



Essence Of Religion And Sex In Portrait Of The Artist As Young Man By James Joyce

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Abstract: A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1916) by James Joyce is a complicated literary work that has sparked several articles and books of critique. This work is unique in that it incorporates numerous facts from Joyce's early life. Stephen Dedalus, the protagonist of the novel, is Joyce's imaginary double in many ways. Although the story contains many fictional scenarios, some of its most poignant passages are personal. A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man has several references to the politics and religion of early-twentieth-century Ireland, in addition to Joyce's personal life.

Keywords: religion, sex, Ireland, God, Christian.

Hypothesis of the work: Joyce's rejection of Irish Catholicism reflected a broader trend of the time, which was to replace any sort of institutionalized religion and authority with a more personal approach. To learn more about James Joyce's views on religion, as depicted in his book A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. To demonstrate that Joyce's stance goes beyond a rejection of Irish Catholicism and indicates a broader trend of abandoning all forms of established religion.

Essence of religion: To define the subject of this work, we must first define the term "religion" and its meaning. The term "religion" has a solely Latin origin. This word is connected to the Latin word "relegere," which means "obligation," and the English word "ligare," which means "to bind," and the prefix "-re," which means "once more," according to The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology¹. Religion is defined as "the belief in the existence of god or gods," "a particular system of faith and worship based on religious belief," and "a controlling influence on one's life; a thing that one feels very strongly about," according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English.

It is common knowledge that no religion can exist without the presence of man, and that religious belief has been in the human species since its beginnings. Religion exists because of man, and it plays an important role in his growth. That is why anthropology (the study of the human race's origins, development, habits, and beliefs) is so important to our understanding of religion. In his book Religion, An Anthropological View, Anthony Wallace provides a succinct summary of some general theories of religion according to that science. Man's requirements change with time, thus they aren't always the same. As a result, the functions of religion change with time. According to Wallace, the role of religion in early civilizations was to provide a rational answer to intellectual issues in the form of a "formula" that provided a gratifying sense of comprehension of the unknown when confronted with incomprehensible natural happenings. Because religion is viewed as a vehicle for "evolution," this viewpoint is known as the "evolutionary theory" of religion.

"Devolutionary theories" regarding religion, on the other hand, consider the idea that the world, including mankind, is inevitably deteriorating and will, sooner or later, come to an end. Religion is the means through which people can "rescue their soul" in this scenario.

Finally, after the emergence of Freud's psychoanalytic theory in the early twentieth century, we have the essentially evolutionary perspective of religion as "a protection of, and therapy for, emotional issues," which was created in the early twentieth century. It's vital to note that *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* was published during a time when this new perspective on religion was emerging, during a period when the concept of religion was shifting.

Historical extent: All social reality, according to Marx, is built on economic self-interested class antagonism. People are actually following a script that history has written for them, thus freedom is illusory. Marx famously declared that "religion is the people's opium," and he was dismissive of all other claims to spirituality. Art, philosophy, love, and justice might all be reduced to financial gain. Darwin's contribution was his argument that humanity, like other animals, must be understood physiologically. Humans have simply evolved skills that allow them to rule over nature. Darwin began his life as a Christian but later became an atheist, believing that his discoveries had ruled out the possibility of a "spiritual" nature.

The concept that reason raises humanity far above other creatures and that reason leads to truth struck Freud. We are ruled by illogical desires rooted in sexuality, according to Freud. People may believe they are free, yet they are actually slaves to unconscious desires. All religion, he said, was predicated on fear (fear of growing up without a parent, fear of sliding into sexual "sin," and dread of death). C. G. Jung, a Freud pupil, eventually proposed a more positive viewpoint, dubbed "Jungian theory" by anthropologists. Religion, in his opinion, was more than just an institutionalized, quasi-pathological symptom of human neuroses (as Freud considered it).

Theological liberalism, also known as theological modernism, was a fundamental shift in theological thinking that occurred in the late 1800s and advocated for religious liberty. D. E. Miller writes in his article "Theological Liberalism"⁵ that the movement was defined by "the attempt to adapt religious beliefs to modern society and modes of thought." According to Miller, liberals said that the world had changed so much since the founding of Christianity that biblical vocabulary and creeds were incomprehensible to those living in the late 1800s.

Divine immanence was a major concept in liberal theology. God was "considered as present and abiding within the world, not apart from or raised above the world as a transcendent being"¹⁰, which meant that God could be discovered throughout life rather than just in the Bible or a few revelatory occurrences. "Such things as rational truth, aesthetic beauty, and moral goodness"¹¹ could reveal the divine presence. Although most liberals tried to maintain a foundation of Christian faith, some took immanence to its logical conclusion, pantheism. Immanence influenced liberal notions such as the presence of a universal religious spirit that underpins all faiths' institutions and creeds, as well as the superiority of good actions.

In summary, theological liberalism was a movement that demonstrated a shift in the way people thought about religion in late-nineteenth-century Western civilization, which anthropologists characterised as the replacement of a "devolutionary" perspective of religion with a "evolutionary" idea. In other words, the view of religion held by western society millennia before Christ, which saw man as a sinner whose soul needed to be "saved," was replaced by a new idea of religion, through which man could reclaim his quality of "perfect being."

Joyce's attitude towards Irish Community and Church: Professor Richard Ellmann, Joyce's acclaimed biographer and author of books such as *Selected Letters of James Joyce* and *The Critical Writings of James Joyce*, among others, wrote an article called "Joyce's Religion and Politics"²⁰ in 1982 that gives us an interesting hint about Joyce's attitude toward his native religion, the Catholic Church. "Six years ago (at sixteen) I quit the Catholic Church, hating it most strongly," Joyce wrote to Nora Barnacle on August 20th, 1904. Because of my nature's urges, it was hard for me to remain in it." He was particularly offended by the Church's stance on sexuality. "When I was a student, I waged a secret fight against it and refused to accept the jobs," he continued in his letter.

Professor Ellmann claims that "Now I wage open war on it by what I write, say, and do," Joyce wrote to Nora. This policy was followed by his deeds. He didn't confess or receive communion. He refused to have his

children christened when they were born. His grandchild was christened without his knowledge and against his desires. He would rather live with Nora Barnacle for the next twenty-seven years than marry her. When a wedding was finally required for inheritance purposes, he had it performed in a registrar office.”

Essence of Sex: This section delves deeper into Stephen's relationship with women. He has a strong devotion to the Virgin Mary and a strong desire to visit whores at the same time. In both cases, Stephen views women as examples of a kind, rather than as individuals. Both Mary and the prostitutes are portrayed as myths or dreams rather than real people. Stephen paints Mary in a romantic and exotic light, describing her with evocative adjectives like “spikenard,” “myrrh,” and “rich clothes,” and comparing her to the dazzling and singing morning star. When Stephen contemplates that the lips with which he reads a prayer to Mary are the same lips with which he has lewdly kissed a whore, we realise that he has unexpectedly revealed himself.

When Stephen goes to Harrold's Cross for a party, he has his first completely recognised sexual encounter. He isolates himself from the other children, savouring his solitude, while Emma casts enticing glances in his direction. She works up a frenzy of excitement in him, and she follows him to the tram stop after the party. They're standing on the tram steps, he one step ahead of her, and she keeps moving up to join him on his step as they converse. He is aware that she is making an offer, and he is also aware that the situation is reminiscent of the time Eileen ran away laughing from him. Despite his admiration for her beauty and the fact that she is ready to be held and kissed, he does nothing.

He is depressed as a result of his failure. The following day, he begins to put the entire experience – which should have ended with a living climax – into a literary matter. He tries to compose a sonnet for Emma while willfully ignoring the events of the moment. He turns reminiscence into a form of imprecise, conventionalized lyrical verbalism. After that, he goes into the bathroom and looks in the mirror. His own portrayal as a romantic poet intrigues him more than the living girl who inspired it.

Stephen works himself up into an enthusiastic romantic mood two years later, on the occasion of the school performance, in the hopes of meeting Emma after she has watched the play. Once again, the devotion is an unspoken fixation symbolised by a dramatic act. Emma is nowhere to be found after the play, in which he shines in the world of imaginative self-projection, and he is devastated. As a result, Stephen's developing sexuality is redirected away from real human connections and into romantic dreams fueled by his reading. The Count of Monte Cristo and Bulwer Lytton's The Lady of Lyons provide him with romantic love scenarios. As a result, his suppressed bodily desires manifest themselves in a twisted desire to sin.

Sexual encounters with prostitutes coexist with his passionate adoration of the Virgin Mary for a time, until the retreat sermons persuade him of his sinfulness and he repents. We don't know if he resumed his practice of seeing prostitutes after losing his faith. However, he clearly fails to establish the connection between the amorous sexuality sparked in his thoughts by the image of the wading girl and the reality of genuine contact with women. The wading girl becomes the ideal vehicle for inspiring the artist to pursue his or her artistic goals. There are no genuine human relationships involved.

The sporadic references to Emma in the book's last chapter imply a lack of interest in living beauty contrasted to the ardent academic interest in beauty theory. Though Stephen prefers to imagine Emma flirting with Father Moran, the sight of her beside the library door piques Stephen's interest in the possibility that she is innocent, and another wave of emotion washes over him – but only in dreams and words, not in actual touch with her. He composes an opulently rhetorical poetry for her and imagines himself, the imaginary priest, listening to her confession. Stephen's mental state and his image of himself as a heroic, lonely artist are clearly incompatible with empathy for others. He entertains the idea.

As a result, he psychologically washes his hands of her, telling himself, ‘Let her go and be damned.’ However, the reader is left in the dark about how far Stephen is misleading himself. Indeed, his diary's last mentions to Emma convey the sense of a female who is attempting to reach him. He responds with a churlish retort meant to embarrass her when she asks why she sees so little of him and if he's writing poems. One of the most

illuminating passages in the book is Stephen's concluding observation: 'I liked her and it seemed a fresh emotion to me.' Stephen has expressed an interest in another person and admitted that the feeling is new to him.

His escape for art: He makes the decision to abandon his homeland. He sees Emma while going to the library (his crush). He is furious with her because he believes she had an affair with a saint and humiliated him behind his back. He does, however, hold her in high regard. He sits on the library stairwell, gazing up at the birds in the sky. It can be used to represent the concept of liberty. In the end, he resolves to "forge the uncreated conscience of my people in the smithy of my spirit." As a result, he is given the opportunity to pursue a career as an artist.

Conclusion: As a result, Stephen's relationships with women deteriorate as a result of his egotism. He tries to project himself as a solitary artist. Sex with prostitutes satisfies his sexual desires. In poems and daydreams, he expresses his amorous longings.

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