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JAMES JOYCE ANTIHERO

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ABSTRACT

In the present study, the researcher sets about exploring how James Joyce as a prose-fiction author employed his major characters as a means to deal with his preoccupations. These preoccupations distinguish the Joycean hero from the conventional hero as portrayed in the ancient epics and inspired the mainstream of authors who describe the flawless and ideal character that induces the admiration of the reader. John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, however, came to shake this tradition with its three controversial protagonists; Christ, Eve and Lucifer. Thenceforth, the Romantics of nineteenth-century England praised and celebrated Milton's Satan and equally all 'noble out-laws' – like Cain and Prometheus – to engender the satanic and Byronic heroes and even the villain Heathcliff in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*. This paper suggests that James Joyce's protagonist in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* invokes Milton's Satan in his rejection of religion and the Byronic hero in his rebel against the social, cultural and political norms of his mother country Ireland. Then, in his masterpiece, *Ulysses*, James Joyce builds on his model of the all-round complete character – Odysseus in Homer's *Odyssey* – to depict what he identified as the subterranean forces and hidden tides of humanity. Leopold Bloom, James Joyce's modern Odysseus, is an ordinary middle-aged (Don-Quixotic antihero) man elevated into an epical 'titan' through everyday activities carried out within eighteen hours on 16-6-1904.

**Key Words:** satanic hero, Byronic hero, Quixotic hero, round character

Introduction

The hero – or protagonist, or main character – labels almost all literary writings; drama and prose-fiction in particular. However, the characteristics of a protagonist are debatable. Authors infuse their main characters with such diverse features that critics tend to term even an eponymous hero as 'character'. This diversity may be attributed to the fact that each author manipulates his/her characters as a means to deal with a particular artistic preoccupation. The Irish novelist James Joyce is not an exception and the two protagonists of his works; *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses* are still an arena of contention.

Objectives of the Research

The aim of this study is to shed light on James Joyce's employment of the literary heritage contributed by Homer, John Milton and the Romantic poets in his portrayal of his two protagonists Leopold Bloom in *Ulysses* and Stephen Dedalus in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses*.

### Research Questions

- To what extent do the characteristics of the hero vary according to a literary era?
- How does the protagonist in Joyce's works represent an epic hero?

### Significance of the Study

This paper attempts a brief survey of the characteristics of heroes in literature and underscores James Joyce's invocation of the Romantic and Quixotic heroes, and the all-round character and – at the same time – antihero in his works *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses*.

### Theoretical Background

The scene of literary creativity comprises the memorable titles; *The Odyssey*, *The Divine Comedy*, and in English, *Beowulf*, and in Russia *War and Peace*, and – starting from the second decade of the twentieth century – James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Equally, the names 'Odysseus', 'Gilgamesh', 'Charlemagne' and 'Captain Ahab' haunt the memory of the literary audience. In real life, the human species tends to act as heroic as the afore-said names or to be immortalized in works such as the afore-cited ones. Once, an English female had enough ambition to overcome her being declared illegitimate by her father's parliament and being formally excommunicated by the Pope in 1570 to be crowned as Queen Elizabeth of England and for forty-five years (1558-1603). After acceding to the throne, the Queen established a courtly culture of poets and propagandists to present her as an ideal of unchanging perfection and to portray her reign as the promised return of heavenly justice and peace. She showed herself to her people as an eternally youthful nymph married only to England. That was when her royal Council drafted a proclamation in 1563 forbidding, according to Andrew Sanders (1984; 126); "further portraits of the monarch until an approved pattern of presentation had been evolved." And, to assert her royal dignity, Elizabeth appeared on a horseback armed in steel breastplate when the Spanish threatened her Kingdom in 1588 and announced that despite her weak and feeble body of a woman she still had, as Sanders quotes, "the heart and stomach of a King, and of a King of England too."

The lyric poems of Sir Walter Raleigh link Elizabeth to the Virgin Queen of Heaven as the paragon untouched by human mortality. She was his distant but eternally youthful and queenly nymph who "sometimes did me lead with her selfe, // And me loved as her owne." Edmund Spenser presented Elizabeth as his "Faerie Queene" and "that greatest Glorious Quene of Faerie Land" who is the "flowre of grace and chastitie" and whose qualities inform and inspire the complex expositions of "morall verture."

In France, the revolutionary spirit of Napoleon Bonaparte won equal admiration from young intellectuals. The Romantic musician Ludwig van Beethoven held the first Consul Bonaparte in the highest regard and compared him to the great Roman Consuls. But when Napoleon's ambitions drove him to declare himself emperor, his epic image fell in the eyes of the Romantics. Lord Byron wrote *Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte* and contrasted Napoleon's fall with that of Milton's Lucifer in *Paradise Lost*. And Beethoven, quoted by Stephen Rose (2011; 6), raged out his disappointment; "So he too is nothing more than an ordinary man. Now he also will trample all human rights underfoot, and only ponder to his own ambition, he will place himself above everyone else and become a tyrant."

Both Elizabeth and Bonaparte attempted to eternalize themselves as epic heroes. The former succeeded but Napoleon's attempt was a failure, and he did not deserve the glory of the *Faerie Queene* or a 'heroic poem'. Abrams defines the 'epic' or 'heroic poem' as a long verse narrative on a serious subject which is centred on a heroic or quasi-divine figure "on whose actions depends the fate of a tribe, a nation or the human race." (1999; 76)

### Hero and antihero in Literature

In literature, the hero of an epic is a figure of great national or even cosmic importance to the extent that gods and other supernatural beings take an interest or an active part in his actions. In Homer's *The Odyssey* and *The Iliad*, Achilles is the son of the sea-nymph Thetis and the wanderings of Odysseus covered the Mediterranean basin, which was the whole of the world known at the time, in his opposition of some of the gods. In *The Aeneid*, by Virgil, the hero Aeneas is the son of the goddess Aphrodite. Even the later *Paradise Lost* presented Adam, Eve and Lucifer. As well, the Romantic William Blake made his primal figure, Albion, incorporate humanity and God and the cosmos.

The term 'epic' comprises the two types of traditional and literary ones. Traditional epics like *The Iliad*, *The Odyssey* and *Beowulf* were written versions of what had originally been oral poems about a tribal or national hero during a warlike age. Literary epics, like Virgil's *Aeneid*, were composed by individual poetic craftsmen in deliberate imitation of the traditional form.

Chronologically, the first literary influential epic was by Homer. Then Virgil's *Aeneid* came out to refine and transmute Homer's clear and inevitable directness into something softer with its fuller moral and psychological dimension and more personal touch. *The Aeneid*, in turn, served as the chief model for Milton's *Paradise Lost* in 1671. However, John Dryden introduced the heroic play, in the Restoration period (1660-1700), in imitation of a heroic poem. Dryden employed as protagonist a large-scale warrior whose actions involve the fate of an empire. In his emulation of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Dryden centered his epic on Adam and Eve and not on God. More significantly, as Patrick Hogan pointed (1995; 78), Dryden underscored Eve's sexuality and the sexual nature of the fall. One instance is Eve's description of her amorous encounter with Lucifer; "When your kind eyes looked languishing on mine, // And wreathing arms did soft embraces join, // A doubtful trembling seized me first all over..."

Probably in reaction to the threshold Dryden had taken the epic, classical critics looked for an idealized art that sees life whole and steadily and they, consequently, debarred romance elements and even disqualified the ancient *Beowulf* because its hero fights monsters and not humans. Likewise, the Victorians came to define the epic as a literary genre on national themes – usually war – as if to contrast with William Blake's several epics, or 'prophetic books' which replaced Milton's biblical narrative into Blake's own mythical terms. Finally, the Modernists, resembled in T.S. Eliot, deprecated Milton's epic as far too celebrated and for the wrong reasons. Milton, to Eliot, was antipathetic, unsatisfactory, and a "bad influence" (1965; 116).

However, it seems reasonable to suggest that the epic has, and since Homer, presented the genesis of literature as we know it today. Homer transformed the hero from the sole entity in the loosely cumulative pre-literary legends into an element in the unity of an action. Homer's contribution was so remarkable that Samuel Johnson described European literature as a series of footnotes to Homer, and the critic Northrop Frye, as cited by Childs and Fowler (2006; 70), explained that with Homer's *Iliad* an objective and disinterested element enters into the poet's vision of human life. Consequently, the works of Tolstoy and James Joyce in prose fiction and Brecht in epic theatre allow their being viewed as following Homer's model since they are based on the epic idea of presenting a character against a particular background and as part of an overall pattern where the whole is more than the specific character depicted.

John Milton's *Paradise Lost* can be assumed as having provided another prominent epical contribution to literature. Hogan pointed out that Milton's prototypes of Satan, Eve and Adam and the story of the fall influenced John Dryden, William Blake, Shelley as well as the novelist Daniel Defoe (op.cit.). Nonetheless, Milton's *Paradise Lost* initiated a more significant debate about who (if any) was its hero. Joseph Addison, in one of his famous essays in *The Spectator*, argued that Milton had no hero in the classical sense, and if there is one it must be Christ. John Dryden named Satan as its technical hero and both William Blake and Shelley relied on Milton's description of Satan to declare him on the side of Lucifer, who; "...above the rest // In shape and gesture proudly eminent, // Stood like a tower..." (*Paradise Lost*; l.598-91) As a matter of fact, Milton's debatable hero drove Childs and Fowler (ibid; 105) to announce that "getting rid of 'the hero' seemed a critical necessity since the concept (of hero) was a barrier to the understanding of literary structures...and critics preferred the slippery term 'character'. But, with novels like *Wuthering Heights*, and the writings of Vladimir Nabokov and Samuel Beckett, there emerged villainous or insane narrator-heroes who forced the term 'antihero' to fill a gap that the term 'character' could not fill. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* cites Don Quixote by Miguel de Cervantes as example of an antihero, or the protagonist of a drama or narrative who is notably lacking in heroic qualities.

### The Romantic Heroes

Romanticism had its genesis in the German movement of Sturm und Drang whose pioneer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe portrayed the archetype of the romantic hero in *The sorrows of Young Werther*, 1774, where the lovesick young Werther, sickened by both the world and himself, eventually commits suicide. James Wilson (1972; 32) as a character that rejects established norms and

conventions, has been rejected by society and “has the self as the centre of his or her own existence.” To a further extent, Northrop Frye endowed the romantic hero, despite being placed outside the structure of civilization, with a sense of power, and often leadership, which that society has impoverished itself by rejecting.

In their rebel against the conventionality and reason of the Enlightenment, the romantics celebrated rebellious figures, categorized by Thorslev (1965; 66) as the “noble outlaws”, even from the ancient history of humanity; from Cain who murdered his brother Abel out of anger and jealousy and was punished by eternal wandering on earth to Milton’s Satan and the Greek Prometheus. Prometheus stole fire from Zeus and gave it to mankind. Zeus chained this titan to a stone and had an eagle eat his liver everyday only to have it grown back and eaten again the next day. The Romantics saw in Prometheus a hero and a saviour of man and the first to defy authority and endure eternal punishment.

The Romantic William Blake, in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, c. 1790-1793, took the issue of Milton’s Satan to a social level and stated that those who restrain desire do so because theirs is weak enough to be restrained and the restrainer or reason usurps its place and governs the unwilling. And being restrained, it by degrees becomes passive, till it is only the shadow of desire. Blake then asserts that the history of this is written in *Paradise Lost*, and the Governor or reason is called messiah. And the original Archangel, or possessor of the command of the heavenly host, is called the Devil or Satan, and his children are called Sin and Death.

However, Blake’s Satanic hero received less praise by Percy Bysshe Shelley to whom, as stated in his Preface to *Prometheus Unbound*, 1821, Prometheus is a more poetical character than Satan because in addition to courage, and majesty, and firm and patient opposition to omnipotent force, he is susceptible of being described as exempt from the taints of ambition, envy, revenge and a desire for personal aggrandizement, which, in the hero of *Paradise Lost*, interfere with the interest. However, the deeds of this hero of Blake’s make of him, at least, a more interesting character than the literary monotonous good hero – as Heathcliff, the protagonist of Emily Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights*, demonstrates.

Heathcliff’s story is of a man victimized by society and social rank. He is an orphan bullied by a foster brother all through his childhood. He grows up to fall in love and loses his beloved, because of his rank, to another man and then by death. Heathcliff travels and returns as a cunning and manipulative gentleman. He plays by the rules of landed gentry in order to conquer the society, which has defeated him, by its own rules. Emily Brontë makes of Heathcliff both an attractive and horrifying character. Heathcliff’s mysterious origin and dark complexion with his passionate temperament of a demonic lover; independent, egotistical and strong makes those around him, as Stein (2009; 41) describes, wonder if he is a demon rather than a human.

In addition to the Satanic and villain hero, another variant of the Romantic hero is the Byronic hero, named after the English Romantic poet Lord Byron. This type of hero, widely thought as Byron’s true self reflected in fiction, first appeared in Byron’s semi-autobiographical epic narrative poem *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, and then in his oriental poems *The Giaour*, *The Corsair*, *Lara*, and *Manfred*. The remarkable characteristics of the Byronic hero are that he does not want to fulfill his predetermined destiny thrust upon him by the expectations of society. He is also, as Rupert Christiansen cites Lord Macaulay’s description; “Proud, moody, cynical, with defiance on his brow, and misery in his heart, a scorner of his kind, implacable in avenger, yet capable of deep and strong affection.” (1989; 201). In stanza xviii of *Count Lara*, the hero is depicted as follows; “There was in him a vital scorn of all://As if the worst had fallen which could befall,//He stood a stranger in this breathing world,//An earring spirit from another hurled;//A thing of dark imaginings, that shaped//By choice the perils he by chance escaped.”

Before dealing with Joyce’s heroic characters, it seems necessary to first mention the Spanish Don Quixote. When Miguel de Cervantes wrote his eponymous novel, he was probably oblivious that he was underscoring the conflict between life and literature in the extended sense of the chasm between the individual and the world around him. Cervantes’s protagonist is the first hero (or antihero) in literature who is embarked in a solitary crusade against the world because of his inadequacy to this world.

Though firstly written as a ridiculous response to the pattern of the romance by questioning the codes, standards and values of chivalry knights, the character created by de Cervantes allows being

categorized into four types of protagonist. First, he represents a 'romance' knight-errant whose quest is impractical only because it is carried out in a world that rejects him and it. Second, and to the result that the romantics of the nineteenth century celebrated him as a Romantic myth, Don Quixote can be viewed as a noble figure that suffers alienation because he endeavours to fight the corruption and materialism of his milieu. Third, Don Quixote can be assessed as an antihero; he is a lean, old man of meager economic means and a deluded comic fool. He is led into disastrous encounters due to his punctilious imitation of what he has read about knights errant. Fourth and being lonely in face of the social and cultural norms of his time, Don Quixote can also be valued as the archetype of the modern hero.

#### Joyce's all-round hero

In his *Aspects of the Novel*, E.M Forster explicates the difference between a round and a flat character in eleven pages (75-85). He defines that a flat character can be expressed in a single sentence because it is constructed round a single idea or quality. If a flat character has the advantages of being easily recognized by the reader's emotional eyes and being easily remembered, it is due to its being unchangeable by circumstances; it only moves through circumstances. Forster continues by citing Norman Douglas's critique of D.H. Lawrence's employment of the 'novelist touch'. This is when the author fails to realize the profundities of complexities of the ordinary human mind and so opts to select for his literary purposes two or three spectacular useful ingredients of a character upon which a necessarily wrong premise is formed and a false depiction of life is provided.

Forster categorizes the people in the works of Charles Dickens and H.G. Wells as flat characters. Both novelists are good because the former compensates for his flat characters with a wonderful feeling of human depth and the latter with his skill of observation. Both Dickens and Wells are clever at transmitting force; the part of their novel that is alive galvanizes the part that is not, and the reader is thus tricked into a sense of depth.

On the other hand, a perfect novelist touches all his material directly and his/her finger passes down every sentence and into every word. Forster names Samuel Richardson, Daniel Defoe and Jane Austen as perfect – and not merely good – novelists, and their characters (together with all Dostoyevsky's and Gustave Flaubert's *Madam Bovary*) as round characters because they give the reader a new pleasure each time they come in and because they are ready for an extended life.

It is true that Forster did not include his contemporary James Joyce in his list of 'round-character' novelists. Yet he mentioned Gustave Flaubert, James Joyce's mentor on the aspects of artistic craft and the impersonality of authorship. James Joyce duplicated Flaubert in his famous definition of the attitude of artist toward his work as being invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails. In fact, James Joyce's characteristics of a round character surpass those set by Forster.

When thirteen years of age, the student James Augustine Joyce chose for his assigned topic 'My Favourite Hero' to write about Ulysses who would become, twenty-seven years later, the eponymous of Joyce's greatest novel in the twentieth century. Once James Joyce asked his friend Frank Budgen, as recounted by Richard Ellmann (1982; 435); "Do you know of any complete all-round character presented by any writer?" Budgen suggested Dr. Faust and Hamlet, but Joyce discarded the first as "not a man at all", because neither Faust's age nor place of living is identified by Christopher Marlowe, and also because Faust is never alone; Mephistopheles is always "hanging around him". Joyce conceded that Hamlet is a human being but he is a son only and so he is not a complete man. Joyce explained to Budgen that a character is all round when it is seen from all sides and complete when it is of a good man with all the defects of an ordinary human being. Then Joyce listed to Frank Budgen that the Greek Odysseus (i.e., Ulysses) in Homer's *The Odyssey* is his model for the all-round complete character because he is son to Laertes, father to Telemachus, husband to Penelope, lover of Calypso, companion of the Greek warriors around Troy, king of Ithaca, a war dodger before the Trojan War who turns to achieve victory when he insists on staying till Troy should fall and the inventor of the ruse of the Wooden Horse which broke the siege. Furthermore, this indefatigable hero displays steadfast courage and cunning to sustain a ten-year struggle against natural and man-made obstacles to return home and regain his rightful position of husband, father and ruler.



Following Homer, James Joyce structured his eighteen episodes in *Ulysses* in correspondence with the adventures of Odysseus on his return from the battle of Troy. The three episodes of the first section, Telemachia, are designed on Telemachus's search for his father, Odysseus, and focus on Stephen Dedalus and his looking for his identity as an artist. In the second section, The Wanderings of Ulysses, in twelve episodes, the idea of exile is underscored by tracing the peregrinations of Leopold Bloom around Dublin throughout the sixteenth of June 1904 till the early hours of the following day. The third section, Nostos (Homecoming), in three episodes, depicts the return of Leopold Bloom to his home and to his Penelope represented by Molly Bloom.

It is reasonable that Joyce's artistic preoccupations in *Ulysses*, 1922, would modify Homer's *Odyssey* (written in papyrus fragments in the third century BC) into a modern epic. When asked whether literature should be a record of fact or the creation of art, Joyce, according to Arthur Power (1999; 43), reportedly replied that, "it should be life." Consequently, Joyce's theme in *Ulysses* would attempt to depict "the subterranean forces, those hidden tides which govern everything and run humanity counter to the apparent flood." (ibid; 64) Joyce continued that in the abnormal the writer approaches closer to reality and that a normal life is a conventional one that follows an objective pattern imposed by the church and state. And since the eternal qualities are the imagination and the sexual instinct which the formal life tries to suppress, the function of a writer is to maintain a continued struggle against (this) objective pattern, Joyce highlighted (ibid; 86). In confirmation, Parsons (2007; 41) testified that the archetypal laws of human existence, delineated by Joyce as an "indefatigable scribbler" and "visionary genius", lay the germ of *Ulysses*.

In fact, Joyce succeeded in *Ulysses* in transforming the Dubliners Leopold Bloom, Stephen Dedalus, and Molly Bloom into representatives of all humanity. Joyce's intimate view of his characters and their thoughts and daily activities provide a portrait of the whole spectrum of life in a far richer and more significant plane than the quotidian nature of these activities seem to indicate; in Joyce's *Ulysses*, the characters, as Fagnoli and Gillespie (2006; 163) summed "*eat, drink, discharge bodily wastes, bathe, shop, attend mass, bury the dead, work, get annoyed, argue, perform acts of kindness, wander about, greet one another, sing, write letters, frequent pubs and get drunk, become vitriolic, read books, engage in external acts, commit adultery, give birth, visit brothels, get tired, and go back to bed*" – at the eighteenth hour after 8:00 a.m. of 16.6.1904.

Joyce devoted seven years of his life to transform the ancient Greek poem and the prototype of the epic genre into a modern epic as Eliot evaluated in his essay 'Ulysses, Order and Myth', edited by Faulkner (1986; 103), adding that *Ulysses* is not written as a "narrative", but as a "myth" which rendered the novel genre "adolescent" and represented "a step toward making the modern world possible for art." And with this perception, Eliot announced to Virginia Woolf, as cited in her Diary (1977; 203), that *Ulysses* "had destroyed the whole of the 19th Century". To the same sense of Eliot's testimony, Ford Madox Ford praised *Ulysses* as one of the books that change the world, "for no novelist with serious aims can henceforth set out upon a task of writing before he has at least formed his own private estimate as to the rightness or wrongness of the methods of the author of *Ulysses*." (Deming, 1970; 129)

James Joyce's Bloom, built on Homer's Odysseus, is to a large extent an unlikely parallel for the wily Greek. Mr. Leopold Bloom is practically a 'nobody'. He works as a newspaper advertisement canvasser. His life is outstandingly ordinary, and – apart from his family – Bloom has virtually no effect upon the life around him. Nonetheless, the genius of James Joyce turns Bloom into an all-round complete character whose sense of exile and his activities, throughout the 18 hours covered by the novel, convincingly parallel the adventures undertaken by the Greek Odysseus in his 10-year-long journey from Troy to his home in Ithaca.

Joyce thrust upon his protagonist all the crises that would have any character wrecked. Firstly, Bloom suffers the losses of both his father and his only son. Secondly, the hostile Catholic society of Dublin views Bloom as a foreigner because of his Jewish father though his mother is Christian. And in an attempt to integrate his son into Dublin's society, Bloom's father has baptized him as a Protestant before Bloom baptizes himself again as a Catholic in order to marry Molly Bloom. Still Bloom is only tolerated but never accepted inside Dublin's Catholic society. Thirdly, Bloom's deep affection and concern for his wife disable him to confront the latter's sexual relationship with her concert manager, Blazes Boylan. Bloom, and so as to allow his

wife's rendezvous with Boylan inside his bedroom, wanders the streets of Dublin throughout the day and returns home in the early hours of the following day for him to be stigmatized as cuckold by Dubliners.

Nevertheless, the honesty, kindness and prudence of Mr. Leopold Bloom as a cosmopolitan, multicultural, religiously diverse and sexually conflicted character make of him a representative, rather than an individual, who provides "a complex parallax view" of Dublin, as Fagnoli and Gillespie remark (ibid; 212). James Joyce's complete man, despite the crises, is still strong enough to lead his life cordially; in *Ulysses*, '4.1-5'; "Mr. Bloom ate with relish the inner organs of beasts and fowls. He liked thick giblet soup, nutty gizzards, a stuffed roast heart, liver slices with crustcrumbs, fried hencods' roes. Most of all he liked grilled mutton kidneys which gave to his palate a fine tang of faintly scented urine."

In order to underscore the 'completeness' of his epic hero, Joyce opens *Ulysses* with the Telemachia section which introduces the character of Stephen Dedalus – previously depicted in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. In contrast with Leopold Bloom, the aloof and ascetic Romantic Stephen concedes little to the everyday material values of the world. His inner psychological perception is preoccupied with the thoughts of the loss of his mother and his apprehensiveness regarding his artistic future. However, and to serve depicting Leopold Bloom as Joyce's all-round protagonist, the two characters are interconnected, as Zack Bower (1984; 448) suggested, in that "the two share experience with or interest in a number of common topics. For example, cattle, Ireland, politics, women, music, and literature play a great part in the thoughts of both men."

In addition to Stephen Dedalus, the 'completeness' of the epic character of Leopold Bloom can be underscored by comparing it with the character of Gabriel Conroy in the story *The Dead* in Joyce's *Dubliners*. James Joyce wrote *The Dead* in 1907, the same period he conceived the idea of *Ulysses*.

However, Gabriel Conroy presents a better educated and more sophisticated character than the average middle-class, middle-brow family man Leopold Bloom. Conroy is a teacher and book reviewer who spends his holidays in the continent. He sees himself as set apart from the society he inhabits; he asserts his continental attentions and his hostility towards Irish culture during a Christmas dinner party he attends with his aunts. While leaving at the end of the party, Conroy's sexual appetites come to dominate his conscience and at the instant he feels roused by his wife Gretta, he finds her detached and absorbed in her recollections of an innocent love affair she has experienced long ago with young Michael Furey. When Gretta describes the details of Furey's adoration and his death for the sake of her love, Conroy awakes to the fact that he has never experienced such a profound love and that love must be a feeling that he has never fully had. The fall of the sophisticated Gabriel Conroy and his spiritual crisis help him acknowledge one of Joyce's 'subterranean forces', 'hidden tides' and 'eternal qualities' of humanity – as Ellmann (ibid; 362) intelligently notes; "What Conroy has to learn so painfully at the end of *The Dead*; that all – dead and living – belong to the same community, is accepted by Bloom from the start, and painlessly."

As a matter of fact, Leopold Bloom, Joyce's all-round complete character, surpasses even the Satanic hero of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* as expounded in the following section.

### **The Miltonic Stephen Dedalus in Portrait**

It is possible to project Stephen Dedalus, the protagonist of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* as a satanic hero whose prototype is Lucifer in John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Despite the fact that Milton is widely known to have called for the removal of all priests, whom he called 'hirelings', and later came to view all Christian churches as obstacles to true faith, Milton's *Paradise Lost* underscores the importance of Christ's love and depicts Jesus Christ as the saviour of humanity against Satan.

Contrariwise, James Joyce fiercely attacked his robustly Roman Catholic mother country and viewed religion as altogether a source of domination manipulated against Ireland; "I do not see what good it does to fulminate against the English tyranny while the Roman tyranny occupies the palace of the soul." (1964; 173)

*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* depicts the journey of Stephen Dedalus in five chapters from the time of childhood till his final alignment with Satan, in chapter five, when he announces his rejection of religion and his refusal to serve as a Christian and decides to leave the cages of religion and country in order to realize his ambition as a profane artist.

Chapter one portrays Stephen as an innocent and disciplined boy who willingly gives no trouble whether at school or to his mother and his governess Dante Riordan. But with chapter two he starts to

manifest himself a rebel. Firstly by expressing his happiness that he does not have to return to Clongowes Wood College – his school – because its aristocratic atmosphere frustrates him. Secondly, and at another school, Belvedere, he writes an essay which his teacher finds to be heretic. Stephen cunningly defends the accusation as a misunderstanding but the incident demonstrates that the time of innocence has passed for the adolescent Stephen. He feels a satanic-wise “vague general malignant joy” (Portrait, 1992; 80), and he starts to enjoy sin as the idea of making a heretical point in an essay makes him feel strangely glad. Thirdly, when asked by his colleagues, Stephen ranks Lord Byron as a greater poet than Alfred, Lord Tennyson. And because Byron was generally viewed as a heretic whose themes are the fall of man and carnal love and whose poem *Darkness* questions the existence of God, the pro-heretic Stephen deservedly gets beaten by his colleagues. The second chapter closes with the start of the satanic incarnation inside Stephen; “He felt some dark pressure moving irresistibly upon him from the darkness, a presence subtle and murmurous as a flood filling him wholly with itself...its subtle streams penetrated his being”, (p. 100) and that he “wanted to sin with another of his kind, to force another being to sin with him and to exult with her in sin.” (p.100)

The beginning of Chapter Three recapitulates Stephen’s commission of the seven deadly sins; lust, pride in himself and contempt of others, covetousness in using money for the purchase of unlawful pleasure, envy, gluttonous enjoyment of food, anger and “the swamp of spiritual and bodily sloth in which his whole being had sunk.” (p.106) Stephen attends a retreat and comes to realize that “he had sunk to the state of a beast...this was the end.” (p.111)

In Chapter four, the shortest in the novel, Joyce employs satire to depict Stephen’s return to the pious and religious life. Stephen turns into a fanatical person who devotes himself solely to prayer and contemplation of Catholic doctrines. He brings each of his senses to punishment; he submits himself to walking in the street with downcast eyes and, after exerted effort to find the foulest smell, “he found in the end that the only odour against which his sense of smell revolted was a certain stale fishy stink like that of long-standing urine”, and whenever it was possible he subjected himself to this unpleasant odour. To the mortification of touch, he never consciously changed his position in bed, sat in the most uncomfortable positions...and, whenever he was not saying his beads, carried his arms stiffly at his sides like a runner. (p.151)

It is easy to mark the insincerity of Stephen’s repentance; even in Chapter three, the effect of the long sermon upon him was of “a faint glimmer of fear” that began to “pierce the fog of his ‘mind’” and not of his ‘heart’. And when the priest mentions death and judgement, Stephen is terrified because of the preacher’s “knife” which “had probed deeply into his disclosed conscience.” (p.115)

Even his wishes when he would become the ‘Reverend Stephen Dedalus, S.J.’ are sinful because he sees in his position as a priest an opportunity to know about “the sins, the sinful longings and sinful thoughts and sinful acts of others” and, in particular, he would hear them murmured into his ears “by the lips of women and of girls.” (p. 159)

However, and due to his pious self-torturing attitude, Stephen is offered “the greatest honour that the Almighty God can bestow upon a man”, the priest tempts Stephen that no king or emperor on this earth has the power of the priest of God, no angel or archangel in heaven, no saint, not even the blessed Virgin herself, has the power of the priest of God. But the subtle and hostile romantic instinct of Stephen eventually “armed him against acquiescence” (p.161) and he decides that he “would definitely not serve”; he would not answer to the calling of the “inhuman voices that had called him to the pale service of the altar.” (p.171)

Stephen Dedalus, like Satan and unlike Milton’s Adam and Eve, rejects the offer of priesthood at his own will, he has been honoured into God’s graces, but he decides he no longer wants to serve. He favours “the caress of mild evening air” to “the odour of the (church) corridors” which troubles him “as if he were inhaling a warm moist unsustaining air.” (p.161) Stephen’s final decision is to fall; “He had not yet fallen but he would fall silently, in an instant. Not to fall was too hard, too hard; and he felt the silent lapse of his soul.” (p.162)

Chapter five confirms Stephen’s satanic attitude when he reports to his friend Cranly that he has quarreled with his mother because she wants him to make his Easter duty and he has refused to serve. Cranly asks Stephen whether he does not fear that the words “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire!” may be spoken to him on the Day of Judgment for Stephen to mockingly ask; “What is offered me on the other hand? An eternity of bliss in the company of the dean of studies?” (p.239)



However, while the two works, *Paradise Lost* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, depict the fall as grounded on the sexual instinct, Joyce diverges Milton's perception of Eve as the fragile and innocent part whom Lucifer had tempted by the apple she offered her man Adam and consequently resulted in the fall of both. Hogan pointed to the sexual connotation of Eve's offering Adam the apple and thus leading him to sin and he connected Joyce's prostitutes with the figure of Milton's Eve (ibid; 74). Yet, it is possible to contend Hogan on the grounds that Stephen "wished" to sin with another of his own kind, as afore-cited and went at his own will to seek a prostitute. Furthermore, and contrary to Adam's Eve, Stephen's female represents the stronger part under whose dominance Stephen "burst into hysterical weeping" (p.101) and from whom Stephen longs for protection and in whose company he seeks a religious substitute. To Stephen, the prostitution area is a church and an altar; "The yellow gas-flames arose before his troubled vision against the vapoury sky, burning as if before an altar. Before the doors and in the lighted halls groups were gathered arrayed as for some rite." (p.100)

This substitution is crystal clear in Stephen's encounter with the girl at the sea-shore (p.171), whom he associates with a wild bird rather than a heavenly angel. The simple sight of the girl leads Stephen to sin. He feels aroused when she reacts to his gaze with "no shame or wantonness" and then moves the water with her feet "hither and thither, hither and thither", and with her blushing Stephen's soul utters a cry in "an outburst of profane joy." (p.172)

Thus she throws before the Satanic Stephen, in an instant of ecstasy, the gates of all the ways of error and glory for him to "on and on and on and on" exile himself into the continent. James Joyce wandered the continent for thirty-seven years and died, about the same time Leopold and Molly Bloom slept after an epical day, in the cold in Zurich at 2:15 on January 13, 1941.

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