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PSYCHOLOGICAL STRUGGLES AND INTERNAL CONFLICTS IN *SONS AND LOVERS, MRS DALLOWAY,* AND *A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN*

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Abstract
A broader transformation took place in the literary fields, mostly in terms of the protagonists' internal conflicts and psychological issues in the 20th century, which can be clearly seen in the works of prominent writers like D. H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, and James Joyce. This research article explores the psychological issues and internal conflicts of the protagonists of *Sons and Lovers, Mrs. Dalloway*, and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. The main characters of these novels suffer from extreme identity and existential crises. Employing Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalytic frameworks alongside modernist narrative techniques, the study elucidates how the subconscious mind and the human psyche are intricately rendered in the portrayal of the protagonists. The most prominent writers of this period, for instance, D. H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, and James Joyce, largely use fragmented narratives to draw out the inner turmoil and obsessive-compulsive symptoms of the main characters in their novels. Focusing on conjugal relations, love, emotion, passion, psychological conflict, class conflict, and middle-class sentiment of the people of this period with a qualitative discussion, the paper finds that the Industrial Revolution and scientific development functioned as catalysts to transform the human psychology of this period.

Keywords: 20th century novel, existential crisis, internal conflict, psychological issue, stream of consciousness

Introduction
The psychology of human nature is a dominant trait in 20th-century novels. Literature has witnessed a drastic shift from the Anglo-Saxon to the postmodern period. Starting from the dominance of religion and heroic themes, modern literature has now shifted to human life. All the small and big events of life have now become the subjects of literature. Emerging in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, modernism responded to rapid social, psychological, and technological changes, placing emphasis on individual consciousness, alienation, and fragmented realities (Bradbury & McFarlane, 1991). Concerning narrative technique, for

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instance, stream of consciousness, modernist literature departed from conventional linear storytelling to inspect the inner complexities of the human mind.

In this context, novels such as *Sons and Lovers, Mrs. Dalloway,* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* offer deep psychological portraits of protagonists antagonizing identity, trauma, and social expectations. Additionally, these texts expose the tension between tradition and change, also the alienation often realized by individuals in an increasingly industrialized and modern world. Some other contemporary works such as Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* (1927), James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), and Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* (1915) also deal with inner conflict and existential crises. These texts redefine narrative style and portray the profound disorientation of modern existence.

The psychological depth of the characters offered new possibilities for storytelling in 20th-century literature. Flashbacks and nonlinear storytelling became popular trends in modernist literature, presenting time as a consolidation of present, past, and future without clear demarcations (Waugh, 2006). This focus on the inner workings of the mind allowed authors to examine themes of identity, existential crises, and the search for meaning in an uncertain world. Kuhn (1962) further argues that logic, rationality, and scientific inquiry in the modern era primarily changed human thought and behavior. The Industrial Revolution and scientific advancements reshaped the worldview through reason and innovation. This rational framework, however, has not only influenced societal structures but also found expression in the thematic and narrative techniques of modern literature, emphasizing the profound interplay between time, human consciousness, and cultural transformation. As so-called civilized people are very destructive, there is a lot of bloodshed. In the First World War, many people were killed. So, human civilization became maligned. The war of 1947 was very destructive, and as a result, people were under extreme psychological pressure, becoming psychologically abnormal and absurd. Isolation started in the modern period. Wars have been the foremost reasons for such behaviors in human beings. Most writings of the modern period portray the destruction, violence, and suffering caused by war, the negative impacts of the Industrial Revolution, as well as how people existed and adapted to the situation during that time (Hemingway, 1929).

In this way, the internal conflicts and psychological issues of the protagonists have become the main concerns of 20th-century novels. Ultimately, the novels *Sons and Lovers, Mrs. Dalloway,* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* offer a powerful critique of modern civilization, revealing how the fragmentation of time and self becomes a defining experience of modernity.

Literature Review

Focusing on characters' inner thoughts, modern literature moves away from the conventional, all-knowing narratives common in 19th-century novels. Scholars like Marcus and Nicholls (2019) argue that modernist fiction breaks traditional storytelling by using thoughtful and fragmented perspectives. For instance, Taylor (2017) asserts that Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* shows an "all-embracing consciousness" that blends her characters' inner and outer worlds.

Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* employs modernist narrative techniques to examine internal conflicts and psychological complexities, particularly through the symbolic and emotionally charged relationships between characters. Childs (2011)

argues that both Joyce and Lawrence examine the fragmented aspects of identity and awareness, employing symbolic visuals and inward-looking narration to convey the complex psychology of their main characters. Talukdar (2024) also examines Lawrence's thematic exploration of sexuality and relationships, analyzing the psychological complexities found in his characters, such as their innermost fears, desires, and conflicts embedded in his narrative style.

Singh (2014, p. 54) shows the psychological intricacies and internal struggles that cripple the protagonists in both *Sons and Lovers* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. These characters contend with antithetical forces such as love and lust, art and beauty, religion and aesthetics, ethics and hypocrisy, and individual versus societal expectations, ultimately "struggling to signify" their place in the world. Ragachewskaya (2015) effectively demonstrates how the trauma of the First World War exists in Lawrence's and Woolf's fiction, manifesting as madness and trauma among their characters. This historical context surges the psychological tension and highlights the fragility of the human psyche in the face of modernity's upheavals. Larbi (2019) elucidates how the stream of consciousness in Woolf's novel reflects her existential struggles, which were deeply connected to her recurring nervous breakdowns caused by the dehumanizing consequences of hyper-modernization.

Recently, Madhok (2024) comments that patriarchy and societal prejudice influence Mrs. Clarissa's conceptual framework, gender ideology, and personal identity. Also, Khan and Khattak (2022) discover Clarissa's mental health in the post-World War period, which is portrayed through her fragmented narratives and stream of consciousness.

Piotrowska (2021) offers a Gestalt analysis of perception, suggesting that humans interpret objects as part of a greater whole. Gestalt psychologists like Wolfgang Köhler and Kurt Koffka argue that the human mind is structured with 'gestalts', mental frameworks that facilitate the efficient processing of visual and experiential information. Piotrowska applies Gestalt literary criticism to critique the Künstlerroman genre within Anglophone modernism, focusing specifically on Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and prioritizes his narrative techniques that reflect the fragmented and multifaceted nature of human perception.

In recent times, some scholars emphasize Joyce's experimental narrative techniques, such as stream of consciousness and free indirect discourse, as central to portraying the fragmented and nonlinear processes of thought. As Gasiorek (2019, p.363) notes, Joyce's modernist innovation lies in his "radical reshaping of narrative time and interiority," which reflects the disordered yet meaningful experience of consciousness. Similarly, Cheng (2017) emphasizes that Joyce breaks away from traditional narrative structures in order to emphasize the inner workings of his characters' minds, reflecting a key aspect of modernist literary practice.

Yêkini, Moustapha, and Seguedeme (2017) contend that the 20th century marked a pivotal shift from the Victorian novel's emphasis on storytelling and entertainment to a deeper exploration of character. This transition allowed novelists to unravel the complex web of thoughts and emotions that define the human experience. Exploring the works of Woolf and Joyce, Maleki, Hooti, and Farahian (2009) observe that the concept of time and chronology plays an important role in reshaping narrative meaning, as modernist writers often break away from the linear structure of conventional narratives. Additionally, Heidegger (1927, p.138)

introduces the concept of Dasein as a "being in the world" that explains time as a series of "nows." To understand this temporal framework is compulsory to get the main ideas of modern literature.

Maleki, Hooti, and Farahian (2009) also demonstrate how Woolf and Joyce employed the displacement feature of the language to challenge conventional notions of time and chronology, thereby employing innovative narrative technique, likely stream of consciousness, that reflects a profound shift in the literary portrayal of human experience. Woolf, Joyce, and Lawrence have profoundly redefined the boundaries of the novel, offering readers a richer and more intricate understanding of the human condition by revealing the psychological, existential, and temporal dimensions of their characters.

However, this paper will illustrate the internal conflicts and psychological issues of the protagonists of the novels *Sons and Lovers* by D. H. Lawrence, *Mrs. Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf, and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* by James Joyce. In this paper, the background and the contextual history are discussed briefly; instead, the focus will be on elaborating on the characters and the contrapuntal plot storyline behind their internal conflicts and psychological struggles. This research paper will investigate specifically on three novels, each authored by a different writer, to assess key aspects of human psychology.

Method

The research paper is qualitative in nature, based on an intensive reading of D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* (1913), Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), and James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916). These texts were selected due to their psychological complexity and their centrality to early 20th-century literary modernism. Apart from the rigorous study of these texts, an extensive analysis of various prominent scholarly articles, theories, books, academic monographs, dissertations, canonical anthologies, and discussions regarding the primary texts was undertaken to analyze and synthesize the novels. This effort helps a lot in generating new ideas and thoughts that develop the comprehensive and utmost information of this article.

Ibrahim Mohamed Othman's article, *Narrative Techniques in the Modernist English Novel: A Study of Woolf, Joyce, and Lawrence*, published in the *South Eastern European Journal of Public Health* in 2024, was scrutinized properly, to dissect the narrative styles employed by Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, and D. H. Lawrence.

The research is framed by a triangulated theoretical apparatus comprising classical psychoanalysis, Gestalt psychology, and contemporary cognitive-behavioral theory (CBT). The psychoanalytic dimension draws primarily upon the work of Sigmund Freud, mainly *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899 ed. 1913), *Totem and Taboo* (1913 ed.1958), and *The Ego and the Id* (1923 ed.1961), which articulate foundational concepts, for example, the Oedipus complex, and the structure of the ego. The familial entanglements and psychic crises of Paul Morel and Stephen Dedalus are directly relevant to Freudian psychoanalysis. Additionally, the theory of the mirror stage by Jacques Lacan, originally presented in 1949 and later published in *Écrits* (Lacan, 2002), helps to interrogate processes of self-identification and alienation in the protagonist.

The study of modern cognitive-behavioral theory by Abramowitz, McKay, and Taylor (2019), *Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders: A Guide for Clinicians* traces the classical insights in the character of Clarissa Dalloway. Identifying the symptoms of depersonalization and compulsive rumination, the contemporary understandings of anxiety-related disorders offer a context-sensitive analysis of her mental state.

Gestalt psychology is used to understand Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. The work of Piotrowska (*Gestalt Psychology in the Modernist Künstlerroman of James Joyce and Virginia Woolf*, 2021) and Iqbal (*An Artist in the Making: Stephen's Search for Self-Identity in James Joyce's A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, 2018) has successfully shown this approach. Both scholars examine the connection between the growth of Stephen Dedalus as an artist and the psychological process of finding a complete sense of self, which is a key feature in the Künstlerroman. The Gestalt approach also helps explain Stephen's realization regarding the world shifts over time, as he balances immediate, sensory experiences with deeper, abstract thinking (Iqbal, 2018; Piotrowska, 2021).

The study further occupies the trauma theory and the philosophy of temporality in *Mrs. Dalloway*. Using the insights of Larbi (2019), in *Trauma and Temporality in Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway*; Davis (2019), in *Memory, Time, and Trauma: Reading Mrs. Dalloway Through the Lens of Psychological Theory*; and Smith (2010), in *Virginia Woolf and the Madness of Modernism*, the temporal fragmentation of Woolf's narrative style is analyzed. These scholars highlight the role of disrupted chronology, memory, and post-war trauma in shaping narrative style and character consciousness. Their work is influential in contextualizing Clarissa Dalloway's internal disorder and Septimus Warren Smith's psychological breakdown within a broader modernist exploration of mental illness and existential dread.

Bell's (1991) *D. H. Lawrence: Language and Being*, a study on the Freudian evolution of the modern self in Lawrence's fiction; Chourasia (2019) *D. H. Lawrence: Self and Sexuality*, a psychoanalytic interpretation of the Oedipal tensions in *Sons and Lovers*; and Singh's (2014) article *Psychological Angst in the Modernist Novel: A Comparative Study of D. H. Lawrence and James Joyce* develop the theoretical framework of this research article. The works of Bradshaw, including *A Concise Companion to Modernism* (2003) and *Modernism: A Guide to European Literature 1890–1930* (2007), support the contextual and theoretical grounding of this study. Childs's (2007) book *Modernism* helps the study outline the key intellectual and historical features of literary modernism. Rivkin and Ryan's (2004) anthology *Literary Theory: An Anthology* also supports the theoretical framework and provides important critical tools for analysis.

In an effort to expand the interpretive scope, the study also incorporates insights from reputable digital repositories, scholarly lectures, and critical blogs. These sources offer accessible yet rigorous perspectives that complement traditional academic literature, especially in the areas of narrative psychology and the literary representation of mental states.

To sum up, this research synthesizes classical psychoanalysis, modern psychological theory, and literary modernism to interrogate the inner lives of Paul Morel, Clarissa Dalloway, and Stephen Dedalus.

Findings and Discussion

Familial bonds, societal expectations, and personal identity crises shape the deep psychological conflicts of the protagonists in *Sons and Lovers, Mrs. Dalloway*, and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. The driving force of unresolved desires, maternal attachments, and fragmented self-perceptions is revealed through Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis. These psychoanalytic theories, along with modernist narrative forms, demonstrate the inner conflict and identity crises of the protagonists, shaped by the effects of industrialization and modern life.

Paul Morel's deep emotional attachment to his mother and troubled relationship form his inner conflict that reflects Freud's Oedipus complex (Chourasia, 2019). Paul's fluctuation between his desires and societal expectations in *Sons and Lovers* emphasizes the tension inherent in the modern artist's quest for self-realization and artistic fulfillment (Bell, 1991). Besides complicating his identity and psychological struggles, the harsh industrial setting of early 20th-century England intensifies his sense of alienation.

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Clarissa's isolation, existential anxiety, and post-war trauma create her inner turmoil. Woolf's stream of consciousness expresses her fragmented identity and the tension between memory and present existence (Larbi, 2019; Smith, 2010). Though industrialization shapes the societal norms that constrain her, it reflects the dissonance faced by women seeking individual freedom in a rapidly changing, post-war world.

In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, the constraints of religion, family, and nation shackle Stephen Dedalus as he seeks individual and artistic autonomy. His epiphany vindicates a break from these forces, embracing self-determination (Erkoç Iqbal, 2018). Freud's conceptualizations of the unconscious and the Oedipal complex offer critical insight into Stephen's internal conflicts and fragmented sense of identity (Freud, 1923). Stephen's transformation in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* signifies the painful journey toward artistic autonomy and self-expression, reflecting the artist's recurrent struggle for individuality and creative freedom (Singh, 2014).

Lacan's concept of the Mirror Stage further enriches the understanding of Stephen's developmental trajectory, as it reflects his internal struggle for self-identity (Lacan, 1949). By portraying his disintegrating sense of self, the nonlinear narratives reflect his psychological fragmentation, which is a key feature of modernism. And the fluidity of time in these narratives disrupts conventional temporal progression, reinforcing the disjunction between inner consciousness and outer reality (Levenson, 2011).

The concept of time plays a significant role in 20th-century novels and reflects a shift in societal structure and human perception. In the beginning of civilization, there was an agricultural society, and people were dependent on natural or seasonal time (Wells, 1895). However, with the beginning of industrialization, people became mechanical because of the increase in workers. People had to depend on clock time, but now it has turned into its extreme version. Time no longer remains the same, and mechanical time has now turned into psychological time, and psychological time has become the ultimate feature of modern literature (Davis, 2019). By the clock, it may be now 2:00 p.m., but in our psychology, there are different times, such as last night, the previous time, or an upcoming moment in the future. That's why our psychology is always active, which highlights the constant

activity of human consciousness, blurring the boundaries between temporal dimensions.

The novels, *Sons and Lovers* (1913) by David Herbert Lawrence, *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) by Virginia Woolf, and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) by James Joyce, deal with human psychology. The internal conflicts and the psychological issues of the protagonists of these novels are the main concern for their attitudes (Fitzgerald, 2004). In *Sons and Lovers*, D. H. Lawrence has shown how industrial civilization has affected human nature and behavior, as well as how it is a pragmatic application of Freudian psychoanalysis that creates inner conflict and psychological problems in Paul's character (Bell, 1991; Preston, 1988). In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Virginia Woolf portrays stream of consciousness, internal conflict, and isolation in the character of Clarissa Dalloway (Woolf, 1925). Similarly, in the novel *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, James Joyce portrays Stephen Daedalus' internal conflict and psychological facts regarding love and art, art and beauty, religion and aesthetics, ethics and hypocrisy, self and society, and so on (Erkoç Iqbal, 2018). Rivkin and Ryan's (2004) *Literary Theory: An Anthology* offers essential frameworks, such as psychoanalytic, feminist, and modernist, that enrich analysis of *Sons and Lovers*, *Mrs. Dalloway*, and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. The anthology helps illuminate Paul Morel's Oedipal conflict, Clarissa Dalloway's introspective consciousness, and Stephen Dedalus's artistic and postcolonial struggles, highlighting the psychological depth and narrative complexity of modernist fiction.

In *Sons and Lovers*, Paul Morel emerges as the central character whose internal struggles and psychological turmoil render his life profoundly challenging. This novel intricately considers human psychology and behavior, which are defining characteristics of 20th-century English literature, making it a work that invites psychological analysis. The title, *Sons and Lovers*, holds particular significance as it evokes Freud's theory of the Oedipus Complex, a concept deeply rooted in psychoanalysis.

According to Sigmund Freud (1923), the Oedipus Complex refers to a psychological phenomenon wherein a child, particularly a male child, develops an unconscious sexual attraction toward the parent of the opposite sex while simultaneously harboring feelings of hostility toward the same-sex parent. Freud posits that boys, from an early age, exhibit a psychological inclination to love their mother and resent their father. This underlying dynamic is reflected in *Sons and Lovers*, where Paul's relationship with his mother and his emotional struggles align with the principles of Freudian psychoanalysis, making the novel a compelling study of human behavior and subconscious motivations.

> "The sexual wishes in regard to the mother
> Become more intense and the
> father is Perceived as an obstacle to the;
> this gives rise to the Oedipus Complex." (Freud, 1913).

> "To express the matter boldly, it is as though a sexual
> preference becomes active at an early period,
> as though the boy takes the same attitude toward
> her mother –a rival by getting rid of whom
> he or she cannot but profit"

> "Perhaps we are all destined to direct Our first
> sexual impulses toward our mothers and our
> first hatred and violent wishes toward our fathers;
> our dreams convince us of us. King Oedipus,
> who has struck his father Laius dead and has married
> his Mother Jocasta, is nothing but the realized
> wish of our childhood." (Freud, 1913)

When the boy's Id desires to kill the father, the ego (reality principle) realizes that the father is a bigger and stronger entity than him. The boy comes to fear the father and develops castration complexity, the fear that the father will castrate him for his sexual desire for his mother. This kind of psychology disappears with age, as the boy starts to identify himself as self and is guided by the superego. After some time, the boy identifies himself as a separate entity, not as a mixed entity with his mother. This stage is called Lacan's mirror stage. If it is not resolved naturally, it may hamper his mental and sexual life in adulthood, making his life miserable (Lacan, 2002).

The same phenomenon is observed in terms of Paul. To form such a kind of complexity in Paul, his mother, Gertrude Morel, is largely responsible. In this novel, Mrs. Morel is very possessive in her character. She is not happy in her conjugal life, as she has a huge communication gap with her husband, Mr. Morel, which prevents any deep connection between them. Behind their communication gap, both of their societal classes are also responsible. Mr. Morel is uneducated, works as a coal miner, and speaks his dialect. On the other hand, Mrs. Morel is from a middle-class society, intelligent, educated, and ambitious. This conflict is a fundamental burden in developing their relationship. That is why her children become her first concern. Her elder son, William, is a better substitute for his father, whom Mrs. Morel loves a lot. After his death, his place is taken by her second son, Paul, the protagonist of the novel. Paul's relationship with his mother is much more intimate than with his father. They are not involved in any physical relation, but their psychological bond develops like that of a husband and wife. Mrs. Morel finds spiritual comfort and satisfaction in Paul. Meanwhile, she blocks communication between Paul and his father. Influenced by Mrs. Morel, Paul regards his father as brutal and savage. Her personal abnormal affection for Paul is the direct factor for Paul's Oedipus complex. In order to occupy Paul's whole soul, she says to Paul, "I have never—you know Paul—I have had a husband" (Lawrence, 1913). Othman's analysis shows how these narrative techniques represent individual consciousness and reflect the Modernist ethos of questioning fixed identities, societal norms, and perceptions of time, thereby transforming the English novel into a medium for deep psychological and philosophical exploration (Othman, 2014)

Afterward, because of the abnormal feeling of his mother, he cannot accept Miriam's love, though he loves her. He does not want to hurt his mother, and to be loyal to her, he rejects Miriam's love. Further, the same pattern occurs with Clara. Clara is a woman who seeks security from a strong man. But Paul is afraid of marriage, thinking that if he marries Clara, then he won't be able to give proper attention to his mother. Paul cannot communicate with other women because of his inner conflicts. Indeed, Paul is nurtured by his mother in such a way that's why such kinds of conflicts and psychological problems are created in Paul's mind that

bring miseries in his personal life (Lawrence, 1913). Thus, Paul becomes a vivid representation of the Oedipus Complex, where his mother functions as a catalyst for his psychological conflicts. As Chourasia (2019) argues that Paul's strong emotional bond with his mother eventually hinders his ability to develop healthy romantic relationships with other women, illustrating the well-known Freudian conflict.

However, upon deeper reflection, it can be surmised that the root of this tragedy lies in the forces of capitalism and industrialization. Industrial civilization makes Mr. Morel a coal miner, and being a coal miner, he has to spend a significant amount of time in the mines, which influences his mind and makes him an arrogant person, and he is unable to make a better relationship with his wife, Mrs. Morel. This leads to the breakdown of human nature, creating a communication gap between Mr. Morel and Mrs. Morel, ultimately resulting in Paul's psychological conflicts. As Childs (2007) argues, modernist texts often critique how industrial and imperial systems undermine individual agency and interpersonal relationships. In *Sons and Lovers*, Paul Morel's emotional struggle reflects this tension, shaped by an industrial order that fractures family dynamics and personal identity. John Smith (1998) also observes, "Lawrence vividly portrays how the dehumanizing effects of industrialization disrupt familial bonds and contribute to profound psychological turmoil" (Smith, 1998, p. 128). In *Sons and Lovers* (1913), D.H. Lawrence reveals how industrial civilization affects human psychology, nature, and behavior. Thus, psychological issues and conflicts become the main concerns of this novel, hampering Paul's personal life.

Secondly, *Mrs. Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf also deals with the psychological issues and conflicts of Clarissa Dalloway, the protagonist of the novel. Virginia Woolf portrays the stream of consciousness, internal conflict, and isolation in the character of Clarissa Dalloway. The human mind is constantly at work, with a continual flow of thoughts occurring during moments of leisure, a phenomenon known as stream of consciousness. This concept addresses our inner or psychological time, allowing the mind to shift easily between the past, present, and future. Similarly, individuals often engage in an interior monologue, reflecting on various thoughts and people within their minds. As John Smith (2010, p. 37) notes, "Woolf masterfully employs the stream of consciousness technique to illuminate the fragmented and fluid nature of human thought".

The action of the novel *Mrs. Dalloway* is confined within a narrow framework of a single day in the life of the protagonist, Mrs. Clarissa Dalloway. All the actions are framed in a single place, London, and emotionally to the relations of Mrs. Dalloway with a few other characters. The action of the novel is mainly presented through the minds of these few people. As the mind ranges without limitations of time and space, the novel deals with the past of its characters more than with the present of its single day. Mrs. Clarissa Dalloway is the central point, and all the actions revolve around her. (Woolf, 1925).

In the narrative of the novel, Clarissa goes out into a London street to buy flowers for her evening party. However, the reader actually joins her as the narrative shifts into her mind, returning to her girlhood in Bourton, away from London, where she recalls meeting Peter Walsh. Through her memories, we encounter scenes from the London morning; we see her next-door neighbor Scrope Purvis, her friend Hugh Whitbread, her husband Richard Dalloway, her daughter Elizabeth, Miss Doris

Kilman, her girlhood friend Sally Seton, and again, Peter Walsh. Then, the narrative shifts outward to an external incident: the backfiring of a motor car engine in Bond Street (Woolf, 1925).

The personality of Mrs. Dalloway is presented with a fullness and intricacy that is rare in fiction. Clarissa was in love with Peter Walsh, but she rejected him and married Richard Dalloway. Marrying Richard leads us to a psychological issue concerning Mrs. Dalloway. The human soul craves love, wants to love and be loved, and at the same time, it hankers after freedom, liberty, and independence. Peter was a busy politician, and he could not give her enough time; his love was also possessive and dominating. He would not give her any freedom, whereas Richard allows her to have her own "attic room." Such kind of thinking creates inner conflict in Clarissa's mind, so she cannot marry Peter. There is a constant tension between love and individual freedom in the human. The novel *Mrs. Dalloway* studies this psychological antithesis between love and spiritual freedom (Woolf, 1925).

Clarissa also suffers from schizophrenic psychosis. She is much more upset about the war. She repeatedly thought about the destruction of war. She says, "She felt somehow very like him the young man who had killed himself. She felt glad that he had done it; thrown it away... He made her feel the beauty; made her feel the fun. But she must go back. She must assemble." (Woolf, 1925, p. 186). This speech of Clarissa Dalloway reveals her inner monologue, reflecting on life, death, and the effects of war, especially in the context of Septimus's suicide, which deeply affects her. As Othman (2014) points out how these authors subvert linear narrative forms to create fragmented and multilayered portrayals of character psychology and temporality. For instance, he notes that Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* illustrate her approach to blending the internal and external worlds of characters through narrative fluidity, providing an "all-embracing consciousness." Clarissa thinks that she is well and healthy, but the doctor says that she is not healthy. Thus, she becomes isolated. Although she appears to the people around her to be emotionally shallow, she reveals her inner turmoil when she is alone. She is coming around an illness in her heart, which could be the manifestation of her "buried psychic pain" (Woolf, 1925, p. 150). Thus, the novel, *Mrs. Dalloway*, effectively portrays the key features of the modern novel such as stream of consciousness, interior monologue, isolation, suffering, mental illness, and psychological conflict through the experiences of its protagonist, Clarissa Dalloway.

In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, James Joyce, like the other two authors, also draws the internal conflicts and psychological struggles of the protagonist, Stephen Dedalus, which revolve around themes such as love and art, art and beauty, religion and aesthetics, ethics and hypocrisy, and the tension between self and society. Singh (2014) examines how these internal conflicts particularly the dichotomies of love versus art, religion versus aesthetics, and self- versus societal expectations are pivotal to understanding Stephen's psychological turmoil. Joyce's depiction of Stephen's efforts to balance his aspirations with the demands of society reflects Singh's assertion that both Joyce and Lawrence explore the intricate psychological and emotional conflicts faced by their protagonists.

As a semi-autobiographical novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* introduces the concept of stream of consciousness, offering a glimpse into Stephen's inner thoughts on religion, individual consciousness, sensations, and

perceptions. Through this innovative narrative style, Joyce captures the complexities of Stephen's evolving identity, making the novel a profound exploration of human consciousness and existential struggle. In this novel, the protagonist, Stephen Dedalus, is a revolutionary hero of Ireland who breaks through the restrictions of family, church, and nation to shape his destiny according to his inner thoughts. He overcomes the limitations of his culture and environment and soars into a higher realm. From childhood, Stephen was very imaginative, unlike other children. He was somewhat different than others. Through his different phases of life, he has learned the core factor of human behavior. He has successfully understood his own "soul" or "self." At the beginning stage, he was confined by the constructed ideas of society, family, religion, state, and politics. He was egotistical and did not share anything while speaking with his classmates or others. He takes everything seriously; therefore, the geopolitical issues of Ireland make him sensitive. Ireland was not an independent nation, as it was dominated by England. Stephen thought Ireland never deserved freedom, as it liked to eat its own furrows. England dominated them in agricultural issues. That's why, from his childhood, he hated politics (Joyce, 2003).

In the late 19th century, the government of the state was Protestant, and he was from a Catholic family. Such religious diversity creates hatred in his mind towards religion. At the age of 14, he went to a brothel and suffered from the lamentation of sins. Then he attended a church where a priest created fear in his mind of God's punishment. The priest told him to seek forgiveness from God. After being admitted to Dublin University, he visited the beach, where he saw some beautiful and attractive girls. These girls attracted his eyes and aroused his sensual desire. Thus, a great epiphany (sudden realization of something) happens to him, and he realizes or discovers his inner soul (Rahman, 2015, p. 33). Moreover, he could realize that religion is not for him and could understand the hypocrisy of the Church. After that, what society thinks of him no longer matters to him. The important aspect was his inner desires, and for that reason, he rejects the Church. By portraying the character of Stephen, James Joyce represents sexuality as a positive way and discovers the hypocrisy of religion, politics, the state, and so on. It is a kunstlerroman novel through which the protagonist Stephen develops himself from naive to maturity stage (Rahman, 2015, p. 95).

Stephen Dedalus's internal conflict is not merely spiritual or artistic but also post-colonial, as he struggles against the cultural weight of British imperialism and Catholic orthodoxy. He believes outsiders cannot dominate them; Romans cannot control their religion. That's why his countrymen condemn him, and he leaves the country. As Peter Childs (2007) observes, modernist texts often interact with empire by exploring the identity crises caused by colonial structures. Stephen's famous declaration, "I will not serve" reflects not only personal rebellion but also an anti-colonial posture, situating his artistic awakening within the broader modernist project of dismantling inherited ideologies.

This novel portrays the agony of the artist and his struggle to free himself. For this, he has to rebel against the authenticity of contemporary Ireland family, nationality, and religion. He has to struggle for his art career and to keep his identity in a hostile environment. He thinks that art deals with beauty. To realize the nature of beauty, we need to realize the frame and scope of the imagination. Art is the expression of universal beauty. It deals with life, and it is as wide as life itself. The

artist is a creator of objective truth and beauty. In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, the protagonist, Stephen Dedalus, experiences an intense internal conflict as he struggles to free himself from the constraints of his family, nationality, and religion. His rebellion against these forces is crucial for his artistic development. Singh (2014, p. 56) opines that "his pursuit of individuality is ruthless, and it is this pursuit which shatters the collective ties to family, nation and religion." This desire for artistic freedom and self-definition is also linked to Stephen's understanding of art. For Stephen, art represents the expression of beauty, and this is the realm of the imagination where he seeks to discover his own soul, and in doing so, connects with the universal beauty of life. He sees art as having three forms: lyrical, epical, and dramatic, each contributing to the expression of objective truth and beauty (Singh, 2014). This understanding allows Stephen to transcend the limitations imposed by his environment and to claim his identity as an artist.

Conclusion

The modern period witnessed the disintegration of 19th-century values and the emergence of new paradigms, particularly influenced by industrial civilization, scientific advancements, and the growing interest in human psychology, which is evident in *Sons and Lovers*, *Mrs. Dalloway*, and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, as these works demonstrate the psychological struggles and internal conflicts of the protagonists. Undoubtedly, D.H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, and James Joyce successfully capture the profound insights into human nature, a significant trait of 20th-century literature. Each of the protagonists of these novels deals with psychological turmoil, for instance, Paul Morel in *Sons and Lovers* struggles with his Oedipal attachment to his mother and his romantic embarrassments; Clarissa Dalloway in *Mrs. Dalloway* faces existential crises and the haunting fragments of trauma; and Stephen Dedalus in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* seeks to transcend the restraints of religion, family, and society in his quest for self-expression, autonomy, and freedom.

These novels, through their exploration of the characters' psychological landscapes, address the complexities of identity, behavior, and internal conflict, making them archetypal works of modernist fiction, leading to the fact that modern narrative techniques reveal a broader observation of the human condition, embodying the tensions between societal expectations and the pursuit of personal freedom. The application of psychoanalytic theory and modernist narrative techniques throughout this study thus substantiates that these works serve as critical representations of the fragmented self within the disoriented modern world.

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