BUILDING SELF-IDENTITY IN URBAN BACKGROUND: *PORTRAIT* AND RESHAPING THE THEMATIC PERSPECTIVES OF THE *BILDUNG* IN THE AGE OF MODERNISM

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Abstract

Among the twentieth-century writers who made the city a part of their discourse aiming at revealing both self-identity and social meanings is James Joyce, a major representative of modernism. *Portrait* is a Bildungsroman which proves that this type of fiction is a psychological novel about an individual who strives to acquire a self, or, having a self, he or she embarks on a quest for a better self. *Portrait* prefigures modernism, Joyce making use of his aesthetic concentration to achieve literary innovation by exploring new fields of human experience and developing new means of artistic expression in his focus on individual, primarily psychological, existence. The present study argues about the link between the protagonist and the chronotope of the city as a factor of synthesis of the formative experience which in this novel ends in departure and search, whereas the *Bildung* (self or identity) is still to be acquired and asserted.

Keywords: Modernism, Bildungsroman, James Joyce, psychological experience, urban background

KENTSEL ARKA PLANDA ÖZKİMLİK OLUŞTURMA: *PORTRE* VE MODERNİZMDE *BİLDUNG*'UN BAKIŞ AÇISINI YENİDEN ŞEKİLLENDİRMEK

Öz

Şehri hem özkimlik hem de sosyal anlamları ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlayan söylemlerinin bir parçası haline getiren yirminci yüzyıl yazarları arasında modernizmin önemli bir temsilcisi olan James Joyce önemli bir yer tutar. *Portre*, bu tür bir kurgunun, bir benlik kazanma için çabası içinde olan ya da daha iyi bir benlik arayışına yelken açan bireyin psikolojik bir romanı olduğunu kanıtlayan bir

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Bildungsroman'dır. Modernizmin öncüsü *Portre'd*e Joyce, estetik konsantrasyonunu insan deneyiminin yeni alanlarını keşfetmek ve bireyin ön planda olduğu, özellikle psikolojik ve varoluşsal yeni sanatsal ifade yöntemleri geliştirerek edebi yeniliğe ulaşmak için kullanır. Mevcut çalışma, romanın kahramanıyla şehir kronotopu arasındaki bağlantıyı eserde biçimlendirici deneyimin sentezinin faktörü olarak ki bu romanın ayrılış ve arama ile bitmişken *bildung*'un (benlik veya kimlik) hala kazanılması ve oluşturulması gerektiğini ileri sürmektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Modernizm, Bildungsroman, James Joyce, psikolojik deneyim, kentsel arka plan

Introduction

In a troubled period in the history of Europe and his own country, James Joyce grasped the atmosphere of frustration and futility, the sense of chaos and confusion. The themes of *Dubliners*, his first important book and, as Joyce once claimed, his "last look at Dublin", consist in rendering the political and social life of Dublin, the misery of humble condition, the theme of exile, the problems of the individual's existence in an urban background which Joyce saw as paralyzed and, like Eliot, an expression of a period of crisis in the history of humanity. Joyce intended to write a chapter of the moral history of his country, and he chose Dublin as it seemed to him the centre of paralysis on different levels which he presented under four aspects: childhood, adolescence, maturity, and public life. All the fifteen stories of the book, like his later works, express a period of confusion and frustration and in all the characters are of humble existence, incapable to fulfil inner potentialities and to establish communication with the others; at moments, they experience relevant epiphanic realisations, apparently due to some trivial incidents and attempt to escape the bonds of everyday life, but all they get is an acute sense of entrapment, frustration and alienation. On the narrative level, the short stories resemble some features of the traditional fiction, but they already reveal some features of Joyce's later experimental writings.

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Joyce's next major work, has its origin in the semi-autobiographical fragment *Stephen Hero* and, like the previous work *Dubliners* and the future novel *Ulysses*, uses the chronotope of Dublin as the formal principle in the text to organize the sequences of events and the thematic perspectives. *Stephen Hero*, like *Dubliners*, Joyce one joked, had the defect of being "about Ireland". *Portrait* is a Bildungsroman as well as a Künstlerroman reconstructing the spiritual biography of the artist, the growth of his personality. It took two countries and ten years (Dublin 1904, Trieste 1914), we find out at the

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end of *Portrait*, for the "picture" to rise complete, a "picture of spiritual life" of the author, as Joyce once declared. The title actually suggests intertextual connection to Wilde's *The Picture of Doran Gray* and James's *Portrait of a Lady*, but it is an ironic autobiographical essay entitled "A Portrait of the Artist", written by Joyce in 1904, which, refused by the editors at the Irish *Dana*, was expanded by Joyce in an autobiographical novel, first known as *Stephen Hero* and finally becoming *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.

In handling the Bildungsroman, this traditional, Victorian type of novel, *Portrait* already reveals the use of some modernist narrative methods, the authorial withdrawal, at least in the final pages (the novel begins with a third-person narrator and ends with a first-person one), as well as a changed view on language and its relation to reality, the psychological principles of free-association and dramatization; the novel emphasizes the role of epiphany and is stronger concerned with the psychological experience of the individual, and prefigures other aspects which would flourish as elements of highest fictional experimentation in *Ulysses* with its psychological insight, abstract manifestations of the mind in the form of interior monologue rendered by stream of consciousness technique.

Modernism and the Focus on the Psychological Context

The periods, movements, and trends emerging diachronically in literature would always attempt to provide changes and innovation of both content and form, and then establish them as aspects of a newly advanced tradition. On the thematic level, such changes involve primarily the character representation strategies, where every important literary tradition would construct its particular vision on human existence and textualize in its own way the individual experience. The hero of the Renaissance literature is a humanist, a philosopher, an integrated consciousness and a unified self, and so on; the persona in a metaphysical poem displays wit, personal potential, rationalization of feeling, pursues argumentation and persuasion, etc.; the neoclassical individual is rational, empiricist, explores the world through mind, experiment, intellectual curiosity and displays a positive and optimistic worldview; the romantic hero or heroine is solitary, escapist, rebellious, caught in the dualism of existence, instinctual and passionate, but more importantly, he or she becomes the primary focus of the author, personal subjectivity is the main concern, or the concern with individual experience. The Victorian human subject, due to the emergent in that age social theories and sociology, is thematized as an individual in relation to the social background, the concern with individual and the milieu dominating the plot of the realist novel.

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In the first half of the twentieth century, due to the rise psychology and psychoanalysis, the individual experience is again a concern in itself, and what was in romanticism the focus on emotional experience becomes now the concern with individual psychological experience, the psychic context of the character, the workings of the human mind, and the feelings emphasised by romanticism and the impressions prompted by aestheticism broaden to become various abstract manifestations of the mind in a larger sense, with memory, epiphany, anxiety, neurosis, frustration and others alike in centre reifying an individual consciousness.

On a more particular level of the character representation strategies, some notes on the differences between realist fiction and the modernist one, in general, and with regard to the Bildungsroman, in particular, would assist our discussion of the modernist representation of the formation of personality set in urban background – as in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*– and show the thematic mutations which differentiate it from the traditional, realist consideration of the formation of an individual identity.

Influenced by romanticism, the character of the realist fiction is an individual, self-sufficient and self-contained personality; however, with the exception of the protagonists, who are primarily socially subjected subjects, realism constructs many of its characters as social and moral types, which is against romantic view according to which the individual is solitary, above human condition, superior, a misfit seeking escapism or displaying a rebellious attitude. The social concern is therefore added in realism to the concern with individual experience, and both are rendered in a relationship which is based on the principle of social determinism, which, in turn, prompts a twofold perspective: (1) survival, emergence, becoming, formation of the individual despite social determinism which can be congenial or obstructing (a low-mimetic realist perspective influenced by enlightenment and romantic thinking); and (2) failure to emerge, become, achieve *Bildung* of the identity as a result of social determinism, obstructing rather than congenial, leading to the tragic outcome of a negative influence (a high-mimetic realist perspective influenced by contemporary developments in social theories, sociology, and positivism).

As a rejection of realism, positivism, tradition, norms, conventional realist techniques, observable aspects of experience and behaviour, objective reality, social and moral issues, as well as a continuation of symbolism, aestheticism, and impressionism, and as influenced by the contemporary developments in science, technology, and humanities, in particular

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psychology and psychoanalysis, namely the new advancements in thought by William James, Freud, Jung, Husserl, and others, modernism came to dominate the artistic and literary discourse in the first half of the twentieth century.

Neither a movement nor a trend, but rather a period and umbrella term used to name a number of trends and movements, which are different and even contradictory (surrealism, Dadaism, cubism, stream of consciousness, imagism, futurism, and so on), modernism is yet unified by certain "family resemblances" in the way in which Wittgenstein explains the term.

A true modernist writer would combine original thematic perspectives (for instance, subconscious or the processes which make the conscious experience possible) with original structural techniques (for example, stream of consciousness) as we see in Joyce and Woolf with their innovation of both levels, unlike Lawrence and Huxley, who in their novels achieve originality only on one level, particularly thematic. Against the realist, reader-oriented type of literary discourse, which Roland Barthes calls "readerly", the modernist author displays the awareness of language as to produce and use motifs and symbols in order to create an increasing complexity of ideas and subjective human responses; he or she displays craftsmanship, artfulness, as well as intellectual arrogance, learning, scholarship, making the literary discourse complex, difficult and disturbing, and requiring the reader to rise to the author's level, in a type of text that Barthes calls "writerly" (*scriptible*), in which "the reader [is] no longer a consumer, but a producer of the text" (Barthes, 1974, p. 4), in opposition to the "readerly" (*lisible*) text, which is classic or realistic work, "an art of Replete Literature: literature that is replete" (Barthes, 1974, p. 5).

With regard to language, "the realism of modernist novels such as *Mrs Dalloway* and *Ulysses*, in comparison, questions and foregrounds language's ability to signify an objective reality while nonetheless fixating on the problems of representing the details of the everyday, thus amplifying our sense of the everyday's presence" (Oslon, 2009, pp. 21-22).

In constructing the image of their protagonists, the modernist writers of the experimental novel employs stream of consciousness to materialise the psychological assumption promoted by William James that reality is not objectively given but it is perceived subjectively through consciousness. The technique is used to render the unspoken thoughts, memories and other manifestations of the mind with all chaotic, disorganized, associative immediacy of their actual occurrence by which the text receives the form of interior monologue. The personal consciousness is rendered in such a way that it retains action but

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excludes the plot and the chronological presentation of events; instead, non-linear structures with flashbacks and concentricity are used since individual consciousness and memory presuppose free movement in time. Memory, in particular, is employed as a "seamstress", stitching in the narrative of a single day many recollections of past experiences.

In the modernist fiction by Proust, Joyce and Woolf, the technique is stream of consciousness, form is interior monologue and free indirect discourse, theme is the psychological experience of the individual consisting in abstract manifestations of the mind rendered in the text as they actually exist on the conscious level before they are formulated for deliberate speech or materialized in external behaviour as well as stimulated by subconscious and the contact with reality, and as related to the processes and experiences which make them possible, such as memory, free-association, and epiphany. Apart from them, the modernist novelist uses various other stylistic devices, such as fragmentariness, parody, allusion, ambiguity, collage, word-play, and so on. Most of these figures of speech and new means of literary expression are employed to represent the main theme – character's consciousness and inner being (psychological, emotional, sensual experience) instead of objective reality – and to show the futility of existence, the lack of values in a barren and almost absurd world, the existential crisis, the historical dead-end, and above all, the frustration and alienation of the individual. Along with the fragmentary narrative and thematic organization and the fragmented expression of the world, the fragmentariness of the self, in particular, discloses frustration, alienation, and the demise of the integrated individual subject, and the setting or chronotope which is used to better reveal this condition is the chronotope of the city, employed by modernists to textualize the psychological condition of the protagonist amid urban and cosmopolitan dislocation, disorder, and wasteland.

The Urban Experience in Literary Expression

The image and role of the urban background in a literary text regard the changes in psychology and worldview of the protagonist, this type of interrelationship between life in city and the psychology of its inhabitants being first pointed out by Georg Simmel in his essay "Die Grosstadt und das Geistesleben" ("Big cities and spiritual life"). The fictional textualization of this relationship occurred, in English literature, as earlier as in the eighteenth century with the rise of the novel. In *Tom Jones*, as later in Victorian novel and in the modernist one, and even in contemporary fiction, with regard to the thematization of a life experience, the richness and chain of "myriad impressions" offered by the city leads to a new

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type of personality that is required to develop new types of psychological defence, such as rational approach, which leads in turn to individualization.

In the realist Bildungsroman, the type of defence which predominates is a kind of unemotional indifference revealing moral collapse, supremacy of money over spirit, and the material character of inter-human relationship. To Pip, for example, London is not his expected source of accomplishment, emerging instead as his chronotope of corruption and failure. The protagonist is weak to resist the violence or determinism of the city, not even by an intellectual, rational approach, since this violence comes from a metropolitan entity which resembles, in Simmel's conception, a living organism (just like for Lotman) with a body having physical boundaries and with a mind possessing a system of moral and cultural values.

Turning to and using urban milieu in order to thematize the issue of social determinism on identity and the struggle of the protagonist for its recognition, the writer through the voice of his or her narrator renders the experience of an individual subject during which the character is not a simple observer of reality, but its learner and commentator, feeling pleasure or frustration, appurtenance or alienation. The protagonist is alive through nervous excitement, feelings, various psychological and emotional states with which city provides him or her. In this respect, the city and its urban culture built on actual social and historical premises are juxtaposed and even opposed to countryside with its eternal, unchangeable features which are beyond history. "Eternity was born in the village", Mircea Eliade claims, whereas city is the centre of culture, politics, religion, science, the culmination of development of a civilization which inflicts ordeals and may even require sacrifice of identity, as it is rendered in the Bildungsroman (*Great Expectations*) and not only (*Middlemarch*). The values, which hero or heroine may learn and assume in the provincial, rustic background of his or her life beginnings, lose their original essence, such as friendship, care, even kinship, and are replaced by cold, fragmentary, surface, and indifferent social relations. The protagonist may assume such relations as a defence mechanism against being subjected, but may also assume the multifaceted existential perspectives offered by the city in order to learn, develop, fill a social place, in other words, to emerge as an individual. In this case, the protagonist would embark on functional relations with others, where the driving forces on asserting his or her identity would be contact, union, communication, co-participation, and other forms of inter-human relationship which encompasses various dimensions of a life experience consisting of education, profession, love, family relations,

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nationality, religion, and so on. The city is thus a kind of parental figure, responsible for the becoming of a spiritual and psychological identity, an artist creating the "portrait" of an individual who obtains a consciousness in his or her contacts with the larger, urban society, which, in turn, determines this consciousness.

The multifaceted city determines a multifaceted identity, a portrait which is not complete or a whole, and the identity may not be formed, or, if formed, may not be asserted, or it may degrade; also, the fragmentariness of metropolis may lead to the fragmentariness of psychology and identity of the individual inhabiting the city. The intensity of emotional and psychological experiences in the city offers, however, a sense of life which is drunk "to the lees", as Tennyson urges, a trust in emancipation, progress, civilization, which attracts the human being in his or her process of building and asserting an identity.

The protagonist may emerge in the city as an individual, or be lost and regimented in the urban mass-society; he or she attends school and acquires knowledge, passes through emotional experience to build up a family, and faces the issue of professional choice to acquire a social status. In the Victorian period, writers would continue the eighteenth-century practice of making novel the arena of representation of city life. The Victorian novelists would surpass, however, there predecessors and thematize the city or metropolis as a spatial component possessing a spiritual dimension of the larger socio-cultural background whose relation to the individual is built on the principle of determinism: David or Pip faces a new type of urban reality and becomes a new type of city resident whose identity and psychology are affected by the urban environment.

The modernist author thematizes the city – Dublin for Joyce and London for Eliot – as an aspect of the reflection in literature of the contemporary period of crisis in the history of humanity to a achieve a sense of urban dislocation. Stephen Dedalus, as a flâneur on the streets of Dublin, exhibits the workings of his mind as an actor receiving inner, subconscious stimuli and outer, external stimuli from within his interrelatedness with the milieu epitomised as city. In the metropolitan background, the individual subject is an actor and city is a theatre, the scene of a social drama; it is a cultural depository, a type of collective memory; city is a socio-historical entity, but also a living organism subjected to many of the natural laws. To Lewis Mumford, the city is a social institution, a physical fact, but with spiritual and cultural dimensions, and, in "What is a City?", he defines it, "in its complete sense", as

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a geographical plexus, an economic organization, an institutional process, a theatre of social action, and an aesthetic symbol of creative unity. The city fosters art and is art; the city creates the theatre and is the theatre. It is in the city, the city as theatre, that man's more purposive activities are forces, and work out, through conflicting and cooperating personalities, events, groups, into more significant culminations. (Mumford, 1997, p. 185)

In the Victorian, especially realist, novel, the city is primarily the result of industrialization and urbanization mixing what Carl Schorske names "city as virtue", "city as vice", and "city beyond good and evil" – the first concept is rooted in the optimist Enlightenment philosophy, the second in romantic culture, and the third in the nineteenth-century objectivity – and becomes the chronotope for the becoming and dwelling of individual personalities with distinct identities.

Twentieth century would come to change the traditional, as rendered in the Victorian fiction, moral, sociological, and historical views on the city, replacing them with, first, psychological and psychoanalytical perspectives of modernism, and, then, with the interpretation of the city as discourse (Roland Bathes in his semiotic approach), or, from a more general postmodern and poststructuralist announcement of the textual nature of reality, city is regarded as a new type of cultural text, where roaming the streets equals to the practice of reading. These views, along with others such as the consideration of the city as the product of nature, or the result of human activity, or the issue of intentionality or that of spatialization, or various postcolonial, feminist and gender trends would provide new thematic perspectives to the twentieth-century novels from Joyce and Woolf to Ackroyd.

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Practical Argumentation: Shaping New Thematic Perspectives to the Victorian Bildungsroman in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*

The modernist reflection in literature of the contemporary period of crisis in the history of humanity and of the sense of cultural dead-end on various levels (cultural, social, religious, national, individual, and so on) often involves the chronotope of city and reflects in the end a sense of metropolitan and cosmopolitan dislocation, where the individual experience in urban background is rendered through the principles of frustration and alienation which mark the existence of the character. The urban background is the setting for the experience of James Joyce's protagonists in *Dubliners*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and *Ulysses*, where they display their various abstract manifestations of the mind, spiritual and psychological states, desires and anxieties.

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A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man is also a Bildungsroman in the way in which we would define the Bildungsroman as the *novel of identity formation*. Our definition relies on Bakhtin, who defines the Bildungsroman as that type of novel "that provides an image of *man in the process of becoming*" and explains it by arguing that

[a]s opposed to a static unity, here one finds a dynamic unity in the hero's image. The hero himself, his character, becomes a variable in the formula of this type of novel. Changes in the hero himself acquire *plot* significance, and thus the entire plot of the novel is reinterpreted and reconstructed. Time is introduced into man, enters into his very image, changing in a fundamental way the significance of all aspects of his destiny and life;

therefore, Bakhtin concludes his definition, this "type of novel can be designated in the most general sense as the novel of human *emergence*" ("roman stanovlenia cheloveka") (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 21), or, as we prefer, the novel of *formation*.

In English literature, the Bildungsroman flourished in Victorian period in the aftermath of romanticism, predominantly as realist but not only, and in the realist one, the protagonist strives for success and accomplishment throughout his or her life experience, which is, however, thwarted by the antagonistic, powerful social institutions and circumstances.

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The Bildungsroman written in the age of modernism – *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Jacob's Room*, *Sons and Lovers*, and others – both preserves some and changes other of the thematic rather than narrative perspectives of the Victorian novel of formation within the context of the general modernist challenge of the traditional, realist fiction:

In the modernist Bildungsroman, a critical perspective reconfigures the conventional structures of narrative, while retaining most of its main elements (plot trajectory, characterization, thematic emphases), and reinstates a revalued classical Bildung as the goal of the modernist Bildungsheld. (Castle, 2006, p. 25)

First and foremost, the alienated and frustrated protagonist of the modernist novel would fail to acquire a self, build his or her identity, and accomplish on personal and social levels, where

Many modernists resisted this pragmatic model of intersubjectivity and attempted to devise ways by which the presumed failure of the subject to satisfy the demands of society (especially in contexts of education and work) could be revalued and transformed into new forms of identity. One way of doing this was, paradoxically, to retrieve the classical conception of

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Bildung and redeploy it in a progressive fight against 'rationalized' forms of socialization and in the search for satisfying modes of self-cultivation. (Castle, 2006, p. 30)

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man is a Bildungsroman as well as a Künstlerroman in that it follows the process of education, development, and formation of an artist. In the Bildungsroman, reasons Eric Bulson, "the protagonist finds his or her place in the society but ends disillusioned by the ways of the world", whereas the protagonist of the Künstlerroman, "forcefully rejects the commonplace life that society has to offer"; in this respect, "Stephen belongs a bit to both traditions: he comes up against the social, political, and religious institutions that want him to conform, and he rejects them for the artistic life" (Bulson, 2006, p. 49).

Portrait relies heavily on autobiographical material, many of Stephen's experiences are Joyce's, characters and events are based on real ones, but Stephen Dedalus is not James Joyce, and what is based on reality is "creatively refracted through the consciousness of a fictional character" (Bulson, 2006, p. 50). *Portrai* began in 1907 as a revision and rewriting of an original manuscript entitled *Stephen Hero*, which Joyce brought to Trieste in 1905 and continuously worked on, but much of it was thrown away two years later, when it counted up to some twenty-five chapters of the planned sixty-three. We might have had no *Portrait* at all too, as in 1911, unsatisfied and unwilling to go on with what he had started, among other things because of the earlier unsuccessful negotiations over the publication of *Dubliners*, Joyce threw the draft sections of the novel into fire and it was the intervention of Eileen, his sister, that the manuscript was saved. Serialised in *The Egoist* between 1914 and 1915 through the intervention of, among others, Ezra Pound, *Portrait* was published in book form in 1916.

Apart from *Stephen Hero*, another source for *Portrait* is an essay which he called, at his brother's idea, "A Portrait of the Artist", written by Joyce for the periodical *Dana* in 1904, but it was rejected for publication as too obscure. This essay grew to a thousand pages in less than one year to be known as *Stephen Hero* and ten years later was offered to the readers as a less voluminous Bildungsroman of five chapters eventually entitled *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. From the formal obscurity of the essay, *Stephen Hero* is "more direct and naturalistic" in style, *Dubliners* more "descriptive", as to achieve in *Portrait* "economy of style and structural coherence" (Bulson, 2006, p. 49).

On the thematic level, the essay and the three literary works share Joyce's attempts to build a system of ideas on art, artist, aesthetic perception, fixed identity versus identity in

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becoming, "portrait" capturing present, past, and future, as well as his views on Ireland, religion, sin, senses, and family. Only in the autobiographical *Portrait*, Joyce's central concern would be Stephen's consciousness in development, the becoming of an artist from earlier childhood until around twenty, his protagonist revealing in the course of maturation the most important formative stages which correspond to the typical Bildungsroman plot pattern: childhood, education, city and larger society, sentimental experience, preparation for a vocation, and so on, culminating here, in *Portrait*, not with acquiring *Bildung* or formation but with the decision to become an artist and the choice of exile. In the novel, with a strong autobiographical correlative at its core, the events are organized chronologically and each chapter is an important stage of the formative experience comprising the whole of an individual consciousness in the process of maturation, his intellectual, emotional, and above all, artistic development. From experiencing the world through senses and the first attempts at rationalization in early childhood, Stephen's intellectual growth would culminate in complex philosophical speculation some twenty years later when entering upon early maturity, which is a process textually mimicked by the use of language, which at the beginning displays childlike simplicity to gradually become more sophisticated and complicated in style and mode of expression. The more he grows and the more complex socialization experience becomes, the more changed and enriched is the vocabulary used to think and speak, revealing the development of language along the growth of personality and consciousness, and showing that "[r]ather than describing or reflecting the world, language was now seen to form it" (Bell, 1999, p. 16).

Among the factors responsible for the diversification of the social relations and, therefore, influencing the act of maturation, Joyce thematizes the family background, religion, Irish national issues, educational system, and, not the least, the city of Dublin. In *Dubliners*, dealing with the theme of paralysis, Joyce brings the city of Dublin to the centre of the thematic pattern of each story, and the urban background becomes the chronotope for the artistic rendering of the life-cycle comprising childhood, adolescence, maturity, and public life. In *Portrait*, these four existential aspects are concentrated around the process of becoming of Stephen Dedalus and represent the main aspects or phases of his development.

"For myself, I always write about Dublin, because if I can get to the heart of Dublin I can get to the heart of all the cities of the world. In particular is contained the universal", Joyce would say, although he lived for long periods of time in various European cities such as

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Trieste, Zurich, and Paris. Dublin is conceived as a centre of spiritual paralysis of the human being, but in itself the locus is not fixed but rather flexible, and like time, which can comprise in one day the whole of a life-time, the city is a structure of spaces – cultural, historical, geographical, textual, verbal, ethical, and so on – which builds up a panorama capturing the diversity of modern life.

Representing initially the background against which an individual experience can be foregrounded, symbolism would bring into literature a new aesthetic of the city, inverting the traditional representations of time and space, and Joyce and other modernists would go further confounding background and foreground, eliminating human figures, and creating the illusion of moving images in panorama, diorama, and, finally, the motion picture.

In literature, in particular in Joyce's work, first in *Dubliners*, then in *Portrait* and finally in *Ulysses*, the ostensibly nationalist, Catholic, mercantile, conforming, and gossipy Dublin is coming on and immediately passing away in the perpetual motion of streets, houses, bricks, pavements, and people, too, where its images create a continual human flux of the city which becomes the matrix of its unexpected durability.

In *Portrait*, Stephen Dedalus's process of formation starts with his infantile and childhood experience at home and school; the chronotope of city is textualized as part of this process in Chapter 2, when the family moves from the suburb of Blackrock to Dublin. Blending tradition and innovation in handling the typical Bildungsroman plot, Joyce reconstructs thematically the element of formation, along with change, understanding (epiphany), and formative experience as a process of biological and intellectual growth. The biological and spiritual/intellectual development contains the components of childhood experience (involving family, provincial setting, conflict, and others), education and larger society (involving professional and sentimental experiences), and above all a very important event in the formative experience, which leads to epiphany in turn prompting change signifying *Bildung* or formation, which could be successful or not depending on protagonist's epiphany and change as well as on his accomplishment on both personal and social levels.

Less interested in social relationship and social determinism, and avoiding the so dear to the British reading public ethical discourse, in Joyce's novel of identity formation, the social concern is marginalized in order to allow the hero freedom to speak, to show his individualized, subjective personality, to express a personal world-view, and to promote

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individual values against or as an alternative to some social and moral values, or some more general, eternal, and objective truths.

Portrait, as a Bildungsroman prefiguring modernism, proclaims and foregrounds the individual and individuality, and reveals the psychological and emotional complexity and spiritual insight of the human being, who is capable of changing and acquiring a distinct identity, of emerging, becoming, and completing formation. Joyce's Bildungsroman creates a complex portrayal of an individual, a round and dynamic protagonist, who is an individual subject with impressions, feelings, thoughts, memories, dreams, a whole consciousness in progress, growth, and, above all, capable of changing. Most of the Bildungsromane value inter-human relationship and inter-personal dependence, and many of them also value social determinism; Joyce's approach, however, is more egocentric and individualistic, promoting at once loneliness and communion, isolation and search for relationship, rebelliousness and escapism, which would achieve its highest fictional representation, in matters of modernist innovation, experimentation and originality, in *Ulysses*.

In *Portrait*, like in other novels designated as Bildungsromane, the chronotope of city stands for larger society and is a factor of synthesis of the formative experiences beyond the original background, which may become a new home, but not for Stephen, who decides to leave Dublin for other formative horizons.

Dublin provides an urban experience which is both obstructing and congenial, a centre of social and psychological paralysis, and a place of exile, loss of identity, passiveness, lack of communication, almost absurdity of human condition, but also a place of escapism from seclusion, search for stability, individuation, granted epiphanies, pointed out solutions, and, as in *Portrait*, one of the formative premises for the protagonist.

Walking around Dublin, it is on the streets of the city that Stephen builds up an aesthetic theory, a philosophical reflection on life and art, which he expounds in the form of a dramatic monologue to Lynch, in particular with regard to "epiphany", which constitutes another significant formative moment in Stephen's life, pointing to the open-ended narrative at the end of the novel and illuminating his decision to leave Ireland and embrace the destiny of an artist, where the self is yet to be acquired and the principle of *Bildung* or formation still awaits for its thematization. The chronotope of road assumes the dominant position in the narrative, and Stephen embarks on an existential journey, a travel of self-discovery, where "travel is considered to be a consortium of genres rather than merely a non-fictional account

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and analyzed in an interdisciplinary manner, on the other hand, its preferred subgenre is given priority over the nature of its main genre" (Özmen, 2011, p. 278).

At the end of *Portrait*, Stephen, the archetype of a self-sufficient, frustrated artist still in search for identity and self, is left with the prospect of liberation and fulfilment, presented with a sense of hope and optimism; at the beginning of *Ulysses*, he is again overwhelmed by doubt, alienation, and frustration, but at the end of this novel, following his chance meeting with Leopold Bloom, he apparently succeeds in getting reconciled with himself and society, and emerges as the archetype of an accomplished artist, nevertheless, still arrogant and ego-centric, but having acquired and asserted a self and identity.

Concluding Reflections

In the realist Bildungsroman, the process of development and formation of an individual, although remains to be gradual and manifold, stops being harmonious, like in Goethe, and receives modified thematising perspectives as determined by the changed character representation strategies, which are also different from the eighteenth-century novel and especially from the romantic views on individual existence. The Bildungsroman produced in the age of modernism would further expand the idea of identity formation lacking a harmonious resolution; it would, on the whole, further change and diversify the thematic perspectives involving the elements of the Bildungsroman literary system, particularly the concept of formation or *Bildung*, family and larger society, education and vocational career, or the individual experience in urban background.

Concerning the thematic deviation in the modernist Bildungsroman of the relationship between the individual and social background, this new type of the novel of formation

> seeks not to circumvent or 'opt out' of socialization processes, but rather to develop new conceptions of self-cultivation, which often take the form of a liberatory *depersonalization* and which respond more effectively and productively to the demands of modern social conditions. The modernist Bildungsroman may fail in terms of genre, but that failure only serves to articulate more effectively its singular triumph, the abstract affirmation of Bildung as a cherished ideal. The constitutive irony of the modernist Bildungsroman lies in this affirmation made from the perspective of the subject who, in the final analysis, can feel only its absence. (Castle, 2006, p. 28)

With regard to the protagonist's failure or success in completing his or her development and acquiring a social status, "for the nineteenth century generally, the heroes of

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the Bildungsroman are always returning to the authorities they have spurned, not because they have seen 'the error of their ways,' but because they have, for all their efforts, found no other home" (Castle, 2006, p. 23), whereas the modernist hero or heroine,

> marginalized by race, class, education, nationality, or gender, refuses socialization and assimilation into social institutions that do not advance his or her artistic designs. If Stephen Dedalus must flee his native land in order to try to achieve his goals, if Jude Fawley fails to achieve his goals of self-cultivation and slips into fatal illness, if Rachel Vinrace dies before she can even find out what her goal is, the failure is not that of Bildung, which remains an ideal for all of these young people, but that of the specific social conditions of their development. (Castle, 2006, p. 24)

The formative experience of Stephen Dedalus discloses a process of becoming and emergence of a highly spiritual being, an abstract reasoner, a philosopher and artist, but bound to the daily issues of his private, family life, later education and public life with issues concerning politics and Irish nationalism, as well as his spiritual life with issues related to religion. Gradually enfolded in the process of development, Stephen's psychological and inner spectrum would become enriched by multiple allusions to philosophy, literature, religion, history, social theories, and myth, disclosing a highly artistic nature of an intellectual human subject concerned with spiritual issues. Stephen is the philosopher, abstract thinker, sophisticated, spiritual, and learned, and his inner world is multilateral and reflects a diversity of interests and fields of knowledge; however, growing along this intellectual and artistic complexity is a sense of alienation and frustration on family, national, and religious grounds.

As revealed in the novel *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and as it will be later enhanced in *Ulysses*, the chronotope of city in Joyce is the arena for the manifestation of the psychological experience of the character, his complexity of though and artistic endeavour, as well as the conscious response to the external, including urban, stimuli and to the subconscious stimuli, which would result in the textualisation of the whole spectrum of the abstract manifestations of the mind. *Portrait*, like the entire Joyce's work, is created around the theme of the condition of modern man in the modern world searching for self-identity, social identity, and stable values in a troubled period in the history of Europe and Ireland. Apart from this, James Joyce focuses on national problems of Ireland, religious issues, realities of family life, aspects of urban existence, and others alike, demonstrating, particularly later in *Ulysses*, that his visions and concerns continuously change, diversify and expand from personal to public and to universal, from Ireland to the entire world, from the

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condition of Stephen representing Joyce to the overall human existence through Leopold Bloom and Molly Bloom, who are exponents of the common and general human condition.

Concerning the character representation strategies, Joyce attempts to grasp the sense of frustration, alienation and futility which dominates the conscious level of the psyche, and the atmosphere of chaos and confusion that surrounds the individual existence. In order to achieve it, Joyce applies a combination of multiple thematic and structural perspectives in rendering the psychological experience involving the relationship between consciousness and unconscious and between consciousness and external reality.

In *Portrait*, like later in *Ulysses*, Stephen Dedalus represents a hypostasis of the modern frustrated and alienated personality in a period of crisis in the history of humanity, which corresponds textually to James Joyce himself. On a strong autobiographical substratum, Stephen reveals Joyce's own feeling of alienation and frustration in public and private life. Like the author, throughout his formative process, Stephen searches for understanding, communication and companionship; he experiences epiphanies which should provide solutions, but the open ending of the novel allows for further advancement of a life experience and it will be in *Ulysses*, when the spiritual Stephen Dedalus (Telemachus) and materialistic Leopold Bloom (Ulysses) finally meet and each acquire a self or discover a better self through a sense of intimacy suggesting prospect of fulfilment, sense of reconciliation, hope for artistic accomplishment, and the eventual escape from the tormenting feelings of frustration and alienation.

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man is a Bildungsroman but not a complete one since the novel ends in search for the self, and the only clearly stated conclusion is that Stephen decides to become an artist and leave Ireland; it is also rather clear that the decision to be an artist and his flight from homeland are a result of his individuation emerging through isolation (the individual mind in isolation, as for Walter Pater) and confrontation with religious faith (first accepted and then replaced by the sensual and sexual fervour) and final break with family, nation, religion, Church, and society on the whole. The acceptance of a life of the senses, in particular, from a psychological perspective, represents an episode in the hero's formative process which corresponds to

the young adult's initial stages of journey into adulthood when both the physical and spiritual deeds are necessary to accomplish his quest. The physical deed could represent the completion

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of physiological ripeness of an individual, since this maturation phase includes also the acknowledgment and practice of sexuality. (Golban, 2014, p. 36)

By the motif of departure at the end of the novel, Joyce formulated the story about the birth and development of "a young Catholic artist, who gradually detaches himself from the religious and social institutions that threaten his artistic autonomy" (Bulson, 2006, p. 48) as to acquire an independent voice. These are the seeds for what would flourish in *Ulysses* as the textualization of the abstract manifestations of the mind, the workings of an individual consciousness, self-characterization through interior monologue, psychological impressionism, epiphany, internal and external stimuli, free-association, and stream of consciousness technique.

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, more than other Victorian and contemporary Bildungsromane, reveals that every *Bildung* requires development, but not every development presupposes *Bildung*. It would be later, in *Ulysses*, after his meeting with Leopold Bloom, that Stephen Dedalus finds his self, gets his *Bildung*, but this might be the concern of another, independent study.

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