ABSTRACT

Over the span of history, there have been several endeavors by individuals of different professions to characterize what an artist is and how this particular individual fits into society. Researcher too has struggled with trying to understand this figure and have also participated in adopting such aforementioned terms to articulate the identity of the poet-artist in literature.

The concept of defining or figuring an artist or the poet is being attempted by many philosophers and poets since ancient time. Socrates has said that it was not wisdom that empowered (poets) to write their poetry, but a kind of impulse or motivation, such as you find in seers and prophets who convey all their great messages without knowing at all what they mean. Plato includes with a similar pith that artists express awesome and insightful things which they don’t themselves get it. Wordsworth has an exalted conception of a poet. He calls him a seer the basis of his conception of the poet is that a poet is a man speaking to men. In this, he revolts against the existing conception that a poet is separate and different from other human beings.

However, with the beginning of modern period in English literature, where there is the great variety of subject matters, themes and forms in literature, some authors have put a serious effort to trace a life or the development of poet in their works. Such works deal with the artist’s growth to artistic maturity. In this context, it is noteworthy to acquaint James Joyce for his A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Stephen Hero and Ulysses in which Stephen’s choice to leave his family and companions behind and go into altogether another atmosphere in order to become an artist—presents that Joyce sees the craftsman as an essentially confined figure. Hermann Hess, a German poet, novelist, and painter, in his novel Magister Ludi explores the upbringing and development of the poet. With the same aspect, Doctor Faustus a classic novel by Thomas Mann, where Serenus Zeitblom is a schoolmaster in his sixties, writes the biography of his friend Adrian Leverkühn, a composer, who somehow does make a pact with devil, to achieve artistic skills.

The researcher has tried to grasp the enigmatic and fascinating figure of the poet-artist. The present research has become curious attempt to figure out what it means to become a poet-artist. The research presents some common characteristics of the figure of
an artist from selected works of the Modern literature. The lives of Stephen Dedalus, Adrian Leverkühn and Joseph Knecht, respectively, from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Doctor Faustus* and *The Glass Bead Game*, are compared correlated with the general concept of poet-artist in literature in general, and finally, the figure of poet-artist of the Modern literature is extracted to conclude the present study. The artistic development, from childhood to artistic maturity of three protagonists, is figured out side-by-side under major aspects of forging the poet-artist.

The significance of the study is that it covers not only the English Literature but also extends to the Irish and the German Literature which adds richness to the concept of a poet-artist. It is envisaged that the study has made a theoretical contribution to the body of knowledge related to the concept of a poet-artist with a particular emphasis on the Modern Period of English literature. I hope this research in the field of English literature will add something more to the existing stock of knowledge and will prove fruitful to the teachers and future students.