

## Conclusion

All the plots discussed here are of a similar type: they center on 'psychological realism' and reveal the complexity of human consciousness. Apart from revolting against the Victorian age and the naturalist tradition, the 'psychological' novel in modern English fiction also stems from the modern novelists' intention to separate their works from the new popular novel. The latter resulted from Forster's Education Act of 1870 which produced a vast new reading public.<sup>1</sup> More people were able to read but they wanted novels that entertain rather than serious ones. Thus there developed, among the serious artists of the nineteenth century, a feeling of alienation from their intended public, not unlike the notions of early Romantics. Gradually adopted by late novelists such alienation led to their conviction of being responsible to no one but their own, true, inner selves.

Since the eighteen-eighties, probably a majority of significant novelists have tended to see themselves as apart from the public, opposed to what they have assumed to be its prejudices...The eighteen-nineties witnessed the triumph of the novelist as conscious artist because the period provided the circumstances which made it possible for him to behave as one.<sup>2</sup>

What we have seen in the works of Conrad, Joyce, and

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<sup>1</sup>Allen, The English Novel, p. 219.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 261.

Lawrence is their emphasis on the developments of their characters' sensibilities. John Fletcher and Malcolm Bradbury write in their essay, "The Introverted Novel", that in most important modern novels what is notably increased is "the novel's degree of self-analytical presentation" and what we are to watch is "the total spectrum of Modernist self-questioning". This idea certainly appears in the works under our scrutiny because the sense of alienation side by side with that of egoism are the main preoccupations of their heroes.

Jim and Stephen Dedalus may look to some degree alike in the way that both are pictures of the romantic hero. Regardless of anything else, and even human relationships, they attach themselves absolutely to the significance of selfhood, pursuing the self-ideal all life long. Their chosen selves are so much to the fore that they face their destiny in a unique and courageous way: Jim willingly meets his death whereas Stephen accepts his rootless life as an artist in exile. They are very lonely, not being able to seek any real understanding or even sympathy from the outside world. To loners like Jim and Stephen, reality is unbearable. The actual world is for Jim, so malicious that his self-ideal is forever out of reach whereas the outer world is, to Stephen, full of unendurable conventional rules.

Of all Lawrence's characters, the one who can, to some extent, be grouped with Jim and Stephen is Gudrun of Women in Love. She is incapable of love and companionship, living always in her isolated world. Like Stephen, she is restless, an artist in exile, sneering at life. Yet, she is not admirable in Law-

rence's eyes. He reserves praise for her sister, instead. Not being always self-conscious, Ursula has the understanding and flexibility that make her relationship with Birkin a successful one. Daiches sees the central question raised by all these novelists as being

"How is love possible in a world of individuals imprisoned by their own private and unique consciousness?"...Loneliness is the great reality, love the great necessity: how can the two be brought together? The more public and social the world, the less real it is likely to be...<sup>3</sup>

In Women in Love, the solution to the problem of isolation and human relationships is seen through the Ursula-Birkin relationship. To Lawrence, each single identity amounts to nothing. In companionship, the self tends to impose its will-power over the other. True relationships mean accepting the uniqueness of the other's individuality. This is one half of Lawrence's sense of life 'equilibrium'.

Lawrence sought a way out of this characteristic modern problem by insisting that true love consists not in merging (he castigated Whitman for believing in the merging of individuals) but in the recognition of the mystical core of otherness in the beloved, and, if that otherness is also a sexual otherness, the experience of being able to transcend the self through participation in otherness is more likely to be recognized.<sup>4</sup>

The other half is to keep the self from being overly social. That is to be 'spontaneous', not always self-conscious, and en-

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<sup>3</sup>Daiches, The Novel and the Modern World, p. 10.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

joy life fully. One must be free too, from any conventional beliefs as Birkin tells Gerald that life for him, has no centre and "the old ideals are dead as nails". Here Birkin may be seen as somewhat similar to Stephen Dedalus in throwing away all commands of the outside world.

As for Conrad and Joyce, their solution to the problem is quite the same as that of Lawrence, though it is not revealed in so evident and so strong a tone. To overcome our psychological alienation as well as our egoism, we must stick together in groups. This according to Conrad, should prevent us from being compulsively introspective.

He(Conrad)found a dramatic equivalent for the law that operates in both society and psyche--that "supreme law" by which the soul is compelled out of isolation and personal illusion into the whole organism of life, into a "solidarity with mankind", into that moral teleology of humanity which must be the novel's supreme theme and problem.<sup>5</sup>

"Without mankind", Conrad writes at the end of his life, "my art, an infinitesimal thing, could not exist." Thus society which he sees as full of false illusions happens to become also our necessity. Apart from helping to protect us from hostile surroundings, society still keeps us in a state of mental healthiness. As Daiches says in The Novel and the Modern World, "Conrad explores again and again the ways in which social and political life are both necessary and corrupting."

The similar problem for Joyce is explored in Dubliners--

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<sup>5</sup>Zabel, Conrad, p. 14.

"A Painful Case", and "The Dead", A Portrait, and Ulysses. Joyce's solution to our loneliness and egoism is through the idea of 'togetherness' as in Lawrence and Conrad. Mr. Duffy, Gabriel Conroy, and Stephen Dedalus are mostly seen in states of self-absorption, closed off from the outside world. Bloom sees Stephen's predominant qualities as being: "Confidence in himself, an equal and opposite power of abandonment and recuperation."<sup>6</sup> Contrasting with Stephen, Bloom is portrayed as an ordinary man with humanity through which he achieves oneness with the world.

The divine part of Bloom is simply his humanity--his assumption of a bond between himself and other created beings. That Gabriel Conroy has to learn so painfully at the end of "The Dead" that we all--dead and living--belong to the same community, is accepted by Bloom from the start, and painlessly.<sup>7</sup>

From the start, Bloom's kindness and gentleness are shown with his cat and then with various characters of the story. Stephen thus sees in Bloom a picture of Jesus Christ: "'Ex quibus', Stephen mumbled in noncommittal accent, their two or four eyes conversing, 'Christus' or Bloom his name is, or, after all, any other, 'secundum carnem'."<sup>8</sup> In his conversation with his friends, Suter and Budgen, Joyce views Bloom as being like Ulysses--an 'all-round' and 'complete' man: "Ulysses was not a god, for he had all the defects of the ordinary man but was kindly...Bloom

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<sup>6</sup>Joyce, Ulysses, p. 657.

<sup>7</sup>Ellmann, James Joyce, p. 362.

<sup>8</sup>Joyce, Ulysses, p. 627.

is the same."<sup>9</sup>

Through the idea of 'togetherness' which Conrad, Joyce, and Lawrence see as the solution to our loneliness and egoism, we can be mentally healthy and live together happily in society. The problems of human nature and relationships these writers raise are always true of human beings. The problem of the embattled self is with us still and perhaps getting worse each day despite the world getting more and more civilized.



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<sup>9</sup>Ellmann, James Joyce, p. 436.



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