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Introduction

The conflict between an individual and society has been a fundamental concept in literature for centuries. The individual is born into a society that has an established and defined social order that places pressure on him or her to fit into a mold that society has put forward as a social norm. The society does not cater to personal needs and as such does not allow for true freedom as that would deviate from the social norm that has been secured. Amid the individual's growth from childhood to adulthood, the individual realizes his or her full potential and along with that a desire to break free and achieve true freedom. This is often done through a process known as *self-actualization*. In the 1820s, German philologist Johann Karl Simon Morgenstern coined the term *Bildungsroman* for this concept and a literary genre was born (Boes 231). Morgenstern specified that any work within the genre could be identified as a *Bildungsroman* because "it depicts the hero's *Bildung* [development] as it begins and proceeds to a certain level of perfection" (qtd. in Booker 84). A *Bildungsroman* gives the individual a voice, as novels within the genre focus on the development of the individual and his or her moral growth from youth to adulthood. *Bildungsroman* novels are often written by authors that refuse to go by societal norms, both in their professional and personal lives. This includes authors such as James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Scott F. Fitzgerald, J.D. Salinger and Charles Dickens. These authors have strong opinions about society that are expressed through their work and therefore it is no coincidence that *Bildungsroman* novels are very often autobiographical and contain elements lifted from the author's own personal experiences (Holman 52).

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man by James Joyce was first published in a serialized form by *The Egoist* in 1914. In 1916 the novel was published in the United States. Joyce had begun a version of the story as early as 1904, then titled *Stephen Hero*, which was originally intended as a volume of 63 chapters (Anderson 67). After setting the story aside to write *Dubliners*, Joyce went back and rewrote the story after the release of *Dubliners* in 1914. He rewrote the story while still retaining all of the previously conceived core themes in a novel five chapters long titled *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Joyce is known for his use of a narrative device called *stream-of-consciousness*, a flowing interior monologue, and he fully embraces this literary technique as he writes the story from the point of view of an omniscient third person narrator and through the style of *free-indirect* speech. The main character is a boy named Stephen Dedalus. The character of Stephen was always of great

importance to Joyce and he is often considered to be Joyce's fictional alter ego. Besides appearing in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, he is also a large character in Joyce's *Ulysses* and he is considered to be the narrator in three of Joyce's short stories included in *Dubliners*: "The Sisters", "An Encounter" and "Araby".

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man starts off like a fairy tale: "Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road" (3). The novel then goes on to narrate the everyday life events in the life of Stephen Dedalus from early childhood to adulthood. The story focuses on the growth and self-actualization of Stephen as he struggles with realistic issues that range from adapting to a new school to a major religious and identity crisis. The story is about the clash between Stephen and the society he lives in. He is pressured by society and a defined social order set forth by Irish and Catholic conventions to become something that he does not want to be. His maturity and development into an adult is portrayed in a realistic manner as he attempts to break free of these restrictions. The novel concludes in Stephen's realization that for him to be able to fully be himself and to be the artist that he envisions himself to be he must leave everything behind that holds him back. That includes his family, his religion and perhaps most importantly, Ireland.

This thesis examines how convincing *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is as a *Bildungsroman*. This will be done by examining how well the novel fits within the confines of the genre. In recent years, many scholars and critics have narrowed down the list of novels that they categorize as proper *Bildungsroman* novels as a way to minimize the effect literature movements may have on the genre and as a way to preserve the German origin of the term. However, this thesis argues that thus far literature movements have had a positive effect on the *Bildungsroman* and it examines how they complement each other. It will analyse Stephen's developmental growth and follow his moral growth from youth to adulthood. It will also examine Joyce's use of literary tools and narrative devices that are not considered to be defining characteristics of the *Bildungsroman* genre but provide more depth and clarity to the story. In chapter 1, I provide a brief context to further explain what a *Bildungsroman* novel is, its origin and how it is defined by academics. This includes a look at the effect literature movements have had on the *Bildungsroman* and how new literary tools and narrative devices that have emerged after the creation of the *Bildungsroman* have enhanced and complemented the genre. Chapter 2 will examine the stylistic and linguistic

choices made by Joyce regarding narrative technique, the gradual increase in the complexity of the vocabulary used by the narrator, the shift in language and the use of a nonlinear timeline. There is a particular focus on Stephen's youth and important developmental markers. Chapter 3 will examine the rules and guidelines of the genre in conjunction with Stephen's realistic character development as he grows older and matures with a particular focus on Stephen's identity and religious crisis. Chapter 4 will examine the four trials of a *Bildungsroman* character, the Father as a symbolic authority and the importance of the shift in narration that takes place at the conclusion of the novel.

Chapter 1: *Bildungsroman* and Modernism

1.1 *Bildungsroman*: Context

In the introduction to *The Way of the World: The Bildungsroman in Modern Culture*, Franco Moretti discusses how modern culture sees "youth as the most meaningful part of life" (3). Odysseus, Achilles and Beowulf, along with many of the great heroes of the classic epic tales and poems, were all older and had gained wisdom and experiences that they could draw from and use to their advantage when battling their foes. But as centuries passed, this idea was reversed as modern society started to view youth as the most meaningful chapter of a person's life. Major changes in social structures brought on by events such as the Industrial Revolution and the French Revolution have led to priorities being reversed and major shifts in how people perceive the environment surrounding them. As more people left the country life behind and moved into cities, youth started to take on a different meaning as children were no longer forced to take on their parent's profession and the city life offered them more opportunities and freedom than life in the country ever could (Moretti 4). Moretti argues that the "defining characteristic of the novel of formation is to be found not in the protagonist's organic or accretive growth, but rather in his youth" (5) and that over time youth has become a "sign of a world that seeks its meaning in the future rather than in the past" (5). As a result, no longer do we seek to be older and enjoy the experience and knowledge that follows age, now we seek a way to stay forever young.

The birth of the *Bildungsroman* genre is generally marked at the release of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's second novel titled *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* in the year 1795. The idea of novels centred on youth and the young was not a new concept when *Wilhelm Meister*

was written but what made Goethe's novel different was the fact that the main focus of the novel was the psychological growth of his main character. *Bildungsroman* is a German word and can be translated into the English language as both "novel of formation" and "novel of education". For a novel to be considered a *Bildungsroman* it must adhere to strict rules that have been set forth by scholars. These rules can be interchangeable but most scholars agree on the definition set forth by Jerome Buckley where he states that for a novel to be classified as a *Bildungsroman* it must include a set list of characteristics: "childhood, the conflict of generations, provinciality, the larger society, self-education, alienation, ordeal by love, the search for a vocation and a working philosophy" (18). These strict rules have been set forth due to the fact that the term has been used so broadly by modern scholars (Boes 230) that it has started to lose its meaning. *Bildungsroman* has become an umbrella term for a novel of formation, a novel of education, novel of culture and is more commonly today referred to as a *coming-of-age* story. With the arrival of the term *coming-of-age*, *Bildungsroman* has started to lose its meaning as these two terms are often grouped together. While these two terms share some qualities, such as both describing the journey from childhood to adulthood, they are fundamentally different in the way that the desired end result is not the same. A *Bildungsroman* must end with the protagonist having found what he is looking for and having gained clarity and maturity. The *coming-of-age* genre is not as rigid. The *Bildungsroman* can be divided into sub-genres, the best known being a *Künstlerroman* which is about an artist's growth to maturity. Chris Baldick defines *Bildungsroman* novels as novels that follow "the development of the hero or heroine from childhood or adolescence into adulthood, through a troubled quest for identity" (35). M.H. Abrams notes that the genre is about the "development of the protagonist's mind and character, in the passage from childhood through varied experiences – and usually through a spiritual crisis – into maturity and recognition of his or her identity and role in the world" (119-120). Youth is a necessity within the genre as the main goal is the mental growth of the main character and when a person reaches that mental growth they are generally thought to have reached adulthood. There is a constant clash between the individual and society in *Bildungsroman* novels and it is a dilemma that Moretti calls a "bourgeois dilemma", the clash between individual autonomy and social integration (67). *Bildungsroman* characters often mature in a different manner from their peers as they often feel isolated from society and even their own families. Social factors such as religion and politics often contribute to their isolation. What has contributed to making this genre unique is how much the end result depends on the ultimate happiness of the hero or heroine.

Throughout history, happiness has generally not been thought of as something human beings have to achieve in order to live a good life. However, in a *Bildungsroman* novel happiness is something that is achieved when the main character has finally found his or her identity and place in the world (Moretti 6). Youth has a meaning “only in so far as it leads to a stable and final identity” (Moretti 6) and when that has been achieved, youth as defined by the human condition has ended.

1.2 Modernism

The *Bildungsroman* is a genre that “has managed to retain its basic contours while adapting to new environments” (Castle IX). Time and social trends have had a considerable effect on the evolution of the genre and it continues to be a versatile genre, much to the dismay of scholars and critics. For example, the Victorian *Bildungsroman* often has a more ambiguous ending while 20th century *Bildungsromans* have a more decisive and definitive ending. Due to its continual evolution, scholars disagree on how to properly categorize novels within the genre. Some call it a “nineteenth-century phenomenon” (Boes 230), while others are very strict when it comes to name novels within the genre – even going so far as excluding its inaugural *Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship* from the genre. Some scholars even refuse to acknowledge its status as a genre, calling it a “phantom formation, a mere construct of aesthetic ideology” (Boes 229).

Over the years, many critical trends have interlocked with the *Bildungsroman*. Every prominent literature movement after the conception of the *Bildungsroman* has had a *Bildungsroman* novel that has been adapted to new settings of the movement, including changes in style and narration while still retaining the basic form of the genre. These literature movements include but are not limited to Feminism, Postcolonialism, Modernism and Postmodernism. As a result and as a solution, some scholars and critics have categorized novels written by authors that are associated with literature movements and have adapted the *Bildungsroman* genre into a novel within that literature movement as belonging to new sub-genres: *The Female Bildungsroman* (also known as a *Frauenroman*), *Postcolonial Bildungsroman* and *Modernist Bildungsroman*. These new genres introduce and aid the evolution of a genre that is now over 200 years old. They follow many of the rules and guidelines set forth by scholars and critics over the years, such as basic plot outline, theme and the autobiographical element while altering and adapting style, narrative form and adding in new literature techniques such as stream-of-consciousness. These set guidelines and

characteristics include a set of challenges that differ between literature movements belonging to different time eras. A protagonist written by a Modernist author is not going to be dealing with the same social factors, family issues, religious concerns and identity problems as a protagonist written by a Postcolonial author. That is what helps the genre evolve and is the reason that it continues to be rewritten by authors still to this day. Due to this instability of the genre, there has been a constant disagreement over which novels can be categorized as true *Bildungsroman* novels. The invention of new sub-genres, the differentiation between a male *Bildungsroman* and a female *Frauenroman* and exclusions and inclusions based on rigorous analysis into details have been introduced as ways of preserving the genre: an act which Boes refers to as “genre wars” (230). The argument over the meaning and classification of the *Bildungsroman* continues to this day. German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey (b. 1833) regarded the *Bildungsroman* to be the “poetic expression of the Enlightenment concept of *Bildung*” (Boes 232) while Moretti (b. 1950) goes as far as claiming that the *Bildungsroman* is a “symbolic form of modernity” (6). The most important thing about a *Bildungsroman* novel is the growth of the protagonist and the transition from youth to adulthood but the academic field continues to disagree on other details that help build and maintain the genre.

James Joyce was a key member of Modernism, a literature and philosophical movement that rose to popularity in the late 19th century. Modernism idealized the modern and is perhaps best described by the title of Ezra Pound’s collection of essays *Make it new!* Modernism in literature is about rejecting old literary traditions and embracing new ones; this includes the utilization and introduction of many new literary tools such as stream-of-consciousness and the abstract. In his study *Reading the Modernist Bildungsroman*, Castle argues that the “modernist bildungsroman fails to adhere to the strict generic rules of the genre” (1) while still defending its use. Modernist writers, along with writers associated with other movements, refuse to follow the strict rules and guidelines set forth while still following the basics of the genre. They are more fluid when it comes to narration and plot while utilizing everything that the genre has to offer in terms of storytelling. They use it to explore the human condition through techniques and tools that are not characteristic of the *Bildungsroman* genre because it offers a platform for writers to explore every developmental step of the human condition in depth. Modernism and the *Bildungsroman* complement each other in a way that might not appease headstrong scholars and critics but has a defining effect on the evolution of the genre due to the literary techniques and narrative devices it has to

offer. Modernist texts have often been excluded from the genre due to their “spontaneous process[es] of self-creation” (Boes 235); however, in his study on the critical trends on the *Bildungsroman*, Tobias Boes argues that modernist novels such as *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* might be read as “preserving a central link between individual and social development, while framing both in a new rhetorical vocabulary” (235). There are scholars that do not include *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* on their list of *Bildungsroman* novels due to it being written by a Modernist writer. By excluding the book, they exclude all positive changes Modernism has on the evolution of the *Bildungsroman*, including stream-of-consciousness and symbolism that are only used to add more clarity and depth to the growth of the protagonist. Modernism, with its stream-of-consciousness, abstract ideas and unique literary style, offers something new to the continual evolution of the *Bildungsroman* genre. The genre has to evolve to survive and that is what it has done despite restrictions. There are scholars and critics that consider *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* to be a “canonical modernist *Bildungsroman*” (Boes 231) and in the following chapters I analyse why the novel is convincing as a *Bildungsroman*.

Chapter 2: Development of a Young Man’s Mind

Ivan Cañadas defines the *Bildungsroman* as a form that “concludes at a momentous point in the hero’s life, which signals the culmination of a process of self-discovery, or the moment when a life-defining decision is made” (16). In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Joyce is constantly building up to that point in Stephen’s life and every mishap, every mistake, every thought and every joy is a conscious stepping stone on Joyce’s part to portray an accurate “account of the development of a young man’s mind” (Cañadas 16). *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is written in the style of a free-indirect speech and is mostly narrated through an unknown omniscient third person narrator with minimal dialogue. Robert Humphrey writes that “James Joyce had discovered that memories, thoughts and feelings exist outside the primary consciousness [...] they appear to one, not as a chain, but as a stream, a flow” (5). This is known as a narrative technique called stream-of-consciousness and Joyce uses it as a way of letting the reader inside Stephen’s mind. Instead of simply narrating and describing Stephen’s environment, the omniscient narrator narrates how Stephen perceives the environment around him. Every little descriptive detail depends on how Stephen perceives the situation that he is in. When his parents drop him off at the boarding school, his mother cries when she kisses him goodbye. This is vital and is only

narrated because the narrator goes on to say that Stephen “had pretended not see that she was going to cry” (6) because she was “not so nice when she cried” (6). This allows for a deeper connection between Stephen and the reader as it brings forward an unfiltered view of what is happening in his life and the absolute truth about what he is thinking about at any particular moment. The narrator also refrains from any judgement as he recounts events taking place. Time passes by in a nonlinear manner as the narrator skips several times backwards and forwards in time and in the span of a paragraph sometimes a year or two has passed without any notification. This is a direct result of the stream-of-consciousness feature as the text fades in and out of Stephen’s consciousness.

Through the use of stream-of-consciousness, a nonlinear timeline, a set sentence structure and an expanding vocabulary, Joyce reflects the development stage of Stephen at any particular moment during the novel. We first meet Stephen Dedalus as a young boy and Joyce uses short and concise sentences with a relatively straightforward vocabulary to get that point across during the first two chapters. The simplicity of the language is meant to mirror that of a child in real life. The text moves at a fast pace because a child’s mind moves at a fast pace. A *Bildungsroman* protagonist is almost always a special child in the sense that he or she is lonely, sensitive, more intelligent than other children, a daydreamer or the youngest in the family. There is something that makes the child different from other children and the child is painfully aware of this fact at an early age. In *A Handbook to Literature*, Clarence Hugh Holman points out that a *Bildungsroman* protagonist is constantly trying to discover the meaning and pattern of the nature of the world (33). Stephen is continually trying to discover meaning and reason and he does this by thinking and rambling as a way to self-cultivate: “by thinking of things, you could understand them” (Joyce 37). The novel starts off with a short song about a moocow and a baby tuckoo and then digresses into a ramble where the narrator shares some of Stephen’s thoughts about wetting the bed, how his mother smells nicer than his father and how when he was older he was going to marry his next door neighbour Eileen (3). There is a constant evolution that shines through during Stephen’s seemingly pointless rambles to himself. The topics evolve from wetting the bed to the definition of beauty and art but they always belong to the *Bildungsroman* structure that Joyce is trying to maintain. Stephen’s rambles are about finding meaning and reason as he is not sure of his identity and his conversations with himself help him discover and understand who he is.

In keeping with Joyce's method of establishing authenticity, there are several concepts that Stephen as a child does not comprehend and Joyce uses politics as an explicit example. During Joyce's lifetime, and continuing for many years after his death, Ireland as a nation was in a constant political upheaval. During Christmas dinner at the Dedalus household, family and friends are discussing the involvement of the Catholic Church in Irish politics and it soon turns into a heated discussion that leaves Stephen confused because he does not understand why his family is seemingly fighting over priests and nuns. Stephen explicitly trusts the church from a very early age and lets it affect his emotions and thoughts and he does not understand why it is brought up during an argument. This scene introduces three themes that are prevalent through the novel: Stephen's severe problems pertaining to authority, his identity as an Irishman and his embrace and later abandonment of religion. This is all hinted at in a moment of foreshadowing when the children's governess, Aunt Dante, protests that they are arguing like this in front of children and exclaims that Stephen will remember all of this when he grows up, "the language he heard against God and religion and priests in his own home" (29).

As Stephen grows older, his comprehension of his environment and his ability to understand the world around him gradually increases. Joyce continually leaves hints in reference to Stephen growing up that are all small steps towards his eventual adulthood. The Christmas dinner discussed above is the first year that he is allowed to sit at the adult table despite being unable to understand the conversation. This means that his family perceives Stephen as being older and more responsible. As he grows older, Stephen shows a growing fascination with language. James Joyce is well known for his poetic-like prose. Every word is carefully chosen and it has been said that his work is best enjoyed read aloud as his work is filled with puns, alliterations and language tricks. Stephen, Joyce's alter-ego, is very fond of language and as he grows up and matures, he starts to enjoy conversing and arguing with his friends about political and artistic matters. Being able to use language to express himself is an important part of Stephen's development as it allows for him to think and self-cultivate. During a conversation with the dean at his school later in the novel, Stephen begins to think about the fact that the Irish language belongs to the English and that his own soul suffers in the "shadow of his language" (168), "his" language being that of the dean. In Stephen's mind, language and nationality are very closely linked and when he realizes that what he perceived to be his language is not his own language it contributes to his isolation from Ireland. There is very little descriptive detail in the first chapter and as the complexity of the language varies

between Stephen as a child and Stephen as a young adult a language shift becomes very apparent. In his essay about symbolism in the novel, Ivan Cañadas discusses the linguistic distance Joyce places between Stephen and other characters. The omniscient third person narrator gives us Stephen's perception of the environment around him and how he perceives the people around him. By placing a language distance between Stephen and other characters through the use of his words, Joyce is foreshadowing and emphasizing the importance of isolation that plagues Stephen when he becomes older. Cañadas uses a very specific example from the text that illustrates the language shift. At first Stephen identifies with Ireland by using the pronoun "my" when referring to his ancestors but goes on to refer to them as "they" (179). This could be interpreted as a way of Stephen distancing himself from the whole of Ireland and the political upheaval that he does not associate himself with nor feel a connection to (Cañadas 17). The title of the novel and especially the fact that Joyce specifies that it is about the artist in his youth, indicates that Stephen is associating himself with great individuals of the past that gave up their life and youth in order to achieve their dreams (Cañadas 17). Stephen has a sense of pride over his nationality but he feels conflicted over it, which is made obvious when he realizes at the end that for him to be able to be himself he must leave Ireland.

Throughout the first chapter Stephen does not have much going for him. There is something going on with his parents that he does not understand and he has to change boarding schools. In reality, his parents are losing their fortune but as Stephen does not understand it, it is not explained. He does not make new friends easily and prefers to spend time with himself and get lost inside his own mind. This leads to a very active imagination; when he becomes sick with the flu, he starts imagining his own funeral and how sorry all the people who were mean to him at the school would be after his death. After all of Stephen's lows, the first chapter ends with a scene that changes everything. Stephen summons up courage to talk to the headmaster of the boarding school after he feels that he has been wrongfully punished by Father Dolan, the prefect at Clongowes. The headmaster listens to what Stephen has to say and tells him that he will discuss this with Father Dolan. Later on we discover that the headmaster was only being nice and that he later laughed about the incident with the other teachers but Stephen does not know that and, more importantly, the reader does not know either because we only see Stephen's perspective. This scene is strategically placed at the end of the first chapter and serves as both a major milestone and as a lead-in to the next stage in Stephen's life in chapter two. This scene is an integral part in distinguishing between Stephen

as a child and Stephen as a young adult. As Stephen leaves the headmaster's office he is hailed as a hero by the students of Clongowes and Stephen finally earns a bit of recognition by his peers. This scene also shows a side of Stephen that we have not seen before. Stephen is not particularly proud of his achievement; he announces that he feels "happy and free" (51) but will continue to be "quiet and obedient" (51). The fact that Stephen stands up for himself and now has the mental maturity to feel a need to be obedient to show Father Dolan that he only wanted justice and that he was not out to get him, shows a major character development that will continue to evolve throughout the novel. The essence of the *Bildungsroman* genre is the development and maturity of the main character and this event pushes Stephen towards the self-actualization that characterizes the *Bildungsroman*. Stephen becomes more self-aware as he seeks to understand himself.

Chapter 3: Gradual Development into Adulthood

3.1 The Three Major Events that Shape and Define Stephen's Character Growth

If a novel is to be classified as a *Bildungsroman* it must adhere to certain guidelines and characteristics of the genre. To be a convincing *Bildungsroman* it must portray a realistic character development from youth to adulthood in either a realistic or a fantasy setting. In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Joyce depicts the mental and physical development of Stephen Dedalus in a realistic manner in a realistic setting. The development of Stephen throughout the novel is reflected in the evolution of his inner and outer voice. It is also reflected in the text through Joyce's precise use of vocabulary, sentence structure, metaphors and symbolism. Joyce gradually goes from short and concise sentences to lengthier, more intellectual and thought-provoking sentences that show how Stephen's grasp of language has expanded through the development progress. The final sentence of the book, "Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead" (225), displays an immense growth and assurance in Stephen's own ideology as he asks God and his country to be of benefit to himself despite having made the decision to leave both behind in search of freedom and happiness. This is a far cry from the book's opening sentence where a younger Stephen is telling us a story about a moocow and a baby tuckoo: "Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road" (3). The form of narration is still stream-of-consciousness but the speed has slowed down as Stephen gains more control over his thoughts. The first two chapters skip months and years between paragraphs but as we

get to chapter three and onwards the time length between paragraphs is shortened to hours and days. The use of a simpler vocabulary has been discontinued as Stephen's gradually increasing vocabulary starts to reflect that of a well-read young man who has gained a much better comprehension of language and can hold up his own during conversations with peers and adults alike. Joyce is also occasionally more direct in his approach: "The growth and knowledge of two years of boyhood stood between then and now" (67). However, the physical, moral and spiritual growth of a *Bildungsroman* character is not only expressed in a direct manner. In accordance with Joyce's other work, the text requires full participation on behalf of the reader as with the increasing range of vocabulary a variety of metaphors, symbolism and foreshadowing are hinted at or hidden within inconspicuous sentences. There are three major events in chapters three, four and five that shape and define Stephen's character growth. The first event is the continuation of Stephen's gradual development from youth to adulthood; the second event is the resolution of an inner conflict concerning religion; the third event is the eventual realization that what Stephen needs to be free is to leave Ireland behind.

3.2. Gradual Development from Youth to Adulthood

While Stephen's gradual development into adulthood is portrayed indirectly through the use of language and vocabulary, it is portrayed directly through character development where Stephen learns and masters the necessary skills needed to grow and become a well-rounded human being. Richard D. Beards defines the *Bildungsroman* character as "an apprentice to life whose goal is to master it so that he can achieve an ideal or ambition, fulfilment of which will heighten his sense of self" (205). Stephen is constantly challenged by events that force him to view the world and the people around him through a different mind-set. He has grown up in a turbulent political and religious environment that reflects the political and religious climate of Ireland in the early 1900s. The family's lack of funds requires Stephen to change schools often but the family stays together through all of the hardship, including his father's alcoholism. Family difficulties are something that Stephen notices as a child but he does not understand what it entails until he grows up. The narration is Stephen's perception of different situations. He does not comprehend his father's drinking problem and the family's money problem. Therefore it is only alluded to but never fully explained until Stephen begins to understand the repercussions it has on the family.

During a trip to Cork, Stephen sees his father in a different light as Mr. Dedalus meets up with some old friends at a pub where they toast to “the memories of their past” (84). Stephen begins to see his father’s obsessive nostalgia as he expresses fondness of the good old days of Irish politics in his drunken stupor. Stephen sits next to Mr. Dedalus and his friends, feeling ashamed of their behaviour, and feelings of superiority towards them rise to the surface: “his mind seemed older than theirs [...] No life or youth stirred in him as it had stirred in them” (84). This feeling engulfs him and complete darkness sweeps over him as the narrator declares that “nothing stirred within his soul but a cold and cruel and loveless lust” (84). The omniscient narrator then places a gap between his childhood and young adulthood with a vivid description of the death of Stephen’s childhood, “his childhood was dead or lost and with it his soul capable of simple joys and he was drifting amid life like the barren shell of the moon” (84). This simple but powerful statement signifies a new chapter for Stephen. From now on the complexity of the language is unmistakable as Joyce uses vivid, somewhat perplexing sentences to describe Stephen’s innermost thoughts.

When Stephen wins prize money for an essay he has submitted to a competition, he indulges himself and his family instead of saving the money despite knowing full well that the money will run out at some point. During this short period of contentment, a “swift season of merrymaking” (86), Stephen feels happy but hits a mental wall as soon as the money runs out and he can no longer provide for his family. He describes this attempt at spending all the money as an attempt to “build a breakwater of order and elegance against the sordid tide of life and to dam up [...] the powerful recurrence of the tide within him” (86). There is a moment of foreshadowing as Stephen clearly sees “his own futile isolation” (86) since he feels disconnected from his family, as if he is a foster child and not connected to the family by blood (87). This soon spins out of control and after several encounters with prostitutes to “ease his unrest” (87), Stephen’s already complicated and fragile relationship with religion turns him into a zealot as fear and obsession encompass him. This leads him on a troubled path towards the second event: a resolution.

3.3 Religious Conflict & Resolution

A *Bildungsroman* needs a conflict as the resolution of the conflict brings forward the character change and growth that is essential for the protagonist to reach adulthood. This conflict is often between society and an individual but the conflict can also be between the individual and religion and the conventions associated with religion. The resolution is gradual

and is not always easy on the protagonist but it gives him experience and tools that he can learn from and serve as an aid in his constant search for an identity. One day in December as Stephen is sitting in a classroom he has a religious experience that completely shakes him to his core. His eyes lose focus as he cannot see the page in front of him and he starts hearing music coming from nowhere. Suddenly a “cold lucid indifference reigned in his soul” (91) and a “dark peace had been established” (91) between his body and soul. Religion is supposed to bring inner peace to the believer but what religion does to Stephen is further isolate him as he becomes immersed in religion and spirituality. Stephen feels too much pride to pray to God because his first mortal sin, his first night with a prostitute, was too great a sin to be forgiven and the sins that came after “multiplied his guilt and punishment” (91). Therefore, he feels that he is damned no matter what and no amount of praying will be able to get him back to how things were before. Stephen explicitly trusts the church and the Catholic faith has been a tremendous influence in his life. Therefore it is very logical for Stephen to become more cynical with life as he feels like he has gone against his faith. He starts to have feelings of superiority over his peers and authority figures which have a negative effect on Stephen’s growth as these feelings do not allow for him to mature. They hold him back and keep him stuck in the same place. During this phase in his life, Stephen’s mind is fragile and it becomes increasingly difficult to figure Stephen out as his reactions to these experiences all depend on the state of mind he is in. This experience fundamentally changes Stephen as his close contact with religion leads to a complete change in character. A *Bildungsroman* demands certain sacrifices to be made as it requires the protagonist to develop and mature. During the search for an identity, there is going to be chaos and there are going to be clashes between the individual and society and the protagonist must learn how to handle them in order for him or her to mature. In Stephen’s case, the resolution of his religious crisis and the subsequent rebellion against Catholic and Irish conventions allow him to find his identity as he realizes that his identity is not rooted in Catholicism or Ireland. Catholic and Irish conventions are so deep rooted within Stephen himself that he has difficulties recognizing himself without them. A conflict of generations is a necessity within the *Bildungsroman* genre as it is the protagonist’s inspiration to break free of bounds set forth by an unbending social order.

Stephen’s moment of clarity comes at the realization that “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” (Joyce 141).

He comes to this conclusion after being asked by a priest whether he has ever felt a desire to join the order (137) but he has become very disillusioned with religion and “the chill and order of the life repelled him” (140). The *Bildungsroman* genre revolves around the solution of a conflict between a character and society and the major conflict between religion and what Stephen now views as freedom has come to an end. The fact that Stephen has realized what is the best situation for him to be able to fully prosper in an environment of his choosing is exactly the maturity that is only gradually achieved through self-actualization. This does not mean that Stephen has reached a certain stage in human development but much rather an indication of maturity and advancement. The narrator has continuously narrated Stephen’s perception of every situation and therefore it can be assumed that Stephen himself is aware that he has reached a new level of maturity.

Chapter 4: Self-Imposed Exile

4.1 Four Trials of a *Bildungsroman* Character

According to Richard Beards, there are four distinct trials that a *Bildungsroman* protagonist must master: “vocation, mating, religion and identity” (215). These four trials are meant to complement each other and an exploration of each trial within the text is an important part towards the novel being considered a *Bildungsroman*. At this point in the novel, in the midst of the final chapter, Stephen has gone through many experiences that directly relate to each of these four trials. During a conversation with his friend Cranly, it is clear that Stephen has realized that to be able to be free he must leave Ireland. He tells Cranly that he 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 defence the only arms I allow myself to use – silence, exile, and cunning” (219)

Cranly asks him whether he is aware that his mind is still consumed by religion even though it does not affect him in the same manner anymore. Stephen replies that when he was consumed by religion, “I was someone else then...that I was not myself as I am now, as I had to become” (213). It is only after understanding what each of these trials mean to Stephen that he is able to come to this conclusion.

Out of these four, mating is the only trial that Stephen has not completely mastered in a way that would be considered healthy. Stephen is socially awkward around women and does not have much of a connection or relationships to women in the story. On the contrary, women are mostly used as a plot device to drive the plot along. Whether they are prostitutes he meets on the streets of Dublin, his own mother or E.C., Stephen's idealized version of the perfect girl, women never play a large part in Stephen figuring out his own identity. This is on point with many other novels that belong to the genre as in the world of *Bildungsroman* women are known for their secondary status (Castle 680). Because of his difficulty in relating to the other sex, Castle claims that Stephen "transforms real and fictive women into instruments of his own struggle for artistic freedom" (680) which results in Stephen "living in a fantasy world" (680). This seems to be acceptable to Stephen who is not all that concerned as he prefers to imagine women and idealize them. In that sense, it can be concluded that this method of mating is something that Stephen is perfectly fine with. Castle claims that "E.C. excites in Stephen the power of youth" (680), youth in this subtext being the essence of the genre and only has a meaning "so far as it leads to a stable and final identity" (Moretti 8). Identity is the only trial that Stephen seemingly has limited control over until the end. He has figured out his future plans only so far that he knows they do not include becoming a member of the Catholic brotherhood or staying and working in Ireland. It is only when Stephen realizes that his artistic integrity is linked with leaving Ireland that he finally finds his own identity. Identity is a concept that includes the beliefs, qualities and desires of a human being. In that sense, identity can never be "final" as it continues to grow as the person grows. Abrams defines maturity within the genre when the protagonist has reached "recognition of his or her identity" (120). It is a challenge to define a personal identity in a novel, no matter how clear or long a novel is, and therefore Joyce uses symbolism as a way to expand and explore Stephen's identity.

4.2 Symbolism

Stephen's first and last name is of great importance when it comes to symbolism. Stephen's first name is a reference to Saint Stephen, the first martyr of Christianity. His last name is Dedalus which is a reference to the master craftsman Daedalus in Greek mythology. Daedalus was the father of Icarus, the man who flew too close to the sun with his wings made out of wax and feathers. Daedalus is explicitly mentioned three times in the book, making his connection to Stephen quite clear. All of his references have to do with art or being an artist,

which is revealed to be Stephen's passion and he sees himself as a pure artist. First of all, Daedalus is mentioned in the epigraph: "Et ignotas animus dimittit in artes / and he applies his mind to obscure arts" (2), Daedalus being the one who applies his mind to obscure arts. Next he is referenced during a scene of foreshadowing where Stephen realizes what lies ahead for him:

"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" (148).

Daedalus is also the old artificer referenced in the novel's final words: "Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead" (225). An artificer is a creator and that is what Stephen wants to be and he knows what he has to do to be able to achieve this. In his essay "*Sons and Lovers as a Bildungsroman*", Richard Beards discusses the two-level identity in regards to the *Bildungsroman* genre and a "symbolic association with several biblical and mythological figures" (212). The genre is centred on a sensitive soul trying to find their identity in a chaotic world and Beards argues that using symbolism that revolves around a two-level identity offers a potentially deeper interpretation of a *Bildungsroman* character and the genre as a whole. Symbolism offers a new fresh perspective when it is used and when an author makes allusions to other people, whether they be mythical, alive or dead, or to other works, whether they be literature, poetry or art, it opens up a whole new discussion on the identity of the protagonist. It offers another viewpoint towards the demands of socialization, conflict of generations and the immense effect of alienation that a *Bildungsroman* protagonist must learn how to cope with. By giving his protagonist the name of a mythological figure and a saint and martyr, Joyce is creating a connection between the figure and Stephen that goes beyond the pages of the book. Assuming that the reader is familiar with Daedalus and Saint Stephen, what Stephen does to himself in the name of religion and atonement, both physical and mentally, creates a link between Stephen and other religious figures that have dedicated their lives to a cause such as saints, martyrs and monks. Joyce is making a clear statement with the symbolism he uses as Stephen's identity is further clarified by this connection (Beards 212).

4.3 The Father as a Symbolic Authority

In “Coming of Age in the Age of Empire: Joyce’s Modernist *Bildungsroman*”, Gregory Castle writes about the father as a symbolic authority. He argues that one of the fundamental forms of the genre is a “rebellion against the father and the social values he represents, the desire for self-mastery and the journey from father and home” (670). In this particular case, the role of the father can be applied to mean several authority figures Stephen meets such as priests, deans, cultural authority in general and of course his own father. Stephen resents all of these and continually has feelings of superiority over authority figures. Many of these characters are also a symbol for something greater, such as Father Dolan and the Rector of Clongowes being the “masculine embodiments of Church authority” (Castle 671-72). The paternal authority Stephen continually shields himself from does not allow for the growth of Stephen’s artistic self and without that growth, there is no *Bildungsroman*. Castle also sees this as the inadequacy of the paternal figure to serve as a mentor to Stephen (673), which then forces Stephen to be his own mentor. In chapter five, Stephen is late for French class and when arriving at the school decides to skip the class and instead heads towards the physics theatre where the dean of studies is lighting a fire and they converse. At this point, Stephen has made the decision not to become a priest and his feelings about the brotherhood become very clear. As he looks into the eyes of the priest he sees “the silent soul of a Jesuit look out at him from the pale loveless eyes” (164) and that there was no spark burning behind them. When the dean of studies, being a figure of authority, fails to understand Stephen’s metaphor, Stephen loses interest in the conversation and makes a comparison between the priest and an “unlit lamp or a reflector hung in a false focus” (166). Stephen feels superior to the priest and even pities him when he finds out that he is an Englishman living in Ireland (167). Stephen is conscious of his feelings of superiority and sees them as a sign that he is no longer a child. He is also conscious about the negative effect Ireland has on him. Along with a rebellion against Catholicism and spirituality, Stephen now rebels against any sort of authority as it does not allow for true artistic freedom.

4.4. Shift in Narration

As the novel comes to a close, the narrative and narration suddenly shifts. The narrator is no longer an omniscient being but Stephen himself and the form of the text changes to that of a diary entry. The switch should not come as a complete surprise as the novel is a Modernist

piece of work and has continually been fluid when it comes to time and narration. Michael Levenson interprets the shift as an “assertion of individuality and a repudiation of public norms” (1018). Levenson quotes Marilyn French as she writes that “having searched among many kinds of linguistic structuring of experience, Stephen creates his own – his diary” (1018). What is important is that the diary entries still stay true to Stephen’s voice, meaning that the now former third person narrator has been a reliable narrator throughout the novel. The entries vary; some are short and concise and contain mostly fleeting thoughts and musings while others are a recollection of the conversations and activities of Stephen’s day. Time and the movement of time also become more established as each diary entry is preceded by a date. The establishment of time is not a departure from the stream-of-consciousness narration as Stephen’s diary entries are still very much just thoughts which is exactly what stream-of-consciousness consists of, thus this is merely a change of form. What is most important is that Stephen is happy. He has gained more control over his emotions. The novel is classified as fiction but it is mostly an autobiographical account of Joyce’s life told through the eyes of Stephen Dedalus. Joyce is creating a connection between himself and Stephen, a connection that allows for Joyce to express his own feelings, desires and needs from different stages of his life through Stephen. This makes for a more realistic and convincing *Bildungsroman* novel. Every major event in Stephen’s life is lifted from Joyce’s own. They go to the same school, have the same moments of personal victory and personal loss, experience the same identity crisis and both flee from the “spiritually paralyzing ‘reality’ of Dublin to a self-imposed exile” (Anderson 6). When Stephen finally makes the decision to leave the shackles of Catholicism and Ireland behind, Stephen is finally happy and free as an independent person. His diary entry for March 21st reads as follows: “Free. Soul free and fancy free. Let the dead bury the dead. Ay. And let the dead marry the dead” (221). Despite having made a decision to leave on a self-imposed exile, Stephen feels free in his soul. Stephen has reached the intellectual awakening, positive character change and moral growth that is the most important for a *Bildungsroman* character and is the reason that this novel is convincing as a *Bildungsroman*.

Conclusion

This thesis has examined how convincing James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is as a *Bildungsroman* and how well it fits within the confines of the genre. Joyce uses literary tools and narrative devices that are not characteristic of the *Bildungsroman* genre, but much rather key characteristics of the Modernist literature movement, and he uses them to provide more depth, clarity and realism to the character of Stephen. Outside influences have had an effect on the development on the *Bildungsroman* but this thesis has argued that these effects have generally been positive. They offer previously unexplored perspectives and allow for deeper interpretation of the protagonist. They also allow for a wider audience to connect and immerse themselves in the protagonist's journey as not all audiences will relate to the same kind of protagonist.

A *Bildungsroman* "concludes at a momentous point in the hero's life, which signals the culmination of a process of self-discovery, or the moment when a life-defining decision is made" (Cañadas 16). *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* concludes at a moment where Stephen has realized that his identity is his own and is not rooted in Ireland, his family or Catholicism. This realization gives him his wings and he is free to fly and fulfil his prophecy as a "hawk-like man flying sunward above the sea" (148). Stephen has reached the objective of a *Bildungsroman* character which is a stable identity and a definitive character development. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* portrays a realistic and gradual development of its main character. Joyce explores how even the tiniest events can have a major effect on the development and maturity of a human being and how conflicts and their resolutions can shape and define a person. The *Bildungsroman* is about the journey to self-discovery and therefore it can be argued that the conclusion of the novel is only the beginning for Stephen Dedalus. He is finally happy and feels free in his soul. Through his use of stream-of-consciousness, a nonlinear timeline, a gradually increasing complexity in vocabulary and other linguistic and thematic choices, Joyce uses Modernist literary tools to create a new kind of *Bildungsroman* that still adheres to set guidelines and characteristics of the genre. Because of this, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is convincing as a *Bildungsroman* novel.

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