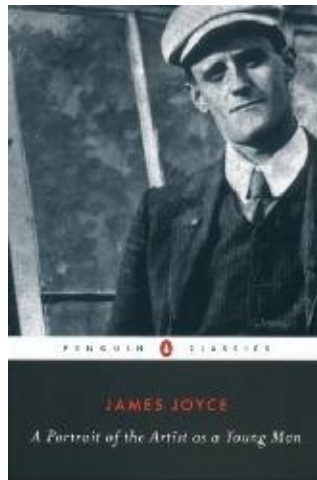


Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

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This is a Chapter 4 summary for the book Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man



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Chapter 4 analysis

Identity

Throughout the book, Stephen searches for his identity. In the beginning of chapter four Stephen attempts to find his identity as a religious follower and religion is the foundation of his life. "Every morning he hallowed himself anew in the presence of some holy image or mystery" (159). This shows how Stephen's devotion to God was to a high degree. The phrase "hallowed himself anew" represents this fact because it means that Stephen is doing religious duties. The margin of Stephen's actions also demonstrates that Stephen is doing religious work every morning. Stephen's actions during this period in his life not only demonstrate how he is searching for his identity but Joyce is also trying to ridicule how devoted the Irish are to their religious beliefs. Joyce is saying that in order for Ireland to find an identity the people must lessen their individual focus on religion and strive to make Ireland better as a whole.

Another example where Stephen searches for his identity is when he wanders through Dublin and notices the clouds: "They were voyaging across the deserts of the sky, a host of nomads on the march, voyaging high over Ireland, westward bound" (181). When Stephen examines the clouds Joyce uses the word "nomad" to describe how the clouds "voyaged" across the sky. Both of these words describe Stephen at this point in his life. Stephen is searching for his identity and is a nomad in the sense that he has not found his home or identity. Stephen's journey is when he wanders through Dublin. Joyce is again using Stephen to show how Ireland is searching for an identity and is also striving for independence. Since the Irish do not have their own identity yet, Joyce does not believe they can separate from England and form their own country. In addition, the clouds that are high over Ireland and demonstrates how Ireland is being forgotten while all of the profusion is "westward bound". When Joyce uses the words "high over Ireland" and "westward bound" he is demonstrating how Ireland is getting lost in the shuffle while all the ideas and wealth are flowing to the east just like the clouds.

Stephen makes the discovery that his last name is the same name as the great artificer, father of Icarus. However, this discovery seems to be washed away as Joyce describes, "He looked northward towards Howth. The sea had fallen below the line of seawrack on the shallow side of the breakwater and already the tide was running out fast along the foreshore" (184). It's going in the direction of England. This shows how Irish make a surge for independence but then it all fails. All of these examples show that Stephen's identity is not fully developed, as well as Ireland's. Stephen's identity is dependent on family, school, art, religion, and his own experiences. Ireland's identity is dependant on England, their culture, and religion. Both Stephen and Ireland's identity is tentative. Joyce uses Stephen to resemble Ireland's embryonic identity. This dilemma is solved later in the chapter, when he gazes at the beautiful young woman in the water. He does not shy away from the sexual image as he did in previous chapters. He observed the young

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woman from the perspective of an artist and finds his own identity as an artist. Even though Stephen thinks he has found his true identity, it will always change because it is so reliant on outside influences. All of the searching for his identity has paid off for Stephen and Joyce is using Stephen to show how he believes Ireland will eventually find its identity and unite to achieve independence from England.

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