

RESEARCH ARTICLE



ISSN

INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA

2395-2636 (Print);2321-3108 (online)

JAMES JOYCE SELF- PORTRAYAL THROUGH STEPHEN DEDALUS

KALAIVANI.H

Assistant Professor, Department of English,

VISTAS.

<https://doi.org/10.33329/rjelal.7119.52>



KALAIVANI.H

ABSTRACT

A semi-autobiography novel is generally based on the personal experiences of the author's own. It is protect the privacy of the author's family, friend and loved ones to achieve the emotional distance from the subjects or for artistic reasons. Many writers about a certain place and time in their lives, and creating a protagonist based on themselves. Semi-autobiographical novels consider the difference between the story concerned and the main characters personal concern. The one among the important semi-autobiographical Novelist in Literature is James Joyce.

Key words: autobiography, emotions, personal experiences.

Introduction

In the novel *A Portrait Of The Artist As A Young Man* by James Joyce, he would bring back into the general picture of life's aspects which modern drainage and modern decorum have taken out of ordinary intercourse and conversation. Joyce is suddenly illuminating. He tells at several points how his hero Stephen is swayed and shocked and disgusted by harsh and sounds, and he is stirred to intense emotion by music and the rhythms of beautiful words. But no sort of smell offends him like that. He finds olfactory sensations interesting or aesthetically displeasing, but they do not make him sick or excited as sounds do. This is a quite understandable turn over from the more normal state of affairs. Joyce an injustice if we attribute a normal sensory basis to him and then accuse him of deliberate offense. The value of this novel has little to do with its incidental insanitary condition. This novel is by far the most living and convincing picture that exists of an Irish Catholic upbringing. The growth of a rather secretive, imaginative boy in Dublin. Joyce is a bold experimentalist of this novel. Joyce tells unsparingly

of the adolescence of this youngster under condition that have passed altogether. There is an immense, shyness, a profound secrecy, about matters of sex, with its inevitable accompaniment of nightmare revelations and there is a living belief in a real hell. No reason is that why England should not do justice to Ireland, but excellent reason for bearing in mind that these bright –green young people across the channel are something quite different from the liberal English in training and tradition, and absolutely set against helping them. No single novel has ever shown how different they are as completely as this most memorable novel.

A Portrait Of The Artist As A Young Man is an semi-autobiographical novel which describes the growth of James Joyce from early childhood to the stage in his manhood when he was ready to take up his selected vocation of an artist. The hero is named Stephen Dedalus and the novel describes his struggles from childhood to early adolescence. He felt that a true artist must not have loyalty except to his vacation as an artist. The novel, therefore, describes how Stephen broke the bonds which bound him to his family, his country and his church. James Joyce

started writing a semi-autobiographical novel while he was in his teens. He took Stephen as his hero and under that disguise he described in detail incidents which had shaped his own personality of Stephen and more of the events around him. By 1908 he had written about 1,50,000 words of this book and it was not even half complete. Joyce was not happy with his work and rejected it. He then wrote a much shorter book that was to be subjective and focused would be an artist and his attempts to fly out of the cages of his family, country and church that wanted to imprison him. After *A Portrait* was published in 1916 Joyce destroyed most of the manuscript of the earlier work. It is the story of Stephen Dedalus, a young writer who rebels against the surroundings of his youth. He rejects his father, family, and religion and like Joyce, decide at the novel's close to leave Ireland. His name comes from Greek mythology (stories that of Gods or explain natural occurrences). In the myth Dedalus made a maze to hold the minotaur (a monster that was half man and half bull). He was jailed in the labyrinth with his son, Icarus. In order to escape, he made wings of feathers and wax, but Icarus flew too near the sun, which melted the wax causing him to die when he plunged into the sea. For Joyce and others after him, Stephen Dedalus became a symbol for all artists.

Stephen Dedalus father was Simon Dedalus and his mother was Mary Dedalus. In this novel Stephen's search was for a father figure. Stephen found that his real father, Simon Dedalus was an irresponsible person who could not provide any support or guidance to him. After his visit to Cork Stephen became convinced that his father could only bring humiliation to him.

Stephen could never forgive his father. He searched for a father among the Jesuit priests and friends but failed. Only Cranly could satisfy this need but he was too ineffectual. He, therefore, relied on his mythical ancestor, Daedalus. While studying in the Jesuit schools Stephen formed a very poor impression of the lives of the Jesuit Priest. He does not like the way in which they bathed in cold water and put on white linen. He had unpleasant memories of them. The financial condition of the family was gradually deteriorating and so it was decided that Stephen would not be sent back to this expensive

school. He was sent to another school called Belvedere college. Here one of the teachers accused him heresy. Three boys caught hold of him and beat him because he regarded Byron as the best poet of English Literature. Stephen was taken by his father to Cork where he had to sell some of his property. He was then taken to Queen's college where his father had studied and introduced to some of his old friends. Stephen won a prize in an essay competition. He used the money for the family who had become very poor. Introduced in the very beginning of the novel are those of light and darkness. Light stands for knowledge, vision and eyesight. Darkness stands for ignorance and blindness. As he grew he was acquainted with a girl named Eileen Vance lived in their neighbourhood. Stephen thought when he grew up he will marry Eileen. Eileen was a Protestant. Dante, therefore, threatened his that if he married Eileen the eagles will come and pull out of his eyes. For a Roman catholic boy it would be a sin to marry a protestant girl, and this sin was to be punished with blindness.

This frightened Stephen who had far eyesight and this troubled him throughout his life. When he went to Clongowes he could not play well because of his poor vision. He saw the football through "Weak and watery eyes." his father says to Dante: " Pity the poor blind. At the Christmas dinner Mr. Casey was first blinded by tears. One day Stephen broke his glasses at the games field and so he was virtually blinded. He could not do any work in the class and so he was mercilessly beaten by Father Dolan. When Stephen went to the Rector to seek justice he passed through a dark and silent corridor. " His eyes were weak and tired with tears so that he could not see. "He saw a skull on the Rector's desk. Hero, Stephen felt, was a kind of minor eagle who will put out his eyes if he did not yield. When Stephen did not admit that Melba says "Byron was not so good" he was badly beaten up and Stephen was "Half hindered with tears". Later Heron says, " will you tell Doyle with my best compliments that I damned his eyes. Stephen was in the adolescence felt a very strong sexual urge. He was burning with fires of lust. He saw a woman, her face transfigured by a lecherous cunning, her eyes bright with brutish

joy. He wanted to sin with a woman and to force her to sin with him.

Tis youth and folly

Makes young men marry

So her, my love, I'

No longer stay (82)

He started wandering in the streets. One day he wandered into a maze of narrow and dirty streets. He heard the sound of drunker singers. He wondered whether he had swayed into the quarter of the Jesus. Women and girls were dressed in long vivid gowns traverse the street from house to house. They seemed to be array for some rite. He was in another world: he had awakened from a dream of centuries. He stood in the middle of the road.

What can't be cured, sure

must be injured, sure,

so I'll go to

Amerikay (82)

A young woman laid her hand on his arm and invited him to her house. Her room was warm. She embraced him. Tears of joy and relief shone in his delighted eyes. In her arms he felt that he had suddenly become strong, and fearless and sure of himself. He closed his eyes, surrendering himself to her, body and mind, conscious of nothing in the world. He had his first taste of sin Stephen was overpowered by lust.

After nightfall he would approach the Squalid quarter of the brothels with fear and joy. Visits to the whones became a regular part of his routine. From the sin of lust all other deadly sins had risen. Greed arose from it because and needed money for purchasing unlawful pleasure, lust also leads to envy, anger, gluttony and sloth. The rector announced that there would be a Pre-treat in the school. On a Friday in honour of Saint Francis Xavier, the saint of the school. Francis Xavier came from an old family of Spain. He met Saint Ignatius in Paris where Francis Xavier was a professor of philosophy. He became a disciple of Saint Ignatius and was sent to preach the gospel.

Father Arnall, who had been Stephen's teacher at clongowes, came to deliver special Sermons during the pre-treat. He said that if there were any sinners among them they should repent

for their sins and become better men. This speech had a profound effect on Stephen. He realized that he was a great sinner and it was his duty to repent for his sins. The sinners are thrown into everlasting fire which will go on for ever. Death and Judgement were brought into the world by the sin of our first parents. Death was blesse moment for the person who has walked on the right path. Father Arnall concluded hissermon by appealing to all those who had committed sins to come to God, confess, their sins and repent for them and thus escape the fortunes of hell. By the time Stephen reached his room, his hands were cold and he was a great sinner and he was not worthy to be called God's child. He had a terrible dream in which he saw that he was in hell in the midst of the devils. He woke up in fright. He felt that God has given him an idea of his hell. He then repented praying

Stephen was blinded by tears and by the light of God's mercy. The clergymen spoke the words of absolution and raised his hand above him in token of forgiveness. Stephen knelt to say his penance. His heart was purified. He was now sure that God had forgiven him. His soul was now holy and happy. He was determined to lead a life of peace and virtue. When he reached home he was very happy. He slept happily. He was sure that God would enter his purified life. The past was gone. A life of grace and virtue had begun for him. Stephen now became a very pious man. And went to church early in the morning. His daily life was laid out in devotional areas. He became very regular in prayers and penances. In this way he thought that the years that he was going to suffer in purgatory would be reduced. He carried the rosary in his pocket and repeated the name of the God while he was walking along the streets. He offered prayers in the chapel thrice a day so that he might grow strong in each of the three theological virtues of faith, hope and love. He prayed on all the seven days, so that he could drive out of his soul, the seven deadly sins which had defiled it in the past. He believed that God had loved his individual soul with divine love from eternity. It was very big to think about everything andeverywhere. Only God could do that. He tried to think what a big thought that must be; but he could only think of God.

One day he was called by the director. The priest said, "To receive that call is the greatest honour that the almighty God can bestow upon a man. No king or emperor on this earth has power of the priest of God. No angel or archangel in heaven, no saint, not even the blessed virgin herself has the power of a priest in God." Stephen's first reaction was of pride that he had been selected for this great honour. He had often imagined himself a priest. He listened in reverent silence to the priest's voice offering him secret knowledge and secret power. The director told him to pray to God to enlighten his mind. He must make up his mind to join the order after very careful consideration. For "once a priest always a priest." The priest took Stephen to the church so that they could pray together.

Stephen thought that a grave, ordered and passionless life awaited him, a life without material cares. He was terribly confused. He instinctively felt repelled by the cold and ordered life of a Jesuit Priest. He was shy by nature and the pride of his spirit had always made him stand apart from every order. If he said, "yes" his freedom would be gone for ever. He saw himself rising in the cold of the morning and going for early mass and trying vainly to struggle against the sickness of the stomach through prayers. Stephen decided that he must have his freedom even if it meant poverty and confusion. He, therefore, gave up idea of becoming a priest of the church. Stephen started walking towards the sea. As he passed on to a thin wooden bridge he saw a squad of Christian Brothers. He tried to look at their uncouth faces with ease and indifference but a faint expression of personal shame and self-pity appeared on his face. A new wild life was singing in his veins. His boyhood was at an end. He was alone and free to do what he liked. He was alone young and wild-hearted in the midst of a sea harvest of shells and tangled and light-lad figures of children and girls. A girl stood before him in midstream, alone and still, gazing out to sea.

It seemed as if magic had changed her into the likeness of a strange and beautiful seabird. Her long slender bare legs were delicate as a crane's. Some seaweed was clinging to her flesh. Her thighs were bared up to the hips and they were of the color of ivory. Her bosom was soft and slight like the

breast of a dove. Her long hair was girlish and her face was wonderfully beautiful. She was alone and still, gazing out to sea. When she felt his presence and realized that he was looking at her as if he worshipped her, she allowed him to gaze at her without shame or wantonness. For a long time she suffered his gaze and then quietly withdrew her eyes from him. She gently stirred the water with her foot. The first faint noise of gently moving water broke the silence. Her cheeks seemed to be red. "Heavenly God!" cried Stephen, in an outburst of profane joy. Stephen turned away from her and started walking across the strand. His cheeks were burning, his limbs were trembling. Her image had passed into his soul forever. He was in ecstasy. Her eyes had called him now was "to live, to fall, to triumph, to recreate life out of life." A wild angel had appeared to him and she had opened before him the gates of all the ways of error and glory. He continued to walk for a long time. Evening had come. He turned towards land. He found a sandy corner and he lay down there so that the silence and slept. He felt a strange rapture in his sleep. He woke up after a long time and recalled the rapture of his sleep, and sighed at its joy. The moon was shining in the sky and the tide was flowing. He left for home. He had realized that destiny was to be an artist. Stephen explained that rhythm was the first formal aesthetics relation the part in any aesthetics whole of which it is a shape and color which are the prison gates of our soul, an image of the beauty we have come to understand-that is art. Blake wrote: I wonder if William Bond will die, For assuredly he is very ill.(243)

C. G. Anderson says "Stephen's exposition of his aesthetics to Lynch in chapter 5 is the intellectual climax of the novel. Stephen is here an ordained priest of art proclaiming the gospel of art. As he says of himself, he is "....a priest of eternal imagination, transmuting the daily bread of experience into the radiant body of ever-living life." But to understand his priesthood, we must understand his conversation and baptism. He is born again, and his souls arise from the....grave of boyhood, spurning her grave-cloth. He feels that his calling and election are sure, and he immediately accepts his vocation: "Yes! Yes! He would create proudly out the freedom and power of his soul... a

living thing, new and beautiful, impalpable, imperishable.”

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