The Academic
International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research

An Online Peer Reviewed / Refereed Journal
Volume 3 | Issue 7 | July 2025
ISSN: 2583-973X (Online)
Website: www.theacademic.in

Negotiating Identity between Inheritance and Autonomy: Formation and the Crisis of the Self through Auto ethnography and Modernism in Yeats, Joyce, Woolf and Golding

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DOI : https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.16784121

ARTICLE DETAILS

Research Paper

Accepted: 16-07-2025

Published: 10-08-2025

Keywords:

Mythical, catastrophe, cataclysmic, gyre, disillusion, generational shifts, radical, autonomy, sphinx, Spiritus Mundi, gyre, autoethnography, orthodox, diasporic, falcon, modernism, conventions, disorientation, blood-dimmed, the Second Coming, redeemer.

ABSTRACT

The central focus of this essay on W.B.Yeats's "The Second Coming" is to investigate its portrayal of the representation of culture and spiritual collapse. Yeats's depiction of a cataclysmic transformation highlights the disintegration of religious and ethical order and examines its profound impact and repercussions on the construction of personal and collective identity. To further develop this analysis, the essay draws on Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse,* James Joyce's *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* as secondary texts, each of which thoughtfully analyses the dynamic between individual self-discovery and entrenched cultural expectations. All four works are analysed through the lenses of modernism and autoethnography to examine the interplay of inner transformation as traditional worldviews clash with contemporary life.

Introduction:

William Butler Yeats a distinguished literary voice of the twentieth century literature is well-known for his insightful examination, revolting around themes of spirituality, cultural upheaval, and myth. His literary output frequently mirrors the anxieties of a world undergoing change characterised by the

breakdown of traditional values. In conjunction with Yeats, William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* uncovers the sinister undertones of the darker impulses of humanity alongside the precariousness of social order. James Joyce, a pioneer of modernist literature, is acclaimed for his inward- looking narrative techniques and his opposition to dominant cultural and religious paradigms, notably in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Virginia Woolf, another significant figure in modernism, is recognised for probing into the intricacies of the human mind and the intricate nature of human relationships, as exemplified in *To The Lighthouse.* In unison, these writers convey comprehensive perspectives on transformation at both personal and communal levels, in an era defined by dynamic cultural revolution. Implicitly, these writers in the selected texts embody autoethnographic perspectives by blending personal narratives with wider cultural and social contexts. Their works serve to analyze the processes that test, modify, and alter the self through deep interaction with ancestral cultural norms.

Although the selected texts are not strictly autobiographical they address fundamental concerns such as personal identity, existential uncertainty, spiritual unrest all of which hold deep relevance to individual lived realities. In this essay, W.B.Yeats's "The Second Coming" is positioned as the primary text. This central discussion is enriched through comparative analysis with three secondary texts of Woolf, Joyce, and Golding.

Modernism, a multinational cultural movement cemented its place in the late nineteenth century and reached its most radical peak on the eve of World War 1. It became established in response to the fast-paced social evolution, industrial growth, and the perceived collapse of conventional institutions. Modernist writers such as T.S Eliot, Joseph Conrad, and Ezra Pound, emphasised fragmentation, disillusionment, and the search for new meaning in a fractured world. Complementing this are the theorists of autoethnography, such as Carolyn Ellis, Arthur Bochner, and Laurel Richardson. These pioneer researchers accentuate the vitality of self-reflective story-telling because it allows individual to deeply examine and articulate their personal experiences while connecting them to larger social, cultural, and historical forces. By focusing on their inner experience, storytellers bring to light how their unique identities, challenges, and perspectives are influenced by, and in response shape the broader social contexts they inhabit. This convergence deepens understanding, cultivating empathy and awareness that extend beyond individual stories. It shows how personal stories go beyond individual experience to reflect collective realities, exposing systematic patterns, inequalities, and our shared humanity.

The self feels caught in the ever-widening, unstable, constant motion and outward expansion of discovery. With reference to the concept of “turning in”, we observe two simultaneous types of expansions or explorations. The first is the subjective expansion of the self, which gradually fragments from its stable identity and explores outward. The second is the expansion of the gyre itself- represents the broader social structures of conventions, norms, religion, and practices which no longer maintain a stable, coherent form. This dual process is encapsulated in the phrase "widening gyre." Thus, the metaphor conveys both an internal, personal exploration and an external, societal transformation occurring concurrently. This unfolding process grows increasingly disjointed as the gyre-symbolizing prevailing norms and customs-loses its cohesive center. This dual process is encapsulated in the phrase "widening gyre." The phrase “turning and turning in the widening gyre” captures two parallel explorations: the self’s outward search beyond traditional boundaries, and the gyre’s own expansion away from its orthodox core. Together, they embody an ongoing transformation—one that rejects fixed beliefs in favor of a dynamic, though disoriented, modern condition.

The repetition in the phrase "turning and turning" signifies more than mere motion-it suggests a relentless, outward exploration of the self, untethered from traditional tenets. This image powerfully captures the modernist shift: a world in flux, where old certainties dissolve and new, uncertain promises begin to take shape. Yeats’s images of turning, and of the gyre that widens with every movement, encapsulate the idea of continual transformation and change. This internal transformation is paralleled by an external disconnection. Just as the falcon breaks away from its source of control, the self detaches from the anchors of family, tradition, and cultural norms; no longer grounded by the coherent structures that once offered stability. Through the line “the falcon cannot hear the falconer*”* a deeper disconnection between the self and its original sources of meaning becomes discernible. The falcon serves as a powerful metaphor resonating the ever evolving identity not only of the self, but also of broader human agencies such as religion (modernism and scientific enquiry brought about philosophical and devotional transformation across centuries and regions) and cultural practices (diasporic identity reshapes inherited beliefs, and generational shifts leading to transformation and abandonment of cultural precedent) all of which appear to move beyond the boundaries once rooted in convention and authority. No longer responsive to the falconer’s command, these forces spiral away from their origins, signalling a loss of cohesion and control. Now, both are caught in a state of ongoing change and movement, gradually distancing themselves from the foundation they once recognised. The self is drawn into a continuous outward passage, no longer paying heed to the once instrumental foundational tenets.

There is a profound sense of meaninglessness as "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold", losing its grip—its inability to gather and bind principles, beliefs, and identities into a unified whole. Rather than serving as a point of convergence, the centre weakens, unable to command coherence or continuity. This collapse resonates with Lily Briscoe's quiet existential reflection in *To the Lighthouse*:

"What is the meaning of life? That was all—a simple question; one that tended to close in on one with years." (Woolf 187).

As Lily contemplates this question, she too confronts the disintegration of once-stable truths. Her introspection parallels the cultural and personal fragmentation Yeats laments a world in which the old centre cannot hold, leaving individuals to navigate an open, uncontrollable transformation that is chaotic, with uncertain modernity.

Both texts reveal how the erosion of inherited structures leads not only to personal disorientation but to a larger reckoning with meaning itself. The result is fragmentation, uncertainty, and the loss of a unifying structure. This may allude to:

"Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,

The blood-dimmed tide is loose, and everywhere

The ceremony of innocence is drowned" (Yeats 4-6).

The phrase "mere anarchy is loosed upon the world" suggests not just chaos in the literal sense, but a symbolic collapse of the structures—social, moral, political—that once imposed order. Interpreted through the lens of the self, it may reflect the release of the individual from rigid institutional frameworks such as family, church, or nation. This release, while potentially liberating, also invites a kind of existential disorder. Once the restraints of tradition and authority fall away, the self is thrust into a state of radical freedom—one that may be thrilling but also destabilising. In this sense, the 'anarchy' Yeats warns of can be read as both a cultural unraveling and a psychological one, where unbound agency risks turning into fragmentation. Stephen Dedalus's defiant statement in *The Portrait of the artist as a Yong Man*:

"I will not serve that in which I no longer believe, whether it call itself my home, my fatherland, or my church" (Joyce 228).

This mirrors the modernist anxiety that underpins Yeats's poem that powerfully underscores the fragility of any entity- be it societal, personal, or spiritual-that is governed by foundational principles. The moment these guiding structures begin to collapse or loosen their hold, a dangerous vacuum like the widening gyre emerges. Yeats's phrase "The blood- dimmed tide is loosed" evokes a world no longer anchored by reasons, ethics, or spiritual guidance. What might apparently be seen as liberation could only be a descent into barbarism, violence, disruptions; emerged from the surfacing of primitive human instincts. As Yeats's asserts:

"The best lack all conviction, while the worst

Are full of passionate intensity" (7 - 8).

The idea of an existential freedom that is both liberating and chaotic resonates strongly with Stephen Dedalus as Joyce puts it:

"He was destined to learn his own wisdom apart from others or to learn the wisdom of others himself wandering among the snares of the world"(148).

True to the meaning of his name, Stephen Dedalus takes flight- escaping the confines of inherited identity and tradition. In this detachment, he is not lost but liberated, carving out a new self amidst the uncertainty of modernity. His joy lies in the very act of becoming- outside the bounds of family, religion, and nation—alone, yet empowered in his estrangement. Yet, how far this flight can stretch remains uncertain. Freedom, though exhilarating, is not without limits. To live within a society is to exist among systems- institutions, norms, and expectations- that guide and restrain us. In their absence, humanity risks slipping into chaos, and might return to primal state. As in *Lord of the Flies,* "Golding reveals that beneath the veneer of civilization, man's true nature harbors a dark impulse toward evil- an impulse that inevitably surfaces when the fragile structures of society collapse." Stephen Dedalus seeks happiness not from the familiar sources that once shaped his understanding of self, but from an uncertain, unseen vitality-an unknown force that propels him beyond his former identity. His detachment is not emptiness but a conscious refusal to serve what he no longer believes in, making space for a self-defined identity; a longing for an unburdened freedom. His contentment in being alone marks a bold departure from all forms of inherited authority—religion, family and culture, etc.

However, as Yeats warns in "The Second Coming", "The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere the ceremony of innocence is drowned," suggesting that the collapse of institutional order

may not yield ideal freedom, but rather unleash chaos, primal instincts, and violence. This echoes William Golding's insight in *Lord of the Flies*, that "man produces evil as a bee produces honey"—implying that in the absence of governing structures, human nature tends toward destruction. Thus, while the self may yearn to transcend all constructs, the significance of institutional frameworks cannot be entirely dismissed. They function as necessary constraints—democratic tools to preserve coherence, civility, and collective well-being within a man-made society. Once the long-held maxim is destabilized, fractured, and begins to crumble down, it alters the scenario. This disturbance brings to the surface the true identities of those who had long used systems or institutions to mask their real motives. The unravelling is not limited to the visible rebels, but also exposes those who had camouflaged themselves within systems of order. It is during such moments of upheaval the true identity is revealed, Yeats' line rings especially true: "the best lack all conviction"- those who might upheld reason and morality often fall silent. Meanwhile, the most rejected, the ones pushed to the margins, rise to actions with fierce determination. They are the ones "full of passionate intensity" as Yeats writes, becoming the unexpected force in times when the supposed "best" remain silent or indecisive.

Some revelation appears to give shape to the second coming. It is "second" in the sense that the first phase of life- our birth and upbringing is guided by inherited norms, beliefs, and structures we did not choose but were born into. These systems- family, religion, and nation- mould our identity, often without question. However, as we mature, we begin to develop our own understanding, perspectives, and ideologies. Through the lens of modernity, these evolving views frequently clash with the convictions we were once taught to uphold. In this light, "the second coming" may symbolize not just an apocalyptic moment, but a personal and collective second chance-an awakening or transformation where the self begins to assert its own truth over inherited dogma:

"For life itself was moving and changing; nothing was fixed or certain" (Woolf 161).

Identity becomes a fluid and evolving construct shaped significantly by the modernist perspective, which encourages individuals to explore and define the self from the depths of their inner experience. It fosters transformation and transitions, highlighting the ongoing negotiation of identity beyond inherited or fixed frameworks. This dynamic process is exemplified in Lily Briscoe's journey, where she moves away from her former self and emerges into a new, redefined sense of being as:

"She felt herself transferred by the intensity of the moment" (Woolf 45).

This journey is often marked by tension and fragmentation as personal freedom challenges collective expectations. We move away from the rigid, restrictive systems into a space where our new understanding of the self and its place in the world unfolds amid uncertainty. It is hence this turning point, this revelation which Yeats speaks of is not distant; it is imminent. As the self transforms, uncovers deep truths and shed inherited structures, the self enters a new phase- a kind of rebirth. This rebirth, this emergence of something unfamiliar and transformative, is the Second Coming; not a return, but rather a radical becoming. Joyce's, Stephen Dedadus for instance declares:

"Welcome O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience" (Joyce 234).

Yeats's poem signals a profound transformation. The speaker's vision of a "vast image out of Spiritus Mundi" suggests the turmoil that arises when the self departs from familiar systems and moves toward the unknown. What is left behind is not necessary embraced for its virtue, but abandoned perhaps because of generational dissonance: a gap in beliefs, values, and understandings between the past and the emerging self. As the self begins to reject what was once inherited without question, it enters a space that is unformed and unstable. From the desert- a metaphorical blank space emerges a figure with the body of a lion and the head of a man, an allusion of a sphinx, a huge mythical creature of the ancient Greek and Egyptian cultures , with a gaze as blank and as "pitiless as the sun." This imagery reflects the danger of the unfamiliar: the self having distanced itself from once dominant ideologies, is now confronted with the vastness of freedom, which may not bring clarity but chaos. "The Second Coming" then marks not a triumphant arrival but an unsettling revelation born from the collapse of inherited structures and the uncertainties of forging a new identity.

The act of breaking free may seem liberating, but it also opens a terrifying abyss of uncertainty. To venture out into the unknown- with no clear destination, plan, or accountability can initially feel empowering. Yet over time, the absence of direction or structure may render the individual passive, idle, and even devoid of ambition. When freedom lacks a sense of direction; when not grounded by purpose, it may become a burden rather than a blessing. The reference of the "vast image" from the *Spiritus Mundi* signals not merely a shift but an impending catastrophe- one that carries with it the scale and horror of doomsday. Yeats's vision is not abstract; it is anchored in a tangible geography: the desert. This setting is particularly notable for its extremities- searing heat by day, piercing cold by night, barren land, and absence of life-giving resources. The desert in its hostility and unpredictability becomes a metaphor for a world stripped of meaning, stability, and moral anchor. It serves as a potent warning: in this new

paradigm anything can happen and nothing is certain. The appearance of the beast in such a place underscores the gravity of what's to come- a future that is not just unknown but terrifying in its potential.

The self, having broken free from conventions, now enters a realm devoid of certainty, however rich in opportunity yet shadowed by the risk of turmoil. This turbulence of unanchored freedom finds expression in Lily Briscoe's admission:

"It was one's body feeling, not one's mind. A sudden, violent revelation of something immune which one had always felt…" (Woolf 52).

The desire of the self to abandon everything and to live life on its own terms, by its own accord, finds a chilling parallel in the emergence of the sphinx in Yeats's "The Second Coming". The ideas born out of this newly liberated self could be as terrifying and destabilising as the Sphinx itself. Emerging from the desert with its blank, pitiless gaze signifies the rise of a new force unbound by the ethical or rational maxims that once held society together. This apocalyptic figure represents the chaotic consequences of unmoored individualism when ventured alone what may rises may not be enlightened, but monstrous. Yeats's sphinx represents the birth of a new era- but one that is irrational and morally unanchored. It is a symbol of something ancient, mysterious, and irrational, re-emerging at a time when traditional systems are breaking down. Its appearance as Yeats puts it: "moving its slow thighs" in the modern world is not a sudden explosion but a slow, creeping upheaval – a transformation that has been long in the making. This suggests that the collapse of old systems and the birth of a new, uncertain identity do not happen overnight. Rather, it unfolds gradually, unsettling the foundations of belief and order until the self is left to face an unfamiliar reality. The Sphinx, a creature of a bygone civilisation, now intrudes into the present, signalling that the consequences of rejecting inherited norms and forging a new path may be slow to manifest, but no less catastrophic in their eventual impact. A sense of ominous stillness is felt before the rupture of the immense power producing terrifying ambiguity. Before any catastrophe unfolds, it is often preceded by a tense, eerie stillness. Likewise, the sphinx does not leap impulsively upon its prey; instead, it watches, examines, and carefully monitors before striking. Similarly, Woolf's Lily Briscoe touches upon that quiet, disorienting stillness that comes with breaking away from social roles and expectations. Her pursuit of artistic autonomy leads her to a distance embedded in solitude, echoing the modernist tension of negotiating identity between the self and the conventions which often results in fragmentations, inner conflict, and discomfort. Such conflicts do not remain confined to the inner self alone; they extend outward- manifesting as tensions between the individual and society. The desire for

personal transformation often clashes with the societal resistance to change, creating a dynamic where self-assertion is met with scrutiny, rejection, or alienation. Such a sight is troubling- the self stepping away from society, becomes troubling for society as it threatens the comfort of familiar norms.

The troubling sight is well illustrated in Yeats's poem symbolizing the unsettling transformation of the individual who defies accepted norms. This change is neither comforting nor easily embraced by society, and thus it "troubles the sight"- a metaphor for the discomfort and resistance triggered by radical shifts in identity and belief. As the sphinx surveys its surroundings from a towering, elevated position, vultures circle above, forming a blanket-like canvas in the sky- harbingers of death, poised and waiting for the sphinx to strike, so they may descend and feed on the remains. Their presence foreshadows devastation, suggesting that the prey has already been marked, and the feast is imminent:

"Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.

The darkness drops again…" (Yeats 17-18).

This segment sets a tone that foretells an abominable shift. These images symbolize not just the breakdown of societal order but also the emotional and moral disorientation that follows. William Golding sharpens this caution in *Lord of the Flies,* where the absence of civil structures leads to moral collapse as Ralph questions:

"What are we? Humans? Or animals? Or savages?" (Golding 112-113).

Piggy, too, clings to order, reminding Jack, "You're breaking the rules," only to be met with Jack's dismissive retort, "Who cares?"

These exchanges dramatize the erosion of structure and the dangerous ease with which individuals abandon the frameworks that once defined them. Like Yeats's vision of the "blood-dimmed tide" and the "ceremony of innocence" being drowned, Golding shows how, in the absence of shared convictions the worst rise with "passionate intensity". When one individual or a few abandon the shared principles, the ripple effect can lead to widespread chaos; triggering larger disintegration across the collective. This is perfectly underscored in Yeats's poem when he suggests to the tide that is loosed. Yeats realises that the long-standing traditions can be awakened:

"That twenty centuries of stony steep

Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle" (19-20).

This might hints the collapse of the Christian epoch and the once etched dictum into the collective mind-now shaken and questioned with authority. For generation no one dared to disturb them. But now, in a revelation of the self, something stirs- a challenge to the hegemony of the trinity that once governed identity. And in that stirring, the ancient edifice begins to tremble. Stephen Dedalus was in cognisance of the change and so he asked for strength and guidance as he embarks on the new path- his artistic vocation as an artist. The prayer-like farewell is manifested in the concluding line of the novel:

"Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead. "(Joyce 234).

Stephen asks to be blessed by the spiritual Heavenly Father, and by Stephen Dedalus-the skilled craftsman of Greek mythology-echoed in his name. This speaks of his metamorphosis from an under confident boy transforming into a bold artist. Stephen's early life is marked by confusion and insecurity-he struggled with language and identity as a child. His transformation, like Yeats's poetic voice is slow and layered-not an overnight revelation but a process of listening closely to that inner voice, nurturing it, and finally finding the courage to embrace it outwardly, shredding his earlier doubts and boldly asserting his new identity. It begins with a whisper- the murmuring doubt of a child born yesterday, cradled in innocence, who dares to question what time has forged in stone. The ancient maxims, supreme dictums, and sacred beliefs- once held aloft as the spine of order- now tremble beneath the breath of enquiry. And when questioned they do not yield gently. "May be there is a beast…maybe it's only us." The system recoils. Stripped of its sanctified skin, and what remains is not divine light but an unsettling darkness:

"And what rough beast, its hour comes round at last,

Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?" (Yeats 21-22).

In choosing Bethlehem, the beast seeks not sanctuary, but to overwrite the sacred with its own presence. Bethlehem is symbolically reflected in the poem to reminds us that if a savior can emerge from such a revered place, then so too can a dark, ominous force-a beast. This reversal suggests that the birth of a creature is not always a symbol of hope or redemption but a blasphemous parody of divine rebirth. It can also signal the eruption of dark, undesirable emotions born from the (destructive) desires of humanity. In this way, Yeats presents a vision where even the holiest origins are not immune to corruption and chaos. From the unravelling comes not peace, but a rough beast, fierce in its birth- something we have summoned through our own unraveling- politically, morally or spiritually. As Woolf wrote:

"To pursue truth with such astonishing lack of consideration for other people's feelings, to rend the thin veils of civilization so wantonly, so brutally…" (53).

Yeats, Woolf, and Joyce suggest that the transformation of any entity- whether individual or societal can become deeply destabilising when severed from compassion and spiritual grounding. Rather than leading to growth or enlightenment, such change can become paradoxical: a futile or even destructive effort that unsettles not only the self but the collective order. The path may become a new art- a fresh canvas upon which to repaint identity and begin again. Yet, it is also an act of creation that simultaneously annihilates the very principles that once gave meaning and cohesion to the self and society. The promise of renewal is thus shadowed by the threat of erasure.

Ironically, ancient concepts and long-standing traditions are increasingly challenged by the "rocking cradle" just born yesterday. These age-old practices and beliefs are peeling away layer by layer, as religion itself becomes impure in its original unity, fragmenting into diverse, categorised denominations. As it encounters the complexities of the modern era, religious philosophy splinters, adapting and evolving but also losing the cohesive essence it once held.

Similarly, Bethlehem- a place long revered and celebrated for its sacred connection to Christ is ironically chosen as the site where the bestial creature emerges to unleash terror and bloodshed. Once hailed as the birthplace of the Redeemer who came to save humanity from sin, Bethlehem in this dark vision becomes the very ground from which a dreadful force is born. What was once a symbol of salvation and hope transforms into the origin of doom and destruction.

The havoc caused by rejection manifests not only in physical terms but also symbolically- an idea powerfully projected by Joyce through Stephen Dedalus's renunciation of Catholic doctrine, Irish nationalism, and familial expectations. Stephen's journey functions as a form of autoethnography, where personal experience becomes a mode through which cultural norms are questioned and dismantle. In the same vein, Lily Briscoe's internal conflict and artistic process stand as a muted yet potent form of rebellion to the rigid gender roles and social expectations of her time. Lily offers a psychological resistance and serves as an understated but impactful pushback against male-dominated systems and the marginalization of female artistic voices. In Golding's *Lord of the Flies,* the revolt against established societal laws and ethical codes is symbolized by the gradual descent into savagery among the boys on the island. As their sense of civility deteriorates, their behavior grows increasingly savage and violent- the conch shell which initially represents authority, rules, stability, social order, and collective decision-

making, gradually loses its influence and is ultimately shattered. The "Lord of the Flies" (the pig's head on a stick) serves as a powerful metaphor for the regression into barbarism and the absence of societal restraint that ensues once civilisation is cast aside; exposing the deep-seated chaos within humanity. While objects like the conch shell serves as a symbolic resonance for the erosion of discipline, governance, and cultural refinement, *Lord of the Flies* does not stop at metaphor. The text is laden with physical annihilation- boys endure violent hunts, suffer brutal aggression, and are ultimately killed.

While Golding vividly dramatizes the physical and symbolic collapse of civilisation, Yeats's "The Second Coming" offers a more abstract yet intensely personal portrayal of cultural and spiritual dissolution. Though Yeats does not speak as an "I" in the personal memoir sense, the poem articulates a vision rooted in personal and cultural disorientation. He prophesised a vision of worldwide turmoil with a personal and symbolic reckoning; marked the decay of traditional, spiritual and moral values.

In all four literary explorations, autoethnography plays a crucial role in illuminating the collision between the deeply personal experiences of the individual and the broader cultural, social, and the political realities that surround them. Through introspective narratives and subjective perspectives, the authors reveal how the self is both constructed and unsettled through its engagement with cultural and societal forces. This intersection exposes the friction between inner consciousness and the external world, emphasising that individual identity is always interwoven within wider societal structures in which it takes place. At the same time, modernism becomes a key lens for delving into the emotional and intellectual dissonance that arises from this conflict. As intersecting approaches, autoethnography and modernism furnish these writers with the means to engage with the layered dynamics- the multifaceted nature of transformation, extending beyond the self to encompass deeper ruptures in cultural and ancestral structures. This dual lens reveal both the possibility of self-liberation, together with the enduring consequences in defying inherited paradigms in the effort to discover authenticity and reinvent identity.

Drawing together these insights, W.B.Yeats's "The Second Coming" offers an evocative meditation on the unravelling of spiritual and cultural foundations, capturing the precarious existence of a world on the edge. By means of combined viewpoints of Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, James Joyce's *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, alongside William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, this essay explores how personal growth, and even institutional evolution, such as the church's fragmentation into diverse denominations – often involves challenging and sometimes fracturing inherited cultural frameworks.

Viewed through the combined lenses of modernism and autoethnography, these works expose the nuanced and sometimes strenuous course of transformation. Unified in their message, these texts point to the fact that the quest for authenticity and renewal is inherently self-contradictory: although it paves the way for new beginnings and self-discovery it also risks severing the fragile bonds that sustain both society and the individual.

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