

## Beyond Boundaries: Modernist Representation of Women's Predicaments in Rhys Davies' Welsh Short Stories

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**ABSTRACT :** This paper focuses on the portrayal of the aftermath of the coal crisis and the depiction of provincial Welsh families in Rhys Davies's short stories, with a specific emphasis on the gender and class relations of the characters within their socio-economic context. The study examines how Davies utilizes lyrical and modernist imagery, as well as psychological insights, to delve into the issues of class and gender in four of his short stories. Specifically, the analysis centers on the stories 'Nightgown,' 'The Fashion Plate,' 'Revelation,' and 'Blodwen,' showcasing how Davies's short stories and his modernist literary techniques shed light on the predicaments faced by women during that era. These stories are narrated from the perspective of female characters who are compelled to defy societal norms and conventions in order to overcome their frustrations stemming from class and gender-related constraints.

**KEYWORDS** –Welsh short stories; Rhys Davies; 'Nightgown'; 'The Fashion Plate', 'Revelation'; 'Blodwen'

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Poetry and short stories are frequently employed by Welsh writers as prominent genres. Toni Brown highlights that the short story genre, in particular, offers a unique opportunity to depict the "ex-centric" or peripheral aspects of society. Brown's clever pun encapsulates the genre's ability to portray "submerged population groups" and give voice to those who are marginalised, isolated, and experience loneliness [1]. By focusing on the "ex-centric" or peripheral, the short story genre serves as a powerful tool for shedding light on individuals and communities who are often overlooked or marginalised in mainstream narratives. Consequently, it becomes a fitting medium for addressing post-colonial issues and contemplating the impact of English cultural dominance in Wales. Moreover, it offers a platform to examine gender and class relations, as women often find themselves outside spheres of power, which can lead to marginalisation, oppression, and frustration in their pursuit of personal fulfilment.

Rhys Davies, a Welsh writer in English, was born at the beginning of the last century in Rhonda Valley. During his childhood he experienced the worst years of the coal crisis after WWI. Although Davies did not directly suffer the colliery's hardships – his father owned a grocery – he witnessed the most terrible moments endured by his community, the mine accidents, the shortage of food, the strikes. He left his hometown at an early age to seek a professional career as a writer in London, meeting influential writers such as D.H. Lawrence. In spite of this, he always came back with his imagination and most of his short stories are set in Wales depicting its provincial way of life. The brevity inherent in the short story genre may impose limitations on Rhys Davies' exploration of class and gender relations, as it does not provide ample space for in-depth and detailed analyses of these complex concerns. However, the concise nature of the genre also presents opportunities for the skilled use of literary techniques. Within the limited space, Davies employs lyrical imagery, recurring motifs, and powerful metaphors to condense symbolic and layered meanings, effectively capturing and conveying the nuances of class and gender issues. Through careful selection and economy of language, Davies can evoke a profound impact, enabling readers to delve into the intricacies of these themes within the constrained framework of the short story format. In this way, despite its brevity, the short story genre becomes a vehicle through which Davies can illuminate and explore the intricacies of class and gender relations.

The short story often employs narrative techniques associated with modernism, offering alternative modes that facilitate the exploration of class and gender. One particularly effective modernist approach employed in short stories is the portrayal of a character's inner thoughts and how they reveal seemingly insignificant moments in life. This essay aims to support these ideas with textual evidence from four of Davies's short stories written in the 1930s and 1940s: 'Nightgown,' 'The Fashion Plate,' 'Revelation,' and 'Blodwen'. These stories are quite representative of his class and gender exploration, all set in the provincial south of Wales. Two of them, 'Revelation' and 'Blodwen,' convey a sense of hope and optimism, while the other two, 'Nightgown' and 'The

Fashion Plate,' exhibit a gloomy and pessimistic tone. Moreover, all four stories revolve around a central theme that can be summarized as follows: the female characters must defy social conventions to overcome their frustrations, effectively highlighting the intersection of class and gender issues. For instance, Mrs. Mitchel challenges societal norms by wearing incongruous garments, Blodwen rejects the most suitable suitor in her village, the unnamed female character purchases an inappropriate nightgown given her social class and means, and in 'Revelation,' Gomer's wife ultimately - we anticipate - discards all social decorum and exposes herself.

## II. WELSH SHORT STORIES

According to Gwyn Jones, most of the Welsh short stories in the early twentieth century share common characteristics. They are 'lyrical, humorous, sardonic, genial, sensual, tragical-comical-industrial-pastoral' and conscious of their surrounding world [2]. Moreover, they are deeply concerned with class issues. This recurrent theme in Welsh fiction, particularly from a political standpoint, involves a depiction of Welsh life often denouncing the exploitation of post-industrial society and the hardships resulting from the coal crisis. Though Rhys Davies may not have been extensively involved in politics, he skillfully portrays the despair and frustration experienced by the working class. However, his primary focus is on gender issues, demonstrating a singular empathy for the oppression faced by women in many of his stories. Most of Davies' central characters are women and it is mostly through fictional females' voices and views that Davies articulates his narrative. As Stephen Knight points out: 'he became best known for his sensitively modelled short stories and novels which often focused on mistreated woman'. [3] In fact, his homosexuality along with the fact that most of his friends were women, could have played a role in this view, and thus in his important and original approach to gender relations. Furthermore, Knight stresses that Davies 'often condensed issues of class with issues of gender' which are precisely the themes to be explored in this essay.[4]

One obvious limitation of the short story genre, in comparison to the novel, is its brevity. Undoubtedly, Rhys Davies could have achieved a different and potentially deeper analysis or depiction of class and gender relations if he had drafted a novel. The novel allows for the development of a comprehensive plot, subplots, and the interweaving of the lives of multiple characters, providing ample opportunities for in-depth psychological characterisation and insightful social analysis. In contrast, the short story struggles to offer multiple points of view or intricate plotlines. However, it excels as an instrument for exploring the human mind through suggestion and demonstration rather than explicit exposition. The short story proves to be an ideal medium for conveying complex emotional states through seemingly simple yet carefully constructed concrete details, as noted by Charles May, drawing on the technique employed by Chekhov. May further suggests that the short story merges lyricism with symbolism, staying true to its roots in oral traditional folk tales [5]. This supports the view of the short story as possessing a poetic and lyrical dimension.

However, when attempting to list the differences between the novel and the short story, Helmut Bonheim encounters numerous counterexamples to the so-called distinctive features of the short story. Eventually, he concedes that the only true formal distinction lies in the brevity of the short story, as it is considered "too short to be published by itself" [6]. While there may be exceptions to each distinctive feature, it is undeniable that inherent differences exist between the novel and the short story. The approach, treatment, and conclusions of themes vary radically in these two fictional genres, as this paper aims to demonstrate. Drawing on Franz Myszor's pioneering study, the most distinctive features of the short story genre can be summarised as follows: an *in medias res* opening, a subjective approach with in-depth psychological characterisation, a focus on an event or life episode rather than a full plot, intentional gaps or ellipses to be filled in by the reader, the use of recurrent motifs and symbolic repetitions, a short timeframe, framing devices, a twist or epiphany, and an open ending typically characterised by unresolved conflicts [7]. Many of these features can be readily identified in modernist literature, which, in contrast to realism, employs nonlinear structures, lyrical styles, and explores characters' minds over plot developments. Modernism embraces formal innovations and employs impressionistic techniques, such as stream of consciousness, indirect speech, deictic language, and vivid sensory descriptions.

In agreement with Brown's analysis, we can conclude that the tools of the short story genre are well-suited for focusing on individuals or small groups, portraying the lives of isolated regional people. Consequently, the short story proves to be an effective medium for depicting the ambiguous gender and class relations between characters and their social environments. Despite the fact that the above list incurs some generalisations, these features are usually found in most of the short stories and, arguably, might have enabled and help Davies's exploration of gender and class relations. To start with, he clearly uses in the four stories recurrent motifs to represent woman, to express femininity such as female's clothing which is 'often of central importance in

Davies' stories as 'he endows clothes with enormous symbolic importance'. [8] 'Nightgown' and 'The Fashion Plate' are clear examples of stories built around the symbolism of women's clothes, through which the characters express their dreams or most inner wishes. In 'Revelation', by contrast, it is nudity that symbolises freedom and happiness. The recurrent images in 'Blodwen' are related to natural forces, such as wind, mountains, animals, and flowers - in fact her name stands for a flower in Welsh language. Titles, obviously, have to be taken into thoughtful consideration since in short stories it could be said that they are almost part of the text, on many occasions their only introduction.

### **III. RHYS DAVIES' 'NIGHTGOWN', 'THE FASHION PLATE', 'REVELATION' AND 'BLODWEN'**

Rhys Davies' short stories, including 'Nightgown,' 'The Fashion Plate,' 'Revelation,' and 'Blodwen,' depict transformative journeys for their characters as they confront societal norms and expectations. These stories intertwine themes of identity and self-discovery, inviting readers to reflect on the complexities of the human condition. Davies explores the transformative power of embracing personal authenticity and challenging social conventions through diverse characters and narratives. Through these stories, Davies encourages readers to question and confront societal expectations, ultimately advocating for personal growth and the pursuit of individual truth.

Rhys Davies' 'Nightgown' delves into the depths of human emotions, capturing the essence of loss, regret, and the fleeting nature of life. Through vivid imagery, compelling characters, and skilful storytelling, Davies masterfully crafts a poignant narrative that explores the themes of isolation, identity, and the relentless passage of time. The protagonist of 'Nightgown' has no name, a sign of her invisibility, of her insignificance in her surrounding world, full of males – the rulers – who are pictured as insensitive, selfish, and hungry. She is losing more and more her female traits in this male world when 'she began to lose nearly all feminine attributes' to the extent that she starts to wear male cloths – 'a man's cap and her son's shoes'. [9] This cross-dressing shows her gradual transformation into a sort of a neutral gender. In 'Nightgown,' Davies highlights the struggle faced by the protagonist in defining her identity. She finds herself increasingly isolated from the world, which amplifies her internal conflict.

The opening of the story lacks any introduction and starts in the middle of something, 'She had married Walt' and yet we have a forewarning: they did not enjoy their courting period – 'together in silence like an aversion' (p.237). Almost at the beginning the author emphasises the clothing symbolism: 'she had only one dress, a new lilac dress out of a proper draper's shop' - in which she courted and got married: 'her last fling in that line' (p.237), again a clear prolepsis of the disaster. She still longs for a new dress but she is too tired to dream: 'So now, at fifty, still she could not sit down on the sofa for an hour and dream of a day by the seaside with herself in a clean new dress at last and a draper's- shop hat fresh as a rose' (p. 239). Yet, soon she is to have another fling: a silk nightgown that she will buy – at all costs – in a proper draper's shop. The epiphany takes place when she sees that finely described garment 'a while silk nightgown [...] most richly and trimmed with lace at bosom and cuffs' in her mind', '[t]hat anyone could wear such a luxuriance in bed struck her at first like a blow in the face' yet 'staring into the window, she was suddenly thrilled' and 'went home feeling this new luxury round her like a sweet, clean silence. Where no men were' (p.240). The power of the image 'a clean silence' conveys a peaceful life without dirty men, a well-being she can only achieve through femininity. In that garment she projects all her dreams, it bears a fetishist significance, allowing her to recover her lost femininity. And for this, she transgresses all unspoken social rules: the gown is far beyond her economic means and social rank even though this is her last 'fling' or impulse to have something to live for. Davies vividly portrays her longing for a sense of belonging through her recurrent fixation on the nightgown, a symbol of her lost femininity and intimacy. The nightgown serves as a tangible representation of her yearning for connection and her quest to reclaim her identity. "How she managed to pay for the nightgown in less than a year was a mystery" (p.242); a mystery that is unveiled only when the reader discovers that she saves every penny from her meals.

Davies conveys the fragility and transience of life. She becomes increasingly lonely over time, feeling a growing sense of isolation. Although the narrator is in third person, we are aware all the time of her feelings, of her suffering. She is rendered invisible and exploited, receiving no emotional compensation whatsoever. Her family members, all male miners, perpetually dirty and hungry, formed a line for her to cleanse their coal-covered bodies, while she herself grows increasingly filthy. They remain silent, exhausted, and desperate for food. Depicted almost as vampires in search of bacon—a recurring motif—they seemed to drain her very soul. In her last days 'she attended on [the men] in a slower fashion, her face closed and her body shorter, because her legs

had gone bowed. But they never noticed' (p.243). These elements symbolise the gradual deterioration of the protagonist physical and emotional state, underscoring the ephemeral nature of existence and the inevitability of mortality. Davies explores the theme of isolation and its profound impact on the human psyche. Her seclusion from society and lack of love intensify her profound sense of loneliness, blurring the boundaries between reality and imagination. By saving money from her meals to purchase the gown, she intentionally decides to deprive herself of sustenance, eventually leading to her own demise. Instructing her only friend, a female neighbour, she requests to be dressed in the silk and exquisite nightgown following her passing. This act symbolises her reclamation of femininity before her ultimate demise.

In the culmination of the story, she experiences a profound sense of acceptance. In her last days, she comes to terms with her loneliness and the inevitability of her own mortality. Davies suggests that true healing and peace can be found through embracing one's circumstances and finding solace in the beauty of the present moment. Her journey towards acceptance serves as a powerful reminder of the human capacity for resilience and the potential for personal growth even in the face of immense adversity. By exploring the complexities of the human condition, 'Nightgown' serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of connection, self-discovery, and embracing the transient beauty of life. After her death, Walt, her widower, will see her more elegant than ever before, stupefied by the discovery, 'there's a fine 'ooman she looks. Better than when I married her!' (p.244). Yet, after that moment, his only preoccupation will be to get married again so as to get the households chore done. Marriage is presented as a servitude for women. The purchase of the nightgown is her only escape, the only agency she is capable of.

'The Fashion Plate' shows a marked contrast with 'Nightgown'. Mrs Mitchell agency is beyond any doubt. The opening is, as well in media res, with a clamour 'The Fashion Plate is coming!'. [10] Mrs Mitchel can be interpreted as a sort of grotesque heroine who in spite of all adversities there she is, stubbornly dressed up as if she were a sophisticated model along a catwalk, a 'Cleopatra' in an awkward setting: a little post-industrial village in Wales surrounded by aproned women. Clothing becomes the central part of the story in a superlative grade. Davies's descriptions of the garments show his expertise and taste in the fashion field. In fact, he was considered a dandy, always finely dressed. Through the metaphor of clothing the story, again, is illustrating how women can overcome their frustrations, projecting their desires in objects, in something that accentuates their femininity and thus their further development of her sexual being.

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Mrs. Mitchell does not love her husband. This case presents an inversion with respect to 'Nightgown', as the man is the one ignored, invisible, and ultimately driven to suicide. He is depicted as lonely and beast-like, an animalistic image that reveals the story's imaginative double meanings. He may have transformed into a beast, even mimicking the appearance of those he kills at the slaughterhouse, a profession that contrasts with his wife's refinement. He suffers from nightmares and is constantly moaning and complaining. The Mitchells no longer have a sexual relationship and are no longer a cohesive couple. We learn through the eyes of her twelve-year-old friend Nicholas that they do not share a bedroom (p.94). Nicholas, although playing a confusing role, serves as

an important character in the story, as if Mrs. Mitchell were projecting her maternal longings onto him. He is invited to her house, where he is treated as a "sole little king," even being fed lobster (p.98), a recognizable motif representing luxury.

After a quarrel between the Mitchells over Mrs. Mitchell's purchase of a fur coat using the money meant for a journal, Mr. Mitchell leaves the house to his place of work, the slaughterhouse, never to return. His death is narrated through the perspective of Mrs. Mitchell and Nicholas, who witness a dark liquid seeping out from under a door, symbolising Mr. Mitchell's suicide. The narrative includes sensual hints and imagery, such as the mingling of the scent of blood with fur and violets, which creates an atmosphere of ambiguity and anticipation. The story concludes with Mrs. Mitchell trying on a new hat and contemplating her attire for her sister's wedding, but only after Mr. Mitchell is buried. The ending is bleak and pessimistic, suggesting that Mrs. Mitchell will continue to live in a grotesque masquerade as she tries to survive. Through the character of Mrs. Mitchell, Davies explores the intertwining struggles of class and gender, highlighting how social hierarchies impact women's lives. Characters like Mrs. Mitchell confront the oppression imposed by their socio-economic positions, rebelling against societal expectations, and seeking their own paths. Davies sheds light on the intersectionality of gender and class, emphasizing the unique challenges faced by working-class women who must navigate societal norms, celebrate their individuality, and assert their right to self-expression.

'Revelation' is a very different story. It basically illustrates how life can be much happier and simpler than sometimes it appears to be. This story grabs an episode in life by describing how the human mind may work. As Virginia Woolf writes, in order to capture life it is essential 'to look into the mind and its depth, since life goes through the mind and dwells in it', [11] a clear modernist feature which is skilfully achieved in this story. Again the opening occurs in the middle of the action when some miners are going out of the colliery into the daylight. It starts with a liaison between a collier and his boss, Montague, an Englishman –showing in a flash postcolonial and class issues together. Then the story follows Gomer, the protagonist, who is sad and depressed because his life after marriage has become a nightmare: 'Ah what a life, the same thing day after day. Down to the pit, up again, food, bath, quarrel with Blowden, slam the door' [12]. It looks like as if the story is to evolve in a pessimistic way, showing again that life is hopeless in this setting and circumstances; how people of working class are inexorably bound to a miserable and tedious life.

However, the twist or revelation, as the title anticipates, will come up soon with good news. Gomer goes to Montague's house for an errand and Mrs Montague's appearance, completely naked and happy as she was expecting her husband, produces a total change in his life. From that moment on Gomer rebels himself against his own life and way of living. He is determined to attain happiness in his marriage after realising that old traditions, all religious ties must be overcome. He just wants to see the nude body of his wife, which is a symbol of free thinking and *joie de vivre*. Yet, for doing this he will have to fight not only against his wife but also against his mother-in-law, Mrs. Hopkins. Gomer's wife seeks refuge in her mother's house, attempting to escape her husband's desire to see her unclothed. Mrs. Hopkins, her mother, responds with an escalating voice, saying, "Well, you might look ashamed. Scandalous, that's what I've heard from Blodwen just now." And she continues, "You're not suitable to be married to a respectable girl. Shame on you, man" (p.64). Gomer becomes very angry and retorts, "You be quiet. Jealous old cat! What do you know about young married people today? Interfering! [...] A girl she is, isn't she? So it wasn't extraordinary for me to ask her" (p.64). Through this exchange, Davies portrays a generational conflict and illustrates how misery and bitterness can be learned and inherited from one's parents. After Gomer's wife returns home and after some confusion, he shares the episode he experienced with Mrs. Montague saying, 'Listen, my silly little pet...' and he recounts the events of the afternoon. 'She became quiet. Surprise, astonishment, and amazement leaped successively to her wild-coloured face.' Gomer then straightforwardly proposes, "Let's be nice to each other" and suggests not constantly squabbling like her parents did. He emphasizes the need to live life on their own terms, saying, "We must live in our own way, Blod..." (p.66).

Through Gomer's character, Davies portrays the transformative power of the mind and how it can lead to personal growth, as the protagonist questions his own perceptions and assumptions. This revelation disrupts the community's established order and prompts individuals to reevaluate their values and relationships. Davies suggests that the provincial and traditional Welsh way of life is too closed and outdated, while exploring female sexuality with sensitivity and nuance. In stories like "Revelation" Davies depicts characters navigating their desires and challenging conservative attitudes. 'Revelation' serves as a reminder of the power of the mind to

shape lives, challenge perceptions, and ultimately redefine our understanding of ourselves and the world around us. It is an invitation to happiness and kindness no matter your education, social class, or circumstances.

'Blodwen' is also an invitation to happiness, albeit in a very different way. In this story Davies condenses, with a myriad of lyrical images and double meanings, gender, and class issues. Again the opening plunges straight into the story with an exclamation: 'Pugh Jibbon is at the back door!' [13] This visit seems to bother Blodwen but we have a different hint, because soon we learn that incongruously she cares for her appearance: 'she could not bear his insolent looks. Nevertheless, after glancing in the kitchen mirror'. These little details are essential in short stories, where almost any action, word or description can be crucial to understand the possible layers of meaning. Nothing said is gratuitous.

The story follows the internal struggle of a provincial and working class girl, who is courted by a sort of modern 'charming prince', Oswald, handsome, rich, and intelligent. However she does not want to recognise to herself that she likes another man, one who is not considered appropriate by unwritten social rules. Davies deals in this story with the gender issue of marriage and the pressure that society exerts on women to seek and appropriate match. Blodwen's sister was already married and 'her mother was always urging he to wed' (p.83). Once more, gender and class are condensed in a crude reality of many working women that have no chance to develop their personality and talent. But life in those villages was almost always doomed, and fate seemed unescapable. And marriage with a wealthy, young, good-looking, and clever man seems more than lucky to Blodwen. Her mother, the villagers and most importantly herself are in favour and persuaded that this is the perfect match: 'His fine superiority and breeding wed to her wild fecund strength' (p. 84). In this latter sentence Davis brilliantly mixes up class and gender issues with images of fecundity and strength together with that of an upper class individual, someone allegedly superior to the rest, someone well-bred. On the other hand, Blodwen looks down on Pugh: 'The unspeakable ruffian' 'someone they bought vegetables from' (p. 82). This free indirect speech gives no indication whatsoever whether she utters it or just thinks it. Anger is the word to define her emotional state, nevertheless she is not angry with Pugh but with herself.

The story is replete with symbols drawn from Nature, which play a pivotal role in the story's unfolding. Blodwen is named after a flower, while Jibbons is associated with a plant. Pugh, on the other hand, is depicted as deeply connected to nature, living a semi-wild existence in the mountains. He embodies the untainted spirit of the Welsh people, untouched by industrialism, nonconformity, or the imitation of the English. This notion aligns well with postcolonial readings, as those who have succumbed to English influence appear to have lost a part of their natural essence, mirroring the transformation of their landscape. Pugh expresses his love and admiration for Blodwen through the act of presenting her with flowers, symbolising his genuine affection. He possesses a keen intuition, akin to that of an animal, which enables him to see through her facade. The reader, too, is gradually made aware of this, as the text is peppered with subtle details that lend credence to his perspective. Blodwen begins to recognise Oswald's dullness, finding herself perpetually moody and irritable, seeking solace in the mountains, an inclination that Oswald fails to comprehend. Suddenly, she resolves to marry immediately, an impulsive decision made in an attempt to escape a potentially catastrophic choice.

These hints and developments build toward an inevitable climax, and the reader dreads the possibility of Blodwen ultimately marrying Oswald, as the story aims to realistically portray the decisions made by those who feel trapped and oppressed in their circumstances. However, the twist is in a different direction thanks to the influence of Nature, Blodwen's salvation. Harsh elements - winds, wild snow, whips of rain- will fill her with passion and impulse to act and, almost -figuratively- transformed into a bird: 'her face was lifted like an eager bird to the hills' (p.91) she will flee, physically, emotionally, and irrationally. In this part of the story Davies displays a remarkable lyrical dimension which identifies Nature with true love. Blodwen's communion with Nature will reach a maximum level at the mountains where she will experience a sort of transfiguration, caring for nothing but a plentiful life. With a clear gap or ellipsis, the narrator jumps to show how Blodwen and Pugh enjoy their love and sexuality with a flower on the 'white hillock of her belly' (p.93) while Oswald asks himself her whereabouts. Again, this short story challenges traditional gender roles, portraying a woman who defies societal expectations. Characters such as Blodwen reject prescribed roles, seeking autonomy and fulfilment beyond societal constraints. Davies' modernist approach empowers these women to question and challenge established norms.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The short story genre proves to be an invaluable tool for exploring the experiences of those outside the centres of power who must overcome greater struggles to achieve self-fulfilment and happiness. Rhys Davies' exploration of class and gender relations in 'Nightgown', 'Revelation', 'The Fashion Plate' and 'Blodwen' is conducted with a unique approach that utilises the genre to its full potential. Through the use of various literary techniques and devices, this paper shows how Davies effectively examines themes such as marriage, patriarchy, sexuality, femininity, motherhood, social and religious traditions, class struggle, class oppression, absence of love, true love, passion, death, solitude, and alienation. His stories are filled with rich imagery, metaphors, and recurrent motifs that carry significant symbolic weight. Details such as clothing, animals, natural forces, flowers, and nudity are employed to convey complex meanings and create a rich tapestry of themes, reflecting the modernist approach to storytelling. The titles of the stories, along with suggestive hints and tips, require interpretation, and the narrative often features gaps and ellipses, presenting the action in *media res*. Sensual depictions, stream of thoughts, free indirect speech, and glimpses into the characters' psychological insight all contribute to the overall narrative. Nothing in Davies' stories is arbitrary; each element serves a purpose. This brief overview only scratches the surface of the multitude of literary traits identified in his works.

Rhys Davies' Welsh short stories offer a modernist representation of women's predicaments, transcending traditional boundaries and norms. Through his narratives, Davies portrays women who challenge societal expectations, explore their sexuality, confront class oppression, and grapple with their inner lives. His modernist aesthetics, use of symbolism, and psychological realism contribute to a nuanced portrayal of women's experiences, offering readers a profound understanding of their struggles and aspirations. Davies' stories resonate as timeless explorations of female agency and the complexities of navigating a changing world.

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