DOCTORAL THESIS

Abstract

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SELF QUEST IN MODERNIST NOVELS:

LITERARY AND CULTURAL MODELS

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Abstract

The exploration of the Self in modernist literature is one of the quintessential topics associated with the novelty and innovation of 20th century writings. The literary techniques of stream of consciousness and interior monologue mostly informed a sense of identity explored in more detail by writers and artists who responded to a specific need of people living and facing changes in all aspects of their lives. Framed by many scholars as a "transformative cultural movement" (Shiach, 2010, p. 21), modernism has been theorised widely and connected to other fields of study, such as phenomenology, psychology, and philosophy. This intersection is highly important since it represents the source of an evolving quest and research about modernist creations.

This study is focused on literary modernism and is concerned with conceptualising the *culture-informed consciousness*, an innovative term which describes the intellectual peaks that are formed under the influence of one's cultural milieu. The representation of consciousness in fiction is one of the key features of modernist writings, and its detailed description finds theoretical roots in William and Henry James's studies, *The Principles of Psychology* (1918) and *The Future of the Novel: Essays on the Art of Fiction* (1956). Besides the psychological implications of the term, consciousness in fiction implied a narrative perspective, which Dorrit Cohn discussed broadly (1978). Her literary pursuit of psycho-narration, quoted monologue and narrated monologue mainly revealed the transition of thoughts in James Joyce's and Virginia Woolf's novels. Extending the endeavour of analysing consciousness as described through narrative discourse, David Herman (2011) showed how perception embodies experience and, thus, how modernist characters reflect examples of a complementary dependence between subjectivity and its surrounding area and factors. Building on this theoretical background, the present research extends the analysis of consciousness representation in the modernist novels of Virginia Woolf and James Joyce by following and revealing the characters' evolving awareness towards higher forms informed by cultural elements.

Criticism has been concerned with the cultural elements that influenced literature in the 20th century. Extensive studies sprung from the realities of the 20th-century culture that inspired

modernist writers to act and react in developing their approaches. In this study, I, therefore, explore how the modernist characters' awareness increases in relation to their cultural milieu and I develop the conceptualisation of *culture-informed consciousness,* which is a higher degree of awareness that evolves only in relation to culture and results from transitional stages of development.

Context and motivation

Modernism, a literary trend of the first half of the 20th century, shifted the interest towards the individual and their psychological mechanisms. Following the emergence of psychology and Freud's theories, the writers of that era became interested in understanding the unconscious, seeing beyond the flesh, and getting to grips with the mysteries of the mind and soul. The unconscious became a central preoccupation for writers at that time because the conventional sense of identity was lost intellectually, and therefore, people experienced a feeling of homelessness.

The cultural background of modernist writings contributes to our understanding of the intellectual formation of the characters in their novels in the sense that certain schools of thought and cultural movements that appeared at the beginning of the 20th century are reflected in the novels. The essays of several modernist writers were written as responses to the artistic landscape of the avant-garde, and studying them reveals new perspectives about consciousness as explored through writing. The dichotomy of old and new became, in these essays, one of the inner and outer, which is the defining feature of modernist novels.

While the essays are a valuable source of information, the modernist characters are the primary source of cultural and literary exploration in this thesis. A character's response to their cultural landscape is revealing since the sequence of happenings that change and shape the character's consciousness is considered as perceived by the character and acknowledged according to a personal sense of awareness. The characters' evolution is thus traced according to both the modernist writers' answers to the cultural landscape of the 20th century and the specific evolution of each of them. By engaging the New Historicism theoretical foundation, the culture surrounding the characters is linked to the realities of the writers who chose to create the new through means of literary devices that would convey both universal and particular truths in their stories. Moving on to the analytical method used throughout the analysis, the individual evolution of each character is predominantly framed in this study.

Literature and culture converge in narrative forms, which reveal formative experiences and deliver a subtle but still apparent image of a core reality, namely the identity of the human being. The primary resources used in this study include several novels: Virginia Woolf's *The Waves* (1931) and *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), and James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916), along with references to *Dubliners* (1914), and *Ulysses* (1922). Restricting the analysis to two authors reflects the motivation for discussing different perspectives on the topic of identity and revealing the common feature of self-representation as a result of cultural factors.

This research stands as a rereading of classic masterpieces. The selection of these novels illustrates the identification of the specific type of character evolution, namely the psychological evolution significantly influenced by cultural experiences. The new associations of literary devices with contemporary conceptualisations of terms such as consciousness, self, and voice respond to concerns of the present time. For instance, contemporary literary and cultural studies now focus on elucidating the connections between nations and cultures. The understanding of the concept of identity changes due to the fast-paced present world.

The novelty of this thesis consists in the conceptualisation of *culture-informed consciousness*. This critical perspective is relevant to contemporary modernist studies because it responds to the present academic landscape in literary studies, namely the inter- and transdisciplinary bonds. Along with the 20th century criticism, psychology became associated with literature, key references being René Wellek, Austin Warren, Norman N. Holland, and more recent critics such as Geoffrey Hartman and David S. Miall. The focus of scholars responded to realities and discoveries about the workings of the mind. The recent development of cognitive studies and congruent criticism, such as cognitive narratology, reflects new challenges and frameworks for meaning interpretation. Thus, rereading modernist literature in the context of multiple disciplines of thought and understanding reflects new elements of identity interpretation. An example of such an element is the recurrence of the motif of silence as a communicative device with revealing effects at the epistemological level of perception. The interpretation of this motif, as related to modernist novels, finds a theoretical ground in Jean-Paul Sartre's definition of silence through words (Sartre as cited in Bree, 1962, p. 115); Maurice Blanchot's approach to the concepts of nothingness and silence in his study, *The Space of Literature* (1982), and Ștefan Vlăduțescu's study on Wittgenstein's conceptualisation of the linguistic silence, *Communication of silence at Ludwig Wittgenstein: Linguistic Silence* (2014). Completing the references, where literature and

silence merge into descriptive elements and inform the characters' evolution towards new levels of perception, I add essential studies, namely Paul Ricoeur's discussion of narrative identity through mimetic modes in *Time and Narrative* (1983) and Michele Kueter Petersen's conceptualisation of contemplative silence in her study, *A Hermeneutics of Contemplative Silence: Paul Ricoeur, Edith Stein, and the Heart of Meaning* (2021).

Literature nourishes the gnoseology of the modern person who evolves due to education and modernist novels framed precisely examples of characters whose knowledge developed due to their thirst for finding answers and courage to question the contexts of their lives. Along with the social and historical events of the time, the impact of technological advances in the 20th century changed the pace of life. Modernity, as reflected in the English literature of that time, meant a connection between fields of study that opened the path for new explorations of that life. Thus, modernist writers developed their creations through interdisciplinary perspectives.

Scientific knowledge was one of the core connections in their novels, and their approach to modern identity features creative engagements of scientific ideas. Recent studies discussed this connection between science and literature as a defining relation that proves the epistemological foundation of modernist literature and the understanding of its novelty. The experimentation of the modernist writers, which is the main feature observed in almost any study concerned with modernist writings, reflects exactly these multiple nets of meaning that have built the cultural and artistic movement of modernism. Morag Shiach argued that "modern writing happened in the interstices between science and literature" (Shiach, 2018, p. 58). Her examples of metaphors used by modernist writers, namely the metaphor of the atom in Woolf's writings, the catalyst by T.S. Eliot and the waves of light by Dorothy Richardson (Shiach, 2018, p. 58), prove this epistemological exchange between literature and science. Moreover, referring to Woolf's creations, she highlighted the creative ways in which the scientific metaphor of the atom is used to describe the character's sense of self: "The atom is here psychologised, and is part of the dynamic construction of Bernard's personality over time and across the novel" (Shiach, 2018, p. 65). Kevin Brazil's analysis of T.S. Eliot's ideas about science and poetry reveals the semantic nuances of the scientific process perceived in the literary context as "specialised inquiry" (Brazil, 2018, p. 78), meaning that studying poetry or literature requires specialised training. Adding an example including James Joyce's creation, Franki Maria Rudnesky analysed the temperature metaphor as revealed in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Mrs Dalloway*. Her approach

describes the implications of the sensory experiences involving temperature on the characters' sense of selfhood. Her results framed how coldness and warmth were constant elements that reflected how the modernist writers used the temperature metaphor to reveal the emotional struggles of their characters (Rudnesky, 2022, pp. 17-18).

Studies, such as Mark S. Morrisson's *Modernism, Science, and Technology* (2017), discussed the interplay between scientific, technological, social, and cultural factors behind the emergence of global modernism. The alignment of modernist studies with technological and scientific advances of the 20th century strengthens the connection between the fields of studies. An important aspect described by Morrisson is the awareness of modernist writers and of the innovators from the other fields of research who were taking part in the process of change. Self-consciousness became a focus for 20th century scholars interested in writing about all the changes occurring at all levels (Morrisson, 2017, p. 7).

Another relevant aspect, reflecting the modernist consciousness, is the approach to faith and spirituality. Modernist writers explored and wrote about spiritual experiences through fiction. Pericles Lewis's investigation is representative in this sense as he argues and reconsiders modernist novels through the narratives of secularisation (Lewis, 2010, p. 3). His study proves how the sacred changed its dimension in modernist literature in the sense that private beliefs and faith were no longer discussed as a matter of shared values but as a private reconciliation of the person with the unseen forces in the world. The direct relationship of the person with divinity was no longer mediated by a person or an institution. The modernist writers described their beliefs as individual experiences informed by a sense of personal intuition.

Therefore, the present thesis aligns with recent concerns in modernist studies, which develop the interdisciplinary connections of modernist literature with diverse research fields. The pedagogical layer developed throughout the last chapter concludes the analysis with significant remarks about cultural elements, their importance for identity formation, and how literature is an important source of revealing them. The investigation of the Self representation in modernist literature by focusing on literary, cultural, and pedagogical layers also opens the possibilities of approaching and interpreting modernist novels through new analysis frames.

The association of literature and pedagogy in the present study develops on the basis of the aim of completing the character analysis with the epistemological implications of culture, which reflect pedagogical outcomes. On the one hand, Virginia Woolf was an advocate for education,

pleading for feminist emancipation and questioning social issues, such as the effects of war among the multiple subjects she addressed. James Joyce, known as having a teaching career before becoming a writer, was an educator who would apply teaching methods corresponding to a pedagogy focused on the student's pace. Both writers approached education and issues related to this process that are relevant to this day. Scholars explored the connection between modernist writers' ideas and pedagogy as a complementary relation that informs the background of present theories evolving in modernist studies and the pedagogy field. A few examples of studies are Rod C. Taylor's *Narrow Gates and Restricted Paths: The Critical Pedagogy of Virginia Woolf* (2014); William R. Bowden's *Virginia Woolf's Pedagogical Art* (2017); Benjamin D. Hagen's *Feeling Shadows: Virginia Woolf's Sensuous Pedagogy* (2017), and the book of Elizabeth Switaj, *James Joyce's Teaching Life and Methods: Language and Pedagogy in "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man," "Ulysses," and "Finnegans Wake"* (2016).

On the other hand, recent pedagogy researchers developed approaches to learning through art. Contemporary scholars, such as Alexis Kokkos and Ted Fleming, wrote about transformative learning through engagements with art (Kokkos & Fleming, 2024, p. 1). Their method, which was implemented as a teaching method, refers to learning as a transformative process. The stages of their method follow the changing awareness of the participants engaging in critical exploration of art. Applied to modernist characters analysed in this study, the transformative learning process reveals examples of characters who acquire knowledge, and some of them attain epistemological levels of understanding due to cultural factors. Thus, as previously announced, cultural pedagogy refers to a transformative learning process through cultural experiences. The modernist novels of Virginia Woolf and James Joyce reveal this new set of meanings that prove the framework of this thesis.

Aim and objectives

Given the present openness of modernist studies towards other fields of inquiry, the endeavour throughout this thesis is to explore and develop this approach to the topic of identity by highlighting how modernist characters stand as examples of literary modes of perception and cultural models.

My research **aims** to link literature and culture with pedagogical pursuits and to provide a new framework for interpreting character consciousness through an approach meant to highlight

the particular and universal elements of the analysed modernist writings. The particular elements are the techniques used to show how the characters evolve psychologically and to indicate the degree of their transformation. The universal elements include the recurring theme of identity and its detailed revelation. The main **objectives** of the thesis are to trace the psychological evolution of modernist characters in terms of awareness, to study the projections of types of *mimesis* and the workings of *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1984) in relation to cultural consumption, and to engage in an Archetypal criticism complemented by a reflective investigation of cultural pedagogy to demonstrate how literature is ultimately a spectre, one which places cultural memory and the struggle for self-awareness in both past and present interpretations of the modernist novel.

The first objective is to reveal the interdisciplinary layers of analysis. Tracing the intellectual, psychological evolution of a character involves analysing both their perception of themselves at different stages as well as their changing relationship with the larger culture of their world. Using Erik Erikson's developmental framework, I will show that the characters in modernist novels progress to a higher degree of understanding themselves in relation to others as they develop. Their understanding of consciousness is linked to the artistic development of the character's personality, namely the formation of critical thinking through cultural awareness.

The second objective is to identify the representation of mimesis and habitus in each novel. The concept of mimesis is considered here as a representation of cultural identities, and habitus as a source of existing dispositions (Bordieu, 1984) that influence some of the characters' perceptions of themselves in society. Modernist novels are cultural artefacts and regenerative sources of universal themes, in this case, the quest for identity. The characters' consumption of culture is associated with their increasing knowledge about the world and their awareness of private beliefs, concerns and choices. The encounter of character and culture reflects a formative experience with pedagogical outcomes. This view responds to Paulo Freire's approach to critical consciousness and praxis, to Henry Giroux's critical observations about the role of education in acknowledging social issues, and to Alexis Kokkos and Ted Fleming's perspective on the pedagogy of transformative learning through art.

The third objective is to engage in Archetypal literary criticism in order to develop a perspective that is influenced by the disciplines that have developed since the early 20th century. The Self as an archetype means, in Jungian terms, that it is a psychological reality revealed through images, patterns, and symbols. Considering the Self archetype as a central theme explored in the

modernist novels, I develop the interpretation of the topic by including elements from other fields of study, such as cognitive narratology, neuroscience, and philosophy. Narratology links the description of the literary devices with the cognitive aspects of the topic. Neuroscience serves as defining essential concepts that describe certain experiences and outcomes faced by the characters. Philosophy mediates the methods used for this critical inquiry and the focus on the meanings explored through interpretation. The essential concepts of consciousness, awareness, perception, subjectivity, and identity, which are all used to portray the Self archetype, are unified within the *Figure and Ground* theory of perception (Rubin, E. in Beardslee & Wertheimer, 1958). This theory describes the uniqueness of the elements involved in portraying the Self and helps understand their role in completing the present approach. Modernist characters are, thus, analysed as active respondents to the cultural elements that they perceive. Their cultural experiences are considered to be formative factors that lead to an ethics of thinking where art has essential effects on the characters' perception. This aspect represents the challenge of a new creative lens when interpreting modernist novels.

Premises, hypotheses and research questions

This thesis tackles an interdisciplinary approach. I begin with a discussion of the cultural background that shaped the appearance of the modernist novel, and then I engage in literary analysis to reveal the interconnected elements in the writings.

The **general premise** of my study focuses on the idea that literary, cultural, psychological and philosophical concepts settle the investigation of the topic of identity as development in modernist novels into a contemporary perspective about modernist literature. The literary analysis emphasises the symbolic framework of interpretation, which then branches according to the complementary theories relevant to understanding the central concept, which opens the possibility of interpreting consciousness, namely the Self.

A more **specific premise** revolves around two main elements that are often discussed in relation to European modernist literature and, more precisely, to Virginia Woolf's and James Joyce's writings. The first one is literary symbolism, which creates spaces of interpretation that reveal the characters' stages of evolution. The second motivating element is the association of

literature with other fields of study, but mainly with cultural pedagogy. The anticipated results of this study are a new understanding of the formative values of modernist novels that reveal a new focus when reading modernist novels, namely the representation of the Self through literary, cultural, and pedagogical layers.

This study is structured around the **hypothesis** that characters in modernist novels portray stages of self-awareness, which can reach higher forms, specifically *culture-informed consciousness,* when engaged in a constant quest influenced by cultural factors. I demonstrate the recurrence in the novels of the Self archetype, which is mirrored by the tree archetype. Starting from Jung's phenomenological approach to the Self archetype reflected through the mandala image, I follow the representation of the Self in modernist novels through images of flight and fall. These images result from investigating themes, such as life and death, and motifs, such as silence and nothingness.

The representation of archetypes in modernist literature finds roots in the monumental work of James George Frazer, who influenced modernist writers' perception of religion and myth. The question of faith relates to the preoccupation of modernist writers to create art centred on the human being in its wholeness, especially on the workings of the mind. The Archetypal criticism resulting from Jung's conceptualisation was applied in literature by Maud Bodkin (1934) and theorised in his literary essay by Northrop Frye (1957). Therefore, the present analysis of the image of the Self archetype in modernist novels reflects the multiple aspects surrounding the notion of archetype through a critical perspective focused on literary and cultural sources of enquiry complemented by necessary psychological and philosophical elements.

The subsequent **hypotheses** connected to the purpose of this research engage the psychological and philosophical concepts of the framework. One of the secondary **hypotheses** asserts that the transition between the stages of self-awareness can be identified according to felt perceptions, described by Antonio Damasio as *qualia* experiences (Damasio, 2010, p. 262) and that reaching an epistemological level of understanding happens due to a transformative learning process. The second **hypothesis** implies that mediation elements intersect with transitional ones throughout the course of the characters' evolution. Such mediation elements are *hupomnemata* realities, which are, according to Michel Foucault, accounts of significant notes for self-understanding (Foucault, 1997, p. 210) and exercises of *contemplative writing*, conceptualised in this study as acts of writing that involve contemplation, reflexive thoughts, and introspective

meditations. These mediation elements are essential in character analysis when understanding and tracing their *culture-informed consciousnesses*.

The **research questions** I follow to fulfil the present pursuit centre on several thematic and methodological aspects. First, how does the characters' psychological evolution take place? By investigating this stage of character evolution, identity perception becomes a central aspect of the theoretical frame. Second, which literary devices frame the image of the characters' individuality? The literary devices reveal the stylistic features of the narrative and how the image of the Self-archetype shapes according to the main metaphors and symbols in the writings. Third, what are the gnoseological and epistemological levels of awareness resulting from the character's evolution in relation to their quest for identity? These levels confirm the existence and exploration of a *culture-informed consciousness* in the modernist novels analysed.

Methods and the main concepts

My primary research **method** is Michel Foucault's analytical approach, complemented by **close reading and hermeneutic interpretation**. The principal investigative tools I use are the literary devices of comparison, imagery, symbolism, formal innovations (namely, character and narrative techniques), and the **conceptual** devices of *hupomnemata*, *qualia*, *voice*, *epistemological reflexivity*, and *contemplative writing*. The interdisciplinary concepts are related to the character's sense of awareness and are explained in detail in the first chapter.

Briefly summarising their meaning as used here, *hupomnemata* describes the physical and mental "notes" of the characters, which are mainly words related to the characters' increasing development; *qualia* reflects subjective experiences, namely felt perceptions, that influence the process towards self-consciousness (Damasio, 2010, p. 262); *voice* is the indicator of the conscious self (Damasio, 2010, p. 45); *epistemological reflexivity* leads to reflexive self-knowledge developed through constant interaction with Other (Teo et al., 2014, p. 72), and *contemplative writing* defines the character's disposition to create a personal story and investigate life through acts of writing. This ultimate disposition implies the contemplative mood of the characters and the process of framing their narrative identities according to Paul Ricoeur's classification of the mimetic modes (Ricoeur, 1983, p. 53), which describes how an individual interprets their life as a story.

The character's increasing awareness can also be categorised, according to a philosophical classification, under three main categories: the experiential, the ontological, and the social (Barresi & Martin in Gallagher, 2011, p. 53). Besides Erik Erikson's developmental framework, which follows the psychological evolution of the characters, the conceptual tools of *internal* and *external focalization* (Genette, 1980) are employed to reveal the evolving process of the characters' cultural acknowledgement. The shifts in focalisation reveal the direct access of the reader to the character's consciousness and the difference between several characters' voices and perceptions.

The selection of these methods and concepts illustrates the identification of the specific type of character evolution, namely the psychological evolution influenced by cultural experiences. Thus, the analysis of consciousness representation in modernist novels explores a new association of literary devices and terms or processes conceptualised in neuroscience and cognitive studies. This view addresses current questions and concerns about the transformative process of learning, and the context of modernist novels and literary studies provides an important example of approaching learning through cultural inquiries.

Thesis structure

Modernist literature is such a complex and diverse field of study that this research demanded I find a balance between demonstrating the association of concepts from different domains and unifying these critical perspectives to focus on the literature. To strike this balance, each chapter in this thesis develops a theoretical foundation that completes the framework of character analysis.

The first chapter establishes the premises that connect the topic of the Self with modernism as a literary and cultural movement. As any attempt to discuss literary modernism implies a broader context that refers to modernity in the 20th century and modernism as a cultural development, it is necessary to mention the focus of the present study.

Among scholars who summarised the understanding of modernism by critics, Richard Sheppard proposed an overall discussion of three main strategies of approach. The last one, as observed by Michael Whitworth, employs the language of cause and effect, meaning that modernist works are responses to their historical context (Whitworth, 2007, p. 6). By engaging the term cultural memory for analysing the characters and referring to the formal features of modernist novels, I use cause and effect to frame the feature of identity representation in the novels I analyse.

By establishing twelve main features in modernist novels, Whitworth's perspective reflected the variety of sources of modernism and the multiple elements that form the layers of the phenomenon. His classification and questions describe "both its unity and its diversity" (Whitworth, 2007, p. 16), offering an informative and critical perspective on modernism. Since the discussion of modernism and its largest context of evolution goes beyond the aim of this thesis, the present approach follows the relevant proof that reveals levels of consciousness in modernist novels and their complexity expressed by modernist writers on several layers.

The epistemological record of the characters' experiences demonstrates the interdisciplinary pursuit of this study and a critical perspective focused on the close reading of the texts. The topic of the Self, as theorised in the first part of this chapter, and its representation in modernist novels, as argued in the second part of this chapter, was one of the main preoccupations of modernist writers who created models of existence adapting to life through creative adaptation. As Dilip Gaonkar defined creative adaptation in the context of modernity and how people faced the sociohistorical transformations and cultural shifts: "It is the site where a people 'make' themselves modern, as opposed to being 'made' modern by alien and impersonal forces, and where they give themselves an identity and a destiny" (Gaonkar, 1999, p. 16). Applied to modernist characters, their creative adaptations refer to their acknowledgement of their will to engage in self-quest through cultural experiences.

The stages of understanding the concept of the Self and its representation in modernist literature as an archetype follow the phenomenological and psychological implications of the term as first definitions. Then, moving the approach towards literary realms, the Self-archetype centres around the symbols of the circle and tree. Ultimately, terminology specifications delineate the related concepts used in the thesis.

The modernist novel section centres the study around English language writers from the first half of the 20th century. Critical perspectives about modernism lead towards focus points of interest that connect the literary movement to forms of expression and cultural phases. The present discussion of these forms and phases centres on revealing the cultural background of modernist novels and consciousness representation as a main topic explored by modernist writers.

The second and third chapters critically analyse Virginia Woolf and James Joyce's works. Each interpretation focuses on character analysis and development according to psychological, cultural and epistemological layers. The processes of the characters' evolution require an analysis

which includes elements from several fields of study that complement the literary interpretation and motivate the interdisciplinary perspective on the topic of identity in modernist novels. The writers' styles and modes of experimentation reveal specific and universal features of their creations. Nonetheless, these chapters aim to reveal the writers' representation of levels of consciousness and their exploration of a *culture-informed consciousness*.

The characters in *The Waves* reveal their symbolic existence according to the water metaphor. Bernard is the main voice of the group, whose capacity for adaptation increases closer to the languages of art. Clarissa, the main character in *Mrs Dalloway*, is gaining an inner independence, which is acknowledged retrospectively.

Stephen Dedalus, whose name places him in the mythological space of the myth of Dedalus, develops an encyclopaedic memory which parallels his increasing awareness of becoming a writer. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* describes the stages of his self-awareness and artistic pursuits that flourish within the character's mind, along with each cultural experience he embraces.

The images of flight and fall, common to both writers' novels, reflect the ongoing process of character evolution and quest. The flow of knowledge acquired by the characters through the novels informs the epistemological level attained by some characters and the application of transformative learning pedagogy.

The last chapter closes the character analysis by discussing the pedagogical layer in modernist novels. Due to the cultural and educational elements included in the novels, the characters' cultural awareness develops into a *culture-informed consciousness* through stages informed by a learning pedagogy. Therefore, the concept of cultural pedagogy describes how modernist novels record character experiences with educational implications. Beginning with the broader perspective of modernist novels as sources of cultural memory and continuing with the representation of mimesis through the modernist characters, which are examples of cultural identities of the 20th century, the present critical perspective extends the analysis of the epistemological level through pedagogy theories that reveal the characters' evolution through the consumption of culture. The main pedagogy theories are Alexis Kokkos and Ted Fleming's transformative learning through art and Paulo Freire's critical consciousness and praxis.

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