

**THE HERO AS OUTSIDER IN SEARCH OF AUTHENTICITY
IN SELECTED NOVELS OF JOHN FOWLES**

05017 0000

By

VICTOR M. ARGUELLES

A Dissertation
Presented to the
College of Arts and Letters
University of the Philippines

In Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

University of the Philippines
Diliman, Quezon City
May 2005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract

A Note From the Author

CHAPTER I: Introduction

1.1 Importance and Limitations of the Study	19
1.2 Definition of Terms	43
1.3 Literary Influences on John Fowles	51
1.4 The Making of the Fowlesian Hero	58

CHAPTER II: <i>The Collector's</i> Miranda: An Existentialist Heroine	61
---	----

CHAPTER III: <i>The Magus</i> : Nicholas' Journey of Self Discovery	90
---	----

CHAPTER IV: Who Is the Fowlesian Hero in <i>The French Lieutenant's Woman</i> ?	112
---	-----

CHAPTER V: Thematic Patterns In the Novels of John Fowles	149
---	-----

CHAPTER VI: Conclusion	160
----------------------------------	-----

Bibliography

Curriculum Vitae

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is on a critical study of the Fowlesian hero as an outsider, a romantic hero and an existentialist hero in search of his/her authentic self. The Fowlesian hero is not a loner who is concerned only with himself or herself. The hero learns that he/she has a “linked destiny” with others.

Miranda Grey in *The Collector*, Nicholas Urfe in *The Magus*, and Charles Smithson and Sarah Woodruff in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* best exemplify the Fowlesian hero among the characters created by John Fowles.

This study focuses on how Existentialism is at work in the development of the Fowlesian heroes. Fowles' novels portray how human life can be made possible, or made even better, given the specific settings; and how the story can be presented with human sensitivity. The novels discussed are bildungsromans or stories of growing up. The characters included in this study are young persons who mature mainly through the decisions they make in their lives.

In the process of searching for their authentic self, the Fowlesian heroes discover how their lives connect with other lives in the novel – with the catalysts who start them off on their existentialist quest, with the antagonists who set up impediments, and the enablers who facilitate their quest.

As a writer, Fowles continues the Existentialist tradition of using the novel as a vehicle for expounding on his philosophical ideas. But he does not draw exclusively from Existentialism for the philosophical orientation of his novels. This study also shows how Fowles' ideas in his seminal work, *The Aristos*, are portrayed in three of his novels. *The Collector* illustrates the clash between the more privileged and talented individuals – “the Few” – and the rest of society, “the Many.” *The Magus* stresses the importance of self-realization in establishing a meaningful relationship with others. *The French Lieutenant's Woman* shows that the liberating forces which work to free the individual from the pressures of society transcend time boundaries.

As outsiders, the Fowlesian heroes have something in common with the novelist. Based on the way he writes, creates his characters, and lives his own life – “an exile in his native England” – John Fowles is the original Fowlesian hero.

A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

In the drive toward material progress, people can sometimes forget the individual whose interest and welfare progress is meant to serve in the first place. Similarly, in a scramble for the symbols and trappings of success, no one seems to have the time anymore to define what success really is.

And yet socio-economic progress begins with the individual who recognizes his true self. Apart from what society expects of him, the individual must come to a realization of what his own life means to him. Only then can success and progress be truly meaningful.

John Fowles' novels are about the individual's self-realization on the meaning of his life, and how his life connects with other lives. In writing this dissertation, as I analyze the Fowlesian heroes, I had a chance to re-examine my own life, my core values, cherished goals, and how I should interact with people in the various spheres of my life – family, school, community, country. Examining one's life indeed makes it more meaningful. According to Socrates, the first existentialist, "only an examined life is worth living."

Like the characters in the novels included in this study, at the start I was like an outsider to the field of literature. I have spent most of my working years in banking. But

I am fortunate to have met my professors, mentors and friends in U.P who initiated me into the world of literature and toward my own self-realization. In Literature, I discover the power of words and the exciting interplay of the intellect and the imagination. I have learned that we can all be poets – even those who do not write poems – by introducing poetry into our lives. We can all be novelists, too, by writing our own lives with our decisions and being responsible for our actions.

I would like to thank all my professors in U.P. for sharing their knowledge and their wisdom. My special thanks to Dr. Naida U. Rivera, my Dissertation Adviser, for her guidance, patience, and encouragement. I would like to thank my Readers, Dr. Judy Ick and Dr. Carlos Aureus; and Dr. Jose Dalisay, Jr. and Dr. Adelaida Lucero, members of my defense panel, for their valued advice and suggestions.

To my wife Linda and my sons Francis and Raymond, thank you so much for your support. I would like to thank God for all the people, who in one way or another, have inspired and helped me in writing this dissertation.