Alienation, Isolation and Re-establishment of Identity in British Modernist Novels

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Abstract

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man by James Joyce and *Mrs. Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf are modernist novels exploring the quest of an individual for his/her identity at the beginning of the twentieth century. They explore the sense of alienation and isolation that come with the social, political, and technological changes in the new century. James Joyce in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* lists environment as the main influence in identity's development, as well as the main cause of an individual's alienation and isolation from the society. He points out religion and politics as the most important influences on the development of the character of Stephen Dedalus. Virginia Woolf in *Mrs. Dalloway* shows the position of a woman in the century of changes, as well as the mistreatment of a mentally ill person. Through Clarissa Dalloway Woolf depicts limiting patriarchal social frame for a woman, and by creating Septimus Smith she depicts the horrors of war and criticizes regressive medical treatments of mental illnesses. Both Joyce and Woolf criticize the society's mistreatment of individuals who try to search for their identity outside the social frame, who consequentially remain alone and isolated from it.

Keywords: Joyce, Woolf, search for identity, mistreatment, alienation, isolation

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to explore the changes on the British literary scene during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, with the main focus on the human identity before, during, and after the First World War. It will discuss the sense of alienation of identity in the modern world and attempts of its recovery from the horrors brought by the "new" world. It focuses particularly on British modernist novels of James Joyce and Virginia Woolf.

The twentieth century optimistically began as an era of philosophical, scientific and technological upheaval. The era witnessed separation from traditions of the previous years with the parole "make it new", meaning that everything was evaluated anew and approached differently. Doing things differently as "a rebellious mood at the beginning of the century" (*History of Modernism*) was unified under the name of modernism. Modernism was specifically pointed against the old conventional moral values, which limited the scope of free human development. At the beginning of the twentieth century changes in psychology, sociology, physics and technology took place. As a consequence, defining human position in the world also changed. In the field of biology, Darwin's theory of evolution was one of the first disruptive ideas of human evolution. Developing a theory of evolution by natural selection he brought to question previously established religious dogma. The theory of evolution states that human beings are not excluded from the laws of nature where one form of the living being develops from another one by natural selection. This theory meant distancing from the Judeo-Christian tradition of creation. The Bible was no longer a credible source for the truth about the world. Religious beliefs started being evaluated and criticized. In philosophy Sigmund Freud and Ernst Mach altered the understanding of the consciousness. Psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud invented the concept of subconsciousness. Freud stated that human subconscious processes have a great impact on human actions and preferences in every aspect of their life. According to Wilson (2014), Ernst Mach, a German physicist and philosopher, contributed to modern understanding of "the self" as something which is "not definite, unalterable, sharply-bounded unity;" and also as a "very indefinite and arbitrarily displaceable", and can be "extended so as to embrace the entire world" (p. 141). Albert Einstein's theory of relativity changed the understanding of the notion of time. He concluded that there is no such thing as universal time and that its perception is dependent on the observer. It brought an idea that there is no unified vision of the world apart from individual's perception of it. The understanding of time caused a departure from historical sense of development of a human being. In addition to the mentioned changes, existentialist

philosophy gained prominence later during the early twentieth century, which also contributed to shifting the focus from the search of the purpose of human existence in "the outside cause", such as in the religious and moral principles, to "the inner cause", such as will and human intervention. Existentialists described human existence as nonsensical; the whole nature has no specific purpose, and this concerns human nature as well. For this reason, the twentieth century is often described as "the age(s) of anxiety". Another idea of the existentialist stream of thought is that human beings are "on their own" (Burnham & Papandreopolous, *Existentialism*), without any help from the higher forces (i.e. God). Therefore, human beings are responsible for their own existence. In attempts to re-establish its position in this new environment, humanity of the twentieth century in many cases felt confused and lost. The sense of alienation was a common occurrence which came along with these changes. However, human quest for identity was not always successful, and literary works of that era serve as a proof.

The First World War was another significant event that altered the way people started to view the world and their own position in it. However, "it would be an oversimplification to attribute the turn towards pessimism only to the last war and to the fear of a new one" (Pappenheim, 1959) even though the War brought a significant dread and uncertainty for the future. The First World War brought horrors previously unimaginable, leaving human beings, previously important figures in historical development and "creators of everything", just a tool in the hands of politics. Humanity suffered postwar ruins and traumas which left an impact on the understanding of its purpose. The War made humanity desperately grasp for a little sense it could find in a world where everything was destroyed. Its dread now "stemmed from a sense of nothingness – from seeing the whole structure of being-in-the world as a process of human time culminating in death" (Lehan, 2009, p.5).

Heike Wrenn stated that modernism "embraced the issues of class, gender, the struggle for knowledge, senselessness and alienation of the time" (Wrenn, 2010, p.9). As the world was changing, literature, precisely the novel, also underwent changes. The authors of this era were aware that the modern world was becoming more impersonal. The older traditions did not favorite free artistic expression. Art was meant to please the masses, and not simply to satisfy its creators. For that reason, modernist artists sought their place in the world by trying to establish a new aestheticism. Initially, modernist literature was a response to decadent Victorian forms and styles in writing. Later the movement spread and became a response to the "scientific, political and economic developments of the time and the way people dealt with

those issues" (Wrenn, 2010, p. 9). Outdated Victorian forms used in literature were no longer an appropriate tool of expression of the world's circumstances. Many of the artists rejected the appeal of "high" art which was intended for popular taste. In pursuing this new way of expression "modernist novel found a new stylistic repertory for making the reader not only see but also experience a character's most intense and private reality while differentiating that vivid stream of experience from larger, more powerful social, historical and literary countercurrents" (Rabate, 2007. p. 36). Consequential to Mach's and Freud's definitions of the self, modernist writers placed emphasis on the individual consciousness instead that of the majority, departed from the grand narratives, and tried to establish a "new myth". Modernists "scrutinized man's real aspirations, feelings, and actions" which led them to portrayal of the man as "disintegrated, mad, suicidal, sexually deprived, impotent, morbid, and deceived" (*History of Modernism*) sometimes. A modernist poet T.S. Eliot stated that the modern literature needed this new myth simply as "a way of controlling, of ordering, or giving a shape and significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history" (qtd. in Bradbury, 1993, p.175). Modernist literature was a search for purpose in the frenzy of the twentieth century changes and attempt to define individual's standing in it. The effect that this new mode of expression had on the audience was often "strange and radical to whoever experienced it" (*History of Modernism*).

Another important attribute of modernism is that modernist writers stopped focusing on chronological development of characters and plots and distanced themselves from the omnipresent narration. Instead, authors like James Joyce and Virginia Woolf brought the idea of "stream of consciousness" narration of the story, developed complex plots with discontinuity and fragmentation in narration, offering the reader a difficult path towards understanding underlying ideas of the novels. James Joyce and Virginia Woolf explored how radical developments of environment and society during the twentieth century influenced the individual's identity, and whether the particular (not collective!) individual succeeded in re-establishment of it, or sunk down deep in alienation and isolation from the world.

Mihaela Dumitrescu states that "we tend to define human identity in much the same way that we try to approximate – unsuccessfully, though – the divine essence, namely in negative terms, 'apophatically', in relation to what is it not. And, ironically, it is this demonized Other that enables us to circumscribe, even consolidate our own identities" (Dumitrescu, 2001, p. 11). McGire and Mcguire address the search for identity as anti-Midas touch (qtd. in Oysterman, Elmore & Smith, 2001, p. 70) – the search which gives no

satisfying answer on what identity consists of. However, “making sense of oneself” (qtd. in Oysterman, Elmore & Smith, 2001, p. 70) is an important task in life of a person showing that “people care about themselves” (qtd. in Oysterman, Elmore & Smith, 2001, p. 70). Our understanding of the term refers to a “fairly recent social construct” (Fearon, 1991, p.2). It is no wonder then that people’s identity is a product of society and environment. A famous philosopher Aristotle claims that human being is a social being, incapable of living without other people, otherwise he/she is either not a human being or he/she is an animal. In short, Aristotle says that the inability to live in the society leads people to isolation and alienation. Hall (qtd. in Grossberg, p. 89) states that human identity “has to go through the eye of the needle of others to construct itself”, that is, it differentiates itself through others. Identity may also have a double sense: “it may refer to social categories and to the sources of an individual’s self-respect or dignity” (Fearon, 1991, p.2). When talking about identities, one may differentiate numerous types of it, for example, national, ethnic, racial, sexual, gender, and age. Social and individual types are often, but not always, connected to each other.

The sociologist Émile Durkheim observes that rapid industrialization happening at the beginning of the twentieth century was “incompatible with the biological hardwiring of the human organism” (Campbell, 2011, p. 6).Changes in the environment affected his perception in a way it was necessary to rethink the position of the self (that is, his identity) in it. The end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century was considered “a crucial period of transition” (Campbell, 2011, p. 5) of the society to “consumption-based economic environment” (Campbell, 2011, p. 5). Most of the nineteenth-century society’s identity (in individual and collective sense) was tied up with social hierarchy. Society was divided on the basis of wealth and ancestry. Social environment decided on their behavior, thoughts, and restrictions. Many of the people did not have rights to vote (especially women at the time), or have the right to publicly express their opinion.

When discussing identity in literary terms, literature has a reason-consequence relationship with its environment in which it appears. Usually, the environment shapes human consciousness (and even subconsciousness) which then gives away products closely related to it. Since the beginning of the time human beings are trying to find what the purpose of their existence is. For example, in ancient literature the characters try to determine their place in the world according to the divine laws, or they try to fulfill some kind of prophecy, since they believe that the most of their actions are based on gods’ will. In modern time, establishing identity is usually in correlation with the political scene. Modernist authors tried to seek their

identity in becoming something new. Many of those artists felt oppressed by the institutions (such as the Church or family), and their work was a protest against them. Many of them reacted to conflicts in a way they tried to refuse identifying with the "machinery of evil", that is, the weapons. However, to return to Mach's definition of self, it is very difficult to strictly define such an ambiguous idea as identity really is, especially in literature, where the author has to stick to the development of the plot he has previously imagined. Defining the term of identity causes a particularly serious problem in autobiographies, such as *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* by James Joyce, since the author's perception on his own self changes on a daily basis.

The theme of alienation is closely related to the theory of identity. Although the theme of "alienation" is very frequent in literature in general, the twentieth century literature brought the term to the spotlight because of sudden changes that were happening at the time. For that reason, the term is here defined according to the characteristics of an era which is being thoroughly investigated, in this case, the twentieth century. The term "alienation" in general "causes considerable difficulty" (Senkal, 2008, p. 7) because it refers to "objective conditions, to subjective feelings, and to orientations that discourage participation" (Senkal, 2008, p. 7). Usually, alienation is characterized as a sense of estrangement from something or someone. In modern sociology it stands for "a term which refers to the distancing of people from experiencing a crystallized totality both in the social world and in the self" (Senkal, 2008, p. 7). Senkal (2008) says that "social alienation is the loss or absence of identification with, and participation in, the form of life characteristic of one's society" (p. 7). In short, alienation can be defined as "an umbrella concept that includes, but does not necessarily or logically inter-relate, the dimensions of alienation distinguished by Seeman: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, social isolation, cultural estrangement, and self-estrangement (Geyer, 1996, p. 388). All of these definitions are applicable to the sense of alienation which appeared at the beginning of the twentieth century. It is often stated that the twentieth century brought the rise of capitalism, which caused distortion in the evaluative notion of humanity. In its philosophical sense, the term "alienation" was first used by philosophers Fichte and Hegel, and later on interpreted by Marx as a support for his theory on self-alienation. According to Marx, alienation in the modern society happens when people are dominated by the forces which are their own construct. Also, he (Karl Marx), according to Ro (2012), claims that our alienation stems from our relations to others and that "the powers and relations that govern our world are historical products and products of our own activity" (p. 30). Marx claims that the feeling of alienation was brought to us by ourselves. It is because humans

created the world in which their power and values were transferred to someone else – religion, politics, or economics. However, Ro also says that Marx suggest(s) that "men and women are not condemned by supernatural or natural forces to suffer their conditions of domination for eternity" (Ro, 2012, p. 30).

One of the influences on modern understanding of alienation, especially in the fields of philosophy and sociology was George Simmel, also called "prophet of doom" (Pappenheim, 1959). He sees constant opposition between life and form "enhanced" in modern age. Simmel believes that in modern age "life is no longer in revolt against…specific forms which it finds alien and imposed, but against forms as such…" ("The Alienation of Modern Man"). Modernism advocated that the individual should reject all the imposed rules which did not fit him. However, establishing this "authentic existence" in the world might bring "the fate of the lonely outsider" (Pappenheim, 1959, "The Alienation of Modern Man"). Investigating the topic of alienation in literature, authors Daronkolaee and Hojjat (2012) concluded that there are three types of alienation in literature: the man's alienation from himself, alienation from the world and alienation of man from God (Daronkolaee & Hojjat, 2012, p. 202). Alienation themes of the twentieth century literature coincided with the appearance of existentialist ideas emerging in the western world. After the wars, the term "existentialism" spread over the cultural life of Europe, referring to "crumbling traditional values and old world views including loss of faith and God…along with anguish and anxiety, estrangement and loneliness" (Saleem, 2014, p. 68).

1. Modernism in literature

In his book *Seeing Subjects* Phillips notes that British modernism was a literary and cultural response to a period that was coming to know itself as crossed with forces that were competing: capitalism, imperialism, national culture, and technology (Phillips, 2011, p. 2). During the nineteenth century the British Empire expanded on a global scale, which brought diverse understanding of British identity. Later on, the twentieth century brought a general sense of movement which, as Phillips notes, many people perceived as "the Zeitgeist"of the period called modernism (Phillips, 2011, p. 7). Life in general became more complex and diverse than ever before. The world was "driven by the desire for ever greater accumulation of profit" (2006, "How capitalism created modernism"). The individual became just like everyone else, a consumer, without any value on cultural or political scene. Since the unified worldview was fading away, British modernists also started straying away from the traditionalist forms prevailing in the previous centuries. British modernists were mostly influenced by European arts movements, such as vorticism and imagism. Experimenting with forms and styles became widespread. Modernism in English literature was "first and foremost a reaction against the Victorian era culture and aesthetic, which prevailed for most of the nineteenth century" (Rahn, 2011, "Modernism"). As a consequence, many of the writers refused to please the audience's opinions on their work, and "the academic world became something of a refuge for disaffected artists" (Rahn, 2011, "Modernism"). Their experimenting was not very well received by the audience, as they were pushed aside as irrelevant. Another issue that the people of the twentieth-century Britain had to deal with was class distinction. The nineteenth century society marginalized women, minorities, and the poor "to the point of utter silence and inconsequence" (qtd. in Leavit, "Writing the War"). In the twentieth century things started to change and modernist works thus became the voice of those neglected and rejected.

When World War happened, anxiety for existence permeated the British society and British culture. Discussing modernist literary movement before, during and after the World War, Watts notes that "because old heroic, valour-laden assumptions about the past no longer coincided with the wartime reality, the soldiers of World War I struggled to find new ideologies about the world - new ideologies about human nature. This then gave way to what I'm calling a subgenre of British Modernism" (qtd. in Leavit, "Writing the War") After the initial patriotic sense which spread throughout the British Empire, literary artists began to see and express the downside of rapid technological and scientific development and arms race.

Many of the British authors viewed this era as a destruction of humanity. Since many of the artists were involved in the war as well – as soldiers or other personnel they had an insight in the war situation. For them, this was the era of disillusionment. There were no progress and bright future, only despair and pessimism, and artists' "concerns about aestheticism moved to the concerns about the preservation" (qtd in Leavit, "Writing the War"). It was mainly an attempt to preserve individual self and identity which was thrown into uncertainty caused by these changes.

In discussing changes of art and literature in the modernist period, Virginia Woolf states that "modern practice of art is somehow an improvement upon the old" (Woolf, 1989, p. 157). For modern artists old traditions and modes of writing were no longer suitable because they "have a strange air of simplicity" compared to the complex nature of reality. Distinguishing modernist authors from the older tradition of writers, Woolf says that the modernists are more "spiritual" in nature than the previous ones were, whom she calls "materialists." Woolf heavily criticizes her predecessors in literature, accusing them for writing of unimportant things in great length. Woolf says that authors such as H.G. Wells, Arnold Bennett and John Galsworthy "spend immense skill and immense industry making the trivial and the transitory appear the true and the enduring" Woolf, 1989, p. 159). She believes that the coming literature should not rely on that tradition, but to move forward, whatever it may bring. Woolf rejects the idea that life is "a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged" (Woolf, 1989, p. 160), and therefore literature should not be oversimplified. Life is complex, and authors should approach it in the same fashion. Moreover, she says that life is not "like this" or "like that", meaning that it is difficult to give it a fixed definition. As an example of life's complexity Woolf gives "an ordinary mind on an ordinary day…which receives a myriad impressions" (Woolf, 1989, p. 160). For that reason, modernists should "attempt to come closer to life, and to preserve more sincerely and exactly what interests and moves". Woolf sees James Joyce as the author whose work distinguishes from the works of the predecessors. She calls him a "spiritualist". The method spiritualist use makes everything a subject of the writing. Woolf says that every method the writer uses is right if it "expresses what we wish to express" (Woolf, 1989, p. 162) and that "no 'method' or experiment, even of the wildest – is forbidden, but only falsity and pretence" (Woolf, 1989, p. 164). Woolf compares British fiction with Russian, explaining how the real spiritualism is visible in the Russian literature: the characters are suffering, sometimes representing a saint figure which tries to reach some kind of divine goal. However, she concludes that there are differences

between Russians and Britons and that British may "see something that escapes them" (Woolf, 1989, p. 163) and that the comparison of any works of literature is futile, except of bringing "of the infinite the possibilities of art and remind us that there is no limit to the horizon" (Woolf, 1989, p. 164). Rejecting the traditional method of expression modernist decided that "everything is the proper stuff of fiction, every feeling, every thought, every quality of brain and spirit is drawn upon; no perception comes amiss" (Woolf, 1989, p. 163) Modernist writers tried to come "closer to life" in their writings as much as possible, representing in detail what constitutes of one's identity.

Modernist authors Virginia Woolf and James Joyce agree that human sense of self somehow became threatened by the outer forces, and it had to be preserved somehow. Modernist novels became a search for identity in a world where the environment brought nothing but senses of alienation and isolation from it. The first example of search for identity in the new modernist era is James Joyce's novel *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Affected by the changes on political scenes in early twentieth-century Ireland, Joyce's semi-autobiographical novel depicts a development of identity of a young man Stephen Dedalus affected by his upbringing, religion, and schooling. Influenced by the events occurring in Joyce's life as well, the main character Stephen Dedalus seeks an exile from his current life and tries to establish his own identity in the world, apart from the tradition which shapes the greater part of his early life. The consequences of such feat end up in isolation on purpose and accidental alienation from the society in general. In Joyce's novel we can trace the outdated Victorian views on the meaning of human existence, as well as modernist attempts to establish new ideas of it. The novel also reveals British and Irish patriotism and rivalry, and it also depicts struggles of Ireland for independence from Britain.

The second novel exploring the consequences of the search for identity in the modern world is Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*. The novel follows several stories, among them the story of Clarissa Dalloway, a woman who struggles to find happiness in outdated bourgeoisie customs of London, and a story of Septimus Smith, a war veteran who fails to find his purpose in life after the War. In the character of Mrs. Dalloway one gets a glimpse of everyday life of an ordinary woman living in London during the early twentieth century and her struggles to find her identity apart from what society assigned to her. The character of Septimus Smith explores the thoughts in the mind of a world war veteran who completely loses his idea of the Self, and fails to establish it ever again. The inability to establish identities is what eventually brings these characters to alienation and isolation. The extreme in

case of Septimus Smith's alienation ends in self-alienation. Woolf, besides exploring topic of human relationship, isolation, loneliness, suicide, and depression, also reveals a woman's perspective of the position of women at the time, revealing it neglected and unimportant. Woolf was one of the first voices of women's attitude about the changes happening in the twentieth century.

Both *A Portrait* and *Mrs. Dalloway* explore the alienated subject in the world full of changes, how they tried to define themselves according to it, and their attempts to re-establish a new meaning of 'self' in a modern world. Also, both of these novels serve as a criticism of the outdated society's traditions and customs, and a voice of liberation for an individual in the society.

2. Religious influences on the development of Stephen's identity

One of the British modernist novels which tackle the topic of identity re-establishing is James Joyce's novel *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Influenced by the author's life, the novel offers an insight into a life of a typical Irish middle-class family during Irish struggle for its national identity from the British Empire. Complex in its structure, this novel offers a detailed look on mental, physical and spiritual development of Stephen Dedalus, a young man growing under the twentieth century society's rules. The novel represents causes and main influences on the development of Stephen's character and the outcomes of these influences. It focuses on "crucial phases of inner spiritual and moral development of its protagonist… from the first suppressions on his self-consciousness in an environment consumed by conformism, to character's final point of development" (Šepčić, 1996, p. 12). It develops in five chapters which depict Stephen's early life with his family, describing suppers and discussions of his family about politics, religion and life in general, and his experiences at school and college, ending with the main character's departure from religion, family, and finally, from Stephen's native country Ireland.

The first several pages "provide a brief introduction of the central themes that *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* will take up – the roles of family, religion, and nationalism in the formation of identity" (Fargnoli & Gillespie, 2006, p. 137). According to Von Bertalanffy's General Systems Theory (and Wilden's interpretation), "the self is dependent upon its environment for its existence, both as a biological organism and as a psychological construct. Thus, looking at the particular formation of social attachments sheds some light on the self's interaction with its environment" (Senkal, 2008, p. 15). Catherine Akca (2008) points out that nationality, language, religion, the nets which enclose Stephen as a child and adolescent, are in fact inextricably intertwined, with religion as the central strand" (p. 5).

Stephen's family is very religious, and Stephen himself is raised Catholic and attends a Catholic school. Catherine Akca (2008) states that "religion permeates Stephen's home life, his induction into the adult world of Irish politics, his school life, his expectations for the future, much of the literature he reads, and even the language with which he expresses himself" (p. 55). The plot starts with the scene of Stephen as a small child and his parents chanting him a song. Stephen here becomes aware of the environment and his place in it. The plot then moves to one of the suppers held in the Dedalus household, where young Stephen

expresses his wish to marry his neighbor Eileen Vance, who is a Protestant. This statement causes disapproval of his family. Later, as the plot develops, negative emotions about religion expressed by his family start to pile up in young Stephen, leading finally to the development of his own negative attitude. Even under the constant influence of religious practices from his family, including prayers, schooling and his upbringing, young Stephen does not understand what God's and religion's roles in the world are. Having thoughts about God as omnipresent and all-knowing gets Stephen thinking of who is in charge of his life and he starts rethinking his role in the world from the early age. Stephen wonders "what was after the universe" (Joyce, 1916, p. 15) and concludes that "it was very big to think about everything and everywhere. Only God could do that" (Joyce, 1916, p. 15).

From the early age Stephen mostly negatively perceives religious laws. The first negative experience Stephen has with his family's religious zeal happens during one of the dinners with his family. When Stephen expresses affection towards his neighbor Eileen Vance, who is a Protestant, the whole family bashes him. His aunt Dante tells Stephen that if he does not withdraw these words "the eagles will come and pull out his eyes" (Joyce 4). Feeling confused and ashamed Stephen hides under the table. With this event Stephen starts identifying religion as authority which must be obeyed by all means. Another important scene which also takes Stephen aback and makes him question religious laws once again is the fight on the Christmas Eve between the Dedalus family members. Akca (2008) says that "what should have been a happy milestone in Stephen's development leaves him terror-stricken and confused about the relationship between politics and religion" (p. 29). On the Christmas Eve his family discusses religion and its interference with politics, which leaves Stephen uncomfortable because he does not understand its importance. The family discusses the death of Charles Stewart Parnell, the Irish nationalist leader, and how the Catholic clergy mistreated him for adultery. The discussion causes a big fight leaving the men at the table in tears, and women enraged. The family also discusses how often religion intervenes in political affairs. Stephen's aunt Dante says that the Church should be identified with the state, and that the intervention of clergy in politics is considered normal, if not necessary. Stephen's father even calls Irish people "a priest-ridden Godforsaken race" (Joyce. 1916, p. 43). The animosity towards the British Empire and the clergy expressed by Stephen's uncle Mr. Casey is a consequence of a centuries-long struggle of Ireland for national and religious independence which escalated at the beginning of the twentieth century. He concludes that "the priests sell aspirations of their country in return for catholic emancipation" (Joyce. 1916, p. 44) and that

there was “too much God in Ireland” (Joyce. 1916, p. 44). As a young boy, Stephen feels “small and weak” because “he did not know well what politics means and that he does not know where the universe ended” (Joyce. 1916, p. 16). He does not know the difference between Catholics and Protestants, but senses that his life is “supersaturated with the religion” (Joyce. 1916, p. 300).

After Stephen’s initial encounter with religion, the plot moves to Stephen’s departure to Clongowes, a Jesuit boarding school, where Stephen is exposed to more religious content which shapes his personality. Stephen is a timid, obedient little boy, blindly following the rules. Stephen often misses out playing with other boys in school, which makes the boys hostile towards him. Being the quiet one gets Stephen in trouble. His peers often pick on him, mock his name and physically abuse him. Here the reader starts to grasp “the particular character traits that will set Stephen apart from others and the challenges that he will face in his effort to sustain the uniqueness of his nature in a society that emphasizes conformity” (Fargnoli & Gillespie, 2006, p. 138). Instead of studying, Stephen often contemplates God and the universe. At school, Stephen quickly becomes homesick and wishes to be with his family for Christmas Eve. Stephen’s negative attitude towards religion increases after he is beaten up by Father Dolan. Stephen broke his glasses and could not read. After he was pandied, Stephen thinks that “it was unfair and cruel because the doctor had told him not to read without glasses” and that “Father Arnall had said that he need not study till the new glasses came” (Joyce. 1916, p. 61). Even though the prefect of studies is a priest, the act of pandying proved to Stephen that even the priests can be unfair and cruel. Stephen concludes that religious authority can also be unfair.

The event which distances Stephen even further from the Church is a sexual intercourse with a prostitute. Even though Stephen repents the action, he never fully regains his connection with religion ever again. After hearing father Arnall’s sermon Stephen tries to regain connection with the only thing he considered familiar in his life, i.e. religion, but he does not succeed. Stephen realizes that he “had time and opportunity to repent and would not” (Joyce 159). Instead, he “flouted the ministers of holy religion” and “turned… back on the confessional…wallowed deeper and deeper in the mire of sin“ (Joyce. 1916, p. 159).

As he becomes older Stephen starts questioning his faith in God. Moreover, he starts developing an attitude of his own on most of the issues he is struggling with in his life, especially on religious rules. Spending some time with his uncle Charles, Stephen wonders

"what his grand-uncle prayed for so seriously" (Joyce. 1916, p. 72) and realizes that he does not share his family's religious piety anymore. At the time of his return to school Stephen's family starts losing money and soon Stephen cannot continue his schooling in Clongowes. For that reason Stephen's family moves to Dublin. During this time in Dublin, Stephen starts reading romantic novels, which stir his creative mind. At this point, Stephen starts developing as an artist and writes his first poem to a girl he met at the tram. Moving to another school Stephen gains a reputation as a writer. As the time passes by, Stephen becomes bored by his family's habits and declining financial situation. While cashing the check from his literary prize, Stephen hopes that his money will help him bring the family closer once again, but soon realizes that this is not the case. He starts differentiating himself from his surroundings, alienating from his family, mentally isolating from his studies, and eventually wishing to leave the town of Dublin in the near future. During lectures in college, Stephen soon starts to wander off in his mind, becoming aware of his "cold lucid indifference" about the classes in general. Spending one night with a prostitute has a serious impact on developing his religiousness by the end of the novel. He starts to sink in his guilt hearing Father Arnall's sermon and tries to regain his religiousness once more: he prays every morning, and reads books on religion. For his religious practices he is offered to enter priesthood. However, Stephen finally realizes that he is not "good enough" for a monastic life and turns away from religion, this time completely, finding it unsatisfying and in conflict with his identity of an artist.

Although there are similarities between Joyce's life and Stephen's life, Fargnoli and Gillespie say that there "would be a serious mistake to attempt to read *A Portrait* as autobiographical" (Fargnoli & Gillespie, 2006, p. 5). Comparing the lives of James Joyce and his fictional character Stephen Dedalus one may conclude that the character of Stephen and his creator have similar experiences, but nevertheless they respond to them differently. Few comparisons can be drawn between Joyce and Dedalus. Religion and family play the most important roles in their lives. Both of them are rebellious and sensitive in nature, Joyce slightly more than his character. Both Joyce and Stephen decide to live in an exile to pursue their dream of becoming an artist. Also, they both experience the sense of isolation and abandonment caused by the alienation from the society. Dressel (2012) in *Stephen Dedalus: Identity in His Name* says that "Stephen's journey does not just mirror his creator's journey, but it also encompasses a universal adolescent identity-crisis as recorded in coming-of-age…text" (Dressel 2012).

From the political and social point of view, this novel is a valuable representation of general sense of estrangement and alienation brought by the new century. The modernist man/woman is represented through an individual named Stephen Dedalus under the influence of environmental circumstances surrounding him. Garcia says that there has been "a considerable debate on whether *A Portrait* should be read from an aesthetic or a political point of view" (Garcia, 2014, p 7), since the author successfully encompasses the major forms of modernism in art and gives a truthful representation of the political scene in Ireland at the beginning of the twentieth century. Lehan (2009) says that "modernism created two contexts: the literary-aesthetic and the social political. The major modernist for the most part kept the two categories separate, compartmentalizing one from the other" (p. 42). This is not the case with Joyce's *A Portrait.* While incorporating the major modernist literary devices making the novel one of the first of its kind, Joyce at the same time offers a criticism of social and political situation of his native Ireland at the beginning of the twentieth century. As seen from the circumstances that surround Stephen Dedalus, Joyce incorporates political and social issues into the novel coming from his own experience of the general sense of crisis of the Church in Ireland and religious influence it had on him. Garcia (2014) says that if "modernism is identified with disequilibrium, the specific situation of Ireland in the twentieth century is no less turbulent" (p. 5). Most of Joyce's and Stephen's life is in some connection with their religious upbringing. It is visible from the creation of Stephen Dedalus that Joyce creates his character to his own image. Both Joyce and Stephen are born into a religious middle-class family and receive Jesuit education in Clongowes and Belvedere. Joyce as well as Stephen "underwent a religious crisis" (Fargnoli & Gillespie, 2006, p. 4) in his mid-teens and "abandoned his Catholic faith" (Fargnoli & Gillespie, 2006, p. 4). Joyce started suspecting the viciousness of the Church when it condemned a prominent political figure Charles Stewart Parnell. During the Irish struggle for independence, the Catholic Church and his supporters condemned Parnell for adultery with Katherine O'Shea. Since the Catholic Church is not supporting divorce, Parnell's incident resulted in the destruction of his political career, consequently slowing down the Irish fight for independence. Joyce's criticism of the event is evident in the novel on several occasions. Firstly, he calls the Irishmen "dull witted loyal serf(s)" (Joyce, 1916, p. 233) for putting the strict doctrine before national freedom. For Joyce "the worst evil of Ireland was not its subordination towards the British system, but towards Rome, that is, Catholicism" (Garcia, 2014, p. 6). Joyce sees Church as a hostile institution that limits the well-being of an individual in favor of an institution. Secondly, Joyce calls Irishmen a "priest-ridden race" (Joyce, 1916, p. 43). Joyce stated that "the

individuality of the inhabitants of Dublin had been subsumed in a religion whose moral, political and cultural influence denied them any opportunity to make choices for themselves" (qtd. in Akca, 2008, p. 52). Joyce actively attacked the idea of "collective identity", wanting for people to find their own, rather than being consumed by institutions. He could not accept the involvement of the institution in private lives of citizens. The institutions made Joyce especially mad because they were meddling with literature and art in general. Attending University of Dublin, Joyce further developed iconoclastic points of view which caused disapproval from his peers and teachers. Joyce's ultimate act of rebellion against Church was finding truth somewhere else, rather than in the doctrine of his faith. As we find out from Joyce's biography, he was persistent in forming his own character, that of a writer, rather than conforming to institutions as others who "took a more conservative approach to their education" (Fargnoli & Gillespie, 2006, p. 5) and who "embraced conformity, seeking to use their university educations in the social, economic, and political institutions of their country" (Fargnoli & Gillespie, 2006, p. 5). Joyce, as well as Stephen, realizes that his own wishes and demands cannot be satisfied in any of the institutions surrounding him, not even in Ireland, and decides to establish his own identity as a writer somewhere else. Even though Joyce successfully established an identity of a writer, the departure from the religious doctrine which shaped the majority of his life came with consequences, the same as Stephen's departure from the society also comes with consequences. It caused both in Joyce's and Stephen's case a social rejection, eventually ending in what seems to be a classic scenario of an individual rebelling against the society's rules, and that is alienation, isolation, and even exile. In the novel, Stephen constantly feels isolated from his peers for having different aspirations and ideas. He alienates from his family for his different standpoints on religious life. The same happened with his creator Joyce.

In broader modernist perspective, Joyce brought with the character Stephen Dedalus a clear notion of what happens to the modern man in his search for his new identity apart from the one that is imposed to him. First of all, the individual feels that he does not belong, especially if he/she is being "brainwashed" with some information he/she does not understand and/or disagrees with. Secondly, those who feel "different" face the faith of being abandoned and isolated from the world, spending majority of their time in their thoughts possibly trying to discover what is "wrong" with them, eventually (deliberately or not) alienating himself/herself from the environment. Thirdly, the attempt to re-establish the identity is not an easy feat. The individual must risk the chance of being judged and misunderstood by others. However, Joyce believed that it is worth it. Stephen Dedalus' attempt to take flight as an artist

away from the cultural and spiritual labyrinth of Dublin recalls Howe's assertion that the Modernist writer disdains "the mass, the mire, the street" and "exits from history into the self-sufficiency of art" (Akca, 2008, p. 53).

3. Stephen Dedalus' emblematic name as a prophecy of his identity crisis

The second environmental influence on the development of Stephen's identity is the significance of his name. Dressel (2012) notices that "Stephen's destiny is especially significant for his unusual last name – Daedalus" (Stephen Dedalus: Identity in His Name). The significance of Stephen's name is given at the beginning of the novel where students at Clongowes School discuss the meaning both of his name and surname. Dressel says that the meaning of his name "foreshadowed his identity crisis" which occurred later in life:

> What is your name?
>
> Stephen had answered:
>
> —Stephen Dedalus.
>
> Then Nasty Roche had said:
>
> —What kind of a name is that?
>
> …Stephen had not been able to answer… (Joyce, 1916, p. 5)

The prefect of the Belvedere school calls Stephen a "lazy idle little loafer" and "schemer" (Joyce, 1916, p. 51), which brings Stephen into thinking if his name really referred to these adjectives. Still a young man, Stephen is yet to understand the burden his name is going to bring him. Stephen muses over the meaning for quite some time, only later inlife fully realizing its burden: last name "Dedalus", he concludes, draws an allusion to Daedalus, an architect and artist of the Greek myth. A mythical character Daedalus built a labyrinth for King Minos for imprisoning Minotaur, in which, at the end, Daedalus himself was imprisoned. However, Daedalus managed to build wings to escape the labyrinth. The "tangled web of broken relationships, successes, and failures (of the famous artisan) provide a wealth of imagery" (Bobo, 2010) which James Joyce used when he created his character of Stephen Dedalus. Stephen quickly discovers that his name is "emblematic of the artist, and that it betokens the artist's means of escape from the island of his birth and imprisonment" (Parrinder, 2005, p. 7). Banters he is receiving in college stopped bothering him and, and Stephen says, "flattered his mild proud sovereignty. Now, as never before, his strange name seemed to him a prophecy" (Joyce, 1916, p. 208).

Stephen's alienation and isolation are connected to his attempt in establishing his identity. Pursuing his artistic career alienates and isolates Stephen from his family and peers to the point of utter dissatisfaction even with his native country Ireland. According to Foley Stephen Dedalus is "persistently portrayed as the outsider, apart from the society he and his family inhabit, connecting with no-one and seeking solitude and isolation at every turn". Foley (2005) says this is a form of "self-imposed exile" which leads Stephen to fulfilling of his artistic aspirations. First signs of Stephen's silent rebellion appear when Stephen is a young boy. Stephen often chooses the "warm study hall" instead of playground, which isolates him from his peers. Describing Stephen's alienation and isolation in social relations, Graydon and McColl state that Stephen is "capable of mature or sophisticated conceptions of affiliation and alienation" (Graydon &McColl 2-3) even before he utters his first words about those issues. Stephen at one point states that "his mind seemed older than theirs (his father's and his father's acquaintances)…he had known neither the pleasure of companionship with others nor the vigour of rude male health nor filial piety" (Joyce, 1916, p. 117). Stephen simply refuses to participate in plays with peers or give opinions about anything. The first case of disobedience is the one to the authority. Stephen is beaten by father Dolan, which gains him "respect of his peers, but also performs his first act of rebellion or independence" (Foley 2005). As he becomes older, Stephen's isolation and sense of alienation increases. He starts intensive reading of the old romantics which stir his creative mind. The isolation combined with his "scholarly path" develops the unique point of view, later enabling him to fulfill his artistic aspirations. When Stephen's schoolmates attack him for reading Lord Byron, blaming him for reading heretic literature, Stephen stubbornly confronts them, revealing another aspect of Stephen's rebellious nature. Delighted by *The Count of Monte Cristo*, Stephen starts fantasizing about what he calls "the unsubstantial image which his soul so constantly beheld" (Joyce, 1916, p. 76), and "the voices of his family, his teachers and his compatriots" (Akca, 2008, p. 56) on rules of behavior become "hollow-sounding" (Joyce. 1916, p. 101). Stephen starts romanticizing the idea of freedom which is not in correspondence with the religious and constrictive upbringing he receives during his early childhood and adulthood. He fantasizes the life which he creates on his own, without meddling of the outside forces. At this point Stephen starts grasping hat his own idea of the world in which one should be free as he/she wishes opposes to the tradition in which he grows up.

In school Stephen remains a victim of bullies who mock him for being elected secretary to gymnasium. He is ambushed by Vincent Heron, one of his school peers and rivals, who sarcastically exclaim that "Dedalus is a model youth. He doesn't smoke and doesn't go to bazaars and he doesn't flirt and doesn't damn anything or damn all" (Joyce. 1916, p. 91). Stephen gradually stops reacting to rude comments: "he scarcely resented what had seem to him a silly indelicateness for he knew the adventure in his mind stood in no danger from these words, and his face mirrored his rival's false smile" (Joyce, 1916, p. 93-94). Stephen finally starts to recognize himself as different, and pursues a different life path from others without guilt. From that point he "doubted the sincerity of such comradeship which seemed to him a sorry anticipation of manhood" (Joyce 101). He does not want to be compared to them anymore. As a confirmation of his unique position, Stephen recognizes the importance of the "symbolic nature of his surname" (Foley 2005) Daedalus, whose wings were "a symbol of escape" (Foley 2005). The final case of rebellion comes in the form of rejection of priesthood offered to him. Being obedient and quiet to the extent that the director of studies at Belvedere suggests to him the possibility of entering priesthood, Stephen finally encounters "a crisis of conscience" (Fargnoli & Gillespie, 2006, p. 138). He finally realizes that the "the confining life and rigorous discipline of the priesthood runs contrary to his perceived needs for experiences to feed his creative impulses" (Fargnoli & Gillespie, 2006, p. 142) and rejects religious tradition altogether. Stephen finally breaks away from the Church and decides that his "destiny has to be elusive of social or religious orders…" and that "he was destined to learn his own wisdom apart from others" (Joyce, 1916, p. 200). The significance of this detachment is depicted through a scene of a girl he sees at the beach of Dublin Bay: "the beauty of this image has an aesthetic rather than an erotic impact on him that ultimately confirms for him the absolute correctness of his choice" (Fargnoli & Gillespie, 2006, p. 142). His isolation from the others reaches its peak at University in Dublin, where Stephen goes even further in his rebellion against the tradition which shaped his whole life. His search for freedom extends over the borders of Ireland, and he even leaves Ireland to discover his true identity as an artist, and to experience life outside of confining life of Dublin.

Even though this decision to become an artist and rebellion against everything that shaped his early life sets Stephen free from imposed beliefs on his identity, this detachment comes with consequences. First of all, Stephen feels lost without the ability to identify with anything, that is, he feels alienated from the world. He sways between what he considered to

be his Self (which started to fade after some time) and his idea of what he wants his Self to be. Stephen finally regains courage to detach from the whole tradition that shaped his life. Stephen concludes that "this race and this country and this life produced me" and decides to "express 'himself' as he is" (Joyce, 1916, p. 251), apart from it. Moreover, no matter how hard he tries to regain the closeness to his family after his acts of rebellion, Stephen has "not gone one step nearer the lives he had sought to approach nor bridged the restless shame and rancour that had divided him from mother and brother and sister" (Joyce, 1916, p. 120). The connection he has with his family "dissolves, paralleling what he calls the 'dull phenomenon of Dublin'" (Dressel 2012), together with his old beliefs. He eventually leaves Ireland too, explaining that "he cannot give himself over to the Irish nationalist movement" (Fargnoli & Gillespie, 1916, p. 142). He cannot reconcile with meddling of the Irish government in Church issues, which also limits the area for personal growth that this "young man has embraced" (Fargnoli & Gillespie, 1916, p. 142). To conclude his standings on religion and family under whose rules he lived his whole life, Stephen decides to "discover the mode of life or of art whereby your spirit could express itself in unfettered freedom" (Joyce, 1916, p. 308). The whole of Stephen's feat of deliberate isolation and alienation can be subsumed under the Latin saying: *non serviam*, meaning: I will not serve.

Using Stephen as his mouthpiece, Joyce addresses the issues a young man encounters in the pursuit of his identity. As well as Stephen in the novel, Joyce underwent rejection from the society in his early life, only later in his life establishing himself as a prominent figure with his writings. Joyce, as well as Stephen, had to depart from his family and his religion, which left him isolated first. After that, both of them felt a form of liberation. Simion (2013) says that Joyce treats Stephen as his alter ego "with a mixture of irony and sympathy" (p 58.), meaning that at the same time he sympathizes with Stephen's struggles in finding his place in the world apart from the society, as well representing Stephen's struggles somewhat futile at the end of the novel. By using this representation of Stephen, Joyce even leaves an open ending for the novel, leaving it up to the reader to decide whether Stephen succeeds or not to become what he wants. The open ending is a consequence of a time span during which Joyce wrote the novel. The time span was of seven years, which left Joyce's plenty of time to decide whether Stephen succeeded in his feat of becoming a writer. Simion (2013) says that "the final pages of the novel represent Stephen's diary for the period before leaving for Paris and it is the reader who decides whether Stephen will succeed" (p. 59). The answer to this dilemma one may find in novels succeeding *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.*

The open ending Joyce uses in this particular novel is a typical modernist literary device emerged in the twentieth century. He incorporates devices which are considered classic modernist, such as "storytelling, cyclical structures, and unexpected ending" in the form of a diary (Garcia, 2014, p. 21). It is also considered a "precursor of the stream-of-consciousness, which represents the thoughts of a character in a sort of continuous present as they pass through his or her mind" (Garcia, 2014, p. 11). As a Modernist representative, Joyce believed that "modern fiction needed to depart from previous conventions in order to express modern life properly in a subjective realism as opposed to the social and mimetic one" (Simioni, 2013, p. 59). By using modernist devices listed, Joyce successfully incorporated the major issues modernist writers were facing during their struggles to create their own voice, free from biases of society and politics, and created a strong voice of opposition to institutional imposition of rules of any kind.

When it comes to the aesthetic value of Joyce's novel, some authors, like Ezra Pound, claim that "discussions on religion and nationalism with which Joyce grew up, and that permeate all his work, are… irrelevant" (Garcia, 2014, p. 8). However, Joyce's aestheticism is closely connected to his political criticism, and they cannot be excluded from one another. For some authors, Garcia says, there is nothing in the novel that is not of a political nature (Garcia 8). The novel is characterized a *künstlerroman*, in which a "hero is represented as a young and sensitive figure whose trajectory is defined by a series of confrontations with the rigid social order, against which he feels alienated" (Garcia, 2014, p. 9). *Künstlerroman* stands for German "artist's novel", which is a narrative that "deals with the youth and development of an individual who becomes – or is on the threshold of becoming – a painter, musician, or poet" (*Encyclopedia Britannica*). By defining the novel as *künstlerroman* one must perceive *A Portrait* as a novel which incorporates biographical facts. In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* Joyce introduces his aesthetic theory by introducing the character of Stephen Dedalus, a young writer who searches his own identity. The development of the character's aestheticism in the novel corresponds to the development of aesthetic attitude of Joyce himself. Joyce, an intellectual educated in literature, mythology, philosophy and history incorporates the knowledge of these topics in the character of Stephen, who often uses quotations and references to these things (e.g. myth of Dedalus and Icarus and romantic characters of *Monte Cristo*).

4. Clarissa Dalloway's public identity

It is self-evident that society has a strong influence on its members. For the most part society shapes one's behavioral patterns, beliefs and the sense of identity. Similarly to Joyce's Stephen Dedalus, Virginia Woolf's characters in *Mrs. Dalloway* are under the influence of various external powers which shape their lives. The novel *Mrs. Dalloway* represents a strong influence of patriarchal society on women in the nineteenth century England. In addition, *Mrs. Dalloway* is also a critique of poor treatment for mental illness, and a critique of society which did not know how to deal with ill individuals. These external powers which influenced the individuals lead the main characters to the sense of isolation, rather than lay the ground for the development of their Self.

By creating the character of Clarissa Dalloway, a fifty-year-old woman who is a part of high-class society of London, Woolf depicts a woman's standpoint in the modern world. Clarissa Dalloway has a created social identity of a mother and a housewife who invests a lot of time and energy into organizing her party and dealing with trivialities throughout the day. Clarissa is usually defined through someone else, that is, her husband Richard Dalloway. Only a few people call her by her first name: Peter Walsh, her old friend and old love, and her husband. The narrator of the story states that Clarissa Dalloway "had the oddest sense of being herself invisible; unseen…this being Mrs. Dalloway; not even Clarissa any more; this being Mrs. Richard Dalloway" (Woolf, 1925, p. 9).Some of her neighbors, such as Mrs. Burton consider her snobbish, upper-class lady who is only preoccupied with her parties, dresses and flowers. Observing the "stream of consciousness" in Clarissa's character one may see that there is lot more to Clarissa than just being a housewife and a mother. She has a perfect judgment of characters "almost by instinct" (Woolf, 1925, p. 7). She analyses her environment thoroughly, noticing small changes and adjusting herself according to it. However, she does not consider "herself clever, or much out of the ordinary…she knew nothing; no language, no history; she scarcely read a book now, except memoirs in bed" (Woolf, 1925, p. 6).On one occasion Peter Walsh, her old love, calls her "the perfect hostess" (Woolf, 1925, p. 6) almost accusing her of having no emotions and being very prudish. Peter Walsh's observation reveals how well she keeps to herself without revealing how she truly feels. She claims that she is neither "this nor that", neither just someone's wife nor just an upper-class lady, but she does not show it. Even in various relationships "she would not say of any one in the world now that they were this or were that" (Woolf, 1925, p. 7).Not only does

she struggle defining her real identity apart the one she is assigned, but she also deliberately refuses to explicitly identify herself apart from the given role.

Another issue which distances Clarissa from establishing her identity comes from not having enough courage to get out from the framework of the society she lives in. Clarissa constantly remains dissatisfied with her present self-image. In search for her real identity she often compares herself with her past friends and acquaintances. She usually compares herself to her old friend Sally Seton admiring her "extraordinary beauty… dark, large-eyed, with that quality which, since she hadn't got it herself, she always envied—a sort of abandonment, as if she could say anything, do anything; a quality much commoner in foreigners than in Englishwomen" (Woolf, 1925, p. 27).Clarissa even envies her husband just for being a man because she would rather be "one of those people like Richard who did things for themselves, whereas, she thought….half the time she did things not simply, not for themselves, but to make people think this or that" (Woolf 8)."If she could have had her life over again", she says, "she would have been like Lady Bexborough "interested in politics like a man; with a country house, very dignified, very sincere (Woolf, 1925, p. 8).

Instead of pursuing her wishes to be "this or that" she remains in her "role" for the sake of someone else, concluding that it is a "perfect idiocy" (Woolf, 1925, p. 8). She cares "too much for rank and society and getting on in the world" (Woolf, 1925, p. 63) to give up on it, but at the same time she wants to escape from it. She wonders what is "beneath what people said (and these judgments, how superficial, how fragmentary they are!) in her own mind now, what did it mean to her, this thing she called life" (Woolf, 1925, p. 100). Analyzing her thoughts one sees that she actually does not see the purpose of living a dull city life organizing parties for others, but she does not know how to escape from it. Clarissa usually tries to make other people happy, often remaining unsatisfied herself. She describes her position in her family and the society as "a perpetual sense, as she watched the taxi cabs, of being out, out, far out to sea and alone" (Woolf, 1925, p. 7).She even organizes all of her parties for her husband Richard, "or for her idea of him" (Woolf, 1925, p. 63), and not for herself. To support her position in the society she even adjusts her posture and gestures. Her face has always "the same imperceptible contraction! She pursed her lips when she looked in the glass. It was to give her face point. That was her self—pointed; dartlike; definite…never showing a sign of all the other sides of her—faults, jealousies, vanities, suspicions" (Woolf, 1925, p. 30). The statement that she "enjoyed practically everything" (Woolf, 1925, p. 64), shows that Clarissa has interest in anything as long as it satisfies the society's standards.

As a feminist writer Woolf's primary task was to point towards outdated values remaining in the twentieth-century society, and the urge to change them. Mehmeti says that "Woolf in this novel portrays women of the post-First World War society and their vague lives shaped by patriarchal and alienating society, sexual repression, ideologies of gender and other conventional factors" (Mehmeti, 2015, p. 6). According to Shihada (*A Feminist Perspective*), "the miseries and loneliness of women's lives were shaped by the moral, ideological and conventional means" (p.126). The Victorian age of the nineteenth century was a patriarchal society which marginalized women. They supposed to be "weak, helpless and fragile delicate flowers incapable of making discussions beyond selecting the menu" (Khrisat, 2012, p. 141). Their position was to "ensure that home was a place of comfort for her husband and family from the stresses of industrialized Britain" (Khrisat, 2012, p. 141). Women were not expected to be anything other than what society assigned. The preservation of this tradition "underestimated women's self-image" (Khrisat, 2012, p. 141). With the portrayal of Mrs. Dalloway, Woolf pointed out how "society put little importance of the female gender" (Khrisat, 2012, p. 141). Women were defined through someone else. In this case, Mrs. Dalloway is "her husband's wife" (Khrisat, 2012, p. 142), defined through someone else, and not as her own person. Through Clarissa Woolf shows that women are not inferior, and that they are capable doing much more than meets the eye. Woolf, as well as Clarissa, grew up in a patriarchal society. Losing her female family members early in her life, Woolf was mostly influenced by the male members of her family, especially her father. The patriarchal influences she gives in Clarissa's case are Clarissa's husband, and old lover, Peter Walsh. Peter Walsh characterizes Clarissa as emotionless and stiff. Richard Dalloway has little or no ability to express any emotions towards Clarissa, which becomes a primarily the reason of her loneliness and sense of abandonment. It is possible that through male characters in the novel Woolf points out the main flaws which led her to her detachment from them. They were cold and showed no signs of emotional weakness or compassion which Woolf might have expected from them. This absence of emotional care Woolf thus connected to someone else in her past. As well as Clarissa with Sally Seton, Woolf had a close friendship with Vita Sackville-West, so it is possible that Sally Seton is a valid representation of Woolf's past joyful experiences. The problem for both Woolf and Clarissa became when they did not receive the same amount of affection in the present as they did from their past friends.

5. Clarissa's fragmentary identity and consequential loneliness

The famous French philosopher Deleuze claims that fragmented identity comes together with "sole relationship in sheer difference - fragments that are related to one another only in that each of them is different – without having recourse to any sort of original totality (not even one that has been lost), or to a subsequent totality that may not yet have come about" (Deleuze, 2009, p. 45). Clarissa is a very contradictory and confusing character. On one occasion she exclaims that, at the age of fifty, she "felt very young; at the same time unspeakably aged" (Woolf, 1916. p. 7), on the other she exclaims she is happy with her present life. Clarissa is sometimes "back in her early twenties, in the countryside at Bourton, experiencing youth and love in the company of Sally Seton and Peter Walsh" (Tufescu-Fransson, 2009, p. 6). The next moment she is back in London, cherishing life, yet feeling depressed and dissatisfied with her present life. Clarissa believes that her true Self remains in the past with her friends and former lover Peter Walsh. Her inability to reconcile with her past, which stretches to present time, blocks her from developing a social identity she presently truly wants. During the day she often remembers her feelings towards an old friend Sally Seton. Sally was both Clarissa's person of admiration, and possibly a representation of Clarissa's repressed sexual desires. Sally once kissed Clarissa, which Clarissa describes as "the most exquisite moment of her whole life passing" (Woolf, 1916, p. 29).

Because of this constant "varying between being Clarissa and being Mrs. Dalloway, she constantly sways between memory and perception, between past and present, as well as integrating the different sensations, creating a web of consciousness, fantasy and reality" (Tufescu-Fransson, 2009, p. 6-7). Clarissa often "wanders off" in her mind observing reality as some kind of a spectator, without actually participating in the events around her. While buying groceries for her party Clarissa asks herself "walking towards Bond Street did it matter that she must inevitably cease completely" (Woolf, 1916, p. 7). Even though she has a public identity, she wonders about the value of it.

Struggling with her present self and past self brings her thoughts of futility of any present action, since she places value only on her past experiences. For that reason she feels emotionally distanced from her family and her friends, no matter how hard she tries to improve the relationships with them. She wants to be as she once was in the past, but this would ruin her current reputation she created. When it comes to her standings on relationships as forms of belonging and bonding with people, Clarissa runs away from establishing any meaningful relationships other than those she once had in her past. Since she lost a sense of

purpose in her present life, Clarissa fails to deeply connect with her husband and her daughter. To get a false sense of belonging in the society she creates the image of a "perfect hostess" well incorporated into society. To protect her "own little world" from the judgmental eyes of the society, she creates her identity of a mother and a housewife, preparing parties and keeping up with the social standards, while her real Self, although not clearly defined, remains somewhere hidden. Because she feels so alone, Clarissa cherishes her past memories as the only reality that has any meaning to her. This is where all of her happiness is preserved and intact. From time to time she wanders off into her fantasies about the past to indulge this little bonding she once had, but lost by living by the society's standards. By this detailed reminiscing Clarissa deliberately isolates herself from the present reality deeming it unpleasant. Failing to establish a meaningful relationship in the present, Clarissa ends up being socially connected to others, but emotionally abandoned by everyone. By creating her identity of a mother and a wife she purposely sacrifices a personal identity for a public one.

Clarissa amplifies the loss of the meaning with her detachment from religion. She "thought there were no Gods; no one was to blame…she evolved this atheist's religion of doing good for the sake of goodness" (Woolf, 1916, p. 64). She believes that "Gods, who never lost a chance of hurting, thwarting and spoiling human lives were seriously put out if, all the same, you behaved like a lady" (Woolf, 1916, p. 64). Clarissa's feeling of futility of life has a final confirmation in Septimus' death.

6. Septimus' madness and lost identity

In *A Study of Alienation* Jeremy Hawthorn claims that "madness in Virginia Woolf's novel is seen both as a symbol and a result of alienation" (Mehmeti, 2015, p. 5). Mehmeti (2015) also adds that Septimus represents "the utmost level of alienation ultimately generating into madness" (p. 7). The story of Septimus Smith develops along with the story of Clarissa Dalloway, but it is not directly connected to it. Septimus Smith is a First World War veteran suffering from shell-shock. His mad behavior stems from the time spent in the war. Septimus suffers from depression and hallucinations caused by the war and the loss of his friend Evans. As a promising young man who aspires to be a writer Septimus idealizes war because the war "offered Septimus the apparently straightforward, socially valued masculine role of defending idealized womanhood by stoicism and violent action" (Coyle, 2003, p. 528). These ideals prove to be false. Mehmeti (2015) says that Septimus seems as "a writer whose creativity was blighted by the war experiences, which eventually destroy him spiritually and physically as well" (p. 7). Septimus believes that war "develops manliness" (Coyle, 2003, p. 528). After his officer and friend Evans' death Septimus even feels "very proud of himself" (Woolf, 1916, p. 71) because "he had gone through the whole show, friendship, European War, death, had won promotion, was still under thirty and was bound to survive" (Woolf, 1916, p. 71).He does not feel anger or sadness about Evans' death, and at first he sees no problem with being unable to feel anything. At that point, Septimus does not yet grasp that this inability to feel any emotion will alienate him from the society in his future life, which will later result in madness, and finally in suicide.

Septimus' madness "derives from the shell-shock which deprives him of his human feelings, emotion, and this state of numbness is one of the symptoms of the forthcoming insanity" (Mehmeti, 2015, p. 8). As well as Clarissa, Septimus tries to fulfill his role of a man in the society, but compared to Clarissa he fails. He should be "an able man who is happily married and content with life", but under the surface he mentally falls apart because of his illness. The numbness Septimus feels has a consequence on every aspect on his private life. The lack of emotions alienates him from his wife Lucrezia, his only meaningful relationship remaining in his life. After he marries Rezia he realizes that, even though among people, he feels alone and abandoned. No one bothers to understand him, except his wife who unfortunately fails multiple times and later becomes responsible for his mistreatment. Septimus' poor attempts to preserve his fragmented idea of his own Self are in his written notes, but "which he refuses to share (they have to be hidden and destroyed)" (Nicolae, *The*

Concept Of Self, p. 694), and in his memories of his deceased friend Evans. Nicolae says that Septimus' notes should not be interpreted as communication to other, but "it represents the failure to create a bond that would tie together the individual and the others" (Nicolae, *The Concept Of Self,* p. 694). Septimus never really establishes a meaningful relationship in his present life since his illness and memories do not allow him to. He believes that he "has lived through something that nobody else can understand, realizing the cruelty that exists in humans" (Tufescu-Fransson, 2009, p. 12).This distances Septimus from others even more. At one point he even thinks that "it might be possible that the world itself is without meaning" (Woolf, 1916, p. 72).During the rare episodes of sanity Septimus discusses the meaning of life and death with his wife Lucrezia, concluding "how wicked people were; how he could see them making up lies as they passed in the street. He knew all their thoughts, he said; he knew everything. He knew the meaning of the world, he said" (Woolf, 1916, p 55). In contrast to Clarissa and her fake identity, Septimus decides to completely alienate himself from the world, failing in creating even a public image. He does not have a created social identity as Clarissa does because he decides that, after the War, the existence of humanity is meaningless. Horney (as qtd. in Saleem, 2014) says that in this type of alienation "a man becomes oblivious to what he really feels, likes, rejects, believes, in short to what he really is" (p 71).Septimus believes that to be isolated has some "luxury in it… a freedom which the attached can never know" (Woolf, 1916, p. 76), a freedom to do as he wishes, whenever he wishes. At the same time he dreads being alone.

The numbness Septimus feels becomes an even bigger problem for him when his wife tries to help him by calling the doctors. The state Septimus is in cannot be treated by the classic "norm" that society proposes for the mentally ill cases like him and because of that he is being mistreated by everyone. This amplifies his sense of being alone in the world and he starts to apply his irrational thoughts to the real world around him, thus developing an irrational fear of people and the world in general. Septimus believes that his body "has flowered; flowered from vanity, ambition, idealism, passion, loneliness, courage, laziness, the usual seeds, which all muddled up… made him shy, and stammering, made him anxious to improve himself" (Woolf, 1916, p. 70). At some point Septimus concludes that "London has swallowed up many millions of young men called Smith" (Woolf, 1916, p. 69) and that even if he ceases to exist it would not be significant. This is where his alienation from the world transforms to the level of self-alienation. Septimus loses from his sight the idea of who he is in the present and finally gives up on himself. By the end of the novel Septimus completely

loses his mind believing that the whole world turned against him. The sense of hostility Septimus feels is confirmed in the form of Dr. Bradshaw and Dr. Holmes. The doctors fail to treat Septimus' mental instability. They claim that the only cure for him is to "get out of his head" or to visit a mental hospital. The departure to asylum and consequential separation from his wife scares him since she is his only connection to reality. In addition, he is convinced that it must be something wrong with him and that he deserves to be that way. The threats from the doctors "incite in him a feeling that he has done some crime and that he must be condemned to death by human nature in the forms of Dr. Holmes and Sir William Bradshaw" (Mehmeti,2015, p. 11). Septimus sees no other exit but committing suicide.

Woolf wrote that *Mrs. Dalloway* is "a study of insanity and suicide: the world seen by the sane & the insane side by side – something like that" (Woolf, 1920-1924). Agsous (2010) says that *Mrs. Dalloway* is "mainly about Virginia Woolf's experience of mental illness and women's concerns as women and social individuals" (p. 29). Along with the character of Clarissa, Woolf creates Septimus Smith with which she shows the darker, hidden side of her personality. The theme of depression, isolation, and personal tragedies were personally known to Woolf. Since she was a little girl, Woolf suffered depression. Her depression amplified with every new death in her family, especially when her mother and sister died. Woolf's disease, as well as Septimus', was poorly treated. Most of her physicians told Woolf to rest, without helping her coping with hallucinations and manic-depressive episodes. This caused several nervous breakdowns in her life, and eventually led Woolf to suicide. The portrayal of Septimus Smith may be seen as a representation of Woolf's mental state, but also a criticism of medical institutions at the time. Hallucinations, manic depressive episodes, and her suicidal tendencies comprised a large portion of her life as well as Septimus'. To amplify this hopelessness a human being experiences, Woolf in *Mrs. Dalloway* added the War as the ultimate destruction of one's identity. Briggs (as qtd. in Nicolae, p. 694) states that "Septimus' experiences are the only record we have of what Woolf's illness felt like from the inside", echoing "moments from her earlier fiction".

It is often understood that Septimus is seen as the "double" of Clarissa Dalloway. It is also possible that these two characters represent the two sides of one person, one dealing with a public image, the other dealing with mental illness. A fragmented identity which occurs in Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Smith can also be applied on Woolf's life as well. Woolf had a hard time coping with constant oscillations between being a cheerful housewife and a depressive person. Because of her depression Woolf felt detached from the world, the same

way Septimus also feels detached. This detachment was severe during her hallucinations, where she talked to and saw dead members of her family. The severity of her condition is portrayed in Septimus' hallucinations of Evans. His hallucinations cause him dread, as well as happiness, but also a complete loss of sanity and loss of perception of the world around him. It is possible that the character of a housewife in her life might have amplified her sense of alienation even more, since Woolf did not feel particularly apt to perform those roles. Neither of the characters of Clarissa and Septimus had a firm ground to stand on when it comes to establishing a steady personality. This bipolar sense represented through the characters, which Woolf constantly felt, led her to misunderstanding from and of the environment, with constant feeling of isolation and non-belonging anywhere.

Conclusion

Late nineteenth and early twentieth century literature was mainly pointed against the outdated traditional modes of thinking and writing. First of all, modernists wanted to make everything new and different. In literature the focus shifted from the "objective" point of view of previous traditions and concentrated more on the "subjective" experiences of individuals. Also, modernism rejected previous unified worldview and introduced fragmentation as the inherent trait of the understanding of the individual. Modernism revealed a new search for identity more suitable to the modernist age influenced by the multiple changes on political and social scene. Lastly, it revealed that the twentieth century brought a general confusion by changes, which sometimes led to the sense of alienation and isolation from the world.

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man and *Mrs. Dalloway* as the first modernist novels introduce the readers to the changes in the modes of expression in the twentieth century literature, as well as point out the individual's place during the years of changes. The novels of Virginia Woolf and James Joyce thoroughly explore prevailing thoughts in the minds of individuals born, raised, and living at the beginning of the twentieth century. They also explore the consequences of various environmental changes that have influence on the development of one's Self. James Joyce and Virginia Woolf both point out environmental changes to be crucial in the development of the character of an individual and add consequences which the environment can have on its development. For them, alienation and isolation from the society are consequences of not being able to establish a meaningful connection to the environment. In the case of Stephen Dedalus, the forming of identity is closely related to the main character's religious upbringing, which eventually leads to his misunderstanding of the religious laws and alienation from the whole society. Moreover, these religious laws diverted the main character from establishing the identity of a writer. The second case is the case of Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Smith, two psychologically distinct characters dealing with the same issue of establishing a stable identity while struggling with limiting outer forces such as patriarchal arrangement of the society and misunderstanding of mental illness. Both Joyce and Woolf incorporated personal experiences in the creation of their characters justifying the modernist idea of avoiding general appeal of the literature, and instead offering the individual's impression of the world he/she lives in. They both believed that the individual's identity was threatened by the imposition of collective identity and they both believed it should be stopped.

The novels explored in this paper raise several questions to discuss: does separating from the society in order to fulfill the individual's true potential always cause alienation and isolation? If that is the case, why does it happen? Is it beneficial to separate from the society in order to establish a true identity an individual really wants? Does the saying "better alone, than in bad company" really holds ground when it comes to fulfilling of a potential of a person? Unfortunately, these questions can be answer only by the individual him/herself. Everyone endures isolation and alienation differently. As seen from the example of Stephen Dedalus and his author James Joyce, isolation and alienation brought to them liberation and freedom to do everything they want. The surrounding became too suffocating, and they changed it. On the other hand, Virginia Woolf and her characters Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Smith did not have such luck. They saw liberation in separating with life, Mrs. Dalloway figuratively, and Septimus Smith literally. It is possible that they did not have enough courage to change their surroundings.

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