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Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

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Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages
Department of English



Modern British Literature Course

For
Master One Students
Major: English
Option: Literature and Civilisation

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Course identification

Domain: **Letters and Foreign Languages**

Major: **English Language**

Level: **Master 1**

Option: **Literature and Civilisation**

Academic Year: **2022/2023**

Module: **Modern British Literature**

Course Description

Modern British Literature Course introduces Master One students to the twentieth century British literature. Because of the unstable meanings provided by the British identity and geographical associations with the English language, the course highlights the different aspects of the literary production provided mainly by British authors in this era, namely works framed by Modernism. In particular, the course captures the transformative nature of British literature, with regard to the twentieth century, especially its opening years.

Main Course Objective

The course seeks to investigate the interplay between literature and history in the British context. It aims at raising the student's awareness *vis-à-vis* the importance of Modern British Literature as a determinant body of literary production and an active agent of cultural excellence. Moreover, by comprehending and applying the given content, the student becomes ready to interpret the literary works belonging to the modern era.

Secondary Course Objectives

The course aims also at fulfilling the following secondary objectives:

- Highlighting the historical backgrounds of modern British literature.
- Improving students' understanding of the development of British literature.
- Spotting the turning points in British cultural history.
- Enhancing students' critical reading skills.
- Motivating students to appreciate literature.
- Synthesising and describing important historical events, with regard to modern British literature.
- Understanding the specific context of related literary works.
- Characterising influential thinkers and authors.
- Comprehending the core literary concepts, related to modern British literature.
- Characterising artworks.
- Distinguishing major representative artworks.
- Analysing literary production.

Schedule

One session of 01h30 per week, 12 to 15 weeks per semester.

Evaluation

Students will sit in-class examination on semestrial basis.

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Required Texts:

- *A Passage to India (1924)*
- *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1916)*
- *A Room of One's Own (1929)*
- *Dubliners (1914)*
- *Heart of Darkness (1899)*
- *Mrs Dalloway (1925)*
- *The Waste Land (1922)*
- *To The Lighthouse (1927)*
- *Ulysses (1922)*

Course Requirement:

- In-Class learning, through discussion.
- Home learning and online interactivity.
- Tasks and Research projects.
- Writing projects.

Semester 1: Toward Modernism in British Literature

Lecture 1. A Prelude to Modern British Literature Course

Modern British Literature course provides focused highlights on the literary production of British writers in modern era, namely the defining moment of its genesis that featured eminent authors and playwrights such as Thomas Hardy, Joseph Conrad, Joseph Rudyard Kipling, John Millington Synge, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, and T.S. Eliot among others (See Figure 1). Despite the discrepancies over the denomination of what could be defined as a modern era, the course takes a cultural approach to read and interpret the literary texts written in English, namely by the subjects of the then British empire around the period when the Empire was at its zenith. Literature in this context is not only about the stylistics of writing but is all about the significance that could be engendered from the content of different literary genres in question, including prose fiction and poetry. Thus, as Hudson (2015) writes, “Literature is a vital record of what men have seen in life, what they have experienced of it, what they have thought and felt about those aspects of it which have the most immediate and enduring interest for all of us” (p. 12). More importantly, the course takes as premise the empowerment of the student’s critical thinking over questions related to history, namely that of Britain and the English speaking world for “literature regularly asks questions about history and about the processes by which historical knowledge and understanding are shaped” (Poplawski, 2020, p. xv).

At the turn of the twentieth century, the British Empire reached its zenith, not only militarily or economically, but in all aspects of life, including art and literature in particular. The major factor that led to such state is the great advances in industry as a result of the industrial revolution taking place in the country for more than a century by then. Despite the fact that the class structure of society was still stable and solid, the

emergence of nouveaux riches has launched a tendency toward some change in society. Meanwhile, the Church kept a significant authority over a population that believed in the power of God and thus respected the institutions that served His religion. A number of feminist activists began their endeavour to call for the right to vote, but still they were looked at as non-conformists (Black, 2015, p. 1769).

Timeline

Historical and Social Events

London–Paris telephone system opened

1891

Ascension of Edward VII

1901

Abbey Theatre founded in Dublin (1904)

Ascension of George V

1910

World War I begins

1914

Easter Rising in Dublin (1916)

Russian Revolution (1917)

Literary Events

Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*

Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* and Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895)

Stoker's *Dracula* (1897)

Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899)

Kipling's *Kim*

Doyle's *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1902)

Synge's *Playboy of the Western World* (1907)

Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* (1913)

Joyce's *Dubliners*

Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916)

Eliot's *Prufrock* (1917)

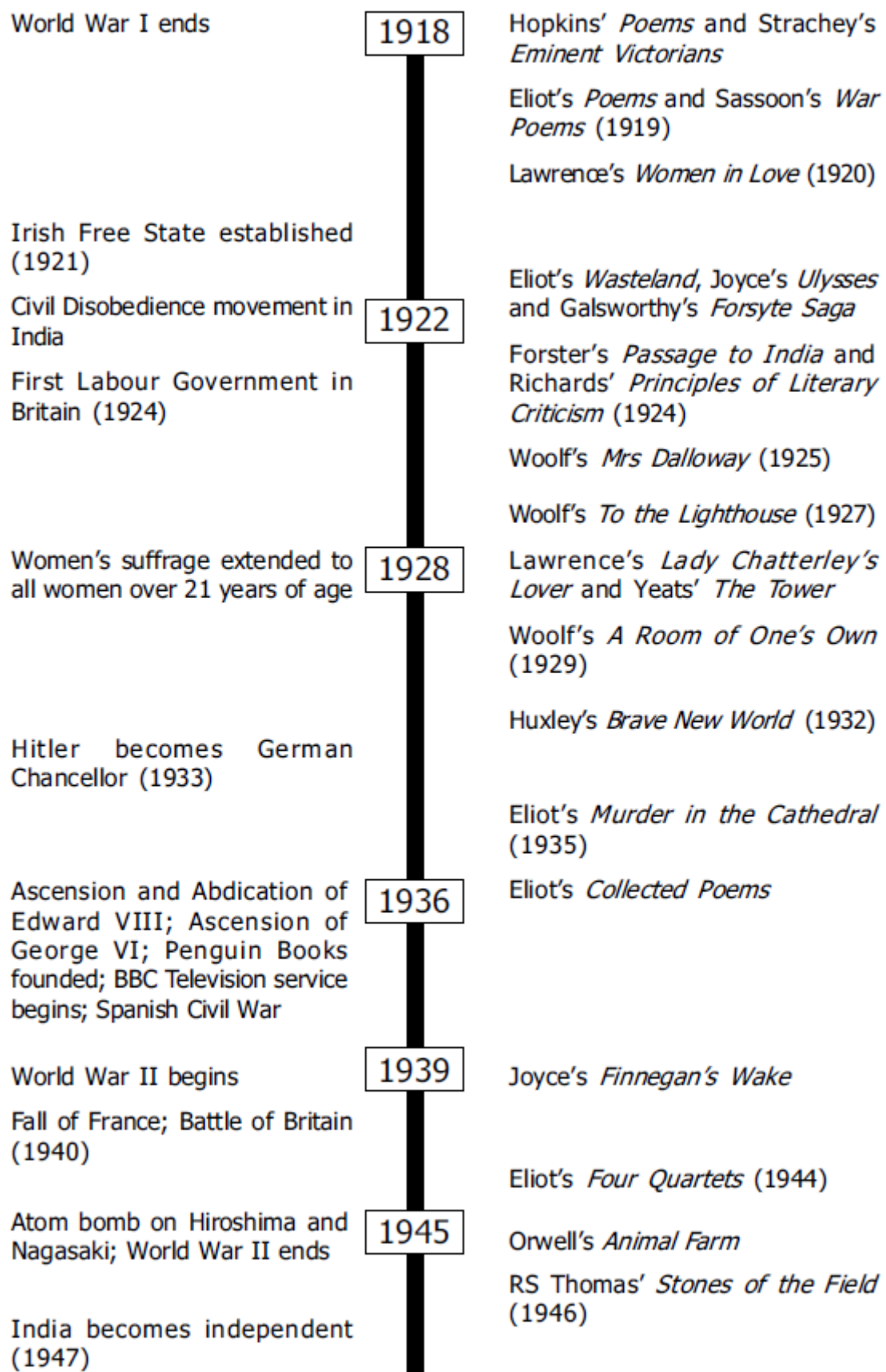


Figure 1. The Modern Age. Nayar (2009, pp. 293-296)

With the beginning of the twentieth century, Britain launches the new era with phenomenal changes starting with the death of Queen Victoria in 1901. At the moment when everyone knew no other monarch but her existence at the top of the country's not only political institutions but also as a cultural model that stand for real conservatism. With her death and her son's Edward VII taking the throne, many feared the transfer of the latter's beliefs and vision to life from the private to the public life. The new king was by no means conservative as his mother was (Chin & Wolfe, 2002, p. 910).

Beside the loss of old beliefs and manners of life, external unrest swept over Europe and the rest of the world in the image of WWI, known then as The Great War. Britain was directly affected as a major player in world events. Defending its remote territories and allies made it involved directly. Such involvement made the country receive the impact of war at different levels that spend from economic to social and cultural dimensions.

Keywords

British Empire; Queen Victoria; Industrial Revolution; The Great War; British culture.

Lecture 2. Culture and Society in early Twentieth Century Britain

Pre-lecture discussion

- What art forms endeavoured to portray the British cultural transition toward the new age at the turn of twentieth century?
- What art genres are generally viewed as higher arts?
- Based on what can we establish a hierarchy of arts?

Lecture content

The era which Modern British Literature module addresses is one of massive controversy and debate. If for some historians the turn of the twentieth century displayed the transformation of British society and culture from one associated with strength and success to one of decline and retreat, for other observers such period did just the opposite. That is to say, the period exhibits controversies in the likes of whether the early opening years of the twentieth century sealed the fate of Victorian culture with all what it represents in terms of stability and cultural triumph or they propelled the country to modernity as another way of continuous trend of progress. A number of texts including Martin Wiener's *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850–1980* and W. D. Rubinstein's *Capitalism, Culture, and Decline in Britain, 1750–1990*, Martin Wiener's *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit* (Daly, 1999). What could be noticed within such discourse of cultural evaluation is that British culture has always been defined by the factor of continuity. Thus, the twentieth century's opening years raised the question whether modernity could indeed be embraced by society or not. Literature was no exception when it comes to the reflection of such contradictions. Beyond that basic concern British artists and writers went beyond the reflection of matters of manners to the layer of thinking and theory. Names in the likes of James Joyce and Virginia Woolf provide such image of Britain as the cradle of invention and transformation not only in economy and politics but also in art and literature. In line with this trend, such writers who took the umbrellas of theorist refuted the claim that British society imbeds within opposition to modernity. The transition to the new era invoked the need for adaptation to the new circumstances in different arenas of social, economic and political delimiters. British intellectuals came up with their own means to cross to the new period, using their scientifically minded capacities. Art and literature received such

tendency in a subtle manner in which different disciplines were integrated to the thought and writing of avant-garde writers who opened the way wide-open to a whole generation of elite artists to experiment in style and form. At this point of the British literary development science met art only to constitute a reactionary wave of literary production that impressed not only readers but critics also. In many ways, experimentation in art pushed the literary expression to its limits both in style and content. Not necessarily all the British society received with acceptance such new wave of thinking and expression. Despite their decline, social institutions in the image of the Church and family challenged change and made it hard for the modernists to settle their way of thinking, with regard to the different participants at other ends of the literary process of creativity. Thus, many editors and publishers rejected the new literary outcomes of those who embraced or promoted the modernist writing. Figures like James Joyce who were to become the epitome of such new style of writing faced severe opposition that led them to suffer from ban procedures or even arrest for breaking the rules or not abiding by certain social norms. A work such as *Ulysses* had to wait for many years to be accepted for publication.

Keywords

Cultural Decline, Victorianism; social resistance; challenge; creativity.

Post-lecture Task

- Provide more samples on the debate on cultural continuity versus change in British context.

Lecture 3. The Edwardian Poetry

Pre-lecture discussion

- What art forms endeavoured to portray the British cultural transition toward the new age at the turn of twentieth century?
- What art genres are generally viewed as higher arts?
- Based on what can we establish a hierarchy of arts?

Lecture content

The end of the Victorian Age coincided with coming of the new age at the turn of the twentieth century. Yet among the marking figures in poetry such as Thomas Hardy inverted the expectations of ascribing themselves to the nineteenth century as the majority of their works and lives belonged to the period. That is their works took the flavour of the new age. Because of his harsh criticism of social and cultural manifestation of this very period, especially his attack on morality in his novel *Jude The Obscure* (1895), Hardy found refuge in his poetry (Blamires, 1986, p. 9).

From 1904 through 1908, Hardy wrote his epic prose and poetry *The Dynasts*. For him the work represents an epic account for the war with Napoleon. Thus, we can see how Hardy's work entails a look back into the past events that marked the history of Europe. Not only the work chronicles for the war, but it resorts to some personification of powers, obstacles, and intelligences that he resembles to the spirits. Thus, in this view, Napoleon's intelligence was defeated by some more powerful spirits, leading to his retreat from Moscow (Blamires, 1986, p. 9).

Hardy's verse displays magnitude in style that imbeds feeling and thought in a remarkable way, a thing that we do not face in concurrent poetry elsewhere. In some ways such poetry presents some hints to experimentation in metrical form and

imbedded stress instances. A rich list of poem production include *Wessex Poems* (1898), *Poems of the Past and the Present* (1902), *Time's Laughing-stocks* (1909), *Satires of Circumstance* (1914), *Moments of Vision* (1917), *Late Lyrics and Eariæfer* (1922), *Human Shows, Far Fantasies* (1925), and *Winter Words* (1928) (Blamires, 1986, p. 9). With some similarities with previous poetry the natural world is exquisitely described with some criticism to human nature.

Not surprisingly, the best of Hardy's production came in early twentieth century for for the period's peculiar context, but for one event that marked his personal life. The death of his wife, Emma, in 1912 represented a pulsating event that brought to the surface his hidden memories and reminiscences. Early emotions of love that marked his marital life constituted a sharp contrast with the sorrows of the alienation he felt as they retreated to solitude (Blamires, 1986, p. 9).

For some critics, Hardy is highly regarded as the authentic English poet who knew how to merged respect to the form with individual vision and stance. Moreover, his acknowledged directness in style demonstrated his remarkable individualistic perspective that in a way joins him to the then rising modernist inclination in art and poetry in particular. Hardy's directness is arguably regarded as the ultimate English poetic tradition of the century (Blamires, 1986, p. 10).

Despite the praise received for the magnitude of his poems, Hardy as a poet faced the impact of the changing taste. Readers have started actually moving from affinity with philosophical and epic poetry. Probably they were not that ready to the movement that was to revive interest in old traditions but in a completely different manner. Change has always been received in a difficult manner. Hardy's efforts did not go without reward. For the very reason that a number of poets followed him in tradition. C. M. Doughty known for his travels to Arabia through his *Travels in Arabia*

Deserta in 1888, wrote also the epic of *The Dawn in Britain* (1906) (Blamires, 1986, p. 10).

Robert Bridge followed Hardy in terms of his coverage of two centuries in terms of literary traditions. He also knew how to leave a whole century behind as he moved from the previous century's short poet to one that is epic in nature and marked with some experimentation in rhyme and metrical. Basically, the rhyme is ironically one that is devoid of its essence of conformity. Therefore, the verse is built on alexandrines—i.e., six iambic feet verse (Blamires, 1986, p. 11).

In his endeavour to reconcile science with religion Noyes marked himself with his three-volume epic *The Torch-Bearers* (1922, 1925, 1930). Thus, despite his prior ballad style poems such as *The Highway Man* which introduced him to schools as a helping illustration to learn poetry, he succeeded to a large extent to establish the transition from the nineteenth century thinking to the new age. In a way his poems which relied on blank verse represented not just portraits but studies of distinct science pillars such as Newton, Galileo, Kepler, and Copernicus (Blamires, 1986, p. 11).

Keywords

Reminiscence; Thomas Hardy; Science; Religion.

Post-lecture Task

- Along the mentioned poets in the lecture find about two other important contributors to modern British poetry.

Lecture 4. The Edwardian Novel

Pre-lecture discussion

- Did the novel follow poetry in terms of the transitional features?
- If poetry exhibited cultural transition through form and philosophical framework, how could the novel fulfil such role?
- Who represented best the Edwardian period in terms of the novel genre?

Lecture content

In the image of British poets, novelists also reflected Britain's transition from what we might refer within the context of this module as Old World to the new age.¹ As an empire Britain had inspired a number of authors to reflect the impressive reality one nation can witness as a symbolic power that rules the world. For instance, Henry James the American born English writer took it on his own to witness how the empire and its subjects live and view life. His long visit to India made him ready to write with a kind of nostalgia to the old world and its manners. Yet, the writer began a new tradition of experimentation that made him almost compared to Virginia Woolf in terms of his writing techniques, namely the stream of consciousness (Blamires, 1986, p. 18). James, therefore, illustrates hints on the shaping of modern cultural trends in Britain that involved a vivid sense of selfhood and awareness of matters of identity as a person who transcended the meanings of citizenship to thoughtful visions with universal appeal. His mastery of the stream of consciousness as a technique illustrates his awareness of the psychological dimensions of literary expression. His awareness shows his endorsement of the scientific method, namely experimentation. If previously the British authors tended to be more conservative and enclosed on themselves,

¹ See previous lectures on the period that launched Britain into Modernity.

disregarding other cultures and contexts. Such new tendency that James and others launched provided a new cultural beginning in which British literature embraced the new realities in the making in different parts of the world, namely the parts in which Britain had a major influence. Places like India and America inspired writers to get involved not only in chronicling the daily life of British citizens but also questioning the old ways of looking to the world.

In contrast to the fixed reality of the old world, the turn of the twentieth century demarked itself with a new tendency that opened venues for transition and movement. The displacement not only of the object of literary investigation but also of the author himself manifested itself in the writings of Henry James. Through his memories in England, France, and Italy new visions have merged to look at the world through different perspectives where the cultural life imposed previously by the empire ceded place to a modern sensitivity to the human condition. In his *The Ambassadors* (1903) an intimate visiting to marital life explored in a deep manner how the new world interacts with the old one (Blamires, 1986, p. 17). With his reference to marriage between characters from the two sides of the Atlantic, James broke the limitations of the empirical understanding of the nation's subjects. More importantly, James referred heavily to the old world as a decadent one, alluding to the assumption that Western civilization whether in Britain or America is crossing to a new world that is innocent by nature. Whether such claim was true or not was a debatable question in that human nature made the world be directed to unprecedented conflicts in the years to come.

The theme of marriage with all the complexities that it involves continues to find room in other novels by Henry James only to establish other links between Britain and America. Such links override the geographical distance to the benefit of the natural bounds between the old world and the new one. In *The Wings of The Dove*

(1902) a triangular relationship connects an English woman, her countryman lover, and an American woman (Blamires, 1986, p. 17). Beyond new vision of Western culture, especially the Anglo-Saxon, as a new replacement to the old limitation of the empire which excluded and even undermined its remote corners' social and cultural varieties, complex dimensions of human relationships began to take hold of the essence of Henry James's text.

The magnitude of Henry James's influence touched upon another figure that was to shape English literature. Like him, Joseph Conrad was also a polish-born who, as an orphaned, moved both physically and culturally to the British context. And like most great authors who marked the history of literature, his life was rich with travel and expertise in different fields of life. As a sailor who travelled to the heart of Africa within the colonial context, he proved to be a tough fighter of the circumstances to which a man can be implemented. Throughout his travel journeys which extended over twenty years, he built up a strong character with rich cultural diversity. At the turn of the twentieth century, he authored his first novel *Almayer's Folly* (1895). Fostering the idea on the importance of marriage as a cultural link establisher, Conrad's marriage makes him settle in England in which he embraced the culture of the country and gradually mastered the language to the extent he found no difficulty in joining force with Ford Madox Ford in a unified professional endeavour. Among this, we find *The Inheritors* (1901) and *Romance* (1903). Both works heavily demonstrated the affinities not just with Henry James but also with French authors likes Flaubert and Maupassant and Russian Turgenev (Blamires, 1986, p. 17). Such influence fosters again the idea of the fading of boundaries between cultures to the benefit of a universal perspective.

Conrad is therefore credited not just for the magnitude of his language and depth of social criticism, but for the outcome of his joint effort with Ford in terms of

the novel's structure, namely the building of the plot. If for the nineteenth century novel, the plot followed life in pattern, especially in terms of the logical transition that go in a linear manner that forms Freytag's pyramid (See Figure 2), Conrad's writing focused more on the crucial facts about such life. While the previous period, resorting to authoritative narrators, exhibited a direct manner of addressing matters of life, Conrad's took an indirect approach that calls for the reader's attentiveness and innate interpretive competence. (Blamires, 1986, p. 17).

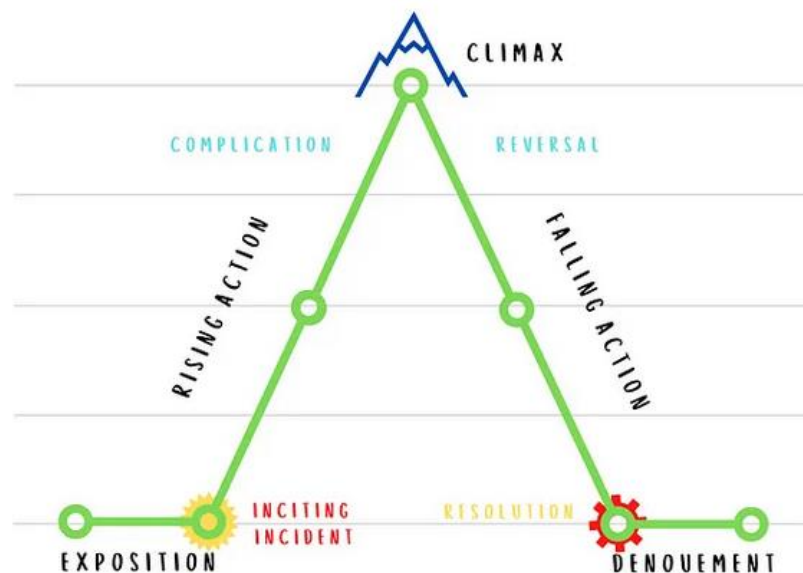


Figure 2. Freytag's Pyramid. Marsiglio (2021a)

Keywords

Displacement; Henry James.

Post-lecture Task

- Do some readings on the Edwardian period and check whether other authors had similar effects, with regard to those exhibited by Henry James and Joseph Conrad, on modern British literature?

- Did the British authors exhibit any sort of nostalgia to the British culture prior to the turn of the twentieth century?

Lecture 5. Impressionism and Modernity

Pre-lecture discussion

- Did realism have any contender to the representation of the modern reality in Britain and Europe in general?
- With Britain's moving toward modernity, how did art attempt to capture such new reality?

Lecture content

The transition of European society to modernity empowered and inspired artists to find new means to approach reality. While realist artists attempted to account for reality in an ordered manner with a focus on its contiguous nature, avant-gardists, namely in France, took another direction of artistic representation. Mostly, they observed that realism is no longer capable of capturing the new reality in the making. That is, the modern life is far complex to be described in a linear way as to capture events in a chronological order. Such new wave of artist, later to be called impressionists, focused more on the subjective experience of life, taking into consideration its fragmented nature. Reality is no longer unified or universal, but rather appreciated in an individualized manner. The artist, therefore attempts to capture reality around him and represent it exactly as it impacts his senses. New shades of colours have become available with the scientific advances and inventions (See Figure 3). More opportunities of capturing reality through its manifestation in nature have been made possible through the mobility of the artist to the open spaces (Bowler, 2016, p. 19).

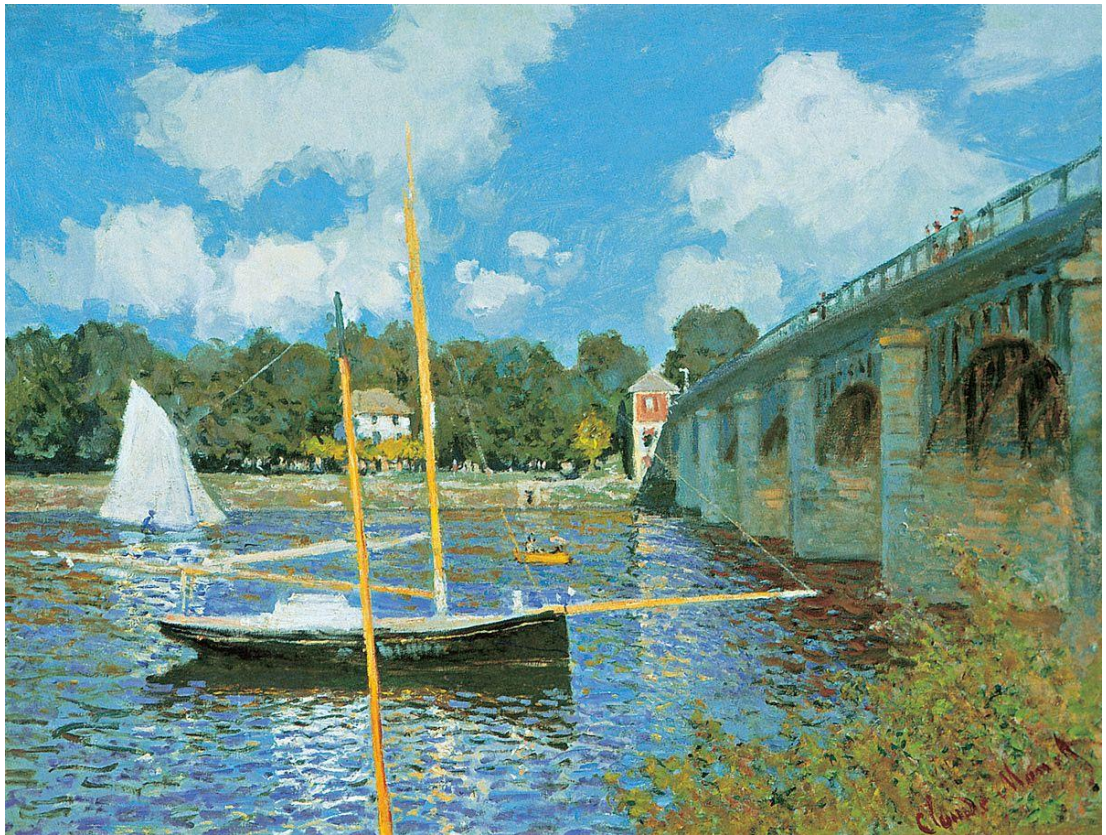


Figure 3. Brodskaja (2018). *The Bridge at Argenteuil*

The main British writers who embraced what has come to be known as literary Impressionism were Ford Madox Ford and Dorothy Richardson. Their main influence was Henry James, who for them exemplified best the way literature should aim at representing life as experience through his notions of the extraordinary reality, as the sense evoked or felt out of reading a work of fiction, and his modernist vision to subjectivity. Henry James actually not just defined to a large extent the new modernist tradition in writing, but he was of paramount importance in paving the way to most of British and American writers to cross to the new era. His works highlighted reality as experienced and manifest the status of decadence as experimented by the old establishment in society. Illustrations of James's style appear in Richardson's works in a direct manner. In her novel *Pilgrimage* the protagonist Miriam's affinity with the

Ambassadors, James's masterpiece, is explicitly portrayed. The focus is in the way Miriam admires the book she is reading, namely its innovative style (Bowler, 2016, p. 21).

Keywords

Chronology; Extraordinary reality; Subjective experience.

Post-lecture Task

Provide a few illustrations on the direct influence of Henry James's on Ford Madox Ford.

Lecture 6. Visual Metaphors in Modern Fiction

Pre-lecture discussion

- Often imagery is important to literary representation. How is it linked with the modernist perspective?
- Since modernism had interest in individual perception, how was this manifested in literature?

Lecture content

Literature boasts a manifest power of representation that made it capable of embracing the impressionists concern over the inner workings of the mind, with regard to the impression left by different kinds of imagery. With metaphors, literature could easily address questions of images, interpretation, and impressions. Actually, the impressionists move from the object of art to the workings of the mind were not a pure twentieth century phenomenon, but it went as early as 1888, when Friedrich Nietzsche proclaimed the importance of the individualistic phenomenology of knowing and seeing. In early twentieth century, Edmund Husserl pushed forward Nietzsche's ideas as he explored the phenomenology of the mind. His work *Logical Investigation*

evoked the hidden processes within the mind, including consciousness and experience and the way they are expressed both to the self and to the other. Language finds its prestigious place as a means to convert the inner experiences to comprehensive ideas and feelings (Bowler, 2016, p. 93).

In literature American expatriate to London H.D. (Hilda Doolittle) and Dorothy Richardson were much interested in turning the ideas proposed by Edmund Husserl and Friedrich Nietzsche into visual metaphors. Both authors endeavoured to use the visual metaphors in literature as means for the representation of the process of converting the world as “sight” into individual experience as “seen”. For Nietzsche, the perception of reality means its transformation into a material form that simplifies and puts objects into scheme-like images. Based on this, both writers showed more interest in the process of encoding one’s interaction with reality into experience through their literary art, namely its impressionist trend. In works like *Palimpsest* and *Bid Me to Live*, H.D. transformed the quest for world and the self into a form of visual interaction marked on papyrus (an ancient paper used to imprint memories) (Bowler, 2016, p. 94). Experimentation in literary representation appears to be the only means to extend further on visual interactions as a replacement to the heavy reliance on language. Dorothy Richardson resorted to such modernist aspect as to make the balance between the inner and external worlds of her characters. In her *Pilgrimage*, the central character Miriam Henderson devotes time and interest to paintings and portrayal turning. Deliberately the writer shows how humans can recreate the world within their minds as imprints that may or may not last, depending on the daily experience, either engraving or erasing such perceptions. The complexity of life and its fragmentary nature could therefore be captured through the juxtaposition of images. Moreover, the social reality is perceived through the acting of the members of society

as a social performance. Thus, the perceived images and their literary representation replaces the old descriptive narratives. Seeing and re-seeing becomes one of the techniques that could enable the writer to embrace the complexity of reality through the juxtaposition not only of images, but the multitude of viewpoints. Often the two authors painted their characters in the fashion of the cubists who made the object of art function in a 3D like style. In such way, the narrative recreated the world scenes through different perspectives, each one adds to the reader's mental record of the sight in question. Thus, as illustrated in Figure 4, the artist has to portray the forms as actually perceived. In this regard Pablo Picasso stated: "I paint forms as I think of them, not as I see them" (as cited in Nelson, 2019). H.D. showed her fascination with the image's power of representation reality as she witnessed the rise of cinema as the seventh art. Despite the criticism against such art as one that entails laziness of interpretation, she made it clear that there is film art as opposed to mass-oriented cinema (Bowler, 2016, p. 95).



Figure 4 Pablo Picasso (1921). *Three Musicians*. In (Nelson, 2019)

Keywords

Phenomenology; imagery.

Post-lecture Task

- Can we dissociate the world from art?
- How can we relate the modernists' resort to biographies with the visual representation?

Lecture 7. Modernism: 1900-1945

Pre-lecture discussion

- Can we attribute a unified literary style to the studied authors so far?
- Under what rubrics can we attribute their shared orientations?

Lecture content

Making clear circumscription to the writers, who swerved from tradition in their early twentieth century writings, proves to be a difficult task to achieve. Authors like Joseph Conrad, Wyndham Lewis, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, D.H. Lawrence, and Catherine Mansfield. The same goes for a good number of authors from the other side of the Atlantic, with a good interaction with British and European culture as we mentioned in previous lectures. What really marks the mentioned figures is their experimentation with both style and content, with shared underlying tendency but with distinct individual execution of thinking and writing (Wolfreys, 2011, p. 120).

Following in pattern defining modernism as a movement which necessarily starts by defining the respective period presents also some difficulty as such canonical writers and their works span over a delicate period. The decline of the Victorian period matched the decline of traditional visions to art and literature and thus helped in

hinting to the beginning of a new era, not just at the levels of society, politics, but also at those of art and literature in particular. Thus, critics have come to delimit modernism by arbitrary years that actually mark some important events such as world wars (Wolfreys, 2011, p. 120).

Modernism, therefore, is more than a movement that included a set of authors as it is generally acknowledged by the voiced circles of criticism. At heart, it is an art and thought orientation that stemmed from a context rich in thought and experimenting drive. No wonder then, the end of the nineteenth century marked not just the end of Victorianism in Britain, but also the launch of modernity as we know it today. However, the British culture was not separate from the European context of progressive cultural movement. The influence of a number of theorists in the image of Sigmund Freud and Fredrik Nietzsche was and still widely recognized among the reasons that led to Britain's entry and development of the modernist thought. Known for their creative tendency, the British, including writers, found more motivation in embracing the new vibes and eventually started showing off their competences. Thus, figures like James Joyce and Virginia Woolf launched a new era in literary creative production. This was not at the level of the writing process but also at the layer of theory production.

As Wolfreys (2011) notes, Modernism could be explained through two rubrics of working spheres: aesthetic innovation and cultural and social politics. Standards such as the metres and rhymes have been dropped to the benefit of other means that help the reader take his journey of diving into the meanings of the text. It is no longer a question of following the poet's textual signs but it is up to the reader's awareness of the events and ideas alluded to within the text. This involves a cultural awareness of mythology and key defining elements of the culture in question. There is no debate

about Modernism involving newness, innovation, and destruction, but agreement upon one manifesto defining style and content remains unsolved. Remarks on pioneers and their different paths help somehow in understanding writers' rush toward the fulfilment of the slogan "make it new." Many writers therefore experimented in all aspects of the creative literary works with much focus on the form. While many works contributed with peculiar modernist ideas into such form, T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* came to become the quintessential modernist reading that any modernist scholar is required to fulfil. Such work made it possible to spot how ambiguity replaced clarity and how allusion overturned directness. Indecisiveness upon the style substitutes consistency. Modernism therefore attempted to defamiliarize and familiarise its object of art according to the writer's mastery of his subject not just through literary perspectives but with regard to an impressive cultural and historical awareness. Beside Eliot's remarkable novel visions to style, other not less in magnitude contributions were introduced by Ezra Pound and Hilda Doolittle. While they are American their contribution reached the whole literary hemisphere. Through imagism, they overturned the poetics relying on superfluous wording that seeks beautifying the text to the benefit of a minimalist style that takes the most of each and every word used, giving priority to meaning rather than the beauty of the form (Wolfreys, 2011, p. 121).

The modernist novel follows in pattern the complexity of the poem in terms of the narrative. In contrast to the realist novel that usually opens with the setting established in a clear manner, the modernist novel builds up another type of narrative in which the setting is a mental image that the reader can conceptualise out of the process of weaving the information generated from the characters' action (Wolfreys, 2011, p. 122).

The second rubric that could provide some explanation to modernism is the cultural and social politics. As literature necessarily manifests a vivid image of the social and political milieu it finds roots in, we could point out to the changing aspect that Britain and most of Europe were witnessing at the turn of the twentieth century. Some writers refused to embrace such change and felt that modernity and technology was endangering the human side of people's lives. Others looked at technology with an eye of hope and aspirations for progress. Machinery in this sense provided humanity with speed and extended potential. However, modernists showed experimentation and among this the discrepancy of opinions. In works like *The Ladybird*, D.H. Lawrence despised technology and perceived it as the counterpart of spirituality and the good nature of humanity (Wolfreys, 2011, p. 123).

Keywords

Innovation; experimentation; technology; transatlantic encounters.

Post-lecture Task

- Based on the interplay between poetry and prose, find out about other common features the two modernist forms manifest.
- Provide an example of a British modernist novel that demonstrates no clue of direct description to the setting.
- Through some illustrations, explain how the setting could be conceptualised out of characters' action.

Lecture 8. Modernist Changes in Content and Style

Pre-lecture discussion

- Since Modernism was not a merely literary movement, what aspects of literature were massively changed?

- What disciplines interfered in such process of transformation?

Lecture content

As Modernism landed in the intellectual and artistic spheres, all participants in art and intellectual spheres showed concern over what such movement called for. In literature, writers found venues to express their concerns firstly as humans in their art works. Literature moved steps closer to other forms of expression, namely visual ones. In the likes of painting, literary production attempted to capture the new worlds Modernism unveiled. The emergence of psychology, namely through the works of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung helped a great deal in paving the way into new dimensions of the psyche and the inner world of the characters who are basically real individual or referring to them in such new style of expression. Thus, it was clearly apparent in modernist works that writers such as James Joyce and Virginia Woolf were tracing pathways that differ completely with traditional writing. Such change appeared at two main layers. The first one was the cultural manifestations of the new era, being shaped with mechanisation and disciplines overriding religion. Based on these two shaping forces, individuals suffered new types of sources of agony that resulted in their lives being essentially fragmented and a style of life that makes every person lives a kind of personal imprisonment, fearing the other. The lack of values and decline of culture made people fell into the grips of depression and solitude. Researches made by Sigmund Freud made it possible to explore the inner worlds of individuals to dig into the new realities that former tools and methods could not even think about. Albert Einstein added to the sense of confusion his treatise on relativity. At philosophical levels, Friedrich Nietzsche sealed the fate of religion through his thesis "God is Dead." All such devised ideas made both writers and readers of literature look forward to interpret reality differently. Therefore, modernists used

further their experimental faculties to come up with new ways and means of expression that resulted in creative literary techniques. With such modern techniques, the core of the literary structure witnessed a colossal change in the plot, leading to a complete transformation of the literary works. While previously literature was all about the external plot, engendered through action, either by characters or transcendent forces, modernist works moved to essentially internal plot constructions. As such, the main concern of the artwork is how the individual looks from within to the world around him and more importantly to his own inner world. New devices were implemented to fulfil the new requirements such as the stream of consciousness—we will study in details in later lectures. Without much acceptance in the beginnings such device answered the need for a direct connection between the character and reader. The author concealed himself to the benefit of the process of interpretation readers were called to embrace. It is in this very instance that the writer could eventually succeed in calling for the need of individual awareness, an idea that Joyce ended up calling for. For some critics, modernists, in their call for thorough investigation into the pain one suffers as he faces external forces such as wars contribute further in the power of humans to dig into their unconscious world. As such, while such process may take forever to be achieved, dealing with the pain becomes even something desirable (Bajaj, 2017).

Keywords

Psychoanalysis; internal and external plots; interpretation; individuality.

Post-lecture Task

- Providing some illustrations, elaborate more on the way modernists revered pain as an inciter into awakening.

Lecture 9. The Modernists' Controversies over Form

Pre-lecture discussion

- The modernists were known for their rich cultural perspective. Was this reflected only on the content of their narratives?
- What was the modernists' vision to the literary form?
- Did they all agree on a unified frame?

Lecture content

The modernists' interest in form seems to be the major manifestation of rebellion against tradition. However, such interest was shared by previous traditions in art and literature. Then the core question of this lecture would be how form took the central position in the criticism over the modernist literary writing. Medalie's (2002) section on the debate over the form provides cutting edge insights on such problematic. For him, the writers of the early twentieth century era did not debate over the literary form per se—since it was a common point of interest to many, but they concerned themselves by joining two hard to meet elements on form. The first one being the imposition of new experimental forms in the process of literary expression, while the second is the undermining of the very form and shape. Thus, this very notion seems very contradictory and unmanageable. Probably, this what makes the modernists highly appreciated as we look at them from the vision of their contemporaries, where norms and patterns were reigning. Medalie's argument is that the shift was daring and risky as such theorists attempted to substitute the form as order for structure. As we explained in earlier lectures, this provides room for the idea that the modernists did share the prospects of experimentation in style and content, but did embrace individual creativity in their endeavour to reach such aims. The mind's

creativity needs some shaping of the concepts and one's perception of the world. Yet, not all the time such individual framework building that resolves to words and linguistic patterns would categorise the world lived into specific forms. This is definitely what pushed the modernists to often retreat from some notions not on reality but on art itself, leading to their continuous negotiation of the process of artistic representation of the workings of the world. Definitely, such negotiations attempted to improve the quality of the modernist art framework, a thing that might imply individual interest in art production and the procedures involved. However, as Christopher Butler observed, the modernists were not self-immersed in such procedures of experimental art production, but their primal concern was the contribution to the spread of innovative artistic representation, mainly through the emerging art form. In this manner, we notice how modernist writers, namely the pioneers of the trend in literature, were mostly involved in the process of theoretical writing on modernism and its tenets. This tendency is illustrated through milestone works such as E. M. Foster's (1927) *Aspects of the Novel* and Virginia Woolf's essays *The Art of Fiction* and *The New Biography* of the same year (Medalie, 2002, pp. 98-99).

Keywords

Tradition; innovation; literary expression.

Post-lecture Task

Did the non-fiction work of avant-garde writers such as Virginia Woolf match their fiction in magnitude?

- What marked Virginia Woolf's own literary criticism writings?

Lecture 10. Modernist Writing and Norms

Pre-lecture discussion

- Art often has a stance *vis-à-vis* society. What was the modernist's vantage?
- How was such viewpoint expressed stylistically in literature?

Lecture content

By the death of Queen Victoria, a whole era had come to an end. The first remarkable feature of such a period was its stability and normality. At the core of Modernism, the idea of breaking the norms reflects the whole movement dissatisfaction with the status quo of art. For them it was too passive and limited in terms of its reflection of human condition. If Romanticism and Realism had the mission of describing such condition as one that is satisfactory and more importantly connected, Modernism dashed such vision and looked to reality in a completely different manner. With society paralysed and individuals socially scattered, artists such as James Joyce thought of a move from the artists as a representer of social reality to an active participant in the process of social and individual awareness activator (Friedrich & Walzl, 1961). Literature, therefore, took a new direction calling for the individual to seek a self-awakening that necessarily sets one free from the social norms. Thus, individuality found inspiration at both ends of the writing process. The writer could find voice through his characters but not making them speaking on his behalf, otherwise creating contradiction with the very idea of self-awareness. Such revered individual status had to find ways through literary techniques such as the stream of consciousness that we tackled in previous lectures. Yet, one should not expect that one or two techniques could reflect the artists mission as awareness revealer. For one reason, modernists, while believing in experimentation, they refuted the advocacy of one specific manifestation creativity in style. Yet, one unified

tendency associated most of the modernist writers and thinkers, which is the sealed fate of the normalcy in both content and style of literature. At the centre of the writing process, the way the writer resorts to grammatical and syntactic rules raised such concerns on continuity and norm abiding. Thus, the old view on syntax as the mirror of social norms and order that by definition writing reflected as well-structured sentences, baring well-ordered ideas and evoking a unified meaning that works the plot. Based on this, modernists thought over a way to emancipate the literary writing from this very idea of expected order through syntax. Either within the stream of consciousness or at different spaces in the text, both syntax and words shocked the reader and called for his attention as to make him seek meaning through his own process of puzzle solving of the scattered fragments of text and meanings in the text. Moreover, the writer could reveal a sense of fragmentation of meaning and truth on both internal and external reality. The individual might be perceived through such textual and semantic expressions as broken in nature and paralysed, waiting for his own emancipation.

Keywords

Fragmentation; individuality; writing style; cultural awareness.

Post-lecture Task

- Examine how James Joyce's works reflected the sense of paralysis and fragmentation.
- Provide one instance from Joyce's *Dubliners*, illustrating how the individual could be conceived as broken at a given moment.

Lecture 11. Character and Consciousness in the Modernist Novel

Pre-lecture discussion

- What were the main features of characterisation prior to Modernism in literature?
- Were the psyche pulses part of the realist literary works?
- What was the contribution of modernism to the author's portrayal of the character and his consciousness?

Lecture content

Characterisation in novels is no new phenomenon when it comes to the novel writing. For around two centuries, characters dwelled the literary works of many generations of now renowned authors. Yet, such characterisation developed massively at the turn of the twentieth century. Before the modernist novel, authors' portrayal of the character was basically one that relies on the social and economic influence and realm of reality understanding. With the appearance of Freud's works and researches on inner worlds of the individual, new venues of explorations have been added to the possibilities of character building within the text. Ideas such as the consciousness have become the new fashion that writers rushed to embrace and put into use in their literary endeavours (Parsons, 2007, p. 54).

With works like William James's *The Principles of Psychology*, (1890) the possibilities of resorting to "introspective" paths of self-exploration have become a tangible reality. Authors such as Joseph Conrad and Ford Madox Ford could finally inflict their own break with the classic vision of the individual as the outcome of his social reality. Their way was to make a clear distinction between the private and the public dimensions of one's experience. To mark their peculiar modernist impulses, other authors continued their literary and psychological examination of the self

through their characters. Their continuous debate pushed toward a redefinition of the self as one that is not simplistic or stable. Based on the mentioned works of psychology such writers proved or at least attempted to show how one's self-definition cannot be satisfactory or comprehensive in that it is perpetually under one's own biases, let alone being heavily shaped by the newly added realms of the unconscious experience (Parsons, 2007, p. 56).

Keywords

Unconsciousness; psyche; interior monologue.

Post-lecture Task

- What is the main literary technique or device that enabled modernist writers to dive into the inner worlds of their characters?

Lecture 12. The Stream of Consciousness

Pre-lecture discussion

- What theme haunted the modernist writers?
- Can a theme be also a literary technique?

Lecture content

William James's work *The Principles of Psychology* (1890) not only ushered in a new world of deep explorations into the mind, but it also found its path into literature. Like Henry James, William's brother, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf intensively embraced one of the main principles evoked in such seminal work. The Stream of Consciousness, as the name suggests, reflects exactly how the workings of the mind, namely thoughts, perceptions, and sensations, take shape. Scientifically speaking, the stream of consciousness involves a number of processes that take place with the psyche of humans. It helps raising a sense of awareness and continuous state

of self-realisation and self-improvement that interact and use the bodily constituents of the human being as illustrated in Figure 5. Accordingly in literature, The Stream of Consciousness took a central position in most of modernist novels. Basically, it affected both form and content. As a form it was adopted as a technique that mirrors the characters' inner experiences the way one would witness internally. While at the content level, such device turned into a way to highlight the subjective experience of the world, otherwise termed as the subjective consciousness. Often confused with the interior monologue, such device is not limited to the dialogue but to its very subjective life (Parsons, 2007, p. 56).

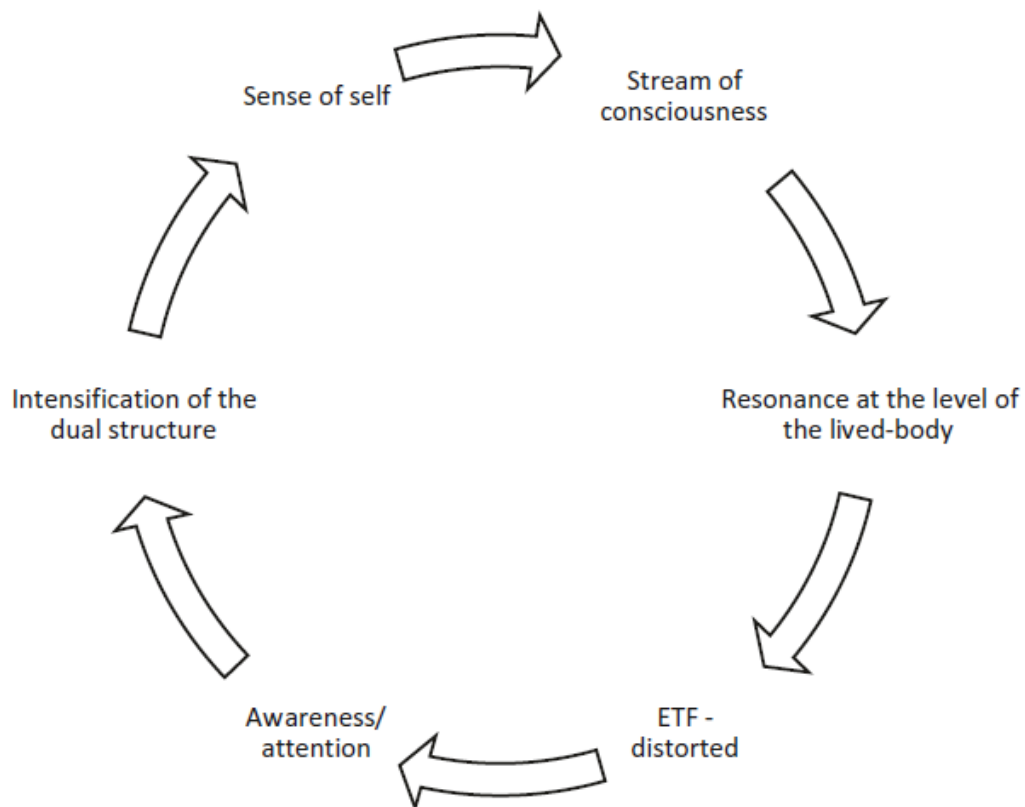


Figure 5. Ataria (2022). *The Stream of Consciousness*

Literary and artistic explorations into the psychic experience fell under the umbrella of the stream of consciousness in a tremendous way during the opening years

of the twentieth century. No wonder then we tend to establish a link to Freud's theories of psychoanalysis. While there is some truth in this regarding the defiling methods of novel analysis that followed until this moment, it is worth noting that the actual influence over literature and art at the time found grounds in the works of French philosopher Henri Bergson. Basically, he was the man behind the main theories on consciousness, individual creativity, and the perception of time that drove the intellectual circles at that important moment in the cultural history of the western world (Parsons, 2007, p. 57).

Keywords

Subjective experience; psychoanalysis.

Post-lecture Task

- Why were Bergson's notions on time very defining for the modernist writing?

Semester Project

- Through a research project, elaborate on the contribution of Modernism in British literature?

----- **End of Semester 1** -----

Semester 2: Thematic and Interdisciplinary Encounters with Modernism

Lecture 13. Time Dimension in Modernist Fiction

Pre-lecture discussion

- In what ways can time define the plot of a novel?

- Do all humans perceive time in the same manner?

Lecture content

Modernist literature emerged at a time where the British empire established its rule over massive territories in the world. The industrial revolution had made transportation so essential to the workings of the nation's economy. Order and discipline were of paramount importance to such economic system. Thus, unifying time came as consequent result, leading to Greenwich time as a universal point of reference. This meant that everyone was compelled to accept a unified perception of time. However, Henri Bergson had a completely different point of view. For him, every individual experiences time according to his individualized experience. Modernist writers were fascinated with this idea and main figures in the image of James Joyce, Dorothy Richardson, and Virginia Woolf devoted their creative writing to the representation of time. No wonder then, hundreds of pages were allocated to the representation of as short as a day in the life of one of the characters as Joyce's *Ulysses* might illustrate (Parsons, 2007, p. 109).

The representation of time became essential for the modernist writer, not because of its newness as a notion, simply because the very idea of the relationship between time and consciousness was not as important as the universal appeal such phenomenon. In other words, modernist writer attempted to answer and clarify why

humans were interested in the way time passes and thus producing common history (Parsons, 2007, p. 109).

In the image of French writer Marcel Proust and her seminal work *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu*, (1913-27) Woolf epitomized the modernists' notion of time as an inclusive veil in which consciousness extends rather than the traditional view of time as linear holder of the passing of events. Following Bergson's theory, writers embraced the mission of examining the individual's perception of time and the way to do this is a meticulous character portrayal and event extended representation that dives into the deep corners of human psyche. Bergson had actually made distinction between two ways of time perception. The rational experience of time based on what social definitions provide constitutes the widely accepted perspective at the time, continuing to this day. That is our understanding of time as some units stretched over a linear plan on which all human experience is organized and perceived. The intuitive perception of time, however, is the way our consciousness dives into the realms of life experience as witnessed by the individual. In what he calls duration, past and present fade within subjective consciousness to create a unique individual experience of life. Bergson's work anticipated Albert Einstein's theory of relativity by providing his critique on the absolute perception of time and space as a human preset (Parsons, 2007, p. 110).

Keywords

Narrative time; perception.

Post-lecture Task

- What is the difference between Bergson's duration and what we commonly understand as a period of time?

- Find an instance of subjective perception of time in Woolf's works.

Lecture 14. Psychoanalysis and Modernism

Pre-lecture discussion

- If pre-modernist era was marked with a sense of stable reality and fixed truths, what made the modernists question such status?
- What helped the modernists unveil the hidden layers of human selfhood?

Lecture content

The end of the Victorian age was marked with the loss of uncertainty regarding the unitary sense of reality and the self as a consequence. Literature in English followed in pattern the direction taking place in France, Germany, and Italy. Writers moved away from the tradition role of literature that attempted to teach and convince. James Joyce, for instance, thought that art is living a status of paralysis in which the traditional role that emphasised morality and mentorship is no longer valid. He and other modernists such as Virginia Woolf in England and Proust in France took the direction toward the inner worlds of their characters. Actually, this was not in the sense of telling the reader anything about what he should think or believe, but to let the latter think for himself about the final image a literary work might produce. If previously religion and engendered institutions had made it possible to control the individual's thinking, modernists attempted to override any metaphysical or abstract approach to reality. In the image of Sigmund Freud who did the same in terms of psychology, they considered a vision that relies on tangible tools in explain the human reality and condition. Freud had made this possible though his devising of concrete techniques in psychotherapy such as free association. Such techniques provided the patient with a certain freedom of expression that evoked reality as it is without any

interruption from the side of the therapist. The patient is invited to an atmosphere in which he could set himself free of any social conditioning that might hinder the process of self-expression. In such freedom, he could allow his unconscious experience come to the surface to be seen not only by the others but by his own high egos, often shaped and limited by the norms (Egemen, n.d.). In the likes of this tendency, James Joyce used his own free association in many of his works as to set his characters free of their own paralysis. Thus, he conceived the stream of consciousness as a means that could capture the human inner drives and desires in a Freudian way. No matter how the outcome is shocking or weird, the writer in this way is not help responsible of any abuse of social norms, simply because he sets himself aloof from the process of telling the truth. His characters speak for themselves in a totally free way without any stylistic intervention. To make himself credible, not conflicting with the character's process of self-expression, Joyce often relies on the third person narrator, who can guarantee the writer's dissociation from both the plot and the characters.

Keywords

Paralysis; unconscious experience; awareness.

Post-lecture Task

Beside free association, Freud used the dreams as one of his tools and techniques. How can this be used in literature and how was it reflected in modernist fiction?

Lecture 15. Modernist Revision of Heroism

Pre-lecture discussion

- Traditional characterisation relied heavily on the main character in different forms of literature. The protagonist represented the special and the inspiring and ranged from nobility to the ordinary person. So, what kind of protagonists did the modernist writer embrace?

Lecture content

Literature as a phenomenon that reverses the human aspiration for greater imaginary worlds marked its own development through the growing types of characters. The protagonist received much of the poets and writers' attentive effort of literary presentation and representation. As much of Western literary tradition, epics brought forth heroes who manifest a massive concern with perfection and human aspiration to the best forms of mental and social situations. At the core of such process is the hero as the emblem of the heightened condition of humanity. Through a journey of self-empowerment, he thrives through hardships and revelations (See Figure 6. The Hero's Journey. Marsiglio (2021b) Yet, for the modernists, as experimenters, the hero should reflect the abrupt upheavals that Europe was facing, namely the repercussions of the Industrial Revolution and the outcomes of the deadly conflicts of wars in early twentieth century. Thus, in the image of Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) protagonist Stephen Dedalus most modernist's central characters took directions in their own vision of what the twentieth century hero should stand for. For previous literary movements such as Romanticism and Realism and even Greek literary heritage, the hero manifested a web of values that revolved around bravery. The extent to which the hero's characterisation was fixed and stable made the literary translation of the meaning of the hero in many works of fiction look like a pattern (Neimneh, 2013).

Besides, the role religion played in the fabric of Western culture was very defining. Often morality was linked with Christian tradition and, therefore, most characters were associated in terms of heroism with some meanings of high esteem that Christianity regarded as the advised moral codes of the Good, as opposed to the Evil. Such era of moral codes and manners was crowned with the Victorian Age in which not only morality played an important role in defining what heroism should be about, but it took mannerism to other levels in which individuals had to abide by the social norms. Heroes in literature represented such tendency and to the detriment of their inner aspirations, they served more as the ideal image through which society should build its human aspect around.

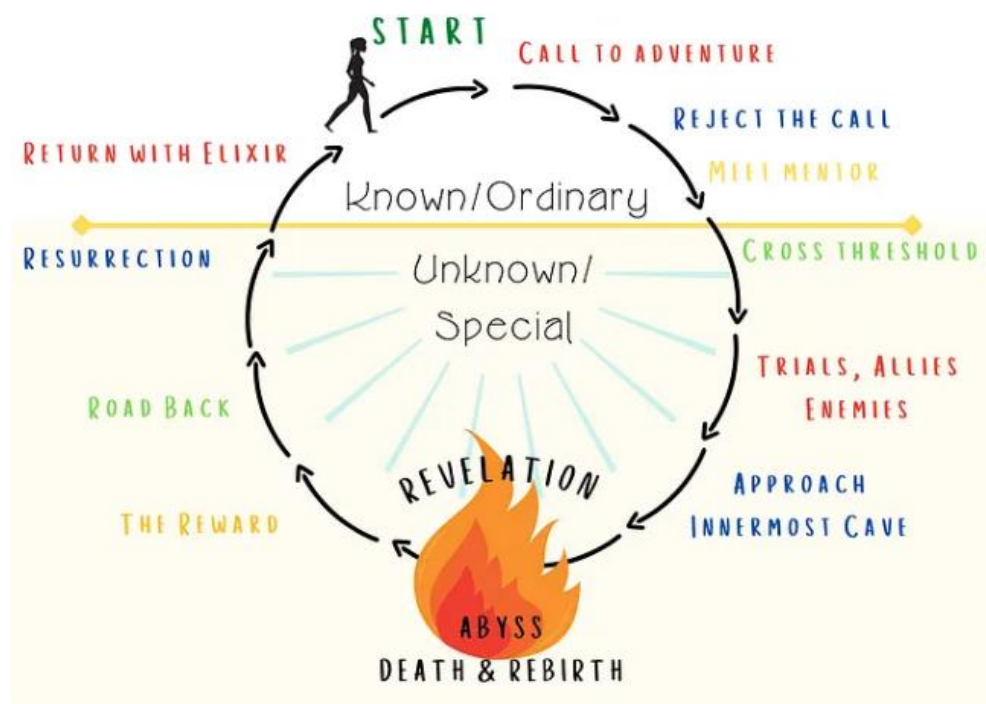


Figure 6. The Hero's Journey. Marsiglio (2021b)

Such condition revering mannerism came to an end not only with the death of Queen Victoria, but with the numerous deaths that wars entailed. The loss of faith in

the goodness of humanity made modernist pioneers in the image of James Joyce think over their own visions of the heroes. Joyce who himself suffered in British prisons because of his aspiration for the independence of his own country experienced first-hand how humans are no longer faithful or believers in the morals and manners they preach in traditional literatures and religious scripts. Thus, as a result of his experimentation in characterisation, he devised what came to be called the anti-hero, a character but also the individual who lives the cultural decay and the status of paralysis. In this vision, the hero is not necessarily a noble or a good citizen, but more importantly, he is a person who lacks the capacity of being a traditional hero. The question is not one of choice but is one of necessity and obligation. Of course, in such period the influence of ideas brought about by theorists such as Charles Darwin, Sigmund Freud, and Friedrich Nietzsche had a massive influence on the Joyce and other modernist writers. The hero, therefore, embraced proudly the ordinary human being who lives a status of confusion and alienation. In his *Ulysses*, Joyce traced a new form of journey that paralleled Homer's *Odyssey*. In a meticulous manner, Joyce raised the concern of art through his anti-hero, who is also an artist. Yet, without fears of denigration, he made the latter reach a point of awareness about his own paralysis. Without devising suggestions, the writer attempted to make the reader seek also a similar status of awakening.

Keywords

Epics; cultural heritage; antiquity; rebirth.

Post-lecture Task

- Did the modernist contend with the status of paralysis Joyce referred to or did they attempt to move civilisation through literature to another level of cultural sensibility?

Lecture 16. Eliot's Objective Correlativity

Pre-lecture discussion

- Modernists are known to incite the reader to be part of the process of art production. How can this be achieved stylistically in works of fiction?

Lecture content

In their experimentation modernist writers and poets made an effort to involve the reader in the creation of meanings and emotions. That is, in contrast to realist and romanticist writing, the author is no longer the only responsible for drawing the whole image in the minds of their audiences. Resorting to imagery and symbolism addresses different levels of interpretation that require the reader to make an effort to generate meaning. As mentioned in earlier lectures, Modernist writing relies heavily on puzzle making that is not necessarily bewildering but thought provoking. In such sense, masterpieces of modernist tendency seem at first glance as confusing and senseless. This might be justified by the density of happenings, basically internal, and the complexity of the events. For modernists like Thomas Stearns Eliot (1888–1965) (T.S. Eliot), the literary work should entail that level of complexity as a reflection of the nature of life and reality that is of the same magnitude. Living the age of science, the writer has also to embrace a sense of objectivity that sets him apart from old traditions which has fixed and determined truths. The means by which the complexities of life could be transmitted to the reader is language at the centre of the writing process. If used in an ordinary manner, such means of expression would not shake the minds of the readers. Thus, Eliot pioneered in the field literature that is shaking and to some extent odd to the unaware readers. At this level he shares with James Joyce the idea on the need for raising readers awareness, as a primarily goal of literature. Thus, he resorted to some odd ways of reflecting culture and life. One of them is the

juxtaposition of the past with the present overriding the dimension of time as a separator between the multitude events and periods. For this reason, his masterpiece *The Waste Land* (1922) involves different historically marked events and merge them into the moment of investigation. The way humans perceive history is questioned and their view of conceiving the past is undermined. New perspectives of looking to what is important are evoked and used. Thus, Eliot came up with a new literary technique to create meaning and emotion at the end of the reader, he coined as objective correlativity. This is a technique that, in contrast to ordinary poetry, does not describe events and objects through meticulous wording that is poetically beautiful, but it involves that artist's skills of describing objectively while using the subjectivity of the readers to create meanings and feelings at the latter end. With evidence, Eliot was massively influenced by what Freud had to offer in terms of inner worlds of the human beings, namely their ego structure and the unconscious layer of their psyche. In such a way, Eliot found justification of using mythology and world cultures not as remote assets but as concurrent constituents of western cultural repercussions of the moment, i.e., the early twentieth century. Merging the moments into one works even for Eliot's own creation of his concept of the objective correlativity. Actually, such idea find roots in the works of many thinkers—including but not limited to Nietzsche, Whitman, Baudelaire, and Husserl, who were occasionally separate in time and place (Frank, 1972).

Keywords

Correlativity; universal subjectivity.

Post-lecture Task

- Ironically, Eliot was known to be conservative. How could he reconcile this tendency with his very modernism?

Lecture 17. Gender Politics in Modernism

Pre-lecture discussion

- Beside ambiguity and ambivalence regarding “change,” find other marking features of social and cultural politics of the modernist writers.
- What does the scarce number of female authors in modernist tradition allude to?

Lecture content

The main British modernist writers in the image of James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and Samuel Beckett progressively and in different manners changed the artistry and gender politics. At the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century James Joyce’s *Ulysses* put an end to the Victorian economic treatment of femininity in art. Yet, dashing expectations female characters did not embrace just the veil of freedom but moved beyond that to become artists on their own. That is to say female characters are not represented as objects of desire but instead they wear the costume of the autonomous artist who through his word and action delivers an impressive form of performance. The woman artist, therefore, becomes at the centre of the modernist writer and every author imbeds his female characters with the power to become the artist who enjoys femininity within, not as an external object of desire. At the centre of the modernist writers’ view to the female character as an artist is the latter ability to create beauty for the sake of creation itself. In such literary realm, beauty goes beyond the formal sense of the word to embrace reality itself. For Woolf, the modernity literature seeks primarily the examination of links between the aesthetic form and the lived experience (Parsons, 2007, p. 21).

That is no other end or intent is at the prospect, with no external influence of any power. From this point, the mother as she delivers a new born is like an artist who

is producing an object of art that is free, with the process of production if also free of any external exert of power. Namely, the patriarchal powers of society are excluded and disregarded as the drive behind the process of procreation (Wood, 2021, p. 1).

Through the use of modernist techniques such as the stream of consciousness and monologue, modernist writers could definitely move from the social discourse of women as objects of desire to women as art producers. In many ways, they projected to demonstrate and prove that women as a social metaphor resemble to a large extent the object of art as the product of the artist (Wood, 2021, p. 2).

In contrast to the superficial reading of a modernist text, the bodily representation of women has a completely difference from the view of women as object of desire. Actually, works elaborated by modernist writers such as D.H. Lawrence, Woolf, Beckett repositioned the portrayal of women from a point of view focusing of beauty as an associated image to the existence of women. The means to achieve this end putting the body at the centre of the imagery, driving the reader or the viewer in the case of theatre to consider feminity as a real truth of its own (Wood, 2021, p. 3).

Keywords

Feminism; gender politics.

Post-lecture Task

- By making female artists, what questions could be evoked?
- Modernist writers resorted to materiality in depicting women. How can you link this to renowned theorists of materialism?

Lecture 18. Virginia Woolf's Modernism

Pre-lecture discussion

- Despite the social tensions regarding gender issues, Virginia Woolf made herself a prominent place in the modernist literary canon. How could she achieve such a status?

Lecture content

Modernism in literature, when evoked in the British context, often evokes two avant-garde writers Virginia Woolf and James Joyce. No wonder such association calls our attention to the magnitude and the importance of both writers' endeavours in such literary tradition. As we mentioned earlier, modernists, in general, shared some common features such as their experimental drive and scepticism over religion and tradition. Woolf did not swerve from such an idea, as she embraced some ideals and literary techniques in the image of the stream of consciousness and symbolism. Yet, what added importance to the writer is her audacious stance as a woman writer. So, beside her fight for emancipation from tradition, as a woman she had another battle of her own, with regard to questions on women rights. Thus, Woolf marked herself with a rigorous activism at different levels that involved intellectual and political dimensions. As such she found herself at the intersection of two cultural movements that were defining themselves in the midst of hostile social and political environment. Her activism associated her with prominent intellectual figures such as Clive Bell, E.M Foster, and J.M. Keynes. In such interactive sphere, she earned some inter-disciplinary knowledge that ranged from philosophy to economy, through journalism. Her awareness on both external and internal life empowered her with the means to write great masterpieces in the image of *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) and *To The Lighthouse* (1927), in addition to her nonfiction works such as *Modern Fiction* (1919). In the

latter, she expressed her maxim on the essence of modernist writing. She wrote: “Examine for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day.” In such a way she set her own version of Joyce’s anti-hero, but with a specific focus on women. Probably, this is the reason why Woolf has been cherished for her bravery of applying modernism on women as characters and individuals without any delay or fear of the public reaction at the time. For her, a woman can be successful as an artist with such basic requirements as a room and some adequate financial means. Thus, her idea was straight to the point. Art is for all, when universal atmosphere of such human activity is available. Woolf’s modernism focused heavily on universality at the core of art in general. Thus, she stated this overtly in her essay *Three Guineas* (1938), as follows: “As a woman, the whole world is my country.” She meant that she bounds her art and experience with no political or social conventions. This fosters her very rejection of the social norms not only *vis-à-vis* gender issues but also regarding other dimensions of human condition. Ideas that were reflected in both her fictional and nonfictional works. Time, for instance, which is known universally to be the means of measurement of moments or events in one’s life was treated by Woolf in her own way that resembles Eliot’s ideas but not regarded through the same perspective. For Woolf, time should be devised into two separate spheres of investigation and perception. One is about the clock ticks as everyone would think of. The other is of paramount important as it is related to impact of time on the mind. Under the influence of Einstein’s theory of relativity, Woolf extended her treatise to the relativity of time and space as she mounted her narratives (Brown, 2015). The other contribution that made her intersect in vision with T.S. Eliot is her fluid use of symbolism as establish a certain layer of historical connection with the past. Actually, her novel *To the Lighthouse* brings forth her fascination with the great civilisations of the antiquity. The lighthouse as a symbol refers back to the first monument of the kind created by the

Pharos in the great city of knowledge and inspiration, Alexandria. As always civilisations mark their traces only to keep their memories alive in the minds of those who are aware, namely artists. In Figure 7, St. Mark Basilica artworks keep the record of the symbolic value of the city of Alexandria through its lighthouse:



Figure 7. Mosaic in St. Mark's Basilica representing the saint arriving in Alexandria. In (Raimann, 2016)

Keywords

Avant-garde women; emancipation; perception.

Post-lecture Task

Provide illustrative instances from Woolf's works that demonstrate how an external event might intersect with the inner character thoughts, forming a special interpretation of time that you elaborate on.

Lecture 19. Woolf, the Word and the World

Pre-lecture discussion

- Reading Virginia Woolf's narratives evokes a sense of the writer's struggle to find meaning. To what extent could her words fulfil her desire?

Lecture content

Prior to Modernism, the mission of portraying the character was definitely within the grasp of ordinary writers, as moral and other value principles were settled and widely agreed upon. The reality of the world was taken for granted for some cultural reasons, including religion and social norms. Christianity which reflected the Western thought on world structure made it easy to understand how everything in the world is centred on a given truth. Humans had a clear belief and satisfaction regarding their aims and own value. Literature reflected such vision through its narratives, relying on omniscient narrators who could manifestly discern between the good and the evil. Mostly, both authors and readers found easy paths overriding the discussion over the belonging of a given character to one or the other category. Beyond that, in the image of the World's creation, the artwork found justification to the flow of its events and the mechanisms of their inter-connection. The truths of the world were, therefore, dispatched to a certain categorisation through dichotomies or polarities. The first one, as we mentioned, was the good and the evil and others followed in the same pattern. We can mention, for instance, the king and the subject, male and female, north and south, mortal and immortal, body and soul, centre and periphery, and so on. What made the distinction between the ends of such polarities a straightforward process is the common grounds between all parties. At the core of the structure of such agreement is a set of principles and moral codes. It was then like a repertoire of rules that the writer could follow as a guideline and come up with a certain narrative

building that finds its ways to the readers. The latter resorted to the same repertoire to interpret, in a universal way, what each bit of characterisation or plot structure might entail. However, with the emergence of Modernism, the said dichotomies and their meanings were shaken and the agreements were no longer held. In particular, they were either reversed or questioned. Under the emergence of the scientific thinking, religion and its hermeneutics lost their convincing powers. Literature embraced science as a good number of writers developed a quite interesting good mastery of the scientific method only to come up with innovative new literary devices. Writers such as Virginia Woolf took this tendency on their own, leading them to rethink the way meanings could be extricated from the world. Thus, for Woolf the question of the writer is no longer about the aesthetics of mirroring life as it is, but the real problem is to discern the meaning from scratch. Woolf found meanings in language and admired finding alternatives to the real world that is no longer up to her aspirations. Words stood higher in their representation of the world. Within this realm, she needed to solve first the problematic on the way characters, who are actually individuals, have to be reassessed since old dichotomies are no longer valid. In other words, Woolf swerved away from categorising her characters based on clear principles, a fact that made her struggle to redefine the basis for the evaluation of such characters. Dashing the old established principles of measurement and judgement made it a dilemma for the writer to come up with new meanings that could be as convincing as old ones or even transcending such efficiency. Embracing experimentation, Woolf not only immersed herself in the process of values categorisation, but she sought to invite the readers to take part in such process (Schwarz, 1995, p. 258).

Keywords

Values; measurement; categorisation; experimentation.

Post-lecture Task

It is said that Woolf wrote as a modernist, but was shaped by Victorianism. To what extent this statement is founded?

Lecture 20. The Joycean Übermensch

Pre-lecture discussion

- Modernist thinking celebrated the individual at the detriment of his society. In what ways James Joyce conceived such supremacy of the individual?

Lecture content

Today we find no difficulty in noticing the way Modernism is associated with a sense of art supremacy, while such status took some time and effort by authors and artists to realise in the opening decades of the twentieth century. In 1916, James Joyce published his first masterpiece *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (APAYM) only to initiate his eagerness to promote art to the level he deemed adequate for such human skill and sensibility. Within a tense atmosphere at different levels ranging from politics to economics through psychology. The biographical elements had their effects on Joyce's thinking and writing. Being an Irish lad, made him interact with real problematics of nationalism and Catholicism. At the time Ireland was struggling over its independence as a nation, a process that evoked the definition of the nation, especially in terms of its ethnic and religious constituents. Thus, Joyce found himself entrapped in such discourse only to find refuge in his literary explorations. In *APAYM* he launched his experimental project of building a man who in many ways might inspire the Irish people to have their ways in the modern world as artists. For Joyce, such inclination stems from the fact that it is art and its aesthetic sensibilities that could empower the individual to become what Nietzsche calls the Übermensch. Such type of persons could be perceived as superior and authentic at higher degrees of

sensibility. Obviously, as an artist such character relies heavily on the sensual connection with the rest of the world instead of plain descriptions and dictations from social and religious institutions in the image of the family and Church. Following this pattern, *APAYM*'s protagonist is named Stephen Dedalus after the Greek mythic character of Daedalus, an architect and artisan who had to use his skills to find ways of escape from a certain labyrinth (Grant, 1978). Likewise, Joyce's anti-hero had to develop to set himself free from the constraints of society and religion. In one scene, he had a conversation with a priest, both talking about the aesthetics of writing. The dialogue they had symbolises the negotiation between two cultures that marked the life of the character, also an image of Joyce himself as the novel has plenty of biographical allusions. In such depiction of Dedalus, the novel shows distinction in the dynamics of the plot that in some sorts parallels the journey of the artist from innocence to maturity and back to the original status of childhood. The status of purity, often associated with the sensitive and spiritual, evokes the sense of superiority that coincides with the mythical Daedalus who, through, his artistic faculties sought to build up wings, with reference to the capacity of flying higher than all the remaining participants in the events around him.

Keywords

Art supremacy; empowerment; anti-hero.

Post-lecture Task

It is known that Joyce's characters lived in both the past and the present. Elaborate on this idea through at least one illustration from *APAYM*.

Lecture 21. Joyce's portrait of the artist as a young girl

Pre-lecture discussion

- If Stephen Dedalus represented the intellectual growth of the artist—in his case male character, how was Joyce's vision to his character's female counterparts?
- Beside ambiguity and ambivalence regarding "change," find other marking features of social and cultural politics of the modernist writers.
- What does the scarce number of female authors in modernist tradition allude to?

Lecture content

At the centre of the modernist writers' view to the female character as an artist is the latter ability to create beauty for the sake of creation itself. That is, no other end or intent is at the prospect, with no external influence of any power. From this point, the mother as she delivers a new born is like an artist who is producing an object of art. Thus, with the process of production, she is also free of any external exert of power. Namely, the patriarchal powers of society are excluded and disregarded as the drive behind the process of procreation. Joyce who was often put in the same basket as the majority of male intellectuals of the turn of the century Britain, made distinction in his own way as he showed his experimentation in characterisation. Despite his focus on a Issy, a female character in his renowned *Finnegans Wake*, he as most of the modernist writers, faced challenge and resistance from the female activists. Perhaps, the complexity of his portrayals made it not obvious to readers as well as critics to spot the balance he wanted to affirm between his established protagonist, Stephen Dedalus. In *Finnegans Wake*, Sissy took the lead as the central character, with much focus on her as an image and not a real character. Through his nuanced characterisation, Joyce made of her an ideal image rather than a social construct. In a way, Joyce drew his

own feminism, which not necessarily was understood by feminist critics of the time. Joyce's way of deciphering the female gender specificity goes by experimenting in the layers of portrayal. Issy represents such tendency as she merges to perspectives of looking at the modernist character. She is both the being of the character and the latter can see. At a phonetic level Issy through the pronunciation of her name delivers two entities, the "is" and the "see." Moreover, the name invokes the domesticity and sexuality of the feminine. This very sexuality implicitly develops to become the drive of the narrative that is defined by the Issy's reflexive vision and appreciation of her imbedded beauty, self-created initially. Growth in the novel takes other dimensions and intents as Issy sexually develops through her interaction with other characters such as ALP and Kate. The interplay serves as a means to provide different perspectives to the same character. At any given moment, the reader is to think over what Issy might become rather than what she is now. Time collapses to provide two competing perspectives in an attempt to define one character. Competitiveness, thus, becomes also a textual tool for making new meaning out of the existing knowledge of the character and the world. The means to achieve this is the use of the portmanteau technique that reminds the reader with Lewis Carroll earlier works such *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* (Wood, 2021, pp. 1-2).

Keywords

Patriarchy; art; artistic craft; gender politics.

Post-lecture Task

- Did James Joyce empower his female characters with artistic awareness? Provide illustrations if any.
- Were such characters portrayed only as socially defined entities? Illustrate.

Lecture 22. Eliot's *Tradition and the Individual Talent*

Pre-lecture discussion

- It is widely spread that Modernism is a breakaway from tradition. To what extent this statement is valid?
- What was the stand of avant-garde modernists vis-à-vis tradition?
- What is the author or artist's creative role positioned in the debate over tradition and individuality?

Lecture content

In 1919 Eliot published a pivotal essay in which he set forth his theory on tradition and creativity, he titled as “Tradition and the Individual Talent” (*T.S. Eliot Selected Essays*, 1948). In such an essay he devised his peculiar vision on the past in general and its role in the artist's thinking. As an avant-garde artist and critic, he embraced experimentation as a means to shape his way of thinking. No wonder then, he advocated talent and creativity as many other modernists, yet he had an interesting perspective on tradition. Laying his stand, he declared himself as classicist in literature, royal in politics, and Anglo-Catholic in religion. Thus, he viewed tradition not as a merely set of accumulated beliefs and manners—alluding to oldness, but he conceived it as a continuous influencing works of arts that form a body of culture juxtaposing the past and the present to form one consciousness. As such, he recognised the role of creativity, but he made it clear that the artist cannot separate himself from what great artists in the past produced. He advocated the need for a certain awareness of the whole body or art stemming from Greek antiquity—namely from Homer's time— to the time the artist is producing his own artwork. Eliot blended this view on history as a living culture—otherwise immortal, shaping the artist's work, with another

important idea on the poet, or artist in general, with regard to considering his perspectives on the object of art. Thus, an old great work of art is not to be imitated but reflected on the thoughts and emotions of the author. The latter, hence, bears the burden of a whole culture as to be felt in his very artwork. Within this process, the simplistic view on the past as a separate entity from the present is refuted, leaving space to a completely different way of perceiving the past. In a reminder of old traditions of the east in manners of thinking about time, Eliot advocates a dynamic relationship between the past and the present, leading to a fusion of time and space. Such view entails also a certain awareness on the scientific thought on relativity. For Eliot, the artist's perspective on his object should not be personal, but there must be a certain separation from the subject and the object, an idea he developed into the theory of impersonal poetry. This is related to both authors and critics, as their views should not judge the person who created as if he is the only responsible on the creation of the work of fiction. Taking into consideration that the artist should have a historic sense in his creative process of writing, they have to acknowledge that such artist is one stone in the wall of a whole culture that began long ago. In such manner, the author has to surrender his personality to the great tradition of art, what he calls "the poetic tradition" (Teubner, 2017). As he put it, the progress of the artist entails a long process of self-sacrifice, eradicating the personal side to the benefit of a historical sense of art. Science meets art in Eliot's thought and poetics. In *The Rock* (1934) he asserts:

Where is the wisdom that we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge that we have lost in information?

Such verse propelled him to become credited for the ground breaking principles of what has become known as the pyramid of knowledge (DIKW) (Rowley, 2007), a crystal-clear conception of the development of knowledge from data to wisdom, as illustrated in Figure 8. Once again, expressing his awareness of the scientific method,

Eliot compares the intervention of the author in the process of art production with chemistry. Like in chemical processes, where a certain agent helps the interaction of other particles, the artist has to initiate a certain operation leading to the creation of an object of art, itself adding a block to the body of art. We notice here that not all what had been written is considered as tradition, but there must be a certain sense of distinction or even discrimination—in a positive sense. Therefore, we can expect how the artist can break away from certain norms if they are not intrinsically entitled to fit into the wholistic historic sense of excellency in art.

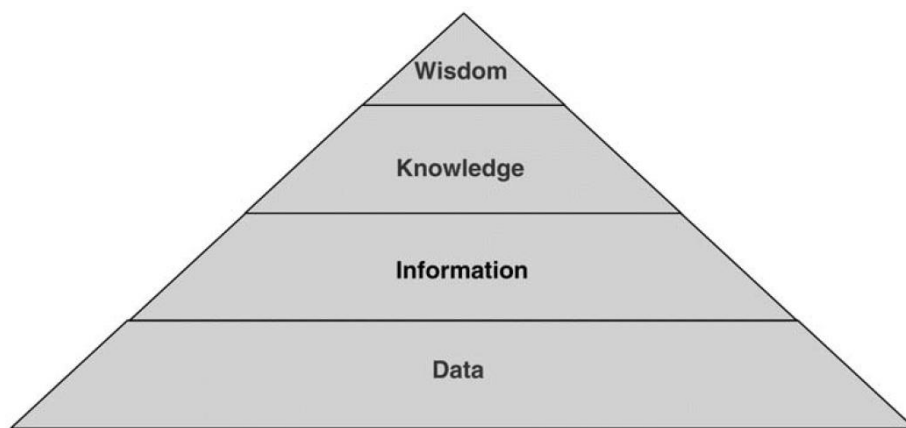


Figure 8. DIKW chart, or the pyramid of knowledge. In (Rowley, 2007)

Keywords

Impersonal theory; tradition; art; poetry.

Post-lecture Task

How do you think the modern poet or artist has any difference from artists of the past, namely Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare?

Lecture 23. Eliot on Ecology

Pre-lecture discussion

- Today, we notice massive problems regarding ecology that in some parts of the world resemble the early days of the Industrial Revolution. Based on Eliot's notions on history, what can be inferred of the recurrence of such problem?

Lecture content

The greatness of art stems not only from its description of reality, but from the artist's capacity of deep commentary on the human's environment. Eliot had advocated and initiated a completely new vision to literary criticism. Namely, as a poet himself, he rejected the romanticist view on criticism as an inspection on the emotional reaction to the work of art. In other words, even the critic has to resort to such emotional reading of the literary text, as to get its essence or the message behind it. In contrast to such claim, Eliot transcended his poetic sensibility to look at the critic as a rational examiner who seeks meanings and thoughts within the lines of the work of art. In continuation to his ideas on the great tradition that we mentioned in earlier lectures, he looked at history not as progressive in nature. That view that considered the humanity is always seeking a better and comfortable life, as expressed by the liberals of the time. Interestingly, Eliot dashed such vision only to dig into the real nature of such world as he viewed history taking retrogressive and forward waves of movement. Put differently history is not progressing in a simplistic way in which the next day is always better than the previous day. In some ways this coincides or explains better the cyclic vision of history proposed by Arnold Joseph Toynbee (A.J. Toynbee). At psychological level, the same idea was explained by Carl Jung through a certain unconscious creative and destructive tendencies of the human beings (Martin, 1999). The role of the intellectual becomes therefore important in discerning where the good

lies in the past, embracing and developing it in a creative manner. As Eliot put it “the process of reading is partly decoding,” (Matthews, 2013, p. 81) meaning that both readers and critics are all invited to participate in the process of building culture and consequently history that celebrates goodness and greatness. Ecology receives directly such “discriminating” faculty in human’s selection of action. Moreover, human awareness on the dangers of unmeditated action is called into attention. Awareness to Eliot is not regarded merely at personal levels, but is considered as a collective action that needs the active intervention of the intellectual elite. For him, modernity, while meaning technology and the comforts of life, meant also the destructive outcomes of the industrial revolution from which machines took hold of human action. Taking into blame the liberals and their unmeditated call for economic freedom, Eliot took some idealistic tendencies with regard on how society should be. Such ideas led to some criticism to his beliefs and ideology, associating him with radical social movements and even going as far as to allegations of fascist ideas (Teubner, 2017, p. 13). However, time is has given Eliot credit on his comment on the destructive effect of technology, namely when humans do empower themselves with awareness on a historic sense. Today, industrial cities in the far east display high levels of ecological disgrace that look similar to what British cities suffered from in the hay days of the Industrial revolution.

Keywords

Poetic sensibility; Toynbee; technology; city; humanity.

Post-lecture Task

Read Eliot’s *The Waste Land* and provide some illustrations of though provoking nature in terms of ecology.

Lecture 24. Eliot on Unity

Pre-lecture discussion

- In what sense Eliot revered tradition and its shadows on the unity of human condition?
- How did Eliot interpret the status of his time in terms of culture?

Lecture content

At the core of Eliot's thought is the unity of human condition and all what can be engendered out of this very status. Unity represents the well-being of human. In other words, it is the ultimate and perfect status a man can hold. Eliot took as an epitome of this cultural orientation his inspirer Dante. He looked at the latter as the great depicter of what human condition could be. Then comes Shakespeare as the second incarnation of human sensibility in art and literature. Interestingly, Eliot found similarities and reflections in both artists times and their condition of culture. He noticed how their visions looked higher to standards of thinking and beliefs. Both of them elevated civilisation through their contemplation over the way humans should be and should act. He also observed that in both cases perfection found no easy ways to thrive or to continue to exist. Corruption emerged to the detriment of art and the sensibility of those supposed to bear the burden of art. Under social and political conditions, a massive state of decline swept the corners of society, including 'artists.' As such, if we take the Elizabethan period, which he considered as the pinnacle of art production, had to come to an end with the political upheavals that swept England by its end. Corruption took hold and artists' thought and art has become prisoner of political agendas rather than human and universal pursuits. Conspirations in the like of the powder plot during the Stuart times represented the exemplar of the way civilisation swerves from the basic ethical standards. As a believer in the artist's

historical responsibility and awareness of the historical content and growth of art, Eliot saw in the opening years of the twentieth century a replica of Dante and Post-Elizabethan periods. Probably the means and tools have changed, but the core and mindset of the persons and their culture to Eliot were the same. In the end of the day, what incited people behind the gunpowder plot and those who wanted to take hold of Europe is the same, the drive to power and the mental diseases. If during earlier times, humans had no way to understand and explain what was going in the minds of people and those perpetrators, the twentieth century empowered intellectuals with the means to unveil the dark side of human. Psychology, through the works of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung made it possible not only to discover the reasons leading people to act in what might be called a criminal way, but to go further to seek some therapeutic solutions. For Eliot, literature and art in general are there just for this very reason to raise awareness and to seek the real betterment of human condition through personal action and self-assertion. Psychology has, therefore, diagnosed the mental illnesses in the likes of hysteria, namely the hysteria for power. Moreover, other illnesses such as dissociation of personality called for attention, as these phenomena could not be perceived at first encounter with the perpetrator. At a philosophical level, such hysteria showed also how unity could be contaminated, leading to a disparity of human thought and consequent action. When unity is lost, there will be a certain dislocation of human condition in terms of perception and sensual meeting with the rest of humanity. This could affect both personal, familial, and public relationships. As such, Eliot developed a pessimistic view on the status of Western culture, leading him to consider it at the phase of decline and disintegration (Douglass et al., 2011, p. 30). Many of his works attempted to capture such human condition in a desperate pursuit to avoid the collapse of a cherished culture. Perhaps, for Eliot, his mission was to be comparable to Dante's.

Keywords

Cultural decline; decadence, corruption; conspiracy; disintegration.

Post-lecture Task

- Find references to corruption or disintegration in Eliot's works and examine what historical events they are alluding to.
- Show how Eliot discusses disintegration at personal and public levels.

Semester Project

Through a research project, elaborate on one of the following topics:

- Joycean thought in literary criticism.
- Eliot's conception of the past.
- Woolf's feminism.
- Freudian literary criticism.

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