
A Peculiar Structure of an Autobiographical Novel

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Chapter One

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man written by James Joyce is more or less autobiographical. Stephen Dedalus, the hero of this novel, goes to Joyce's schools and shares many of Joyce's friends who are disguised by other names. Stephen's home is something like Joyce's own, and his father is a little like Joyce's own. Herbert Gorman, who wrote the biography of James Joyce, says in his book "The truth about himself he began to see as a sort of autobiographical novel, a story of his school and college days through which would walk thinly disguised or disguised not at all the variegated personalities, family, instructors and companions, who had influenced (however briefly) his own development." (1)

But the more we know of Joyce, it becomes plain that 'A Portrait' is not a mere autobiography. Here and there it is obvious that Joyce allowed himself a certain amount of liberty in the composition of his self-portrait. When we compare the early draft of 'A Portrait' published in 1944 as 'Stephen Hero' with 'A Portrait', we can find how much the author omitted and selected for his final version. In 'A Portrait', for instance, no mention is made of the death of Stephen's sister Isabel, although in the early draft her illness and death are mentioned of. In this draft Stephen refuses to perform his Easter duty, his mother wanting him to offer up his communion

for a special intention concerning Isabel. If we read the biography by Gorman, we find that in real life it was Joyce's brother, George, that died, so that even 'Stephen Hero' changes the actual facts somewhat. These changes concern an important event, for the conscientious refusal in question, whether actually repeated or not at the deathbed of his mother, became in many ways the turning point of Joyce's life and the great obsession of his authorship. In 'A Portrait' we only hear about the bare refusal as reported to Cranly, one of Stephen's friends, but thus incorporated in the conversation with his friend, it affords to Stephen an opportunity for an immediate and complete declaration of apostasy followed at once by the realization that he must fly his home and country. The effect is one of deliberateness and concentration as compared with the earlier more extended narrative, 'Stephen Hero'. In 'Ulysses' the same incident is used for dramatic effect and thematic significance. The apostasy is connected with the death of Stephen's mother, and his haunting sense of guilt contains no memory of a sister betrayed in death. Joyce slightly changed lineaments of Cranly and his other friends to make Stephen more obviously the main character. Altogether, he compressed and dramatized his material, but also internalized a number of things in Stephen's mind which really took place in discussions or in action. It is clear that the finished portrait is a less literal record than the draft version of the autobiography and it is far from a photographic reproduction of life. It is true that Stephen is Joyce himself, but it is dangerous to conclude so. Joyce does not show the real incidents or materials as they are. Instead, he selected the ideas, the dreams, etc., which had

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most fascinated or troubled his mind since his childhood, and changing them, he put them in Stephen's consciousness symbolically.

Theodore Spencer, who wrote the introduction of 'Stephen Hero', says that Joyce was also trying to place his center of action as much as possible inside the consciousness of his hero. (2) And Kristian Smidt, who is one of the scholars of Joyce's works, explains in his essay, "An immeasurable mass of the stuff that personalities are made of is won so gradually and is so elusive or so deeply hidden that it cannot be explained in matter-of-fact terms. Such gradual experience, which in reality is stretched over periods of years, may be condensed by the artist into a symbol or to use a word of Joyce's—an "epiphany." I suspect that this took place in the first story of 'Dubliners', entitled 'The Sisters', in which a child, fascinated by the memory of an old priest and by the spell of the word "Paralysis", looks with fear and longing into a dim region of vice and corruption. I feel that the story, with its sudden revelation of the magnetism of evil, sums up in a way the gradual growth of a mood of the author's childhood, so that it is symbolically, if not historically, true." (3)

Stephen Dedalus says in 'A Portrait' that every artist uses "his image". Though this could mean an image made by him or an image of himself, the second seems more applicable here, for this artist as a young man (Stephen) is more or less Joyce's image of himself, when young. But we must be careful to separate created image from creator as William York Tindall says in his book. (4) Joyce doesn't show us his image, the incidents, the ideas, etc., as they occurred.

'A Portrait' is not a literal record as I mentioned above. Joyce

selected the incidents, ideas, dreams, etc., which had most fascinated, troubled and obsessed him since his childhood. They are, for instance, his consciousness of the corrupted politics, relation between a father or mother and a son, and his haunting sense of guilt for his mother. Joyce doesn't explain his image for himself in 'A Portrait'. This is the greatest difference between 'A Portrait' and the draft version and also other autobiographical novels. He doesn't stand between the passages. His figure is invisible in his novel. He puts his image into Stephen's mind. This shows the most fundamental and important attitude of Joyce toward his works. Stephen declares his theory as an artist in the last chapter of 'A Portrait', "The personality of the artist, at first a cry or a cadence or a mood and then a fluid and lambent narrative, finally refines itself out of existence, impersonalizes itself, so to speak. The esthetic image in the dramatic form is life purified in and reprojected from the human imagination. The mystery of esthetic, like that of material creation, is accomplished. The artist, like the God of ceation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails." (5)

Joyce's or Stephen's attitude as an artist is very objective, not subjective. Stephen says that the works of art produced by such an attitude above mentioned are static, and that they are the most ideal works of art. 'A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man' written by Joyce having such an attitude is on the one hand autobiographical, and on the other hand is very objective work. It may be due to the structure, the style which Joyce used in the novel.

Chapter two deals with this particular subject, the structure which

Joyce used in the novel.

Chapter Two

'A Portrait' appeared in 1916 when many writers had found the "novel of adolescence" (or the "Bildungsroman", development novel, as the Germans name it) a congenial form.

The writers dealing with the subject of adolescence develop this subject from childhood through adolescence.

Maugham's 'Of Human Bondage', Wolfe's 'Look Homeward, Angel', Mann's 'Magic Mountain', Goethe's 'Wilhelm Meister', Meredith's 'The Ordeal of Richard Feverel,' and Butler's 'The Way of All Flesh', are outstanding among innumerable twentieth-century examples of this kind.

Joyce was familiar with Butler, Meredith, and Goethe. References to 'The Way of All Flesh' can be found in Joyce's 'Finnegans Wake' (6), and references to 'The Ordeal of Richard Feverel', 'Wilhelm Meister' can be found in 'Ulysses' (7) Whether deliberately based on this pattern or not, 'A Portrait' generally conforms to it. In Joyce's Bildungsroman (A Portrait), as in most of the others, we find a sensitive youth shaped by his surroundings, feeling their pressure, and rebelling against them to become himself. The theme of these books is not only the process of growing up, but the revolt against father that every son must undertake in order to become something like him. This is one of Joyce's great themes, not only here but in later books. We know that Joyce read many of these novels of adolescence published in the years immediately preceding the appearance of 'A Portrait', and found

their subject matter applicable to the autobiographical circumstances that he had decided earlier to fictionalize.

It is true that Joyce's 'A Portrait' and novels produced by other writers dealing with the subjects of problems of adolescence have similarities. But on the other hand great difference can be detected, for instance the emphasis on the attitude of the writer and the way of expression. Let me compare, for instance, 'A Portrait' with Samuel Butler's 'The Way of All Flesh'. Unwilling to fall in with the discursive trend of later naturalistic novels whose authors spared no words to expatiate on the remotest branches of the hero's family tree, Joyce refused to allot, as Butler does, a full eighty-six pages of commentary before the main character, Ernest Pontifex in 'The Way of All Flesh', is allowed even to be born. Joyce's Stephen hears about moocows in the very first sentence of 'A Portrait'. Joyce brings the reader into the picture as an active participant in the experience. His method, more over, by eliminating the omniscient narrator, necessarily eliminates explicit moralizing on man and nature, which Butler found indispensable. As Stephen declares in 'A Portrait', Joyce remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, and invisible. His attitude toward Stephen is objective, so the novel has something objective in spite of an autobiographical novel. As I have repeatedly mentioned, Joyce himself does not narrate the hero's mind. He brings the reader into the hero's mind as an active participant in the experience. I am sure that in order to make this effective Joyce adopted the way of expression from other arts except literature. One is from movies and the other is from music.

Chapter Three

In this chapter I will attempt to explain about the way of expression which, I think, Joyce adopted from movies. The first chapter of 'A Portrait' consists of four parts, connected by idea and theme, but separated by gaps without transitions. The first and shortest of these parts is Stephen's infancy. Suddenly, skipping years, we find Stephen at school, on playground, in classroom, in dormitory, in infirmary. At the third part we find him back at home for that Christmas dinner. He suddenly reappears on playground and in refectory, complains in the rector's study, and on playground again, enjoys social success. Bodily, Stephen does not move. Only his mind moves through the past, the future, and the present.

Although the gaps that separate these matters give some readers trouble, they are what we are accustomed to in movies, where flash-backs abound and where we pass without the aid of transitional devices or explanations from one scene to the next. We can find, in the biography by Gorman, the fact that Joyce was interested in movies and he tried to keep a movie theatre in Dublin. Joyce may have availed himself of their method. At any rate, the sudden juxtaposition of apparently unrelated things is like that with which the moviegoer is familiar.

The second part of the first chapter, showing Stephen at school, is an intricate pattern of actual experience, memory, and thought, connected by free association, parallelism or antithesis, and recurrent images. The opening scene begins with Stephen on the playground. Bodily he is there, but his mind hardly is there. He at-

tends to memories of his father and mother, the square ditch, and mother again. After a momentary return to the playground, his mind wanders by way of words like "belt" and "suck" to the drain at the Wicklow Hotel and the lavatory at school.

This cross section of the mind (combining sensation, memory, and thought) anticipates "Internal Monologue" or "The Stream of Consciousness" that Joyce perfected in 'Ulysses'.

This method adopted from movies was mastered by D. W. Griffith, which Eisenstein, his successor, called "montage" or "the placing of unlikely things together for the effect of their union". Harry Levin explains it as follows. Joyce's efforts to achieve immediacy lead him to equate form and content, to ignore the distinction between the things he is describing and the words he is using to describe them. In this equation, time is of the essence. Events are reported when and as they occur; the tense is a continuous present. Joyce did not begin his 'A Portrait', as other autobiographers would, by summoning up a retrospective account of his earliest remembrances. Instead, the opening pages of the book are presented as an exact verbal equivalent of the opening impressions of his life. ----- The story of 'Ulysses' takes no longer to happen than to read; acting time, as it were, is simultaneous with reading time. ----- Bloom's mind is neither a *tabula rasa* nor a photographic plate, but a motion picture, which has been ingeniously cut and carefully edited to emphasize the close-ups and fade-outs of flickering emotion, the angles of observation and the flashbacks of reminiscence. In its intimacy and in its continuity, 'Ulysses' has more in common with the cinema

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than with other fiction. The movement of Joyce's style, the thought of his characters, is like unreeling film; his method of construction, the arrangement of this raw material, involves the crucial operation of "montage". (8) It is no doubt that Stephen's mind in 'A Portrait' is like unreeling film as well as Bloom's mind in 'Ulysses'. Let me quote passages from another scholar. "Both James Joyce and Virginia Woolf use it (montage), as do other stream-of-consciousness writers, because the quality of consciousness itself demands a movement that is not rigid clock progression. It demands instead the freedom of shifting back and forth, of intermingling past, present, and imagined future. In representing this montage in fiction, David Daiches points out there are two methods: one is that in which the subject can remain fixed in space and his consciousness can move in time ——— the result is time-montage or the superimposition of images or ideas from one time on those of another; the other possibility, of course, is for time to remain fixed and for the spatial element to change, which results in space-montage. The chief function of all of the cinematic devices, particularly of the basic one of montage, is to express movement and coexistence. It is this ready-made device for representing the nonstatic and the nonfocused which the stream-of-consciousness writers have grasped to aid them in accomplishing what is, after all, their fundamental purpose: to represent the dual aspect of human life ——— the inner life simultaneously with the outer life." (9)

Stephen's stream of consciousness in the second part of chapter one can be said to be the most remarkable example of time-montage. Of course the author's figure cannot be found there.

Chapter Four

In this chapter I will explain about the way of expression adopted from music. The way of expression adopted in this novel is very objective. I think that Joyce adopted this way to present the static beauty in his novel which he thought the most ideal one. An author must devise the particular way of expression so that he can objectively present the most subjective reality he got. The subjective elements which music has can be presented objectively because it has the peculiar rule. Tindall says that the novel ('A Portrait') suggests the classical symphony. (10) According to the biography of Joyce by Gorman, Joyce had an excellent grounding in music like his father. His tenor voice was as good as a professional. Once he intended to set himself up in music.

The structure of 'A Portrait' seems to bear some resemblance to "sonata form" in music. I will make the chapters of 'A Portrait' under the classification of "sonata form".

sonata form	the structure of 'A Portrait'
(1) <u>the first part</u> presenting the (leit)motif	(1) chapter one...part one
(2) <u>the second part</u> developing the motif	(2) chapter one... part two, three, four, chapter two, three, four
(3) <u>the third part</u> reproducing the motif	(3) chapter five

There are certainly two main motives in 'A Portrait'. One is Stephen's exile from his surroundings (his country, home, religion, politics, and so on), and the other is that Stephen sets himself up as an artist. Joyce adopted "leitmotif" in music, which we can find

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in Wagnerian Musical Drama by Richard Wagner (1813 — 1883), in order to present the form of his novel effectively. The Wagnerian school, with its thematic blend of music and ideas, had its obvious lesson for a novelist who had wanted to be a lyric poet or a professional singer.

According to one standard American dictionary, "leitmotif" means "a marked melodic phrase or short passage, expressive of, or associated with, a certain idea, person, or situation and accompanying its reappearance".

Robert Humphrey defines its meaning as follows. "Transferred to literary terms it may be defined as a recurring image, symbol, word, or phrase which carries a static association with a certain idea or theme." (11) As I have already mentioned, Joyce read the works of George Meredith when young. Perhaps Joyce adopted the style of Meredith's works. Joyce as a young man liked the novels of Meredith. In 'Stephen Hero' the insistent comment and slightly patronizing air of the author probably owe something to Meredith's model, and Stephen's ecstasy in the fourth chapter of 'A Portrait' is very likely indebted to comparable ecstasies of Richard in 'The Ordeal of Richard Feverel' by Meredith. In 'Ulysses' Stephen borrows Meredith's definition of sentimentalist to confound Buck Mulligan, and Joyce adapts Meredith's most radical technical device.

We can find the following review on George Meredith. The review explains about the most radical technical device of Meredith. "the reception of theme words with increasing ramifications until they coalesce in a significant statement." (12) Joyce must have been interested in Meredith's vigorous wrestle with the problems of

secular affirmation in a shaken age.

The expressive reiteration of an action, a situation, or a speech, which eventuates in the emergence of a significant pattern of meaning or feeling essential to the unity of the novel is scarcely noticeable to the reader, but the motif may be insistently present in the consciousness of the reader (i. e., the red and green imagery of the first chapter) without the reader knowing precisely what to make of the theme or what to do with it. Certain motives, finally, clear in their significance, frequent in their occurrence, need little critical exegesis to be felt and understood by the average reader.

I think the first part of chapter one in 'A Portrait' comes under the first part of "sonata form" This part concerns infancy at Bray, a town to the south of Dublin. All the motives are introduced in this part, and they contain the germ of all that Joyce had to say in 'A Portrait' and in each of his subsequent novels. Joyce allots only two pages for this part, but he introduces the two main motives in this short part. One is Stephen's struggling and revolt against his surroundings (particularly against religion), and the other is the sign that Stephen will become an artist. "Dante had two brushes in her press. The brush with the maroon velvet back was for Michael Davitt and the brush with the green velvet back was for Parnell." (13)

This passage refers to Charles Stuart Parnell who fought to bring freedom into Ireland as the leader. This is followed by the discussion about politics in the third part of this chapter.

"The Vances lived in number seven. They had a different father and mother. They were Eileen's father and mother. When they were

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grown up he was going to marry Eileen.”(14) Here the motives of religion and sex are introduced. Eileen was a protestant, and Aunt Dante did not like Stephen to play with a protestant child. Longing for Eileen and E. C. (Emma Clery) is to be an impulse of producing his art for Stephen. The last passage of this part has the most important meaning.

He hid under the table. His mother said.

-----O, Stephen will apologize

Dante said :

-----O, if not, the eagles will come and pull out his eyes.

Pull out his eyes,

Apologize,

Apologize,

Pull out his eyes.

Apologize,

Pull out his eyes,

Apologize. (15)

For what does Stephen have to apologize.? For his intention to marry Eileen? I think we should not leave it at that. I think his authority (his mother and his governess) demands Stephen should admit and apologize for the alleged error of his way rebelling against his surroundings (politics, religion, home, and so on, introduced in this short part). And, moreover, the prohibition of Stephen's meeting with Eileen suggests, not only he is compelled to enter religion (for Catholicism, not Protestantism), but also he should not produce his art, because the meeting with the girls is to be an impulse of producing his art for Stephen.

The rest of chapter one, and chapter two, three, four comes under the second part developing the motives in "sonata form". Stephen comes to lose faith in Catholicism His new deity is the goddess of Beauty and Art. If we follow Stephen's development in 'A Portrait', we see that the spirit of Beauty is revealed to him hazily first in sounds, as is natural with a person of pronounced musical gifts. From all the concrete impressions of beauty emerges a vague feeling of a general essence or spirit of Beauty, over and above its manifestations.

The impulse which completed the transformation of beauty into a personified deity was, as is often the case, that of sex. Sex, art and religion with them are certainly merged in Joyce's case. Harry Levin says in his book, 'In Stephen's mind a symbolic association between art and sex is established, and that precocious revelation helps him to decide his later conflict between art and religion.' (16) Stephen attains with the dream vision of E. C. the sexual consummation which, in 'A Portrait', he is too timid to ask for in reality, and at the same time a poetic consummation: a quaint is engendered in which religious terms and imagery poetry are dominant. At the back of Stephen's mind as he grew up there lingered the memory of a childhood playmate, a little protestant girl called Eileen, whose religion caused Stephen to be scolded by old Dante for playing with her. For when Dante was young, "she knew children that used to play with protestants and the protestants used to make fun of the litany of the Blessed Virgin. 'Tower of Ivory', they used to say, 'House of Gold'. (17) Stephen wandered too, and the phrases puzzled him until at last he found some sort of a solution.

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“Eileen had a long white and cold and soft hands. That was ivory: a cold white thing. That was the meaning of ‘Tower of Ivory’.” (18) And once when Eileen was running he noticed that “her fair hair had streamed out behind her like gold in the sun. ‘Tower of Ivory’. ‘House of Gold’. By thinking of things you could understand them.” (19) A thought complex is formed between girlhood (Eileen) ----sex, beauty, ——— and the Virgin Mary ----- religion.

Stephen turned back for a while in repentance, to his first idea of the angelic and to the worship of Emma Clery (E.C.). “When the agony of shame had passed from him he tried to raise his soul from its object powerlessness. God was too great and stern and the Blessed Virgin too pure and holy. But he imagined that he stood near Emma in a wide land and, humbly and in tears, bent and kissed the elbow of her sleeve.” (20) Stephen’s faith is not toward profound and inaccessible religion (Catholicism), but the religious ecstasy in a meeting with one of the opposite sex. And he becomes certain of producing his art through such an experience. It was not long after this that he met, unmistakably and for the first time, the angel of Beauty. He had just become enthusiastically certain of his vocation to be an artist. The passage we can find in the last part of chapter four. As I have mentioned above, in this case there are four elements; sex, beauty, art, religion. On the shore a beautiful girl like the Virgin Mary is wading. Stephen perceived the Beauty which he would produce after he had met this girl. “Her image had passed into his soul for ever and no word had broken the holy silence of his ecstasy. Her eyes had called him and his soul had leaped at the

call. To live, to err, to fall, to triumph, to recreate life out of life. A wild angel had appeared to him, the angel of mortal youth and beauty, an envoy from the fair courts of life, to throw open before him in an instant of ecstasy the gates of all the ways of error and glory. On and on and on and on!" (21) What threw him into ecstasy is not the profound beauty which can not be easily captured but the static, and pure beauty which is easily approachable in this real life.

Chapter five, the last chapter of 'A Portrait' comes under the third part reproducing the motives in "sonata form." The two main motives ... Stephen's revolt against his surroundings (home, religion, politics, and country, and so on) and his rebirth as an artist ... are reproduced in this part. The first motif is presented in Stephen's conversation with his friend, Cranly. The second motif is shown in Stephen's conversation with his friend, Lynch. In this conversation with Lynch, Stephen announces his esthetic theory as an artist.

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- (15) *ibid.*, p. 8
- (16) Harry Levin, James Joyce, p. 57
- (17) A Portrait, p. 35
- (18) *ibid.*, p. 36
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- (20) *ibid.*, p. 116
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