

A Narrative Analysis of Stream of Consciousness in the Novel *Adrakahā al-Nisyān* by Sanā' Sha'lān: A Psychological Reading Based on William James's Perspective

Hedayatallah Taghizadeh, (corresponding author): Associate Professor,
Department of Arabic Language and Literature, Faculty of Literature and Foreign
Languages, Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran. Email: drtaghizadeh@cfu.ac.ir

Introduction

William James (1890), in his *Principles of Psychology*, introduced the term "stream of consciousness" to describe the continuous flow of thoughts, memories, and emotions within the conscious mind. This theory, which offered a psychological framework for understanding human consciousness, later became a pivotal technique in modern literature, enabling authors to delve into characters' inner depths, challenge conventional narrative forms, and bridge psychology and fiction. Sana Shaalan's novel *Perceptions of Forgetfulness* (1977) exemplifies this approach, employing interior monologue and other contemporary devices to explore the unconscious layers of its characters. This research aims to analyze the novel through the lens of James's theory, motivated by three key needs: first, to offer a fresh interpretation of a work not yet examined via this framework; second, to enrich comparative studies between Western psychological theories and Arabic literary traditions; and third, to illuminate the link between narrative form and the philosophical-psychological themes of the text. Using a descriptive-analytical method, the study investigates how the stream of consciousness manifests in narrative structure, characterization, and the portrayal of existential concerns.

Methodology

This interdisciplinary study combines literature and psychology to analyze Sanā' Sha'lān's novel *Adrakahā al-Nisyān* (1977) based on William James's stream of consciousness theory (1890). Using a qualitative descriptive-analytical approach and text-based content analysis, the research identifies eleven operational components of James's theory—including free association, interior monologue, non-linear mental movement, psychological time disruption, poetic language, mental symbolism, and the blurring of external reality and the character's mind. Data were collected through library study and careful examination of the novel's original text, then systematically analyzed according to these components. The findings reveal how Sha'lān employs these techniques to create a fluid, non-linear narrative that reflects characters' inner conflicts—such as guilt, identity crisis, and the interplay of memory and forgetting—while dissolving the boundaries between past and present, reality and imagination. By demonstrating how these operational components function as practical indicators of James's theory rather than

mere general narrative elements, the research offers a replicable interdisciplinary model for analyzing similar works of modern Arabic fiction.

Results and Discussion

The analysis of the novel "Perceptions of Forgetfulness" based on William James's stream of consciousness theory demonstrates the systematic application of nine main components. Internal monologue, flowing through the characters Baha and Zahhak, presents non-linear, poetic expressions of love, suffering, and identity search. Association operates unconsciously, with present moments triggering childhood memories through shared emotional experiences. Fluid and non-linear time, using flashback techniques, breaks temporal sequences and blends past with present, as the main character lives entirely in his past. Self-narration places readers at the center of emotional storms, fostering immediate identification with characters. The poetic language, manifested through sublime words, imagery, and rhythm, adds philosophical depth. Mental symbolism conveys abstract concepts through personal and cultural symbols. The disregard for conventional audience expectations transforms readers into co-investigators who must interpret intertwined layers of thought. Finally, the return to past and memory blurs boundaries between objective and subjective reality, immersing readers in psychological turmoil where time stops and only the endless flow of memory persists.

Conclusion

This interdisciplinary study analyzes Sanā Sha'ālān's novel *Adrasahā al-Nisyān* through William James's stream of consciousness theory, focusing on narrative structure, characterization, and ontological themes. Findings show that nonlinear time and flashbacks reflect James's "continuous flow of consciousness," enabling characters to merge past and present and redefine identity via repressed memories. Interior monologues and self-talk depict psychological conflicts—guilt, loneliness, identity crises—without mediation, while repressed memories and vague emotions flow as "transitive states" shaping the "fringes of consciousness." Ontologically, poetic language, mental symbolism, and blurred reality-mind boundaries represent forced forgetting, memory-desire tension, and identity search in a repressive world; forgetting is a conscious survival choice, not memory loss. These devices engage readers actively: nonlinear time and free associations challenge traditional narration, while poetic language creates a dreamlike, multi-layered atmosphere inviting reflection on hidden meanings. The research shows Sha'ālān integrates James's components to create dialectical form-content interaction, expanding Arabic narrative's capacity for psychological complexity. It offers a replicable interdisciplinary model for analyzing similar works, demonstrating how stream of consciousness

techniques can illuminate modern human psychological intricacies in contemporary Arabic literature.

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