



THE JOURNEY FROM ALIENATION TOWARDS SELF-REALIZATION IN JAMES JOYCE'S A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

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ABSTRACT

The very scrutiny was entrenched on the novel A portrait of an artist as a young man (1982) which is the great work of James Joyce. The efficacy of this probe was that it took a concept, alienation, that is basically considered as a pessimistic phenomena, and analyzed that how this notion led towards self-realization in the novel A portrait, which is the optimistic outcome of estrangement. Therefore, it did not merely ponder upon the negative, but also the positive facet of alienation. It focused on the brutal effects of alienation which perturbed Stephen's self and how that disturbance was changed into solace and eventually he realized his true self. Moreover, it also gave the very importance of self-realization in Stephen's life. The whole investigation was backed up by Hegel's theory of alienation since he takes alienation as a process that leads towards self-realization. For this study qualitative paradigm was being opted and through content analysis the novel was being examined and the researcher inferred that being indulged in the murky depths of estrangement, Stephen encountered separation but then afterwards his surrender assisted him to embrace his own self.

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Keywords: Alienation, Self-realization, Real self, Self, artist.

Contribution/ Originality

This study contributes in the literature-cum- philosophy arena. This study uses methodology of Qualitative research method. This study originates formula between alienation towards self-realization in literature. This study investigates self through enduring alienation. This paper's primary finding is that a person can achieve his self despite of enduring alienation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Life always brings something new for people, but that "new" does not always mean anything exuberant or congenial. It is actually the amalgamation of dreams and realities or in fact is the conflict between one's longings and the truth which is mostly opposite to what a being desire for. It provides individuals with contrastive paths and one has to opt one road to move forward. While this selection human beings encounter several plights for they are ambiguous in this tough task. It needs acute self-examination to peep inside yourself and see what your real self wants. But it becomes immensely torturing when a person is not mindful of what he truly hungers for and this is the muddling stage from where the problem generates. Therefore, this is important to have self-realization which assists in achieving the desirable goals.

A decision taken by one is wrong when it, after momentary satisfaction, becomes pernicious. It starts perturbing one's mind and life leading towards alienation. Occupied in the darkness of estrangement, a person feels himself to be helpless, weak, disgruntled and all alone. It then needs a long peregrination to bring one's self up from this condition and realize his self. Such is the very predicament of Stephen and his life is full of complexities and is explicit epitome of shift from alienation to self-realization.

The following research paper reflects Stephen's journey which he travelled from alienation to self-realization. The paper examines his life and discusses how he strives to conquer himself and says farewell to complexities of his life which were owing to alienation.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Alienation

The word alienation is derived from Latin verb *alianare* that stands for "to estrange" or the act or state of being estranged or isolated (Mosby's Medical Dictionary). At the very beginning it got fame in theological writings. In Bible, infidels are described as "darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God" (Ephesians, 4:18). On defining spiritual death, Calvin (1858) said that it is nothing more than the alienation of one's soul from God. Along with Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism also explained it as a separation from God (Kanungo, 1982). In every day usage, it suggests the detachment of individual from his/her former friends. For Hegel (1949) alienation stands for self-estrangement.

2.2. Hegel and Alienation

Hegel (1770-1831) a German idealistic philosopher, made acquainted with the idea of alienation to the contemporary sociological literature. It has been put on interpretive foundation for comprehending the problem of alienation in modern society (Fromm, 1941;1966). Rousseau (1947) arguments of alienation as the surrender of individual's self and control and Schiller's (1954) as cited in Kanungo (1982) use of this notion in a theological realm as a state of separation were having influence on Hegel thereby has made use of two distinctive German words for enunciating twofold nature of alienation; *entausseerung*, surrender or divestiture and *entfremdung*, a state of separation (Kanungo, 1982).

According to Hegel (1949) there are two types of alienation. The first one makes an individual experience a separation which causes him lack in identifying with the “social substance” or the societal, political and cultural institutions. Being alienated is not a deliberate act of an individual but rather obligatory one. In the second type of alienation, an individual gives up and pass his very rights to someone else which is an intentional surrender to secure a preferred end, which is unison with the social substance (Sachacht, 1970).

2.3. Self

The oxford dictionary definition of self is “a person’s essential being that distinct him from others”. Sometimes the word self is used as a synonym to refer to a person, which seems to be in general use now a days. In this regard, individual’s self is all in all that person, him or herself.

Lewis (1990) on the other hand, segregated the self into two components: the existential self and the categorical self. The existential “self” assures us to be a unique person, embracing our own peculiar individuality. It evolves quite early and comparatively remains consistent throughout the life. The categorical self, however, is contrastive in nature because it prospers later and also keeps on changing as we continue to grow. This self specifies to alternative manners which we opt to describe ourselves in terms of categories found in the external world.

2.4. Self-Realization

An eminent psychologist has defined self-realization as “fulfillment of one’s own potential”. Jung (1973) views self-exploration as a magnanimous process that takes place throughout the life. A person, he says, keeps on developing new skills and hence chases the path of self-realization. He furthermore opines that the journey towards self-realization is an exhausted and painful process. According to Maslow (1968) self-realized being intermixes with the nature, possesses and identifies with a "love of kind," and shows the capability to relate to life in terms of the possible. A person is sacred and that supports him to rise above nationalism, patriotism, ethnocentrism and anthropocentrism. Self-realization is an ongoing relationship—even, as some traditions say, a spiritual marriage between the individual human being and self, between the human and the ground of being. The emphasis here is not upon the attainment of particular states of consciousness, but upon developing a lived relationship with self. And as any committed relationship, this relationship cannot be limited to a particular moment or special event; it is rather lived out in all life events, for better or worse, in sickness and in health (Assagioli, 1973).

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study aims at enunciating the very phenomenon of self-realization as the outcome of alienation in a novel of James Joyce, ‘A portrait of an artist as a young man’.

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) What are the negative effects of alienation on Stephen’s life in *A portrait of an artist as young man*?
- 2) Whether alienation lead Stephen to self-realization or it is a loss of self?

- 3) Why self-realization becomes mandatory for Stephen to spend a satisfactory life?

5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- 1) To scrutinize the very influences of alienation on Stephen's life.
- 2) To examine whether alienation leads Stephen to self-realization or it conceals his reality.
- 3) To elucidate the very significance of self-realization in Stephen's life for making it meaningful.

6. METHODOLOGY

The study deals with the whole experience of Stephen's life; his feelings, his views therefore qualitative methodology is more suitable for this investigation. Cronbach claims that statistical research is not able to take full account of the many interaction effects that take place in social settings (Cronbach, 1975). The ability of qualitative data to more fully describe a phenomenon is an important consideration not only from the researcher's perspective, but from the reader's perspective as well. He maintains it as, "If you want people to understand better than they otherwise might, provide them information in the form in which they usually experience it" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

7. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The researcher's center of attention is to peep deeply inside the life of James Joyce's protagonist, Stephen in *A portrait of an artist as a young man* (1916). The study expounds different stages of Stephen's life and explicates his whole condition of alienation which he encountered in his life. As the researcher's main concern is alienation which is leading towards self-realization, therefore the whole situation is backed up under the theory of alienation presented by Hegel (1949) who takes alienation as a positive process and claims that it leads towards self-realization. It also finds out twofold nature of alienation described by Hegel (1949) in his theory. Under this theory the researcher evaluates that how after the whole experience of estrangement and isolation in Stephen's life, he realized his true self and how alienation assisted him to understand his own disposition.

According to Hegel (1949) alienation is the process by which human self externalizes itself and then encounters another being that is contrastive to the actual being.

It also finds out two aspects of alienation presented by Hegel which are:

1. Separation or 'Entausserung'.
2. Surrender or 'Entfremdung'.

The first one makes an individual experience a separation which causes him lack in identifying with the "social substance" or the societal, political and cultural institutions. It is not a deliberate act of an individual but rather obligatory one. In the second type of alienation, an individual gives up and which is an intentional surrender to secure a preferred end that is unison with the social substance.

The luminous work by the Irish author James Joyce (1882- 1941) , *A portrait of an artist as a young man* (Joyce, 1982) is an idiosyncratic paradigm of Bildungsroman. Several definitions of this literary genre have been presented. This work commences with the traditional story opening

style i.e. “once upon a time...”, but it is not a common story (p. 49). It shrieks about the complexity of Stephen’s life and several experiences encountered by him in quest of making affiliation with his soul. It depicts that how through alienation he reached his true self and embraced self-realization. Hegel’s account of alienation is also positive and he takes alienation as a process that leads to self-realization. There is a conflict between Stephen’s fake and true self and this makes the whole plot of the novel.

At the very beginning of the novel we met a boy who was shy, confused and extremely fearful. It seemed quite normal at the commencement but turned abnormal afterwards. He wanted to live a happy life as every normal individual wants; a self-realized life. A life which could give him the freedom of doing what he wants to do in his life, which could show him uncluttered paths, which could be truly lived by him; free from compulsions, fears and discomfort.

For Hegel (1949) alienation refers to the process in which the human self externalizes itself and confronts its own other distinct being. Stephen at the very beginning gives the traces of his alienation. He was an artist but he lacked this realization therefore another Stephen was there to live his life in the state of alienation.

Alienation incorporates twofold nature according to Hegel; separation and surrender. The initial alienation led Stephen for separation and this was not his deliberate act. Hegel (1949) says that this separation is an obligatory act and it causes one in lack of identification with the social substance. The identical was the situation of Stephen. He started feeling estrangement from his environment and there was nothing at that time which could provide solace to his disturbed self. He felt alienated from the very beginning and every step that he was taking was leading him towards the murky depths of life. His life became more and more difficult for him, offering him complicated challenges to be achieved.

8. DATA ANALYSES

8.1. Alienation and Separation

The alienation caused him restless and for this very restlessness he had to take some measures to gain solace. In taking walks all alone, without the company of any other individual, he found some soothing pleasure. The author maintains that “The peace of the gardens and the kindly lights in the windows poured a tender influence into his restless heart” (p. 113). At the children’s party he tried to have escape from the prevailing condition of his life and also “tried to share their merriment” but his rattled soul could not permit him (p. 117). “He felt himself gloomy” because he was not doing this from his own free will (p. 117). He knew that his loneliness is there to soothe him therefore he left the party and started relishing the “joy of his loneliness” (p.117).

He was slowly and gradually realizing that he is different from others therefore he always preferred to be alone. This loneliness was his true companion which was ready to value him. Being a young boy he must had liked playing in the company of different girls and boys and must had preferred to spent his time without any worry or tension but it was not the case with Stephen. He, at the very beginning, was acquainted that “he was different” (p. 113). The shrieking noises of the children could not activate his innocence of childhood but rather he was “annoyed” (p.113). In the company of other children “He did not want to play” (p. 113). Because of his sensitive nature, he

recognized it easily that he was really contrastive in nature from others but this was not enough. For being “different” what was demanded from his true self was yet not disclosed. And this had to take a long effort to know that on what grounds he was different. If his soul was restless, then what could be the remedy to cure it? And definitely, as he could not ignore his very condition, he had to move forward and work for finding out his true self. Actually he was entangled in the thought of Mercedes so deeply that he was urging to meet her. A girl was having a great impact not only on his mind but on his soul Stephen was a child who used to ponder upon the situations acutely which were there in his life or around him. His senses were always active therefore he felt his life thoroughly and also suffered. He thought that whatsoever is happening in his life or around him comprises some meaning in it and nothing is useless or senseless. Whenever Uncle Charles used to visit Church and prayed there, he looked at him extremely seriously and “wondered what his grand uncle prayed for so seriously” (p. 110). He always reflected on several matters with seriousness so that he could what real world is all about. Stephen used to remain busy the whole day with his uncle and father but “his evenings were his own...” (p. 110). He was the one with powerful sense of imagination and it manifests his artistic soul.

Even in his imagination, the image of Mercedes brought a kind of “strange unrest” in his blood and this unrest “led him to rove alone in the evening along the quiet avenue (p. 113). He was preoccupied with the “unsubstantial image” but as this character was from adventures novel therefore he did not know where he could meet his own Mercedes and how he will approach her (p. 113). And he opted being lonely than being in the crowd because he was hoping that he “would meet quietly as if they had known each other...” (p. 113). Although at this stage his life was not so very much complicated and vague and still he wanted to be changed. “They would be alone, surrounded by darkness and silence: and in that moment of supreme tenderness he would be transfigured” (p. 113).

The problem of his life was that he was not merely in conflict with his inner world, but the outer world was also not free from troubles. In fact the outer world played an important role in increasing his tensions and also burdened his mood. Owing to the financial crisis which his family faced and shift from the comfortable home to “gloomy foggy city” he found his “heart heavy” (p.114). Before this shift at least he was there in physically comfortable shelter but when the situation changed he would have to live in physical and spiritual tension and that would be surely leading him to more miserable conditions.

Now a struggle for excluding the problems of his life started. He had to take some measures for making his life better and cheerful. “In the beginning he contended himself with circling timidly round the neighboring square” (p. 114). Again he felt “strangeness” in his life and started wandering in such of Mercedes (p. 115). He knew that there is something wrong in his life. “A vague dissatisfaction grew up within him...” (p. 115). This restlessness and dissatisfaction was not leaving him to stay at home but rather compelled him to keep on moving from one place to another.

Again by meeting with a girl in children’s party he felt something different. Stephen’s demeanor is portrayed as, “His heart danced upon her movements like a corp. upon the tide” (p. 118). What a beautiful feeling! This girl had given him joy which he lacked and for searching for. He also remembered Eileen at the very moment and started thinking that Eileen desired for the

same which this girl desired for. But he was not in demand for physical relationship with her. This was not what he wanted. His interest in girls was not just because he wanted physical satisfaction but actually he unconsciously knew that they might be helping her in making his life comfortable. Girls always developed his aesthetic sense and also in vague terms made him realize of his true self. But he was not able to realize that. Right after next day the result of his meeting with the girl was there. He was trying to produce something valuable. At first he could not but then slowly and gradually he gained confidence. He was in a great search for what he is? He had taken girls as a medium to sort out the problem of his life; what is real Stephen. He stared at his own face in the mirror to have the answer of this question after producing poem. He was not ready to free himself from her thinking and he wanted to meet her again. With this thinking “old restless moodiness” occupied him (p. 126). And he did not know that this agitation will be bringing up perilous consequences for him.

8.2. Alienation and Sinful City

The increase in the intensity of estrangement was aggrandizing his helplessness. It has been mentioned in novel as, “The wasting fires of lust sprang up again” (p. 151). And he thought it mandatory to satisfy his physical need so that he could appease his soul. He was really helpless. In this state, he could surely do whatsoever could be done by him, without having clear sense of right or wrong because in that condition nothing seemed wrong to him. He started visiting brothels and it explicates that he wanted peace and solace, whoever could be the provider did not bother him at that stage.

8.3. Temporary Surrender of Stephen

The second aspect of alienation by [Hegel \(1949\)](#) which is surrender could be seen here. “Surrendering himself to her” (p. 152). This surrender was because he was in a hope of positive outcome as Hegel confirms it and says that a person gives up deliberately for securing a preferred consequence but this surrender was temporary. Stephen found no other option. He was so much involved in his interest in women that this lustful desire was rooting up like anything. This predicament of protagonist is reflected in lines, “He moaned to himself like some baffled prowling beast” (p.151). His condition was really irresistible and to bring calmness to step inside “another world” (p. 151). This step was taken in intense need of healing himself. “Tears of joy and relief shone in his delighted eyes...” (p. 152). He thought that he had found his identity which was his actual intention, “he became strong and fearless and sure of himself” (p. 152). How strange his condition was that he felt joy and satisfaction in doing sin. He felt his self to be powerful without any danger which he had prior in his life. The alienation from which he was suffering and which increased his fear, restless, and powerlessness forced him to do so just to appease himself. Stephen’s intentional surrender was unequivocal because he continued to visit those dirty streets. But somehow along with joy he had “fear” as well (p.153). This fear has been envisioned in novel as, “He would pass by them calmly waiting for a sudden movement of his own will or a sudden call to his sin-loving soul from their soft perfumed flesh” (p. 153). But he knew that it is a sin and he will have to give answer for that. He realized the reality of his sin and was guilty over it. His

metaphysical anguish is inscribed as, “By every succeeding sin he multiplied his guilt and punishment” (p. 154). But this cautious surrender was for a short time for he very soon realized that he could not live this sinful life.

According to Hegel (1949) work is also a spiritual activity which makes a difference between human and animals. Animals directly consume which is immediately available in the environment. Stephen’s work brought highly destructive product which was guilt and he had to make an effort to make a difference between himself and animal. For the fulfillment of his needs he had directly consumed which was available in his environment. But Hegel (1949) refers to this act as the act of animal.

Now a new struggle was waiting for him. To remove his guilt he had to move forth but “certain pride, certain awe, withheld him from offering to God” (p. 154). Pride of what? Being the part of sin which his deliberate action? He was proud because he assumed this act to be his very right for the fulfillment of his need. For a time being he stood rebellion in front of God but his soul had to kneel down before Him. This had to be ceased. Stephen’s soul had to realize the difference between free will and compulsion and between love and lust.

His pride was very soon converted into fear by the retreats. The words of father during the retreats were putting immense impact on Stephen’s mind. “Banish from your minds all worldly thoughts and think only of the last things, death, judgment, hell, and heaven” (p. 162). How could his sensitive soul restraint itself with such powerful impression of Father Arnell? Stephen was actually guaranteed that by sticking to these topics only which are opted for retreats will enable him to “live a good life and die a good death” (p. 162). And he desperately wanted a “good life” (p. 162). Whatsoever was occurring in his life was not what he wished for. He was still working for the improvement of his life. He knew that the happenings of his life are not pleasing him and that he had to find another solution for it. He could not quit the war which he was been fighting. He could not very easily accept his failure. He had to struggle and he knew it. The huge gap between his body and soul had to be removed.

The retreats started playing their magnanimous role in Stephen’s life and his fear and guilt continued increasing. Each and every word of preacher was affecting him deeply and it seemed as if every statement of retreats was for Stephen only. Stephen profoundly feels that, “Every word of it was for him” (p. 166). His delicate soul felt “the death chills touch the extremities and creep onward towards the heart...” (p. 163). He was really “the poor helpless spirit” (p. 163). There was nothing at that time which could heal his agonies and bring him back to normal life where he could feel a strong link with his soul.

This was the toughest time of his life when his terror was at its peak. He felt himself to be extremely weak and powerless. The preaching was acutely touching his heart and the scenes of death, hell and punishment were lying before his eyes. He could feel them. “The wind of the last day blew his mind...” (p. 167). And after these retreats came to end he had to make a decision for his life, a new decision. To meet his lost soul he found it a hope to “repent” (p. 178). “His soul seemed to sigh...” (p. 188). He could no more tolerate his thick heart with fog all around. Repentance was the only means through which he hoped to attain satisfaction and to remove this guilt which was making him more powerless and weaker. It is displayed in novel as, “No escape he

had to confess” (p. 178). And for confession he had to meet his own wounded soul so that he could examine it which injury was given to it on which time. He needed to scrutinize his soul. It was the time to confess those all sins with your own self before confessing them in front of Father. How difficult that could be! He knew that his own soul was being destructed by his own hands and by his own deeds. He wanted to weep over his sins, not one but many but he could not weep” (p. 189). And at last, he confirmed himself that he is a sinner. He accepted to his own self that “he had done them, secretly, filthily, time after time, and hardened in sinful impatience...” (p. 190). Despite of the fact that the sins were done “secretly” but how could he hide them from his own self who was suffering from the outcomes of his sins (p. 190)?

The rebellious attitude of his towards his sins vanished and he was actually ashamed of whatever he had done with his life just to remove alienation and the results of alienation which he was bearing in his life. “Confess”, his soul started whispering it in his ear and was assuring him that he might be “sinless again” (p. 193). “He was sorry” and truly wanted admit to lessen the burden. He was in great urge for this medium because every day he was scratching his own wounds which were increasing his pain. He could no more drag his injured soul with himself.

Now this was a time to use this medium and free himself from all the pathos of his life. It is shown as, “His blood began to murmur in his veins, murmuring like a sinful city summoned from its sleep to hear its doom” (p. 195). But he could not take a venture of having confession in front of all for he was thinking of his sins to be greater in number therefore decided to be all alone with father. And finally he confessed! And he confessed the “sins of anger, envy of others, gluttony, vanity, disobedience” (p. 197). The reason of all these sins was that he was not sure of his own self. Nobody was there to understand him which caused anger in his mood. Even he himself did not know what his true self is demanding from him. Every time he wanted to see his real face but was deviated.

After this whole way from fear, powerlessness, guilt, sins and shame this was the time to enjoy the taste of happiness. Joyce writes it as, “His soul was made fair and holy once more, holy and happy” (p. 199). Another beautiful life was waiting for him. Writer puts it as, “A life of grace and virtue and happiness!” (p. 200). He was rebirth. He entered a life with full energy and devotion, with new spirit and sinless soul. Anybody can imagine how contented it is to live a new life and feel yourself as a new born baby; extremely innocent soul. A kind of fresh power was induced in himself. In this new life, he wanted to make strong connection with his own Creator so that he could get the peace of soul which he missed in his prior life.

8.4. Alienated Stephen and Religion as an Escape

Starting a life with new vitality and having inner gratification that your soul is spotless is something soul satisfactory. Everything seems to be beautiful and a mesmerizing relationship could be felt all around. The identical situation seemed to be of Stephen. “How simple and beautiful was life after all!” (p. 199). He was fully occupied with religion. His each and every moment was devoted to religion just because he did not want to lose what he recently secured; a peaceful mind and a satisfactory soul. He wanted to leave behind the muddy depth of alienation thereby tightly grasped this only fulcrum which he thought to be in his life. He, with extreme adversity, had

brought himself up from the previously confronted catastrophes and therefore this new life was a new attempt for him to secure his self from fragmentation. He started it with the determination that he will not be repeating those mistakes again in his life which caused such damage in his world and the “past was past” (p. 200).

Human nature is not unchanging universal according to Hegel (1949) it develops and changes. Stephen’s nature could also be seen as changing with the passage of time. It is clear through this investigation that his nature kept on changing and now he is moving forward for another change. Stephen’s daily routine was based on religious activities. “His day began with an heroic offering of its every moment of thought or actions for the intentions of the sovereign pontiff and with an early mass” (p. 200). He dedicated all his time to religion and forgot for some moments that what exactly he is. “Sunday was dedicated to the mystery of the Holy Trinity, Monday to Holy Ghost, Tuesday to the Guardian Angels, Wednesday to saint Joseph, Thursday to the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Alter, Friday to the Suffering Jesus, Saturday to the Blesses Virgin Marry” (p. 200). This was all religion but where was Stephen? What he dedicated purely for himself? After all it was his life and how could he avoid himself in it? He was actually lost behind the curtains of theological realm but was not aware of that fact because of his intense engagement in this work. He hoped that by chasing this path his “soul might grow strong” (p. 201). Therefore he thought of religion, practiced religion and committed his life for religion.

It is not an easy task to say good bye to your past and never return back to see how it looked like. Same was the condition of Stephen. He could not easily get rid of what his past was all about. “He felt a subtle, dark, and murmurous presence penetrates his being and fires him with a brief iniquitous lust...” (p. 203). But positivity could be seen for he was able to get out of these passions easily. He conjectured himself of being capable of disregarding these slight thoughts “leaving his mind lucid and indifferent” (p. 203).

He was definitely suffering from the guilt of past and owing to that he aimed and strived hard to “undo the sinful past” and bring as much positivity as he could bring in his life (p. 203). This undo of past shows that he was not satisfied with whatsoever he did in his life. If he were a fulfilled individual then there could be no need of amendments in life. It further manifests that it was not what he demanded with himself for his life therefore this could not be the end of struggle. This phase of his life was also not free from struggle. He kept on working hard with hope. His prayers depicted the urge for the betterment in his life. “One each of the seven days of the week he further prayed that one of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost might descend upon his soul” (p. 201). Stephen in fact wanted the solution of the alienation which he found in his life earlier and he hoped that with the assistance of religion he can get a chance to meet his true self and realize the aim of his life. And somehow, he found contentment in him and believed that his soul is improving. As conferred in novel as, “When his soul was enriched with spiritual knowledge...life became a divine gift ...” (p. 203). He started having trust on the reality of love and “he feels within him a warm movement like that of some newly born life ...” (p. 203).

Hegel (1949) takes work as an activity which assists to objectify ourselves in our product. Religion was Stephen’s work but his product was not the reflection of what he demanded for. The efforts which he did were at the peak, but the outcome was exceedingly less. The more effort he

was making, the greater he faced estrangement. His alienation started increasing when he imposed religion on himself. When his Creator was not putting these obligations then why was he? In the strong need of increasing that momentary happiness he compelled himself so that he could relish the taste of this contentment which was recently gained as much as possible. But he was unaware of the fact that these forces which he was putting on himself will maximize the tension of his life.

8.5. Stephen's Compulsion on his own Self Because Of Alienation

In order to “undo the sinful past” he was increasing his interest in religion deliberately but he did not know that to undo his sinful past, the thing which is required is self-realization (p. 203). He decided to control all his five senses. But why was so? Was he preparing himself to bear to hardships of life which he unconsciously knew that might face because of lack of self-realization? As he was not sure of his journey and was negligent of his path that is why it seemed unconscious preparation for future.

His sense of sight was controlled by him by casting his eyes down while walking in the streets and “his eyes shunned every encounter with the eyes of women” (p. 204). He avoided to see women because he knew that he could hardly control his fascination towards them and also that they played their vital role in making his past regretful and aggrandizing his alienation. For the mortification of his sense of hearing he started bearing harsh and unpleasant sounds along with different other precautions. He made no “attempt to flee from the noises which caused him painful ...” (p. 204). Sense of smell was mortified by tolerating unbearable odors. “He found in the end that the only odor 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 odor” (p. 204). For having control over his sense of taste, he started observing fast and “sought by distraction to divert his mind from the savors of different foods” (p. 204) and for sense of touch, he provided himself with the similar torture and “suffered patiently every itch and pain” (p. 204).

By coming in this discomfort zone, how could he get solace? This ruthlessness was not by the people of the society for him but he himself was doing so with deliberation. His self continued on diminishing. The more he went into the depths of theology, the more shrunk his self was. Although he felt no attraction towards sins anymore but still his life was not perfect. It is jotted down in the literary work as, “He was so easily at the mercy of childish and unworthy imperfections” (p. 204, 205). Only by saving himself from the sins could never promise him a successful and agreeable life. There was much more to discover and realize in his life.

When this alienation was encountered he realized that this is not the station of his life. He wanted to become closer to his Maker and himself but the consequences were completely opposite. For him “to merge his life in the common tide of other lives was harder ... than any fasting or prayer and it was his constant failure to do this to his own satisfaction which caused in his soul... spiritual dryness” (p.205). The mental and psychological torture which he gave to himself was highly pernicious. He undoubtedly became brutal. This was the very product of his work. This brutality was not with others but with his own self. How could his true self bear that torture? A self who was in need of freedom to express itself could never tolerate the compulsions of Stephen. The hope, enthusiasm, energy, and satisfaction with which he stepped in this new life faded and once

again he was surrounded with fear and discontentment. He started pondering upon why this happened to his gain? He had brought bundle of changes in his life just to make sure that this time he will not be facing failure. "A restless feeling of guilt always be present with him..." (p. 206). His soul was agitated and was restlessly asking "I have amended my life, have I not?" (p. 207). He was not sure whether he had sincerely repented or not? Although that was true repentance and his full devotion and passion for religion and prayers was the evidence but the inner joy which he was missing was creating great trouble for him.

He was still unable to interact with people because he was alienated from them. Some where he knew that he was different. His fake self was forcing his real self to be the part of theological frame but it was not accepted by Stephen's true self. He was not what he was pretending to be. He was living a life which was unreal. He was deceiving himself by choosing this path and his hard work made him more estranged from his own self and also from the work produced by him.

He had in fact used religion to have an escape from the worries which once again had infiltrated in his life although his efforts were remarkable. But owing to his alienation from religion he could not acquire what he demanded for. He in fact had picked up this life merely because he thought of it as his "duties" but not his free will (p. 201). He was not made to spend his life by only focusing on religious realm and forgetting his true self.

8.6. An Artist's Final Surrender and Self-Realization

He again surrendered. He had surrendered before as well while visiting brothels but those caused him guilty owing to the fact that he knew he was doing sins. But now he knew that he has selected the right path, which is not of sins, thereby he had no other option then to give up.

According to [Hegel \(1949\)](#) the alienation in the first sense is possible by surrendering the particular self, by sacrificing the particular interests or needs. So did Stephen! He was very well aware of the fact that this is not his destination and his desired path for life but he could not struggle anymore for he has being striving for a long time. After this intentional surrender for expecting positive outcome, he went on the beach. Eventually his alienation enabled him to meet his own true self. A girl became the very reason of bringing him up from the state of alienation and he realized himself. The moment of self-realization brought him up from the murky depths of alienation and had taken him to an ecstasy. Even his soul yells as, "Heavenly God! Cried Stephen's soul" (p. 225). He thought of himself to be liberated from every chain. He relished the taste of freedom and he at last realized what Stephen is. He met his own true self which brought eternal contentment to his soul. He was exceedingly happy because he had finally found his path in the presence of darkness. He was pleased "singing wildly to the sea" because he no more had to wander in search of his own self (p. 226). That moment made him realized of all his potentials and he knew that now he has to chase one path only by his own free will, without any obligation from inner or outer world. This realization brought a new hope of a life which he will spend according to his own wish and eventually alienation has given a fruitful product that will be guiding Stephen in his future life.

9. CONCLUSION

This whole study was based on the novel “A portrait of an artist as a young man” (1982), by Joyce (1982). Two greatly important concepts were being discussed and traced in the above mentioned novel; alienation and self-realization. The researcher had put forth that how “alienation”, which seems to be a quite negative concept, is leading towards something really fruitful and optimistic. For this study the theory of alienation by Hegel was preferred to support this thought.

Through content analysis the life of Stephen was being investigated to have explicit examination of his journey from alienation towards self-realization. The researcher aimed to analyze the following objectives:

- 1) To scrutinize the very effects of alienation on Stephen’s life.
- 2) To examine whether alienation leads Stephen to self-realization or it makes his reality vague.
- 3) To elucidate the very significance of self-realization in Stephen’s life for making it meaningful.

The researcher has studied Stephen’s life from the beginning of alienation till he was self-realized. This glance in Stephen’s journey empowered her to inspect the above mentioned objectives.

At very early age he encountered such plights which were harder for him to endure. He was alienated, not only with his society but with his religion and more notably with his own self. And this was a great torture for him. In search of his true self he had taken multiple steps. He needed to find it at any cost. And yes, he had paid for that. He kept on wandering from one station to another but could only find brief consummation. In the fog of alienation he kept on indulging. The more he strived, the greater he found himself within its dark and murky depths. The start of his alienation also caused him a reluctant separation from his society.

The researcher has noticed that at the very commencement he had only one minor realization, and that was that he was different from others. He did not know that if he is different then what is being demanded from his restless soul. He was also aware of the fact that it is not real face and through using different mediums he kept on finding what actually Stephen is. His journey was full of alienation; one after another. When he worked to remove his alienation he was again occupied with another one. He opted numerous contrastive paths for him in his life owing to the actuality that he was not self-realized person thereby his life was free from true joy and ease. His alienated life compelled him to roam uselessly because he had not realized the very aim of his life. And these roaming resulted in something very destructive. At the very beginning of the novel, the researcher has found Stephen’s enthrallment towards a girl. He was greatly interested in Eileen and wanted to marry her but that was removed by the fears which his parents had put inside his mind. “His mother said: ...Stephen will apologize”. And his father added that “if not, the eagles will come and pull out his eyes” (p. 50). His parents never understood him and this made him alienated from them. He was confused whether his act of kissing his mother daily at night is right or wrong (p. 57). The relationship between Stephen and his father was also not strong and we could not find out single evidence where he could be able of sharing anything from his family. Along with family he was also not having familiarity with people around him thereby he preferred to be all alone. He always

found a clear difference between others and himself. He did not enjoy others but his own company when he was one to one with his own self. The only thing which fascinated him from the origination till the completion of the novel was girls. He was frequently soaked in the thoughts of girls one after another; Eileen, Mercedes, and girl with whom he met in the children's party, women in brothels, and lastly the one in the beach who made him realization of his own self.

Two most important phases in his life came and in both he surrendered. In one phase he was extremely sinful and in the other he was chasing the extremities of religion. The two were contrastive in nature. But it is surprising that he neither found true satisfaction in one nor in another. First phase was when he entered a new world in the sinful streets and brothels. Second was when he was rebirth. These both phases of alienation played important roles in Stephen's life.

His life became narrower for him when he unintentionally entered in a sinful world. By having great urge for satisfying his soul. His soul was begging him for her fulfillment and at that point of time he found it the only way to appease his perplexed soul. Not only once but several times he willfully said yes to his sin. He thought that he might satisfy his body and soul but all in vain. In fact his soul got wounded by his sins and started getting more distanced from him. Finally he got the acquaintance that it was not his free will but he was forced by his own soul to do so. It was surrender for a short time. He was an artist and his soul did not deserve this undeserving way of contentment. From there his life became living hell and he continued striving to convert this hell into heaven. For that the retreats of Father Arnell were enough to change his life. With immense fear and guilt and with ruined soul he had confession. These confessions for a time being brought peace and comfort in Stephen's life and he felt happy that the sins which he did alienation will be no more escorting him and he can get rid of his past. In this hope, he confessed and considered himself to be born again. Although he escaped from prior alienation through the medium of religion but another estrangement was waiting for him with its brutalities and outcome.

His second major alienation started when he stepped in his new life. He commenced this life with amusement and new hopes but he was not made to serve in the realm of religion. His estrangement from religion made him hypocrite for he was something else but was pretending to be a wholly different person. He had all powers in his hand but had no power to find out his true self and realize what his soul is asking from him. He knew that this profession (priesthood) is not suitable for him for it was not his free will. He thought all religious activities to be his duty of life but had no interest in them. He again worked to remove this alienation and to live his life with its all colors and pleasures. It has been seen by the researcher that this second major alienation caused him to fully give up since he knew that he could not strive any more.

His surrender worked! After this long flight which was filled with thrones, pathos, sins, shame, powerlessness, fear, hypocrisy and discontentment came to its end and he finally realized that what makes him different from others and why he was alienated in his life. His artistic soul had awakened from deep slumbers on the beach and he felt a joy which he never felt before in his life ever. Interestingly, the girl made him realize of his potentials and helped him to select one and right path in his life. Thus the researcher can claim that owing to the alienation which he possessed in his life he met his true self.

Thus it is inferred that the very dilemma of Stephen's life was disunion with his own self and he could not make affiliation with his own self thereby how could he be enabled of establishing effective relationships with others. He lived his life in estrangement and desolation because he was not a self-realized person. The happiness which entered in his life during alienation was momentary. That could not satisfy him perfectly but at the moment he was self-realized, the joy which he felt was out of the world. But the same alienation which ruined his soul also became the medium for his self-realization. After that realization he knew his life had become transparent to him and with this hope he stepped in a new world and this world will be unequivocally different because now he was self-realized individual and he knew where he will have to utilize all his energies, time, and potentials. His journey had not finished yet, in fact it was the beginning of the end. He got self-realization and this will be enabling him to move forward with focus in his ambitions and with eternal happiness which will save him from discontentment and ambiguity. Actually his soul wanted freedom but she was kept in cage. Limits and boundaries were there to stop her from flight. He did not want compulsion but wanted his self to be free with its expression so that he could better understand what his "self" wishes for and this is demanded by every individual.

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