100)

Joyce who follows the character Stephen Dedalus as he grows into manhood, begins with his earliest childhood, making a considerable use of this technique. The illusion of watching the workings of Stephen's mind is often generated by showing how circumstances in the external action evoke mental processes, how specific elements trigger mental images, how impressions from the outer world are

absorbed by his consciousness and how external 'reality' is transmuted by his private vision .

The evolution of Stephen and sensibilities as shown by his responses to these illuminating moments ; listening to the sound of the prose and the organization of Stephen's thoughts , one can feel that he is growing older .

As we follow him through the course of his first year at Clongowes , we realize that he becomes more accepted by his classmates, although he will always remain something of an outsider- at this stage of his life Stephen is always presented as an easy target for bullies because of his sensitive nature, small size and social awkwardness. He comforts himself with thoughts of how it will feel to return home.

Once, one of the classmates called Wells came over to Stephen and asked him whether he kisses his mother before he goes to bed . Stephen answered yes I do. Wells turned to the other fellows and said: "O , I say , here's a fellow says he kisses his mother every night before he goes to bed .The other fellows stopped their game and turned round, laughing. Stephen blushed under their eyes and said: I do not . Wells said: O, I say, here's a fellow says he doesn't kiss his mother before he goes to bed." . Stephen started to think why Wells and the others were laughing;

" he tried to think what was the right answer; was it right to kiss his mother or wrong to kiss his mother? What did that mean, to kiss? Was it right? (*A Portrait,ch.1, p. 14*)

This incident along with a later one when Wells would shoulder him into the square ditch made Stephen feel sick. " The cold slime of the ditch covered his whole body; and , when the bell rang for study and the lines filed out of the playrooms , he felt the cold air of the corridor and staircase inside his clothes " . (*Ibid , p.15*)

Joyce, now , would use the stream of consciousness remarkably . Stephen , who gets a fever from the filthy water, fantasizes about how sorry everyone will be when he dies:

He wondered if he would die. You could die just the same on a sunny day. He might die before his mother came. Then he would have a dead mass in the chapel like the way the fellows had told him it was when Little had died. All the fellows would be at the mass , dressed in black, All with sad faces. Wells too would be in a cope of black and gold and there would be tall yellow candles on the altarand he would be buried in the little graveyard of the community off the main avenue of limes. And Wells would be sorry then. And the bell would toll slowly. (*Ibid*, P.22)

Throughout this initial phase of his life, we see several traits in Stephen that are the seeds of a formidable personality. Joyce uses the stream of consciousness excessively during this earlier stage of Stephen's life to intensify the fact that throughout all his interactions with the others, he is either silent or he keeps his thoughts to himself when he disagrees ; " he is not a whiner, despite his sensitivity. He is tough enough to go to the rector and complain of Father Dolan's unfairness ". (*Ch.2, P. 52*). These moments of strength are not easy for Stephen. He is an extremely sensitive child and his athletic incompetence makes him nervous and fearful .

Chapter Three : Stephen's Adolescence

Joyce uses the stream of consciousness method most thoroughly in his treatment of Stephen during this critical stage of his life. With Stephen , Joyce suggests rather than fully records the stream of consciousness; " as he walks through Dublin, stray thoughts flicker through his mind like fishes, thoughts suggested by whatever business he is about, by things that catch his eye in the streets , by smells that assail his nostrils; and all the time , coming sometimes to consciousness through association with these sense- impressions". (*Ch. 2, p. 49*)

Adolescence is a conflicted time for Stephen and an extremely important one. Stephen realizes that he has changed completely; that his childhood seems like a dim memory. As an outlet for his longing for adventure , Stephen is enraptured by *The Count of Monte Cristo*,

he imagines himself living through the adventures of the protagonist, culminating in his rejection of his old love, Mercedes:

" The figure of that dark avenger stood forth in his mind for whatever he had heard or divined in childhood of the strong and terrible. At night he built up on the parlor table an image of the wonderful island cave out of transfers and paper flowers and the coloured tissue paper and the stripes of the silver and golden paper in which chocolate is wrapped. When he had broken up this scenery, weary of its tinsel , there would come to his mind the bright picture of Marseilles, of sunny trellises and of Mercedes. Outside Blackrock, on the road that led to the mountains, stood a small whitewashed house in the garden of which grew many rosebushes: and in this house, he told himself , another Mercedes lived. Both on the outward and on the homeward journeys he measured distance by this landmark: and in his imagination he lived through a long train of adventures, marvelous as those in the book itself, towards the close of which there appeared an image of himself, grown older and sadder , standing in a moonlit garden with Mercedes who had so many years before slighted his love, and with a saddy proud gesture of refusal , saying: Maddam , I never eat muscatel grapes." (*A portrait, p. 58*)

Joyce presents Stephen as a teenager having a vague conception of a world of images that he longs to meet; he also awaits some kind of transformation, although he is not exactly sure what it will entail . It is the night of the Whitsuntide play , and Stephen is taking a moment for himself as he prepares to go on stage and act his part. Outside, he runs into Wallis and Heron who tease him about a girl in the audience. Their chiding sets off a new train of thoughts for Stephen, as he remembers an incident that took place during his term at Belvedere. He thinks about the girl sitting in the audience , remembering their shy contact and his unfulfilled desire to kiss her:

" A shaft of momentary anger flew through Stephen's mind at these indelicate illusions in the hearing of a stranger. for him there was nothing amusing in a girl's interest and regard. All

day he had thought of nothing but their leave taking on the steps of the train at Harold's Cross, the stream of moody emotions it had made to course through him, and the poem he had written about it. All day he had imagined a new meeting with her for he knew that she was to come to the play. The old restless moodiness had again filled his breast as it had done on the night of the party but had not found an outlet in verse." (*ibid*, p. 71)

His family was waiting for him, but he left quickly without answering his father's question. He ran across the road and began to walk :

He hardly knew where he was walking. Pride and hope and desire-like crushed herbs in his heart sent up vapours of maddening incense before the eyes of his mind . He strode down the hill amid the tumult of sudden risen vapours of wounded pride and fallen hope and baffled desire. They streamed upwards before his anguished eyes in dense and maddening fumes and passed away above him till at last the air was clear and cold again. (*Ibid*, p. 80)

Joyce at this critical stage of Stephen's life tries to emphasize his isolation from others . He intensifies the use of the stream of consciousness to cope with the intensity of Stephen's dreams and memories:

Every event and figure of which affected him intimately, disheartened him or allured and, whether alluring or disheartening, filled him always with unrest and bitter thoughts ." (*Classic* . p.12)

In his essay, Gifford states that Stephen , as an adolescent , "is full of thoughts and feelings that he can not articulate to others." Some time later, Stephen is taking a voyage by train with his father .They are going to Cork to sell property at an auction. There in Cork , Stephen's father chats up everybody about old times and how things were; only when Stephen goes with his father to Queen's College do his father's stories come to life:

On the desk before him he read the word 'Fetus' cut several times in the dark stained wood. The sudden legend startled his blood: he seemed to feel the absent students of the college about him and to shrink from their company. A vision of their life which his father's word had been powerless to evoke, sprang up before him out of the word cut in the desk. A broad-shouldered student with a moustache was cutting in the letters with a jackknife, seriously. Other students stood or sat near him laughing at his handiwork. One jogged his elbow. The big student turned on him, frowning. He was dressed in loose grey clothes and had tan boots. (Ibid, P. 83)

Stephen can imagine the boy carving the letters, the students of the past sitting and studying, all of them now aged or dead. The word also reminds Stephen of his increasing preoccupation with sex.

Joyce will jump now into another phase in Stephen's mental and spiritual development. This in fact demands a change in the use of the technique. The voices of his elders and peers often sound hollow to him, but he does not yet have a means of rebellion. His isolation does not mean he despises his family and peers; he simply feels disconnected from them. (Gifford, p. 47)

Whether under the influence of William James, Henri Bergson or other psychological thinkers of the time Joyce developed an idea that "the very essence of life and personality was to be found in these activities of the mind." (Allen, p. 344). Stephen starts seeing prostitutes. He enters a period of deep confusion and spiritual paralysis. He considers his actions to be terribly sinful, but he becomes strangely indifferent towards the idea of eternal damnation. He continues his studies and his duties in the society of the Blessed Virgin. He finds himself an altogether less pleasant person, as if his violation of one rule has led to a complete loss of self-control; although he begins with lust, he lately finds himself tainted by all of the Seven Deadly Sins. (Classic . p.14)

Chapter Four : Stephen's Manhood

Joyce used St. Francis Feast Day as an entrance to another stage in Stephen's life . It is the stage of manhood ; or as it will be reflected a rebellion against the Catholic values. At first he enters a state of moral paralysis and confusion.

Having broken one rule , he seems to lose the ability to maintain any kind of moral structure or self- discipline. His deep unrest manifests itself as a general souring of his whole personality. His situation is difficult. He is indulging in the pleasures of the flesh for the first time , but he soon learns that to abandon the moral order in which one was raised is no easy thing:

He had sinned mortally not once but many times and he knew that , while he stood in danger of eternal damnation for the first sin alone, by every succeeding sin he multiplied his guilt and his punishment. His days and works and thoughts could make no atonement for him , the fountains of sanctifying grace having ceased to refresh his soul ... his sin, which had covered him from the sight of God, had led him nearer to the refuge of sinners. (*Ch.3 , p.98*)

In his treatment of this subject, Kershner enters into Stephen's mind to find out that " he is tormented increasingly by a bodily lust that ever drives him to a prostitute. The first prostitute is not the last ; he is plunged into a life of serious Catholic sin". His sense of being lost makes it possible for Father Arnall's sermons during St. Frances Xavier's Feast Day to bring him back the church. (*P. 34*).

During the three days of the retreat Joyce is extremely anxious to portray Stephen's fears and spiritual pains .On each of the three days of the retreat , " Stephen hears a fiery sermon on the torments of hell and the punishments meted out by the just but stern God. Stephen is made sick with fear; the sermons seem as though they were written specially for him. He thinks about his sins , and is too fearful to confess to God, Who seems to him too fearful, or the Blessed Virgin , who seems too pure" (*p. 31*).

Joyce presents Stephen now as a sinner who is overwhelmed with a restless feeling of guilt and remorse . He has terrible nightmares about hell; the dreams are so intense that he wakes and vomits:

That was the work of devils, to scatter his thoughts and overclouded his conscience, assailing him at the gates of the cowardly and sin corrupted flesh: and, praying God timidly to forgive him his weakness, he crawled up on to the bed and, warping the blankets closely about him, covered his face again with his hands. He had sinned. He had sinned so deeply against heaven and before God that he was not worthy to be called God's child. Could it be that he, Stephen Dedalus, had done those things? His conscience sighed in answer. Yes, he had done them, secretly, filthily, time after time, and, hardened in sinful impenitence, he had dared to wear the mask of holiness before the tabernacle itself while his soul was a living mass of corruption. How come it that God had not struck him dead? The leprous company of his sins closed about him, breathing upon him, bending over him from all sides, He strove to forget them in an act of prayer, huddling his limbs closer together and binding down his eyelids: but the senses of his soul would not be bound and, though his eyes were shut fast, he saw the places where he had sinned and, though his ears were tightly covered, he heard. He desired with all his will not to hear or see. He desired till his frame shook under the strain of his desire and until the senses of his soul closed. They closed for an instant and then opened. He saw. A field of stiff weeds and thistles and tufted nettle bunches. Thick among the sifts of rank stiff growth lay battered canisters and clots and coils of solid excrement. A faint marsh light struggled upwards from all the ordure through the bristling grey green weeds. An evil smell, faint and foul as the light, curled upwards sluggishly out of the canisters and from the stale crusted dung. Creatures were in the field; one, three, six, creatures were moving in the field, hither and thither. Goatish creatures with human faces, horny browed, lightly bearded and grey as India-rubber. The malice of evil glittered in

their hard eyes, as they moved hither and thither..."
(*Ch.3, pp. 123-127*)

The sermons prey perfectly on his active imagination and sensitive nature . He thinks lengthily about the inevitability of judgment. God who gave many opportunities for repentance during life, will be transformed from God the Merciful to God the Just. He imagines himself being brought back to God through Emma , the girl to whom he tried to write a poem. She seems approachable enough. He feels that he must confess , but he is too ashamed to do so:

He thinks deeply and fearfully about the elaborated sermon on the hell's tortures, the greatest of which is being cut off from God. Fear drives him back. He searches for a church where he can go and make confession with true anonymity . He finally finds one and he confesses all. the world seems born anew when he steps out of the church. He resolves to live a new life of piety. (*Ibid, p.133*)

Stephen's mind and soul are filled with great determination to change from a degraded sinner to a devoted young man. Fear drives him back. He becomes almost fanatically pious , devoting himself daily to prayer and contemplation of catholic doctrines. He sweeps away any doubts or misgivings he has with the idea that at a later stage of his spiritual development , all will be clear. He forces different forms of unpleasantness on himself to punish each of his five senses. Stephen , having given to the carnal pleasure, is made to fear for his soul .He returns ,feverishly , to the Church:

Every part of his day , divided by what he regarded now as the duties of his station in life, circled about its own centre of spiritual energy. His life seemed to have drawn near eternity; every thought, word and deed, every instance of consciousness could be made to re-vibrate radiantly in heaven... on each of the seven days of the week he further prayed that one of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost might descend upon his soul and drive out of it day by day the seven deadly sins which had defiled it in the past.

(Ch. 4, p. 135)

The utmost employment of the stream of consciousness is used now cleverly and remarkably . Joyce will jump now to one of the most important and crucial scenes in the novel The director tries to draw Stephen to the calling by describing the incredible responsibility and power of a priest . The idea is not without its appeal for Stephen. After he leaves the rector's office, he continues to reflect on the life of the priest. He thinks about along life of pondering obscure questions of Catholic doctrine. Even more vividly , " he imagines the stale odor in halls of Clongowes , and of spending his life wandering through corridors such as these , in the end he realizes that such a life repulses him. The life of a priest would be contrary to Stephen's desire for freedom and independence " (Keshner, p 18). When Stephen **imagines** the life of a priest, his repulsion is grounded in the physical senses:

Stephen prefers another odoure: the sour smell of over ripped cabbages in the path leading home. It is the world of life and living, with its mess and sheer physicality, that interest Stephen. He realizes that he will " sin " again ; he accepts that he was not made to live a spotless life. Rather he will live life to the fullest and accept that part of his growth will include making great mistakes. The shrine of the Blessed Virgin is too tidy , too sterile . Stephen prefers mess and he will live his life accordingly. (*Ibid*, p. 145)

The vision of a girl wading in the ocean water makes Stephen feel something akin of divine revelation:

He turned away from her suddenly and set off across the strand. His checks were aflame ; his body was a glow ; his limbs were trembling. On and on and on and on he strode, far out over the sands, singing wildly to the sea , crying to greet the advent of the life that had cried to him. 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! (*P. 147*)

Joyce , who cleverly employs the technique of stream of consciousness will presents Stephen during this stage of his life as a young discontented man. The movement from Catholic piety to an acceptance of the physical as a part of beauty is central to this chapter. " Stephen tries to constrain the very impulses that distinguish him as an individual: sensitivity to sensation, interest in beauty. But the sensual world of real living wins"(*Classic. P. 13*)

The faint sour stink of rotted cabbages come towards him from the kitchen gardens on the rising ground above the river. He smiled to think that it was this disorder, the misrule and confusion of his father's house and the stagnation of vegetable life , which was to win the day in his soul. (*A Portrait, p. 148*)

The style of this work, the language and the intensive use of the stream of consciousness , all are developed gradually to reflect the increasing impacts of the protagonist reactions ,memories , reflections and ideas through out the three main phases of his growth. The tone is considerably changed in order to focus more exclusively on the perspective of Stephen. Joyce changes his style by intensifying dialogue- scenes which reflect Stephen's growth as well as his alienation from society

" His obsession with Emma is more aesthetic and abstract ; he has admired her afar for ten years, but in truth he does not know her that well. His contemplation of her is based on a very abstract idea of women. Emma exists more as Stephen's muse than as a flesh and blood woman ”

(*Ch.5, p 201*)

In this chapter, Joyce describes vividly the growth undergone by Stephen with regard to his new perception of the world around him. University has provided crucial intellectual material for Stephen's growth. The new ideas about beauty are his obsession. His aesthetic theory, is very sophisticated for a college student. Stephen now has moved from sensitivity and unfocused love of beauty to an obsessive and methodical contemplation of aesthetics:

Though the same object may not seem beautiful to all people, all people who admire a beautiful object find in it certain relations which satisfy and coincide with the stages themselves of all aesthetic apprehension. This relations of the sensible, visible to you through one form and to me through another, must be therefore the necessary qualities of beauty. (*Ibid* , p. 204)

The idea of escape obsessed Stephen greatly . It is most often symbolized by flight. On the library steps , Stephen watches dreamily as the birds fly above him:

He watched their flight ; bird after bird: a dark flash swerve , a flash again , a dart aside , a curve , a filter of winds. He tried to count them before all their darting quivering bodies passed: six, ten, eleven: and wondered were they odd or even in number. (*Ch. 5* , p. 205)

Although too complicated and lengthy to summarize in a satisfactory way, the last part of the novel merit a close look for a deeper understanding of Stephen: " These include his own definitions of piety, terror ; his delineation between static art (the sublime art that invites contemplation without spurring the viewer to action), and kinetic art (art that moves the viewer to do something). During lectures Stephen's attention wanders back to his ideas about art " (*Classic. P. 19*). In a critical essay in *The Nineteenth Century Novel* , Northrop Frye states that " one of the most important things that had made this novel a very remarkable one is the revelation of character and incident through the searching use of the stream of consciousness technique. The author jumps into Stephen's mind to follow his stream of consciousness, and out again to describe it externally." (p.35)

According to this idea, Joyce travels freely in Stephen's mind , searching for a suitable conclusion for his ideas and contemplations regarding independence, freedom and aesthetics : "The artist , like the God of creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence , indifferent, paring his finger-nails. (*Ch.5*, p. 215)

Conclusion

In *A Portrait of an Artist as a young Man* , Joyce followed Stephen's life from childhood through adolescence to first flash of manhood using one of the most artistic and remarkable techniques ever used in English Novel . As Stephen matures through various family conflicts and periods of study at Jesuit schools, he begins to rebel against his family, his religion, and his nation. Finally, in order to establish himself as an individual and to find his identity as an artist, he seeks self-imposed exile in Paris

What particularly sets *Portrait* apart from other " coming of age " books is Joyce's manipulation of the narrative itself- the language and syntax used at each point in the book reflect the age and intellectual development of Stephen.

To link the sections of his novel and the phases of Stephen's life; Joyce used elaborate patterns of symbols which echo and re-echo through the text, the use of stream of consciousness .

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