

تيار الوعي كظاهرة جديدة
في رواية القرن العشرين: رواية يوليسيس لجيمس جويس كدراسة حالة

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Stream of Consciousness as a New Phenomenon in the Twentieth-Century Novel: James Joyce's Ulysses as a Case Study

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ملخص

يسعى هذا العمل إلى دراسة تيار الوعي كتقنية سردية مهمة في روايات القرن العشرين، موضوعاً جذوره الفلسفية، ومبيناً نشأته كتقنية أدبية، وكيف تجلى بشكل أساسي في رواية "يوليسيس" لجيمس جويس (1922). يُعرّف تيار الوعي بأنه تقنية أدبية تمثل التدفق المستمر لأفكار الشخصية - ذكرياتها الماضية، وفهمها، ومشاعرها. يُعد استخدام هذه التقنية الجديدة نقلة نوعية عن السرد التقليدي القائم على الراوي العليم، والذي كان سائداً في روايات القرن التاسع عشر. تأخذ هذه الورقة في الاعتبار النظريات النفسية لويليام جيمس وهنري برغسون، وتضع





عمل جويس ضمن المشروع الحداثي الأوسع. تُجادل هذه الدراسة بأن جويس لم يستخدم تيار الوعي كأداة أسلوبية فحسب، بل حوّله إلى إطار أوسع للمعرفة والفهم، إذ يُغير استخدامه لهذه التقنية من طبيعة سرد القصص (كينر 12). وأخيرًا، تم فحص ثلاث حلقات مختارة بدقة، وتحديدًا حلقات "بروتئوس" و"ليستريجونيانز" و"بينيلوب". يُظهر هذا كيف أن هذه التقنية قادرة على توفير الذاتية والزمن والوعي، مما يُسهم إلى حد ما في دراسة كل من قابلية القراءة والتمثيل. (جيمس 239؛ بيرجسون، تايم 90). كانت روايات القرن التاسع عشر واقعية للغاية في سردها، إذ صوّرت الحياة الاجتماعية والتغيرات التاريخية والقيم الأخلاقية بأفضل صورة. مع ذلك، واجه الروائيون تحديات وحدودًا في أسلوبهم. من أشهر روائيين القرن التاسع عشر: ديكنز، وإليوت، وتولستوي، وفلوبير. اتسم أسلوبهم بالتشابه، حيث ركزوا على الأحداث والمجتمع وتحكم الراوي أكثر من تركيزهم على أفكار الشخصيات الداخلية. لعب صوت الراوي دور الوسيط بين القارئ والشخصية، فحوّل الأفكار المتناثرة إلى قصة مترابطة.

Abstract

This work is an attempt to examine stream of consciousness as an important narrative technique of the twentieth-century novel, explaining its philosophical roots, showing its emergence as a literary technique, and how it mainly comes to realization in James Joyce's Ulysses (1922). Stream of consciousness described as a literary technique which represents the continuous flow of a character thoughts — character's past memories, understanding, and feelings. The use of this new technique is large move to leave traditional omniscient narration which was dominant throughout the nineteenth century novel. This paper takes into account the use psychological theories of William James and Henri Bergson, and placing Joyce's work within the wider Modernist project. This study makes an argument that Stream of consciousness is not used just as a stylistic device by Joyce and turns it into a broader framework for knowledge and understanding, this use of this technique by Joyce changes the ontology of narrating fiction (Kenner 12). Finally three selected episodes looked into closely particularly 'Proteus,' 'Lestrygonians,' and 'Penelope'. Shows how this technique is capable to provide subjectivity, time, and consciousness which to a certain degree examines both readability and representation. (James 239; Bergson, Time 90). The nineteenth-century novel was very realistic in its narration. It depicted the social life, historical changes and morals in the best way but still the novelists faced problems and had their own limits. The famous novelists of Nineteenth century were Dickens, Eliot, Tolstoy, Flaubert. They all had almost similar way of writing focusing more on action, society and



narrator control rather than the character's inner thoughts . The narrator's voice services as a mediator between the reader and the caharacter , the narrator turns messy thoughts into an organized story

1. Introduction: The Novel and the Problem of Interiority

The nineteenth-century novel was very realistic in its narrtion.It depicted the social life , historical changes and morals in the best way but still the novelists faced problems and had thier own limits.The famous novelists of Nineteenth century were Dickens, Eliot, Tolstoy, Flaubert . they all had almost similar way of writing focusing more on action, society and narrator control rather than the character's inner thoughts . The narrator's voice services as a mediator between the reader and the caharacter , the narrator turns messy thoughts into an organized story (Schwarz 3).

As the ninteenth century wraps up and a new century begins holding a shift opposing traditional narrations.A group of writes and thinkers started questioning the validity of traditional narrations . These writes believed that if it is the work of literature to represent real life of a character and society then how it is possible to exclued the inner thoughts of a character. The popularity of stream of conscousness in the twentieth century seen as a great change regarding time, identy, and society(Humphery 2-3).

In Ulysses , James Joyce employs the strongest , most systematic and complicated use stream of consciousness. The entire book publication was in 1922. The whole story happens in Dublin on a sunny day.The story told in 18 different episodes.The character spends one single day in Dublin. The use of this techinque by James led to a shift in how we write and see thought.It is worth mentioning that the reader in Ulysses can see what happens inside the mind of each cahracter . Readers knows what Blooms,Stephen and Molly think. Furthermore, readers can see charcter's dreams ,memories and even feelings .James based on his experience bravely uses stream of consciousness to organize the thoughts of characters(Kenner 33-35).

Section two of this study dives deep into psychological and philosophical background which led stream of conciousness ultimately seen as a literary technique, and extra focus will be put on contributions of William James and Henr Bergsoni . There is a brief history in section three describing the use of this techniqe in literature before Joyce, taking into account big names like Édouard Dujardin, Dorothy Richardson, and Virginia Woolf. Section four of this study discusses the broad use of stream of conciousness in Ulyssess and for that it examines three important episodes . Section number five takes into consideration the implications of this techniqe both formally and epistemologically.

Section number six examines the continuing impact of Joyce's Ulysses on twentieth-century literature.

2. Philosophical and Psychological Foundations

2.1 William James and the Metaphor of the Stream

A psychologist William James used the term "stream of consciousness" in his famous book *The Principles of Psychology* in 1890. Based on this one can argue that this term has a psychological root not a literary criticism. In his book James dedicates an entire chapter to this topic and called it 'The Stream of Thought.' Before James psychologists or whom were familiar with psychology suggesting that our thoughts are separate or disconnected links in a chain. James refuses this view and he believes our consciousness "does not appear to itself chopped up in bits", he continues to claim our thought is like a river or a stream flows, and no boundaries ever exist between one thought and the next thought (James 239).

James in his book lists several characteristics of this stream. First, Every thought is entirely personal. It means every single thought belongs to a specific person. Second, it never stays the same, it keeps changing: means thoughts do not happen exactly the same way the second time. Third, it is unbreakable: even factors like sleep or daydream do not stop our thoughts. Fourth, consciousness always has a purpose, it aims to deal with things around it rather than itself. Fifth, choice is a big part of consciousness: it always selects and refuses it like a filter, therefore preferring some experience and dismisses others (James 243-46).

The term stream or river changed everything in literature, in fact it had huge impact on narrative technique in literature. Paying attention to perfect grammar and logical sentence does not match with what we actually think. Following that pattern of writing may create a false picture of human brain. James suggests that to sound more realistic writers should show that human mind is a mess, it jumps from a current feeling to a sudden memory or an emotion, it is a mixture of all them (Humphrey 3).

2.2 Henri Bergson and the Philosophy of Duration

An architect Henri Bergson, holder of a philosophical analysis of time and experience, his philosophical analysis of time goes well with James's psychological account, changed the way people saw time. Bergson in his works such as *Time and Free Will* (1889) and *Matter and Memory* (1896) advances his analysis for time. To Bergson there is a real distinction between time measured by seconds and minutes, which is known as 'clock time' with the actual time which we feel it, he calls





it “duration” (durée). He suggests that time is not a straight line but instead it is a flow where past memories, future hopes all mix in present (Bergson, Time 100-02).

Reading Bergson's philosophy can help sharpen our understanding for stream of consciousness narrative and the way we view it. Therefore actual time or duration serves as a real representation of inner life or thought because it is characterized by disorder different from clock time in which there is no chronologic narration, Bergson's analysis suggests that literature needs to have some layers of time to collide, it is best to show multiple times occurring at once. One single incident might evoke a past memory and build a future dream (Bergson, Matter 67). Joyce is a master mind of this technique in Ulysses. In Ulysses this Bergsonian understanding of time vividly seen and realized. In Ulysses Bloom lives in present time but frequently his mind occupied with old memories and future concerns (Schwarz 97).

3. Stream of Consciousness Before Joyce

It is true that Ulysses by Joyce is the best example of stream of consciousness, but Joyce is not the one who created it. There were great authors and writers before Joyce who had experience with this technique. To find and understand Joyce's work better and how amazingly he used this technique we should look at his predecessor (Humphrey 5).

Edouard Dujardin is a French writer, He is the one who honored for his use of his interior monologue in his novella *Les Lauriers sont coupés*. It is one simple form of stream of consciousness. On multiple occasions Joyce admits Dujardin had influence on him. Dujardin later on released his description of the technique *Le Monologue intérieur* (1931). Compared to Joyce, it is notable that simplicity is occupied Dujardin's use of his interior monologue. In Joyce's use of stream of consciousness grammar correction is not important as well as order. In Joyce's technique there is a deep meaning and a cultural reference which make his style so familiar.

Prior to the publication of Ulysses. An English author called Dorothy Richardson wrote a series of multi-volume novels called *Pilgrimage*, as it was a great contribution to English literature at that time. Richardson's series began with ***Pointed Roofs*** in 1915. The publication of *Pointed Roof* was a vital for experiencing stream of consciousness and diving deep into inside character's mind before Ulysses. In her work multi-volume novel Dorothy Richardson spends years following inner world of her major character Miriam Henderson, Richardson uses a different technique to show his character's inner thoughts. Even though this technique was clearly designed to female rhythms and interest and for

this unique technique she was praised by Virginia Woolf, who herself worked closely in similar writing methods (Woolf, "Romance" 189). It is worth mentioning that Woolf came from the same school of modernist pursuit and this is noticeable in Mrs Dalloway (1925) and To the Lighthouse (1927), obviously, Woolf's use of stream of consciousness is more poetic. deeply interested in mood, emotions and self-impression and he seeks to show pretty side of brain. Unlike Woolf Joyce leans towards writing comedy, mess and dirty body habits.

The only difference that makes sets Joyce apart from writers before him is that Joyce's project was so big and highly organized. In fact, writers like Dujardin, Richardson, and Woolf all experienced the use of stream of consciousness but their experience remained mostly within traditional boundaries. Where in Ulysses Joyce builds his sections completely on unique rules —each episode has a different style of writing, each episode had a different layout, different storyline approach, therefore we constantly see put on stream of consciousness itself as well as shift and twist (Kenner 91).

4. Stream of Consciousness in Ulysses: Close Readings

4.1 The 'Proteus' Episode: Stephen Dedalus and the Phenomenology of Perception

James names his third chapter in Ulysses 'Proteus'. This chapter is the most difficult chapter in Ulysses both philosophically and technically in the use of stream of consciousness. As the chapter opens describing Stephen Dedalus walking on the beach alone. James in his narration dives deep into Dedalus's mind with little description of the outside world. These opening lines of this chapter are recognized as the most famous and celebrated lines in modern literature.

Ineluctable modality of the visible: at least that if no more, thought through my eyes. Signatures of all things I am here to read, seaspawn and seawrack, the nearing tide, that rusty boot. Snotgreen, bluesilver, rust: coloured signs (Joyce 37).

The above sentences not only give readers a description of Dedalus's mind but show his mind in work. He takes his first phrase which tells us how we should see the things around us 'Ineluctable modality of the visible' from great thinkers like Aristotle and Berkeley. He employs this phrase to secure his insights. As Stephen tries to explain his perception using his abstract philosophical language, he gets disrupted by concrete objects on the beach like: seaspawn, seawrack, a rusty boot. This shows that mind is constantly on move between abstraction and sensation and this exactly



fits with what James and Bergson described about thoughts flow (James 243).

For Joyce it was important his prose not only representing its content by rather imitating the structure of consciousness. In terms of sentence structure, the text is damaged, ambiguous, and short; and when it comes to grammar, there is a constant shift between full sentences, broken, and direct sensory imagery. No use of quotation marks. It is obvious that Joyce intentionally abandoned using them in *Ulysses*, Joyce carefully eliminates these traditional signals that separate character's thoughts from real world. This removal helps cleaning boundaries between how Stephen thinks and what the narrators notices. Here Joyce omits any space to let readers feel Dedalus's actual senses. This removal makes readers directly experience Dedalus's feelings exactly how he lives them (Schwarz 55).

4.2 The 'Lestrygonians' Episode: Leopold Bloom and the Embodied Mind

In previous chapter 'Proteus' Joyce depicts Dedalus's deep and smart inner world. In this chapter Joyce wisely introduces a new character Leopold Bloom who walks streets of the central Dublin. Here Joyce represents to his readers a different mind. He carefully shows a practical mind of Bloom, an associative mind which brilliantly creates links between ideas and holds kindness to others, and Bloom's mind concentrates on concerns of body such as hunger and worry (Kenner 76). In fact Joyce in *Lestrygonians* portrays uniqueness of Bloom's stream of consciousness for its scale and rapid association. Amazingly just walking by a poster of a famous evangelist preacher named John Alexander Dowie, his mind quickly creates a network of associations with that poster such as United States of America, evangelism and religious people who he knows them, his mind is busy associating all of this when suddenly disrupted by a smell coming from the river Liffey and by passing a friend. Just after short sentences Bloom's mind starts jumping between multiple topics, he starts by thinking about food, and then he thinks about his wife Molly whether she cheats on him or not, and then he moves into digestion and how it works, and he asks if eating fish is good for brain or not. Bloom's mind does not follow a logical sequence instead it is triggered by what he sees, by emotional association and old pressured memories (James 246; Joyce 151-54).

This associative quality is central to Joyce's conception of Bloom as a character. Where Stephen's mind tends to move through philosophical abstraction toward aesthetic insight, Bloom's mind inhabits the sensory world more immediately and comfortably — yet it is no less rich and no less interior. The Jamesian insight that consciousness is selective is

evident in the way Bloom's stream returns again and again to the fact of Molly's impending afternoon assignation with Blazes Boylan, circling it obsessively without ever quite confronting it directly, registering it through evasion, displacement, and sudden changes of subject (Kenner 78).

4.3 The 'Penelope' Episode: Molly Bloom and the Dissolution of Syntax

The last episode is called "Penelope", Joyce writes the most fundamental writing experiment in *Ulysses*. The final episode of *Ulysses*. The Episode opens in a room where Bloom's wife Molly rests in bed. Molly's stream of consciousness is presented in eight long lines without any punctuation. The last line is too long, and it probably extends into thousands of words in which her inner world, feelings, memories, dreams all mix up, using this technique by Joyce eliminates conventional grammar or any logical walls to imitate raw human thoughts (Joyce 723-82).

The lack of punctuation in this episode carries an implication that it is not just a characteristic of writing but in fact it is a proof of Molly's stream of consciousness and it is a true reality of boundaries of traditional language. In writing, Punctuation is a system of rules which works to enforce well-organized hierarchy on language, this system defines limits sentences, clauses, texts and paragraphs, and it builds connection between subordination and coordination. By ignoring punctuation, Joyce intends to build a unique form of consciousness in which these strict lines do not exist. According to this form thoughts do not follow one another in lines instead they flood together, mix and join and this echoes exactly the concept of time "duration" of Henri Bergson (Bergson, *Time* 104; Schwarz 201).

Molly's thoughts are important because they openly represent a true picture of Women's body, sexual desires and deep memories. Early readers of *Ulysses* were shocked by what they were presented in *Ulysses* and called it scandalous, in contrast modern readers or critics celebrate this as a big achievement in representing women's interiority. Molly finalizes her statements by repeating the word 'yes', her 'yes' does not end the story beautifully but honors human consciousness and its connection to the world. It also suggests that existing means 'yes' to the universe and happily accepting your individual experience (Kenner 148).

5. Formal and Epistemological Implications

Using the technique of stream of consciousness by Joyce brings to awareness the important relationships between form and content, between



narrative and knowledge. There are three important implications required close attention.

First, this style of writing by Joyce poses a challenge to the superiority of old narration style 'third-person omniscient narrator'. In omniscient-third person narrator which was a common nineteenth century type of narration the narrator has full hand knowledge about the character, knows what a character does, thinks, feels and what he expresses in words, then the narrator puts this information into a clear, understandable and ordered narrative (Humphrey 7). Joyce's technique rips this power into pieces and instead presents inside world of the character directly, with no need to any chronological facilitation. Providing that deep detail with messiness is only in capacity of this technique and no omniscient technique can ever do. This technique leads to a conclusion that every thought is fairly treated; boring, crazy, shocking, all get the same amount of care as important philosophical ideas as well as high standard moral values.

Second, this form of narration in Ulysses was born to reverse the traditional old form of narration between story and discourse, between what to narrate and how to narrate. Old narrative used discourse to help its story, style works to deliver major elements of the story like plot, character, theme as clearly as possible (Schwarz 11). In contrast. In Ulysses, the old narrative is torn apart and what draws readers attention mostly is diverse style through which consciousness is presented, therefore it is fair to say that readers never detach the question of what consciousness is from how consciousness is portrayed. This technique of writing goes hand and hand with its content.

Third, the use of this technique provokes a serious question regarding our private inner world communicability, Is it possible to interpret our private inner thoughts to outside world, It is a question even the book itself leaves it unanswered. Stream of consciousness builds that assumption that one person can enter another person's mind and see clearly character's thoughts. This technique allows the reader to see what is like to be one of the three characters imagining their inner world. It is obvious what stands in achieving that goal is that the text mainly vague, symbolic, and broken grammery, and it frequently tells the reader that obviousness is a made-up story, but thoughts are extremely opposite, knowingly to read a mind you requires not a direct access to mind but it is performed through interpreting their behavior (Kenner 17).

6. Legacy and Influence

Joyce's Ulysses left a big impact on the authors came after him and it reflected in their writing. Samuel Beckett who worked for Joyce as his secretary out of his intelligence applied this technique in his writing

professionally. He took stream of consciousness even further as it is notable in *Trilogy* (*Molloy*, *Malone Dies*, *The Unnamable*). Joyce in *Ulysses* tries to not separate his character's thoughts from real places or physical bodies where Samuel goes further and tries to cut off his speakers from any real places, no bodies and he even makes them appear like ghosts. It reaches a level where his speakers doubt if they really exist (Humphrey 130).

The American writer William Faulkner was among the earliest writers to use stream of consciousness in his work "the Sound and the Fury" seen as a response to this new challenging narrative in writing introduced by Joyce. Faulkner in the Sound and the Fury uses diverse streams of consciousness starts with extreme opening lines in which Benjy Compson who is mentally sick narrates them, the narrator's mind jumps from one time to another without having any consideration for chronological order. Faulkner builds an amazing narrative of a southern broken apart family where no one else can achieve it through any traditional narrative method. The sound and the Fury is a proof that like Joyce Faulkner was very ambitious regarding the structure of his book, therefore he intentionally makes his book hard for readers to understand so he could absolutely show the inner world experience (Humphrey 131).

The effect of stream of consciousness goes far beyond English literature. Writers like Juan Rulfo and Carlos Fuentes are among Latin writers whose works reflected the use of this technique. This impact was felt in broader literature of other nations like European literature, and Japanese literature. In each of these literatures stream of consciousness exists not to copy the technique but to transform. Stream of consciousness is reorganized, redesigned, adapted to local literatures according to the political and social environment writers were writing in or belonged to. Finally, Despite the fact that this new form of writing changed writing narrative but stream of consciousness is not beyond criticism. Some critiques believe that stream of consciousness is extremely overwhelming, restricted and forces readers quitting pleasures of traditional narrative. Others believe this technique is too personal, and it advocates for bourgeois concept of subjectivity which lines up with the social systems ideologically (Schwarz 19). Despite their worries and notes authors broadly accepted this technique and at the same time they played it down, and they had questions regarding beliefs about the freedom of personal mind and also about commonality of inner world experience.

7. Conclusion

In twentieth century Writers experienced a new technique which was completely different from the previous narrative technique. Readers saw the birth of a new technique as an answer to the psychological, philosophical calls in which they considered nineteenth century narrative method was incomplete especially in capturing real individual experience (James 239). Writers in twentieth century were influenced by ideas of both William James who defined consciousness as a flowing and



Stream of Consciousness as a New Phenomenon in the Twentieth-Century Novel: James Joyce's *Ulysses* as a Case Study



continuous stream and Henri Bergson who has his philosophy of lived time (duration). Dujardin and Woolf are among the writers who used stream of consciousness of their own and they tried to show beauty of inner world honestly no other traditional technique could depict (Bergson, Time 90).

Joyce is one of the famous writers whose stream of consciousness reaches its peak and achieves its literary goal. Joyce shows the inner world of each of his characters in *Ulysses* on a sunny day in Dublin (Kenner 33). Joyce tried every aspect of stream of consciousness including interior monologue, free indirect discourse, syntactic disruption, his focus was to make consciousness the official and philosophical heart of his novel. Joyce's effort is the creation of a work which not only changed old narrative technique but it challenged the reading practices the same extend. He encourages readers to dive deep into human mind and experience for themselves individual inner world (Schwarz 199).

It is worth mentioning that *Ulysses* still holds a big impact on both literary practice and literary theory. Interestingly the novel seeks to answer questions about how human language relates to consciousness, and what relationship exists between novel's narrative structure and direct or first hand experience, relationship between human thoughts and social reality, and these questions are still considered as the most important and disputed topics in modern literary scholarship (Kenner 17). To understand truly *Ulysses* and the stream of consciousness you have to engage with nothing except to think of the question of what is meant to represent a human thought and what it is meant to own one.

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