

A Modernist Insight into Character Formation: The Bildungsroman and Its Thematic Perspectives in *Jacob's Room*

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Abstract

The Bildungsroman constructed its fictional pattern in German literature in the eighteenth century, in English literature flourished as the Victorian Bildungsroman, and was adapted by Virginia Woolf, among other modernists, in the twentieth century. The Bildungsroman gained popularity among the Victorian realists for having offered the necessary extension in a fictional discourse to their primary concern with the based on the principle of determinism relationship between individual experience and the milieu, but the Bildungsroman maintained its vitality in the age of Modernism, as to mention just Jacob's Room, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, and Sons and Lovers. Virginia Woolf's novel reveals that the modernists call attention to individual experience in the determent of the social concern to show the impossibility of the harmony between internal and external factors in the process of character formation. To present the ways in which Jacob's Room both continues and deviates from the tradition of the Bildungsroman, and expresses the protagonist's physical and spiritual development, while criticizing the social structure that restrains the achievement of the personal desires of the young generation and provokes their failure before completing their development, represent the main concern of this study.