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***Thematic Analysis of Virginia Woolf's
« To the Lighthouse »
A Biographical Perspective***

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Dedication

*I dedicate this modest work to my dear parents may Allah give them
long life.*

*To my brothers and sisters may Allah protect them and to all my
family.*

To all my faithful friends who supported me along my studies.

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Abstract	

Glossary

The Avant- Guard: is traditionally used to describe any artist, group or style, which is considered to be significantly ahead of the majority in its technique, subject matter, or application. The term was reportedly first applied to visual art in the early 19th century by the French political writer Henri de Saint-Simon, who declared that artists served as the avant-garde in the general movement of social progress, ahead of scientists and other classes.

The Bloomsbury Group: is a name given to a collection of writers, artists, and intellectuals who came together during the period 1905-06 at the home of Virginia Woolf and her sister Vanessa Bell. in Gordon Square, Bloomsbury, in central London, close to the British Museum. The group included Virginia Woolf (writer) and her husband-to-be Leonard Woolf (writer and later political figure); her sister Vanessa Bell (artist) and her husband Clive Bell; the artist and critic Roger Fry; the novelist E.M. Forster and poet T.S. Eliot; economist John Maynard Keynes and philosopher Bertrand Russell; the writers Gerald Brenan, Lytton Strachey, and Vita Sackville-West; artists Duncan Grant and Dora Carrington.

Classicism: refers to the styles, rules, modes, conventions, themes and sensibilities of the Classical authors, and, by extension, their influence on and presence in the work of later authors. Classicism in literature is by no means extinct. In the 20th c. there has been a considerable revival of interest in Classical themes in drama, fiction and verse, especially in French drama, and particularly in the plays of Sartre, Cocteau, Giraudoux and Anouilh.

Imagism was a movement in early 20th-century Anglo-American poetry that favored precision of imagery and clear, sharp language. The Imagists rejected the sentiment and discursiveness typical of much Romantic and Victorian poetry. This was in contrast to their contemporaries, the group of poets who were prominent immediately before the First world War. The best known were; Ezra Pound, Amy Lowell, T.E. Hulme, Richard Aldington and H.D. (Hilda Doolittle). They believed that a hard, clear image was essential to verse. They also believed that poetry should use the language of everyday speech and have complete freedom in subject matter. Pound edited the first anthology, *Des Imagistes* (1914), and in 1915 Amy Lowell published some imagist poets. This work contained a statement of the ideals of imagism (or 'amygism', as it was called).

Marxism: Karl Marx (1818-83) and Friedrich Engels (1870-92) were primarily concerned with economic, political and philosophical issues and worked out explanations of the capitalist theory and mode of production. Marxist principles and attitudes and modes of thought and inquiry have been adapted to create a Marxist theory of literature. The Marxist critic (who tends to be primarily interested in content) writes from the definite standpoint of Marx's philosophical ideas, and from his view of history in which the class struggle is fundamental, or in terms of socio-historical factors.

Realism: An exceptionally elastic critical theory suggests that the external world is knowable by scientific inquiry by the accumulation of data, by documentation, by definition. Thus, correspondence will require referential language coherence, emotive language. The former will imply an objective point of view; the latter a subjective.

The Stream of Consciousness: A term coined by William James in "Principles of Psychology" (1890) to denote the flow of inner experiences. Now an almost indispensable term in literary criticism, it refers to that technique which seeks to depict the multitudinous thoughts and feelings which pass through the mind. Another phrase for it is the interior monologue of the character. James Joyce, who is believed to have known this work, exploited the possibilities and took the technique on in *Ulysses* (1922), which purports to be an account of the experiences (the actions, thoughts, feelings) of two men, Leopold Bloom and Stephen Daedalus, during the twenty-four hours of 6 June 1904, in Dublin. The climax to this extraordinary work is the forty-odd page interior monologue of Molly Bloom, a passage which has only one punctuation mark. Virginia Woolf (*Mrs Dalloway*, 1925; *To the Lighthouse*, 1927) and William Faulkner (*The Sound and The Fury* 1931) are two of the most distinguished developers of the stream of consciousness method.

General Introduction

General Introduction

1. Background of the study
2. Aim of Study
3. Justification
4. Motivation
5. Research Question(s)
6. Methodology
7. Dissertation Structure

General introduction

1. Background of the study

By the early Twentieth Century, Europe saw the emergence of capitalism and industrialization. New concepts, theories, ideologies, policies, technologies, mass warfare and violence were brought to life and eventually increased urbanization and industrialization.

Virginia Woolf was among the novelists who lived and witnessed the crucial transition from the Victorian era to the Modernity of the twentieth century. She is considered as the best remembered woman writer of the period because of her great contribution to literature. As she was a talented writer motivated and influenced by reality, personal experiences and the environment, she is considered one of great stars of English novel. In her works, she experimented with the stream-of-consciousness and the basic psychological state, as well as the emotional motives of characters.

Virginia Woolf was aware of the enormous changes of the period, as she connects physical and economic changes with shifts in cultural and social relations. In her essay “Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown she mentions: “in or about December, 1910, human character changed. . . All human relations have shifted- those between masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children. And when human relations change there is at the same time a change in religion, conduct, politics and literature”.

“To the Lighthouse” (1927) is a novel of childhood, a summer house, intellectual life and art. In which the passage of time is set by the consciousness of the characters rather than the big bong of a clock. The events of a single afternoon are narrated in over half the book, while the events of the following ten years are compressed in few pages. In the novel nothing happens actually; all the events take place in the characters’ minds.

Since this paper gives a specific look at the major themes of the novel it draws a link between the major themes and Virginia Woolf’s life, the biographical approach seems to be most suitable.

Woolf’s “To the Lighthouse” was a great example of the changes in the end of the nineteenth century. In the middle section “Time Passes” there is a veiled reference to the First World War, it is suggested through the atmosphere, the imagery, the despair, the destruction, and the catastrophic consequences of the war.

2. Aim of the Study

The study explores Virginia Woolf's "To the Lighthouse" in order to show how her personal experiences influenced her writings. In "To the Lighthouse" Woolf writes her memories, her feelings and her pains. In fact, Virginia Woolf had always been confronted to the vicissitudes of life; a happy family life, a series of esteemed people's deaths, the passion of a beloved husband, sexual abuses of brothers, ravages of a war, and the concerns of a woman as a woman and as an individual in the society, all punctuated with serious mental breakdowns and numerous suicide attempts. The consequences of Woolf's sinuous biography are reflected and described in this novel by means of major themes, and their relation to her own life. Then the novel comes as an autobiography to Virginia Woolf. Therefore, our study aims at exploring and describing the themes of death, mourning, and life. Also it attempts to show the extent "To the Lighthouse" can be considered an autobiography to Virginia Woolf.

3. Justification

It is the interest to investigate the common aspects of writing personal life and the events in the novel with relevance to the themes that activate our keenness to study Virginia Woolf's "To the Lighthouse". Thus every theme in the novel is taken upon the author's emotional and spiritual progress, which is the essence of the work. Secondly, the novel is considered the most popular autobiographical work Virginia Woolf even wrote.

4. Motivation

Virginia Woolf was seen as a major twentieth century novelist and one of the foremost modernists. She wrote "To the Lighthouse" based on her childhood memories in Talland house. Hence, the novel is about life, death and the passage of time. In fact, it fully reflects Virginia Woolf's life. Then the period of her life spanned the transition from the Victorian to the modern world. In addition Woolf has a style of writing which is very ironic and quiet complex. These factors together with a personal fascination of the work motivate us to deal with this novel.

5. Research Question (s)

In order to conduct the study the following questions have been raised:

1. To what extent can “To the Lighthouse” be considered an autobiographical novel?
2. To what extent does the group of themes in “To the Lighthouse” realize Virginia Woolf’s own autobiography?

6. Methodology

This work is an analytical study endeavoring to depict cues in the novel that might be considered to reflect Woolf’s real life. Therefore, the extracts from the novel will be analyzed to evidence the resemblance of the novel and Virginia Woolf the writer herself.

7. Dissertation structure

The present study is a thematic analysis to Virginia Woolf’s novel “To the Lighthouse”. Therefore, this work is divided into two chapters. The first one deals with theoretical background of the study; on which the first part concerns with the historical background of Modern Literature, dealing with the period from the First World War to the Second one and the enormous changes of that time. The second chapter stands as the practical part of the study that highlights the thematic analysis of the novel, “To the Lighthouse” as a corpus, then the themes’ relation to Virginia Woolf’s real life, with reference to the woman as an individual in society.

Theoretical Part
Literature Review
&
Historical Background

Theoretical Part: Literature Review and Historical Background

Introduction

1. Modern Period

1.1. Historical and Social Background of the Period

1.2. Overview of the Modern Period Literature

2. Virginia Woolf's Biography and Major Works

2.1. Virginia Woolf's Biography

2.2. Virginia Woolf's Major Works

3. The Autobiographical Kinds

3.1. Narration of One's Life

3.2. Autobiography

3.3. Diary and Journal

Conclusion

Introduction

The concept of the modern world besides the other periods assures that modernity is not just another era in history, but rather the result of a new type of change. This chapter displays a historical and social background about the modern period, then an overview of the modern period literature. In addition to concise profile to Virginia Woolf's life, and major work.

1. Modern Period

1.1 Historical and Social Background of the Modern Period

The death of Edward's mother, Queen Victoria, means the end of the Victorian age. Edward's reign was short (1901- 1910), however for people who attended the period, it was completely different from its previous. It was the beginning of a new era named "The Modern Age", or the world before and after the Great War, this transformation became a major theme for novelists' fiction and poets' poetry.

In the late Victorian and early Modernist times, intellectuals faced the absence of believing that the world is one unity as it should be treated in only one manner. However many fight against going deep into an incoherence and fragmentation thoughts that prevented their theories from being universalized. From the 1880s to the 1920s, the importance of the exchange of ideas between artists, philosophers and religious thinkers was to formulate the world's views into a pragmatic construction of modern products (Damon 1).

Broadly speaking, 'Modernism' could mean liberating and shifting away from traditions, by using new and innovative forms of expressions in writing, so that many styles in art and in literature, of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, are completely different from those that preceded them. Generally the term 'Modernism' covers the creative production of artists and thinkers who saw the traditional approaches such as, arts, architecture, literature, religion, and even life itself become seeming old in light of the new economic, social and political circumstances of an industrialized society. Also the period seeks rapid social change and significant developments in science. Modernists found themselves faraway from what was named Victorian morality and principles, instead they were searching for radical responses to the radical changes occurring around them. As they confirmed that human being's power could shape and influence the environment through experimentation, technology and scientific advancement. The extent to which modernism allows the diversity of interpretations, is perhaps the juxtaposition of points of view, this idea was declared by a

symbolic couple of modern poetry: Ezra Pound (1885-1972) who made his famous call for “Make it New”, and his contemporary T. S. Eliot (1888-1965) who was insisting on the essential role of tradition in art (Duman 75).

The Modern period was a period of significant development in the fields of science, politics, warfare, and technology. It was also an age of discovery and globalization. On the other hand, the European powers and their colonies began their political, economical, and cultural colonization in the rest of the world.

By the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, modern arts, politics, sciences and cultures dominated not only Western Europe and North America, but almost every civilized area on the globe. The Modern Era is associated with the development of individualism, capitalism, urbanization and a belief in the possibilities of technological and political progress. However, by mid-century, a group of ideas with stable forms had emerged as a reaction to the failed Romantic and Democratic Revolution of 1848, this stabilizing situation was rooted from the following idea; that reality dominates over subjective impressions (Opsit 3).

The miseries of industrial urbanism, and the experiments created by scientific researchers on subjects, bring changes shackled the European civilization, which was advancing in a continuous and progressive line of development from the Renaissance.

In the 1890s a new way of thinking began to appear; that it was necessary to push aside previous norms, as it would be better to keep in consideration the knowledge of past within of new current techniques. It was argued that, if the nature of reality itself was a question, and if restrictions that are around human activity were falling, then thinkers and artists could go freely with literature, painting, and music. This wave of modern movement broke with the past in the first decade of the twentieth century, and tried to redefine the art’s form in a fundamental manner.

In literature and visual arts some modernists were challenging the recent predictions to make their art more vivid, or to force the audience to question their own preconceptions about an idea. This aspect of modernism has often seemed as a reaction against the recent culture, which developed in Europe and North American in the late nineteenth century.

Knut Hamsun’s *Hunger* (1890) is considered to be the first modern novelist by the beginning of the twentieth century. Virginia Woolf, T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound, Joseph Conrad, Ernest Hemingway, and many other novelists and poets are the leaders of this new movement; “Modernism”.

1.2. Overview of the Modern Period Literature

The Modern period was the time of the United Kingdom's rise, in which the state was developed in many fields as it reveals different changes, especially in science; trade and politics; however the most prominent change was the establishment of Capitalism as a new economical system. And then, another main change which is the transform of the political system to a Bureaucratic one. Nevertheless, Literature of the Modern period takes the part of the lion over all (Herman 5).

The form, the style, and the semantic perspectives of the Modern period makes literature of the period looks differently from its previous; the Romanticism, this is because the Modern period literature deals directly with the subject's main idea. One of the most famous works of the period is T.S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1915).

Literature of the Modern period is distinguished by a pessimistic tone, mainly because of the Great War; this tone was also dominated in the Victorian Literature, in another word, the majority of writers and intellectuals rejected the optimistic way of thinking because of the First World War's bad impact on ordinary people as well as on artists. Many modern works, such as; Eliot's "The Waste Land" (1922), are designed by the absence of the heroic character in the novel. Moreover, modern novels often deal with realistic issues of the period that are related to the society's problems, mainly the historical and the social changes. Novelists like, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf have used "the Stream of Consciousness" as a new technique to value these issues, as they tried to resolve the social problems as possible as they can through their art.

The concept of the Modern period is not only a historical movement, as it is totally different from a medieval or an ancient one, because the real sense of it is that modernism comes as a new type of change from the radical life, especially in Europe, also it is defined as a process for liberating human efforts to better their situation.

David Lodge in his essay, "Modernism, Anti modernism and Post Modernism" argues that the twentieth century Literature is as a river of ideas that come to the writer's mind fluently, this means that, in a given kind of writing, literature is as a pendulum of clock which swung all over time is passing, as it may move oppositely in one moment at time, in which the writer moves from one idea to another. There were writers such as: Scott Fitzgerald and Earnest Hemingway who make a combination between modern and realistic writing, they use

the modern form to express a real social context, as if they use the narrative method to convey a realistic situation, as an example, the works of William Golding's "Pincher Martin" and John Fowler's "The French Lieutenant's Woman" focus on giving the Modern period literature different kinds of characters (Bhatna Gar 2).

By the end of the First World War in 1914, life in Europe became complex and disordered, in a way that seemed to refuse or challenge what is happening in reality. Writers such as James Joyce, who sets out a new way of writing prose, which is "the stream of consciousness" technique, and his companion Ezra Pound, who was calling for "Make it New" in poetry are evidences for what is named; the experimentation of representing the world differently. These authors and others have had one main purpose, which is to help people to accept the results of the Great War, as an important point of change to the best (Pack & Coyle 251).

During the nineteenth- century period, novelists were using the name of the main character in the novel as a title of the book, as it is the case of Charles Dickens's "David Copperfield" (1850), Charlotte Brontë's "Jane Eyre" (1847) and George Eliot's "Adam Bade" (1859), this technique is used to attract the reader's attention to that particular character. By contrast, the Modern period novelists' used metaphorical titles in their works, such as D.H. Lawrence's "The Rainbow" (1915) and Virginia Woolf's "To the Lighthouse" (1927). These metaphorical titles often play with the scenes of light and darkness that give the reader, especially the European reader, the chance to go far from the European mode in the time after the First World War (Ibid 257).

The Avant- Garde revolution which occurred in the early years of the ninetieth century, predicted that it would be a good way to guide society into a finer world, however its effect on ordinary people was not acceptable, as it separated the artist from his actual society, because artists were in unfinished search for entertaining instruments for their audiences, what makes them be separated of their actual society. This situation led for new movements, such as "Classicism" led by T.S. Eliot; however it was less to be considered a literary relevance. In England as in America, the new century brings in new literary techniques, as it was the case of James Joyce and Virginia Woolf in using "The Stream of Consciousness" as a new technique, which is used to express the character's interior monologue. Also the contribution of Ezra Pound and Amy Lowell in modern poetry, began with the creation of "Imagism" in 1912, this technique stresses precision and economy of language contrarily to

the traditional rhyme and meter. Also Earnest Hemingway was famous of his objective style and the use of realism technique to present pictures from the real life.

The Great War was the absolute cause for change in Europe at that time, in which the situation of society was so tragic and very far of the old way of thinking; however it was so much acceptable concerning the new thoughts of arts than ever before. Mainly literature was functioning better than the other arts, as if the authority of the state was given to the artist to conduct society. It is true that literature is a liberal struggle concerns with the freedom of humans to gain respect, especially respecting woman as an artist, the phenomenon that did not exist in the Golden Age (Grigson 13).

Until the twentieth- century, American literary area was far away from the British one. Meanwhile, London is one of the greatest capitals in the world; it was considered the centre of English Literature all around the world, because of its attractive nature. By bringing Oscar Wilde, George Bernard Sow, George Moore and James Joyce from Ireland, then T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound from America, and Joseph Conrad from Poland there was appeared an international republic of letters, as well as its essence was to keep the literature of the same time at the right place (Ibid14).

The major thematic concerns of the Modern period literature are dealing with the major problems of people that time, where the war was the most interesting subject at all. In Britain thousands of young people were joined in the war to defense with their nations, however, they found themselves living in the same place with rats and corpses; they were really living a miserable life. In Ezra Pound's words "eye deep in hell", he meant the destruction of the land, of human bodies and of lives, also for many writers and artists, who were grouped under the free term "Modernism" like Virginia Woolf, the situation was presented is an irreparable break of the past, and a need for new representations in arts and in Literature (Scutt 56).

2. Virginia Woolf's Biography and Major Works

2.1. Virginia Woolf's Biography

Virginia Woolf come to life in the Victorian Age in London (1882- 1941), she was an English novelist, essayist, biographer and feminist writer. Woolf was a creative writer whose modernist style changed with each new novel. Her letters and memoires reflect her career and her English literary culture in the Bloomsbury group. Woolf was a symbol of a historical period in which art was integrated with the other elements of life in society, as it is given by

Svendsen and Pericles in their article “Virginia Woolf- Biography”, T.S. Eliot describes her in his obituary: “without Virginia Woolf in the centre of it, it would have remained formless or marginal... With the death of Virginia Woolf; a whole pattern of culture is broken” (Svendsen & Pericles).

Virginia Adeline Stephen was the third child of Leslie Stephen, who is a remarkable and notable Victorian intellectual. He wrote books in different disciplines; but his sixty- three volume “Dictionary of National Biography”, was the most famous of his works, Woolf’s mother, Julia Duckworth, was a great ideal Victorian woman, mother and wife, she provided her husband and her children with sympathy and love. The Stephens’ family lived at Hyde Park Gate in Kensington; they were an upper class family, as they had had important relations with many artists and writers, such as the novelists; Thackeray and Henry James.

As normal, Virginia Stephen did not have a formal education as the same case of the girls in the Victorian era. She and her sister Vanessa were having an “at home education”, while her brothers Thoby and Adrian were sent to The Cambridge, all of them were encourage by their father to read his works and to explore his library. Vanessa became a well known painter; she was introduced to a group of painters who bring modern painting to England. As well as the case of her sister Virginia in writing, both of them were modernist artists, in which the biographer Hermione Lee argues that “Woolf was a modern, but she was also a late Victorian” (Ellis 3).

A series of deaths in her family had affected Virginia Woolf’s life deeply. In 1895 when Virginia was thirteen years old she lost her mother, the death of the mother was as a sign of destruction for Virginia and all of the family members, because she was as the oxygen of their lives. Then after the mother’s death, Stella Duckworth, Virginia’s half- sister took her place to turn the household, but just after two years she get married, then three months later she died suddenly of illness.

The sudden death of her mother and that of her half- sister, Stella, lead to Woolf’s first nervous breakdown, Leslie Stephen pass away in 1904 after a painful struggle with illness, this was Woolf’s second breakdown with a suicide attempt. The death of her closest brother Thoby of typhoid fever in November 1906 has a similar effect on her emotional situation and her health. Thoby Stephen later on would be Jacob in her experimental novel, Jacob’s Room.

A depressive world and a series of deaths around her had badly harmed Woolf's life. She suffered her first breakdown in 1895, and the second in 1904 after her father's death in addition to many moments of hallucination and an attempt to suicide; this collapsed her life and led her to stay in rest room for months. After that she and her sister Vanessa bought a house in Bloomsbury, their house became as a meeting place for their brothers and their friends of the Cambridge University. In 1912 Virginia Stephen married Leonard Woolf, a friend of her brother, together with her brothers and friends; they formed what was known as 'The Bloomsbury Group'. The main objective of this group was to deal with literature, aesthetics, criticism and economics and also it dealt with modern issues such as; feminism, pacifism and sexuality. Its best known members were, Virginia Woolf, John Maynard Keynes, E.M. Foster, T.S. Eliot and Lytton Strachey (K. Chapman 4).

This group of friends were representing much of what was modern and rejecting the oppressive taboos of the Victorian life. Later on Virginia and Leonard Woolf founded the Hogarth Press which became their publishing house and a successful business.

During her literary life time, Virginia Woolf's writings were addressing issues related to her era and to her literary domain, in which she focused on the position of a human being life between the nature of his relationships and the real sense of time. She was influenced by the French thinker "Henri Bergson" and the novelists "Marcel Proust" and "James Joyce", in using the 'Stream of Consciousness' style of writing, then as a consequence she found herself at the center of England literary community. She started by writing essays and book reviews that are published in a newspaper called "The Guardian". After that she began writing novels, and her first novel, the *Voyage Out* was published in 1915.

Virginia Woolf committed suicide in 1941. She put on her overcoat that she filled its pockets with stones, and then she walked to the Ouse River near to her home and drawn herself. In March 28th, 1941, she wrote her last letter to her husband, where she stated that she wished not to spoil his life after her death, as she thought that she is going mad once again because she were hearing her dead mother's voice, she also thanked him for his patient with her and for his numerous attempts to make her feel happy. Virginia Woolf was so depressed and frightened with these thoughts, so she preferred to face both death and her phobia of water.

2.2. Virginia Woolf's Major Works

Woolf began writing professionally by the 1900th, with journalistic pieces about Haworth; the house of the Brontë's family.

2.2.1. The Voyage Out

Her first novel, *The Voyage Out*, was first published in 1915 by her half- brother's imprint, Gerald Duckworth Company Ltd. This novel was originally entitled *Melymbrosia*.

2.2.2. Night and Day

Her next novel, *Night and Day* (1919) is a conventional novel, its events occurred during the best times of the upper-middle class lives and loves, mostly with happy ending, when Woolf interrogated the restrictive life style of young men and women in the Victorian Era.

2.2.3. Jacob's Room

Nights and Days is followed by *Jacob's Room* (1922), which is a memorial to Thoby, Virginia's brother. His personality is painted by a series of allusions to his room, his lovers and his coming and going to London. Jacob's death in the war is expressed symbolically to Thoby death of typhoid fever during a trip to Greece. With this novel, Virginia Woolf goes far of the realistic tradition and she was established as a leading modernist writer, this is evident in her most famous works.

2.2.4. Mrs. Dalloway

Mrs. Dalloway (1925) focused on the efforts of Clarissa Dalloway, a middle- aged married woman, who organized a party in her house, even as her life is paralleled with that of Septimus Warren Smith, a working- class veteran who has returned from the First World War suffering from deep psychological sickness. It is mainly about Virginia Woolf's experience of mental illness and women's concerns as women and social individuals.

2.2.5. To the Lighthouse

To the Lighthouse (1927) a novel about the Ramsay's family anticipation of visiting The Lighthouse, set on two days and ten years apart. Nothing happened actually, thus everything takes place in the characters' minds, it is considered Woolf's autobiographical novel.

2.2.6. Orlando

Orlando (1928) is one of Virginia Woolf's greatest novels. It is a biography of a young nobleman, who lives for three centuries, without aging more than thirty years old, but he does suddenly turn into woman. The book is in part, a portrait of Woolf's lover Vita Sackville- West.

2.2.7. A Room of One's Own

A Room of One's Own (1929) is a novel in which Woolf analyzes the figures of women, where she considers the broader issue of the ideological oppression to women. On which it is said that this novel is her most enduring contribution to change the ways in which we live and think today.

2.2.8. The Waves

The Waves (1931) is a spiritual and profoundly meditative work that pushed Woolf's concept of the novel's form to its limit, where she presented a group of six friends by whom she explores the sense of individuality, of self and of community. The novel shapes a combination between prose and poetry, as Woolf herself considered it as a playpoem.

2.2.9. Flush

Flush (1933) is a part of fiction; however it is a play of the cocker spaniel owned by the Victorian poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning. The book is written from the dog's point of view. In the play, Flush is on stage for much of the time. In fact the play was a way that Virginia used to escape from her own human existence.

2.2.10. The Years

The years (1937) is a novel about Victorian family in which the characters were challenging life with died wife and mother from the beginning of the novel, and then as the years move on the children see liberation from the rigidities of their formal way they have been raised.

2.2.11. Between the Acts

Her last work, Between the Acts (1941), is a story of a village pageant that portrays the history of England, in which scenes of great beauty are combined with fleeting pictures of egotism, and the horror of war. This book is considered the most lyrical one of all her works, not only in feeling but also in style. With this collection of works she reached the pinnacle of Modern English Literature.

3. The Autobiographical Kinds

3.1. Narration of One's Life

3.1.1. Biography

It is an account of a person's life, and a branch of history. Dryden defined it as "The history of particular men's lives". As a literary form it had become popular since the second half of the seventeenth century.

During the Elizabethan period in England, there were produced a remarkable translations of classical biographers one of them, Francis Bacon's "The History of Henry VII". In 1824, Thomas Carlyle had published a good biography of Schiller. "Mrs. Gaskell's Life" of Charlotte Brontë (1857) is also an important work; as is "Foster's Life" by Charles Dickens (1874).

Since 1950, the art of biography had developed, as it became a major publishing business. So the number of biographies augments each year, as there was a large quantity of the historical and political biographies, in addition to an important number of biographies written about artists and sportsmen. Literary biography has become more popular. Though, there are critical books about biographies and biographies of biographers (Cuddon 85).

3.1.2. Memoire

The memoire is an early form of the novel and is considered to be an autobiographical history; it often includes diaries and journals, but most of them are fictitious. The author appears just as an editor of another's memoires. France and Defoe, with Robinson Crusoe (1719) and Moll Flanders (1722) were the first English Masters in writing memoires. Smollett's *Roderick Random*, Goldsmiths' "The Vicar of Wakefield", and many others were presented as memoirs under only the smallest circle of memoire.

"Memoirs of Cavalier" is a historical romance by Defoe, published in (1724). "Memoires of Captain Carleton", a narrative published in 1728 as "The Memoirs of English Officer", by Captain George Carleton; it is the subject of an attractive tale of soldierly adventure (Drabble 660).

3.2. Autobiography

In his *Sixteen Self Sketches* (1898), George Bernard Shaw said:

All autobiographies are lies. I do not mean unconscious, unintentional lies; I mean deliberate lies. No man is bad enough to tell the truth about himself during his lifetime involving, as it must, the truth about his family and friends and colleagues. And no man is good enough to tell the truth in a document which he suppresses until there is nobody left alive to contradict him.
(Williams 1996)

Generally the autobiography is an account of a person's life by him or herself. The term had been first used by Southey in 1809. In Dr. Johnson's opinion "no man was better

qualified to write his life than himself”, but this is debatable, because few can recall clear details of their early life and most of them are depending on other people’s impressions on them. Moreover, everyone goes to remember what he or she wants to remember because disagreeable facts are often hidden, that is to say no one could avow about bad memories, otherwise the truth may be distorted for the sake of convenience or harmony. In the classical times few autobiographies were survived, and then history and autobiography were mostly considered the same thing, as it is clear in the “Histories of Herodotus, Xenophon’s Anabasis and Caesar’s Commentaries”.

The first autobiography was St Augustine’s “Confessions” of the fourth century, it is a personal account of spiritual experience, and an extraordinary instance of deep psychological self- analysis, that kind of writing has become ordinary only in modern times. “The Sculptor”, Benvenuto Cellini (1500- 1571) was the author of one of the most vivid autobiographies ever written.

During the eighteenth century, we find some connection between autobiography and the “Sentimental journey” (1768) are taken to be a kind of autobiographical fiction, or fictionalized autobiography, and occasionally, the long poem has been used as autobiography. The classic instance is Wordsworth’s “The Prelude” completed in 1805. From 1950, the autobiography started to flourish on a huge scale, and here it is possible to mention some of the many worth readings, Roy Campbell’s “Light on a Dark Horse” (1951) and Gerald Brenan’s “A life of One’s Own” (1962) (Cuddon 63).

3.2.1. Confession

It is an autobiographical type of fiction written from the first person point of view. Such works are very personal and subjective such as accounts of experiences, beliefs, feelings, ideas, and states of mind and soul; for instance St Augustine’s “Confessions” (4th century) and Rousseau’s “Les Confessions” (1781- 1788) (Ibid 175).

Alfred of Musset wrote “The Confessions of a Child from the Century”, to testify to his generation an inexpressible uneasiness feeling began therefore to ferment all young courses (Ibid 56).

Jean Paul Sartre, in “The Words”, tries to understand how the man constructed himself in the childhood to present a strong man in which he said: “Worn-out, unobtrusive,

humiliated, pushed back, passed under silence, the child's features remained at the fifty years old" (Sartre 35).

3.2.2. Testimonies

Testimonies are documents which accept witness with an affirmation. It is a kind of autobiography that realizes itself with the first person, where the author, the narrator and the main character are excluded. The 'me' dominates and the events are seen through him as the facts stated by Sartre: "only in the middle of the adult, I was an adult in miniature, and I had adult readings; it sounds forgery, already, since, in the same instant, I stayed a child" (Ibid 20).

The testimonies establish a particular report to the reader, who sometimes receives an intimate confidence with the author and then he becomes his witness, his accomplice, but possibly as his judge. Among the better testimonies are Thomas Usk's allegorical prose work "The Testament of Love" (1387) and Henry Son's "Beautiful Testament of Gressied" (fifteenth century).

3.2.3. Autobiographical Novel

The autobiographical fiction is primarily made of events and characters that existed in the author's own life. The protagonist might be modeled by the author, and he must do at least some of the things the author has actually done in his or her life. However, the ratio of truth in such fiction work will be to some extent small. It can easily be argued that all fiction is autobiographical in some way because it undoubtedly contains elements of the author's actual experience and the society. A writer who writes a story about a school can be assumed to have either attended school or know people that have. The school does not need to be the writer's school nor resemble it in any real way, whereas the concept of "school" exists in the writer's memory and is therefore based on some type of real experience.

3.3. Diary and Journal

Diaries and journals can be divided into two categories: the first one is the intimate; such as: Swift's "Journal to Stelle", the Journals of Benjamin Hydon, Amiel, Shelley and André Gide. Secondly, the anecdote such as: Pepys's Diary, and the diaries of Charles Greville and Thomas Creevey (Cuddon 220).

Although the journals are often published, after the death of their authors, some authors published their diary, as André Gide or the Goncourts. After his brother's death, Edward continued alone the journal and published some excerpts. It was fully published in 1956.

Journal and diary are generally written from day to day with first person narrator and they are dated. The author expresses his emotions and his feelings there, he stands back in relation to the events that he lives, to the people that he meets and to his readings. "it is a mistake only to pretend to write the very important in a journal" (Cuddon 64).

Other important writers published diaries in the nineteenth century, namely George Eliot and Queen Victoria. The Queen's contribution was "Leaves from the Journal of Our Life in the Highlands" (1862), and "Moreve Leaves" (1883). George Eliot's journals came out in (1885).

Conclusion

From the given ideas presented in the previous elements of the chapter, the autobiography is the ultimate purpose of literature, in which our primary concern is to explain the individual message of the writer in terms that make its significance clear to the others. However, with the autobiographic approach, one can discover not just what a text means but how it comes to mean what it does. Being familiar with this theoretical framework, we shall investigate to which extent Virginia Woolf's "To the Lighthouse" should be considered as an autobiographical novel.

Practical Part

Thematic Analysis of the

Novel

Practical Part Thematic Analysis of the Novel

Introduction

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Conclusion

Introduction

“To the Lighthouse” Virginia Woolf’s best known novel appeared in the period of transition, from Victorianism to Modernism. This chapter seeks to explore specific aspects in the novel to draw a parallel connection between Woolf’s life and the novel, in order to depict the reasons that push her to write this novel. The chapter begins with an illustration to the position of woman as an individual in the society, followed by the major themes of the novel and the characterization, then the novel’s themes reflections in Virginia Woolf’s real life.

1. Woman as an Individual in Society

The Victorian Era was the great age of change that makes England reaches its highest development as a world power. Victorian literary men and women produced a large legacy of works consists of novels, short stories and poems were published in series. The Victorian novel was an important solution to represent the actual life, especially the social world at that time, and then the hero’s or the heroine’s personalities are drawn from the real life that is conducted by social conditions that distinguish the Victorian society from another. However the Victorian poetry tends to be more pictorial and often poets were using sounds to convey the meaning. Also, theater was a flourishing and popular institution that time, but in 1890 Victorian theatre assists some changes produced by the comics George Bernard Show and Oscar Wild, the ones who used to criticize the Victorian pretense and hypocrisy (Amigoni et al).

Women in the Victorian Age have one main role in life which is to marry and take care of her husbands’ interests and business. Before marriage they would learn housewife skills such weaving, cooking, washing and cleaning, whereas if they were of wealthy families, they are not obliged to learn all of these tasks, because their maids will took care of the household duties. Also, women were not allowed to be educated or gain knowledge outside of the home because it was man’s world. The critic, Richard D. Altick states: “a woman was inferior to a man in all ways except the unique one: her femininity. Her place was in the home and not in the world of affairs”(54). Patriarchal society did not allow woman to have the same privileges as man, in which man’s principals lead woman to be the ideal Victorian woman that society expected her to be, however if a woman did not accept a Victorian man’s principals, she will remain spouseless. The extreme injustice to women leads to huge debate about women’s role in society, known as “The Woman Question”. That time women were not able to vote or to

hold a political office, whereas by the end of Queen Victoria reign, women were capable to have degrees at universities. As well as, hundreds of thousands of working class women were labored at factory jobs under harmful conditions, and many were driven into prostitution (Appell 2).

Also, the death of Queen Victoria guides the citizens to change their way of life. Society was based on the ownership of land, however by the end of the Victorian Age it turns into an urbanism economical society. Some writers such as Thomas Babington McCauley had accepted the movement as a good change for England's progress, while others like Mathew Arnold has considered it as departing away from the traditional rhythms of life. In the early years of the century (1870- 1901) the costs of empire increased rapidly what makes England feel confronted with the growth of other threats on its military and economic domination.

That time there were spread many socialist movements, that makes people be influenced of it; the most famous of which is the theory of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, which was named "Marxism". Literature of the 1890s is characterized by an aesthetic language and sadness writings, also literacy increased rapidly in this period, as well as novels, short stories and long poems were published in serial form. The period between 1870 and 1945 was a period of transition from the Victorian Age to the Modern one, in which literary writings were the most active factor that changes the way that the world was being presented. However artists found the era to be their occasion to relate the forms of their arts with society, tradition and reality, that is to say, artists of the transition period were acting freely in presenting their arts. The change at this period reached even education, equality, race and imperialism; these issues were considered important, then for each of them there were specialists and guides in society. Meanwhile, the ideas that dominated the twentieth century intellectual life in Europe were the thoughts of Charles Darwin, Karl Marx, Frederick Nietzsche and Sigmund Freud; they were the first ones who deposit politics on the cultural floor. At the same time women find their ways to examine the social, political, and economical world, the fact that leads for the articulation of gender to be a main category of historical analysis (Scott 146).

Modernism dealt mainly with the issues of class, gender, and sense of time; however gender issues have been always a great topic and a major focus in society and also in literature. By the way, the enormous changes occurred in the century gave women the chance to work outside the house. Nevertheless not a few number of women go out to defy their traditional place in the western society, for them it was really high time for changing the

situation, thus until 1882 woman could not own a property, and until 1918 no woman could vote. The years between 1880 and 1920 were key years for women movement against the current thoughts. Virginia Woolf herself had never attended school; never went to the university. However she was lucky that she had have parents like her own, who have money and sense enough to educate their daughters and encourage them to read, write and paint, but she had never experienced intellectual and social friendship like her brothers. Until 1905 when her father died, her brothers, her sister and she went to live in the Bloomsbury where Virginia get liberated from a strong Victorian way of life, as she began to live and work depending on her own principles. However it was not only Virginia Woolf who changed her life, all the society was changed, also arts were changed (Duman 75).

“To the Lighthouse” is a concrete example of the transition period from the Victorian to the Modern one. It gives a clear portrait of the Victorian family and the external factors such as, the Great War in turning the scene into a modern period way of living. Throughout the novel, Virginia Woolf shaped her feminist agony when she talked about women’s opportunities to create and to share the man in different domains of life; this was presented in a binary opposition between mother and artist.

Though Mrs. Ramsay corresponds perfectly to Julia Stephen, Woolf’s mother, both are representing the Angel of the House as a symbol to the ideal Victorian woman. Like Julia Stephen, Mrs. Ramsay presented the duties, self sacrifice and other behaviours that distinguished the Victorian mother and wife from any other one. Lily Briscoe is the artistic woman figure in the novel, she mirrors Virginia Woolf herself because by the end of the novel Lily was forty- four years old, which is the same age of Virginia Woolf when she finished writing the novel (Anderson 3).

“To the Lighthouse” contains an equivalent mother/ artist binary, at one end of the binary there is Mrs. Ramsay, who is a mother of eight children and a wife of e great Victorian man, she symbolized the traditional Victorian values of a dutiful, domestic and helpful woman. In the opposite side of the binary stands Lily Briscoe as an independent and unmarried artist. Generally the mother and the artist are the two main characters in the novel; Mrs. Ramsay dominates “The Window”, the first and the longest section, while the final section, “The Lighthouse”, focuses on Lily Briscoe and her endeavor to complete her painting. The death of Mrs. Ramsay in the second section suggests a symbolic death of

traditional Victorian values, what gives Lily Briscoe the chance to express herself as a painter, then for the other women to present their creative souls in front the public (Ibid7).

On the external level of the plot, Woolf positions Mrs. Ramsay the mother when she devotes an exceptional attention to her children, in the novel, when Mr. Ramsay and Charles Tansley teased James about the impossibility of visiting the lighthouse next day, it was the role of Mrs. Ramsay to soothe the injured feelings of her youngest child; “perhaps you will wake up and find the sun shining and the bird singing, she said compassionately, while smoothing the title boy’s hair”. (Woolf 15)

Mrs. Ramsay’s duties extended to her husband, he often comes to her to get affirmation of his professional ability as she provides him with the sympathy he desires. Woolf’s characterization of Mrs. Ramsay in “To the Lighthouse” declares her claim in her novel “A Room of One’s Own “women have several all these centuries as looking- glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size” (Woolf 30). Mrs. Ramsay was that looking glass that reflects and enlarges her husband’s image to himself

The novel clarifies that Mrs. Ramsay was a part of whole dominant system of Victorian woman behaviours’, which are inherited from one generation to the other, in fact this image was changed by the end of the ninetieth century as a result to the women’s movement in England.

If Mrs. Ramsay represents the mother in the novel, Lily Briscoe brings an image of the anti- mother. Lily stands contradictory to Mrs. Ramsay in many aspects. She is an independent creature, unmarried and passionate about her work, she refused to perform the role of mother and wife because she didn’t accept the way Mrs. Ramsay treats her husband. This suggested an opposing relationship between the artist female, who is necessary independent, and the surrender for successful motherhood. Then Mrs. Ramsay and Lily opposed each others in their ideas about marriage and art, Mrs. Ramsay rejected Lily’s function as an artist, as she thought that it would be better if Lily Briscoe could obtain a suitable husband. Mrs. Ramsay believed that “an unmarried woman has missed the best of life”. (Woolf 42) However Lily thought of herself “how Mrs. Ramsay cared no fig for her painting”. (Woolf 41) the fact that Mrs. Ramsay was saying to Lily “with her little Chinese eyes and her puckered up face, she would never marry; one could not take her painting very seriously”. (Woolf 15) It is clear that Mrs. Ramsay preferred marriage instead of art, she

suggested that one cannot take Lily's art seriously, but Lily was insisting on her talent, she said: "but this is what I see; this is what I see" (Woolf 17).

According to Lily's point of view, motherhood cannot be combined with art, so that a woman have to choose one of them and Lily prefers art, from this perspective it is clear that the binary mother/ artist is the same opposition between traditional and modern life. However Lily's painting is a symbolic representation of reality, in which Mrs. Ramsay and James are represented by a purple triangular. Her painting represents a way of dealing with any problem simply.

2. The Major Themes in the Novel

After many years of her death, Virginia Woolf began to be seen as a master writer. In 1927 she published her masterpiece novel "To the Lighthouse". It is a novel of summerhouse, childhood and memories. In which the events of an afternoon are narrated in about half the book, then the events of ten years are compressed in few pages.

"To The Lighthouse" does not have a traditional plot; it consists of a series of experiences, memories and feelings that refers to Woolf's characters' consciousness. The novel is divided into three sections; "The Window", "Time Passes" and "The Lighthouse". Its events took place during a summer afternoon and evening, and ten dark years, in a summerhouse on the Isle of Skye in Hebrides where Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay pass their summer with their children.

That night Mrs. Ramsay addressed a number of guests to dinner such as: the botanist William Bankes, the poet Augustus Carmichael, a philosopher Charles Transley, the painter Lily Briscoe and others, the dinner party was what signified the first section. In the second section, "Time Passes", the children grow up, the war broken out, Mrs. Ramsay dies suddenly one night, her eldest son, Andrew is killed in battle, and her daughter Prue dies too. So the summerhouse enters into a state of destruction for ten years. In the last section, "The Lighthouse", Mr. Ramsay decides to go to the lighthouse with his two children James and Cam, and this experience is a moment of connection for them, and Lily succeeds in finishing her painting.

The characters of the novel are drawn from Virginia Woolf's own family at the time when her parents were alive and spending summers at Talland House in St. Ives, Cornwall, often with a number of gests. In the novel Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay are described in such a way

that evoked Vanessa Stephen to say that it is as if Virginia has bring their parents back from death, and the painter Lily Briscoe, who is attempting to draw a portrait based on Mrs. Ramsay reading to her youngest son whose dream of a trip to the lighthouse has been cancels by his insensitive father.

In “To the lighthouse”, Virginia Woolf dealt with her own preoccupation with death and the trouble of mourning. However she perfectly dealt with the essence of life, as a central theme, through conveying its significance to the reader in tones of consciousness combined with visual imagery.

Most critics acknowledge that Woolf did never lose the sight of death in her novels. She never ignored the fact that time moves human being toward death, for Woolf the wonderful beauty of life is disturbed when knowing that we humans live short lives and lose everything when we die.

In fact death is the main theme which captures most of the novel’s body, what gives it an elegiac tone. Then mourning is a natural and necessary reaction to death, especially the case of Woolf; because she lost her beloved family members. The novel also was an occasion to Virginia Woolf to express her feelings of the effect of the Great War on people and the public mourning after the First World War.

While dealing with the meaning of life and death human beings’ personal perceptions come only when they are forced to deal with death. For Virginia Woolf, death created meaning in life, and without death there would be nothing to live for. From this perspective and together with time as an innate factor, Virginia Woolf arrive at destroying her pessimistic perception to life as she had escaped from her pains by exploring her literary talent in writing prose. The third section of the novel is a great evidence for Virginia Woolf optimistic perception in which Mr. Ramsay and his two sons, James and Cam, reached The Lighthouse, and Lily Briscoe succeeded in finishing her painting (Aytaç 43).

To the lighthouse is a deeply personal novel in which Virginia Woolf faced her past in a way that liberated her to speak and write as she had never done before. At the time of writing “To the Lighthouse”, Virginia Woolf had lived through one World War. After World War One there was much sorrow in Europe and a public mourning.

The war had great impact on Woolf’s writings and on her vision of the world. When she published her novel, Mrs. Dalloway, in 1925, she understands that writing was her only escape from personal pain and loses, as she begins to find her own voice and work through her past by creating new life on paper.

By drawing inspiration for Mrs. Ramsay from her mother and Mr. Ramsay from her father, Woolf succeeded in presenting her pain by transferring it to the characters, and consequently allowing them to mourn in her place (Ibid 10).

“Time Passes”, the second part of the novel, is a literary lyrical experiment of life from Woolf’s conception that takes us through ten dark years to her memories. This section is a symbolism for some elements in life that are not affected by death. Those elements such as their house, when it was left away for a long time, however; darkness envelops it, the ghosts of the past were settling there, the dust settles everywhere, and silence filling the rooms with emptiness.

As Spilka puts it, the novel is marked by a “compulsive need to cope with death”, however; it is clear that the elegiac tone in the novel is muted as if she were afraid to express her mourning directly. In this respect it is important to note that Virginia Woolf avoids giving death directly, instead, she prefers to depict its scenes ambiguously in between brackets. While reading the novel, it is obvious that Mrs. Ramsay is died. However Virginia Woolf put it: (she had died very sudden at the end, they said). (Woolf 114), also Prue Ramsay, the most beautiful of Mrs. Ramsay’s children, she is died too after two years of her marriage. Instead Virginia Woolf said: [Prue Ramsay died that summer in some illness connected with childbirth, which was indeed a tragedy]. (Woolf 110), Andrew has been killed in the war. But it is given such a way: [a shell exploded twenty or thirty young men were blown up in France, among them Andrew Ramsay, whose death, mercifully, was instantaneous]. (Woolf 111) In her diary, Woolf describes telling the deaths of the characters in brackets, as “the flight of time and the consequent break of unity in my design”, it is as if she wants to be detached from the world, by dealing with reality as an uninterested existent (Benefiel 5).

3. Characterization

Virginia Woolf, in “To the Lighthouse” takes the readers in a journey to the true nature of relationships, through the perspective of many different characters, especially in the first chapters of the novel, it is difficult to know the character who Woolf is speaking through, from which perspective she is talking, but as the novel goes deeper, it becomes obvious to clarify each character.

3.1. Mrs. Ramsay

From the beginning of the of the novel, Mrs. Ramsay is the central character, she is as the crystal of the house, she dominates the novel in the first section “The Window” through her role as a successful mother and wife. In the lyrical section “Time Passes” Mrs. Ramsay was died, and the fact of her death caused a great struggle in the other characters’ minds, what makes her still omnipresent. In the last part “The Lighthouse”, she kept in the memories of Lily Briscoe, in which she said:

Oh the dead! She murmured, one pitied them, one brushed them aside, one had even a little contempt for them. They are at our mercy. Mrs. Ramsay has faded and gone, she thought. We can override her wishes; improve away her limited, old fashioned ideas She recedes further from us (Woolf 127).

Physically and psychologically she was a force of cohesion and a source of unity in the house. Mrs. Ramsay with her great personality and her sense of sympathy, she was able to hold all the family members together, and also with guests. However she is advanced in age and a mother of eight children, she was still beautiful and charming woman. Also she is cultural, polite and patient with her husband and her children. All these ethics and many others send a clear portrait to the Victorian ideal woman that referred to the Queen Victoria as a symbol of all woman of that age. As she was respecting the others, she received her respect; this is why she has never been called by her first name in the novel, as the case of Clarissa Dalloway in Mrs. Dalloway.

Mrs. Ramsay plays the role of a match maker very well, especially during the dinner party, when she thought that William Banks must marry Lily Briscoe. However Lily rejected totally the idea of marriage. As well as she had a great affection on children; by the beginning of the novel, Mrs. Ramsay knew that Mr. Ramsay and James will not go to the lighthouse that day, but she could not dishearten her youngest son by telling him that he will not be able to go to the lighthouse because of the weather conditions, so she deviates from the truth. The first words of the novel are validating that; “yes, of course, if it’s fine tomorrow,” said Mrs. Ramsay. “But you’ll have to be up with the lark”, she added. To her son these words conveyed an extraordinary joy”. (Woolf 4)

Also Mrs. Ramsay was a source of inspiration for her husband; Mr. Ramsay was depending on her for sympathy. And Lily Briscoe was influenced by her personality, as Lily

argues in the novel; “fifty pairs of eyes were not enough to get her around that one woman”. (Woolf 166) Her irresistible charm makes her appear as a unique character from the pen of the great novelist Virginia Woolf.

3.2. Mr. Ramsay

He is a knowledgeable academic researcher and a well-known intellectual of sixty two; he is the responsible of the Ramsay family and the father of eight children. He was one of the leaders of literature in his time, due to his contribution to philosophy in one book, besides his success in the field of literature and philosophy he was feeling that he is failed in some extent, as if he did not done what he should do. His strong personality does not stop him from demanding sympathy, because the way he was bagging for sympathy from his wife in the first section, then from Lily at the last one makes him looks comic and sad.

In the first part “The Window”, the character of Mr. Ramsay appeared so harsh and severe, especially when he strongly tells James that the weather won’t be fine to enable them to go to the lighthouse as it is given in the novel: “But, said his father, stopping in front of the drawing-room window, “it won’t be fine”. (Woolf 4) Mr. Ramsay was a man who considers himself a truthful man, he thought himself that he could not make mistakes as the following quotation shows: “what he said was true. He was incapable of untruth; never tampered with a fact, Never alerted a disagreeable word to suit the pleasure or convenience of any mortal Being, least of all his own children”. (Woolf 5)

His strong manner of treating his children is because he wants them to know that life is not a bed of roses, and facts are strong as it needs courage and the power to carry on. With a superb words and expressions Mr. Ramsay’s personality was given to readers from a great Modern Age novelist.

3.3. Lily Briscoe

She is an important character in the novel. In the first section, she appeared as an artist who cared about her art, and devoted less importance to marriage and family life. For her marriage and family are no more important than her artistic activities, that the artist in her personality comes before the woman in her. This is why she was shocked when Charles Tansley supports the idea that women could neither write nor paint.

Lily Briscoe rejected the fixed picture of woman that was presented by Mrs. Ramsay, in which Virginia Woolf was claver in presenting Lily's role as an outsider, who attempts to value her artistic soul over the idea of marriage. However it was difficult to stand against the limited expectations of society.

Throughout the novel, Lily was suffering from gender inequality and male injustice upon women in that society, as if she was challenging the fact that she could pick up her paintbrush and start painting, it was also the case for manifesting a hidden sense of guilt presented in her personal independence from a male's domination society.

Lily's first appearance in the novel gives a clear qualification of her social status as an outsider of the Ramsay's family, she was first introduced, when she decided to paint a portrait for Mrs. Ramsay and her son James , who were sitting in the openly transparent window of the cottage. By using literary and figuratively language, Woolf represented the fact of looking through the window to a world that does not accept Lily's liberated lifestyle was the role that Virginia Woolf gave to Lily, to make her appear as if she is lost in time. In this respect the window is a metaphor used to represent a relative looking glass for the external world, the world of giving a woman her freedom to do whatever she want, far away from the one symbolized by Mrs. Ramsay's idealism. However it seems reasonable that it is through art a woman can get experience and gain her independence.

As Lily finished her paining by the end of the novel, she established herself as a liberated female artist at that time.

3.4. James Ramsay

He is the Ramsay's youngest son. James loves his mother deeply, but he feels a big dislike among his father. At the beginning of the novel, Mr. Ramsay refuses the request of six years old James to go to the lighthouse because the weather does not permit that journey. Then after ten years, James finally makes his journey to the lighthouse, with his father and his sister Cam. At this time he grew up into a young man as his relation with his father changed to the best.

3. The Novel's Themes and Virginia Woolf's Life

3.1. The Concept of Life in Woolf's Childhood

Virginia Woolf's "To the Lighthouse" is a novel of summerhouse and memories of childhood. Woolf's childhood character is presented in her memories of the past, what allowed her to write an autobiographical novel, the one which is under this study. Woolf's childhood memories are exactly what Sigmund Freud called "screen memories", it means that the childhood period of life is an occasion for the child to formulate his adulthood personality, through the experiences of time and place.

In the novel, Virginia Woolf dealt with pains that could not be resolved, which is related to her parents, as well as, the novel contains a sense of nostalgia to childhood memories and an unforgettable moments with her dead family members. This is why Woolf's family and childhood memories are important subjects in the novel. On the other hand, Woolf dealt with the meaning of life; by conveying its significance to the reader by giving signs from her consciousness combined with visual imagery. And then from Vanessa and Virginia's letters, it is clear, how valuable were their two months of each summer at St. Ives, where all the family members were going. The novel give the reader a wonderful image of their real life in summer with a special concern to the magic presence of her mother, while talking about her, Woolf said:

At a certain moment, she supposed, the house would become so shabby that something must be done. If they could be taught to wipe their feet and not bring the beach in with them- that would be something. Crabs, she had to allow, if Andrew really wished to dissect them, or if Jasper believed that one could make soup from seaweed, one could not prevent it; or Rose's objects- shells, reeds, stones; for they were gifted, her children, but all in quit different ways.(Woolf 24)

In her diaries, Virginia Woolf explained that the memories of the past were obsessing her all of her life, also she argued that if she did not edited these memories in one book, she would suffer all her life of what she named "her parents obsession", in addition to her suffering healthily, so the fact of writing about them was something necessary for her. Otherwise, by writing "To the Lighthouse" she kept them in her mind, and then she invented her own therapy.

According to her memories, Virginia Woolf's best ones are those she spent with her family in their summerhouse, Talland House at St. Ives in Cornwall, where they spent every summer until 1895, when her mother died. The novel also includes happy memories about the family holidays in the landscape especially in the Godrevy Lighthouse.

There are many similarities between the novel and Woolf's souvenirs of Talland House. Firstly, Adrian Stephen, Woolf's brother was not allowed to go to the Godrevy Lighthouse similarly in the novel, James Ramsay wants to go there, but the journey was canceled because of weather conditions.

Also, in the novel the Ramsays return to the summerhouse after ten years of Mrs. Ramsay's death, which was the years of the Great War, the same as the Stephens left their house after Julia Stephen's death; however Virginia and Vanessa visited their house once again under its new owner. And then after the mother's death, Leslie Stephen enters into a gloomy situation, as it was the case of Mr. Ramsay in the novel.

The same as the Ramsay's, Leslie and Julia Stephen insisted on teaching their children, Adrian and Toby sent to study at school, whereas Virginia and Vanessa were having an at home education, they were learning dance and music, and then Vanessa learned arts and Virginia studied Latin and Greek languages.

In the novel, Mrs. Ramsay performs the role of the ideal Victorian woman, she liked bringing people to the house, especially her husband's friends, when they were invited to attend dinner party at the beach. Mrs. Ramsay is aware that her work compared to her husband's, Mr. Tansley and Lily's work will not be rewarded one day, however by doing such actions she hoped to live in the others' minds, which is clear in the fact of collecting people together in charity moment is an attempt to create a sense of harmony and unforgettable moments (K. Chapman 4).

At the age of five, Woolf's grandfather died, and then from time to time she was hearing speeches about death and nervousness, what makes her sensitively affected as younger as she grew. Also at this time, Virginia Woolf was sexually abused by her half-brother, Gerald Duckworth, however her situation was so difficult, because Gerald was younger than her and certainly she could not tell anyone, the feeling of shame that she felt was the result of direct and indirect messages from her parents, nurses and siblings to maintain herself, by the time she was sick. Later years, Gerald was her first publisher; after all they remain friends. At the same time, Virginia's step- sister, Laura was behaving mad and

then she sent away because of her behaviours, this fact marked an emotional impact in Virginia's personality (Ibid 18).

The most difficult period of Woolf's life was her early teens that begin by 1895 when her mother died of a rheumatic fever, at that time Virginia was thirteen years old. The mother's death was a breaking point for all her children, as if she was nonexistent reality and they were serious and selfish rather than unhappy (Ibid 29).

Stella Duckworth took Julia's place in the household; she was cooking for Leslie and caring for young children. In "To the Lighthouse" Stella was represented by Lily Briscoe. However in the third section Lily Briscoe represents a portrait to Virginia Woolf herself.

In April 1897, Stella Duckworth and Jack Hill married, later on Stella was sick as she done a surgery related to childbirth then she died in July 1897. So Vanessa was obliged to take Stella's place at home. Through time Leslie Stephen became aged, he relied on his son, George Duckworth, in many businesses, as he was a helpful and generous brother with Virginia and Vanessa. So all of these facts make Virginia Woolf's future life predicted to be worse.

3.2. Death and Mourning in Woolf's Pessimism

Death is one of the great themes of Literature; it is even more common than love. The modern perception to death was considered as a problem in many literary pieces written in the first years of the Modern Age. As a modernist writer, Virginia Woolf's concern of death and mourning was different from the other modern writers.

Woolf's "To the Lighthouse" is a novel belonged to the period called "The explosion of Modernism" (1910- 1930). Her works are a suggestion that she was influenced by the recent thoughts of the period, such as; Freudian psychology and the Stream of Consciousness technique. On the other hand her biographies and diaries make us understand that her early life was disturbed by a series of deaths in her family. This is why death plays an important role in Virginia Woolf's life.

In writing "To the Lighthouse", she faced many difficulties presented in her relationship with her Victorian parents. As we know Virginia Woolf's life was shadowed by death from an early age. In the years between 1895 and 1904 she lost her mother, her sister and her father. Less than ten years later, Europe was destroyed in the war and public mourning became a part of her life, this is why she attempted suicide several times, as a way to escape from the

harsh realities, then to change that situation. Marder puts it, we can realize Woolf's position towards death in the lines of the letter she wrote to her husband and to her sister, just before her tragic death, that she was trying to give up with both her mental illnesses and her desire for death; because she thought that death is the only way for her to live in release.

To the Lighthouse is a long meditation on time, death and mourning. The relationship between the three is that, while dealing with death, time must be passed and mourning must be done. The novel is a part of Virginia Woolf's own experience and her personal understanding of death and the trouble of mourning, in which the relationship between death and life is a central theme that dominates Woolf's fiction in different ways. From this perspective Virginia Woolf's "To the Lighthouse" is considered as a mirror of Woolf's inner self and she portrayed it from her own views about death and mourning. However, the major reason that makes Woolf write about her mourning is the death of her mother, Julia Stephen, when she was thirteen years old, as it caused her first breakdown, then her father's death when she was twenty years old, caused another severe breakdown and a suicide attempt.

Woolf's mother died exactly at the moment when Virginia entered the adolescence age. However, the death had been preceded by a number of anxious moments which Virginia never revealed to her parents, her half brother Gerald Duckworth had sexually abused her, and her half-sister Laura Stephen was behaving in a mad way that leads her to go far away.

In "To the Lighthouse", Virginia Woolf represented her mother in Mrs. Ramsay's character, who had given us a direct and clear understanding to the unresolved grief of Virginia Woolf. In her diaries, "Moments of Being", she wrote that she does for herself what psychoanalysts do for their patients.

Throughout the events of the novel, Virginia Woolf makes the reader understand her own pain through each character in the novel, in a way that she gives them the ability to mourn in her place. That's why "To the Lighthouse" is put to depict mourning as a process, through which, Virginia Woolf had experienced her grief, and as a fictional representation of Woolf's own family, the characters act exactly along this process.

While working on the novel, Woolf wrote in her diaries that she would have a character for her father done completely in it, a mother, ST: Ives and childhood. Like the Stephens, the Ramsays are a family of ten; parents and eight children.

In the second section of the novel, "Time Passes", Virginia Woolf's imagination takes us through ten dark years, when the family leaved the summerhouse because of several conditions prevented them to come back again. The house was left to the forces of time however darkness enveloped the house and the memories come out as ghosts of the past, also

dust settles everywhere, and silence filled the rooms with emptiness, it is only interrupted by the ringing glasses, or the gust of the wind. In which Virginia Woolf said: “nothing it seemed, could survive the flood, the profusion of darkness which, creeping In at keyholes and crevices, swallowed up here a jug and basin, there a bowl of red and yellow dahlias, there the edges and firm bulk of a drawer”. (Woolf 102)

The empty silent house is a symbol for what is happening to the characters during this time. The middle section also could be considered as an evidence of Virginia Woolf’s attitude towards the Great War, which she wished it to be written as a different kind of “history”, the one that would be from her point of view. Thus this section was an effective presentation of the history of war of the 1919s.

Then if we go further in the novel, it is obvious that nature plays a great role there. However, we can discover the existence of nature in Woolf’s mourning, where she said:

In spring the garden urns, casually filled with wind- blown plants, were gay as ever. Violets came and daffodils. But the stillness and the brightness of the day were as strange as the chaos and tumult of night, with the trees standing there, and the flowers standing there, looking before them, looking up, yet beholding nothing, eyeless, and thus terrible. (Woolf 113)

As seen in the quotation, the effects of death on nature are a reflection to its effects on Woolf herself, through using particular vocabulary that realized the meaning.

In fact death is the main theme which captures most of the novel’s body, what gives it an elegiac tone. As a result mourning is a natural and necessary reaction to death, especially to her parents. From another perspective, Virginia Woolf gives particular emphasis to the effect of the Great War on people and the public mourning after the First World War.

While reading the novel we understand that Mrs. Ramsay is dead. In which Virginia Woolf said, (she had died very sudden at the end, they said). (Woolf 114), also Prue Ramsay, the most beautiful of Mrs. Ramsay’s children, she is died too after two years of her marriage. Instead Virginia Woolf said: [Prue Ramsay died that summer in some illness connected with childbirth, which was indeed a tragedy](Woolf 110), Andrew has been killed in the war. [a shell exploded twenty or thirty young men were blown up in France, among them Andrew Ramsay, whose death, mercifully, was instantaneous] (Woolf 111). In such a way Woolf dealt with the death of those characters, who referred to her family members, between brackets, as if she is afraid of revealing her mourning.

No doubt that the death of Mrs. Ramsay is a turning point in “To the Lighthouse”. From the beginning, Mrs. Ramsay is the main character in the novel; she was as “the lighthouse”

enlightening the house. However, as a result of her death, all the unity and order disappears in the house and the characters feel as if they lost their hopes about the future.

Dunn claims that Woolf wrote that she could not get the words out of her head; that means that, the sense of yearning for the dead mother and father is the same absolute pain of losing a child. Husbands can be replaced, also more children can be born, but a mother and father once lost, the longest life can never bring them again, she also goes to say that it was painful for her to be sure that no one as nothing would ever be able to take the place of that lost fundamental tie. In fact, Virginia Woolf suffered a deep grief and obsession with her parents (Dunn 81).

In the third part, “The Lighthouse”, as Lily Briscoe sits up in bed and asked herself, how she should react to Mrs. Ramsay’s departure. However it was difficult for her to accept the death and the following mourning for a woman she loved, as it is given in that passage: “for a moment she felt that if they both got up, here, now on the lawn, and demanded an explanation, why was it so short, why was it so in explication.... “Mrs. Ramsay!” she said aloud, “Mrs. Ramsay!”The tears ran down her face”. (Woolf 131)

Some critics said that there was a comparison between the sonnets of Shakespeare and the imagery used in the modern novel. However, the themes of “To the Lighthouse” are those of the sonnet’s time, themes such as time, beauty and also death from that we could feel the poetic spirit that comes together with the meaning of fate and life what characterizes Woolf’s fiction especially in “To the Lighthouse”.

By the final section, “the Lighthouse”, Lily’s vision of life goes in parallel with her pain of losing Mrs. Ramsay. Mrs. Ramsay’s death is now part of her ordinary experience, so that the work of mourning is done. When we consider Woolf’s own ideas about death, we can clearly conclude that she assures her opinion about life as a long journey full of struggles including both the good and the bad endings.

3.3. Reality and Time in Woolf’s Optimism

A primary Woolfian theme is “Time”. Time is an element with familiar characteristics; the most famous of it is that time has an innate relation with human life; that is to say, that human beings are logically related to the stream of time until they get died. Whenever the human being is alive, he is immediately experiencing happy moments, others of pain and also complex moments that may occur anywhere in time. This is why for everyone on earth, looking forward the future, joy and suffering are naturally shaped by the awareness that time is unchangeable for the sake of a movement. A movement that could be the result of a final

end of consciousness in a human being mind. From this point of view, it is clear that Virginia Woolf's ideas about death justifies her struggle with the surprising moments of time, including good and bad endings (Aytaç 43).

In "To the lighthouse", Woolf's characters lived within chronological and psychological order. In fact, Lily Briscoe was searching for clear way for her mixed emotions, it is the search for a new situation of life, she wanted to go far of her grief and the feeling of sorrow among Mrs. Ramsay's death, her position was the same as looking for a new form of life, however, her effective solution was time and the acceptance of reality. In other words, time is a fundamental factor for human being to pass from a state of mind to another, as it helps to accept the reality, especially, the belief that we are all going to die one day, whether we declare of that or not, this is something could not be judged. It is the willing of God on earth. After a long struggle with the reality of death, Lily finally find a solution to make her deal with death as a part of her ordinary life, she experienced painting as an art that gives her the chance to express her fillings. Lily's recollections begin to disappear as her artistic soul works to put those memories in the past.

In the novel, James Ramsay reacts aggressive towards his father after his mother's death. He like his father, they were mourning lonely because they cannot verbalize their feelings, that they were so close to Mrs. Ramsay as if they were fighting a wordless battle. By the end of the novel; James Ramsay reached the Lighthouse with his father and his sister Cam Ramsay. The act of reaching the Lighthouse for James was as an affirmation of his own life and his relationship to his father. James Ramsay is like Lily, after Mrs. Ramsay's death each one of them holds his efforts to continue living without her presence. From another perspective, the Lighthouse represents Mrs. Ramsay herself:

She looked out to meet that stroke of the Lighthouse, the long steady stroke, the last of three, which was her stroke...often she found herself sitting and looking, sitting and looking, with her work in her hands until she became the thing she looked at that light for example. (Woolf 52)

Life and death are like the beginning and the end, while, death is a part of life, as an example: In "Mrs. Dalloway", Big Ben rings all the time, it was to remind Clarissa Dalloway that she has only one hour to go to the party, however, it was only one hour closer to death. Similarly, "To the Lighthouse" we face the same opposed nature between life and death in which time shines its light in front of life, but when death comes, it will be switched off then time would has no meaning (Benefiel 13).

In fact, dealing with death in her “To the Lighthouse”, Virginia Woolf is like Lily Briscoe had found her own enlightening talent to go out of the pessimistic situation.

Susan Bennett Smith claims that Virginia Woolf suffered from grief after her father’s death in a more normal way, comparing to the way she grieves after her mother’s death. As evidence to that is when she wrote a letter to her friend, Violet Dickinson, seven months after Leslie Stephen’s death, where she reflects her sorrow, by writing “To the Lighthouse”, as she considers her novel as psychoanalysis to a certain extent.

Lily Briscoe’s painting reflects her optimistic perspective to life after Mrs. Ramsay’s death, where Virginia said: “with a sudden intensity, as if she saw it clear for a second, she drew a line there, in the centre, it was done; it was finished, yes, she thought, laying down her brush in extreme fatigue, I have had my vision”. (Woolf 175) Dealing with death in her own life, Lily has an enlightening habit that allows her to complete the work of mourning and physically complete the painting.

Conclusion

By the end of this chapter, it is clear that the major themes given in Virginia Woolf’s masterpiece, “To the Lighthouse”, are the threefold Childhood, Death and the Role of time, in which each one of them completes the other. In dealing with childhood memories, death suddenly breaks the stream of happy moments, and then the role of time is to accept the reality and carry on in life. However, the characters are given from Woolf’s real life, and the parallelism between her memories and the story’s events makes the work looks like a mirror of Woolf’s own life, as well as it makes the novel one of the most popular of all English novels.

General Conclusion

General conclusion

By the end of Queen Victoria's reign, England witnessed a period of transition which was between the nineteenth century and the twentieth century; it was the beginning of the Modern Age. During this period many changes occurred in different domains. The most obvious of these changes is the transformation of the political system into a bureaucratic system, and the economical system was replaced by a capitalistic one, the fact that leads to the United Kingdom's rise. However, by the explosion of the Great War in 1914, everything had changed in Europe; the situation was very tragic and so far from the old way of thinking. In fact, the war was an absolute cause of change. This situation attracted many modern writers and intellectuals who were interested in and engaged at the social problems. Virginia Woolf was among these writers, who were influenced by the issues of the period.

Through using her literary career, Virginia Woolf wrote a wonderful masterpiece novel, "To the Lighthouse". It is a novel of summerhouse and memories of childhood; the novel does not really have a habitual plot, however it contains a collection of feelings, memories and experiences with her family members in their summerhouse.

Through a thematic analysis of the novel, we attempt to clear that the major themes of the novel are reflecting Virginia Woolf's real life. Starting by the theme of childhood's memories, the novelist gives us a wonderful picture of the Victorian family and the major principles of that age. However, she provides us with the exact sense of life, especially when she describes the dinner party and the great role of her mother in turning the house, in the first section. And then, in the second section she moved to the major theme in the novel, and in literature as a whole. The theme of death and its result; mourning, were clearly discussed in the novel, in "To the Lighthouse" as in all her novels Virginia Woolf never forget to deal with that theme, this is because she was affected deeply by the death of her beloved family members especially her parents, she faced the death of those people one after the other starting by her mother, her half- sister Stella, her brother Thoby and then her father. Death is mostly followed by the ghost of mourning. Otherwise, the effects of the Great War and the series of deaths in her family makes her suffering several nervous breakdown and attempts of suicide, that what formed the pessimistic tone in her novel.

In the third section, "The Lighthouse", Woolf dealt much with the theme of time, that is to say that throughout time people could accept their fates, because time in many respects is considered as an important factor that helps people to forget the past and try to carry on in life, especially in the case of death, time is the only possible solution to learn how somebody

General conclusion

could live without the dead persons. In this respect Virginia Woolf finds the suitable solution to go far away of the pessimistic feelings by creating her own therapy which is the talent of writing.

At last, the fact that she was feeling the same pains as her society population felt, Virginia Woolf was really considered as a realistic and social writer of the modern period. And then from the analysis of the novel it is clear that there are common aspects between the novel's themes and Woolf's major facts during her life, as it includes some characters from her real life that's why "To the Lighthouse" is considered an autobiographical novel to Virginia Woolf in which she arrives at liking literature with reality in a highly modern style.

We hope that our study contributes to enrich our library, and that it will be of a great help to English Department students interested in British Literature.

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Abstract

This study attempts to investigate Virginia Woolf's masterpiece novel "To the Lighthouse". It is a modern novel that revolves around family life and memories of childhood, in which Virginia Woolf related its major themes to the facts occurred in her real life. So, the ultimate aim of the study is to explore the major themes of the novel, which are given in the following threefold, childhood, death and time in order to detect any connection with Woolf's personal life; Therefore, when remembering the memories of childhood, death comes as an earthquake and breaks out the stream of happy life, as this would cause a strong feeling of mourning, so that it is important to deal with time as the most suitable solution to accept the reality of death, and to carry on in life. Thematic analysis is opted for to show the logical relations between the novelist's real life and the themes of the novel. After investigation, has been revealed that "To the Lighthouse" is the real embodiment of Woolf's early life, so that it is evidently possible to consider that novel an autobiographical novel to Virginia Woolf.

Key Words: characterization, autobiography, modern novel, memories, childhood, death, mourning.

الملخص

تحاول هذه الدراسة البحث في رائعة فيرجينيا وولف "تو ذ لايت هاوس". تعتبر هذه الرواية من اروع الروايات الحديثة , التي تدور احداثها حول الحياة العائلية و ذكريات الطفولة ,والتي من خلالها تمكنت فيرجينيا وولف من ربط الافكار الاساسية للرواية بالأحداث التي وقعت في حياتها . اذ أن الهدف الاسمي لهذه الدراسة هو اكتشاف اهم الافكار الاساسية في الرواية و اظهار علاقتها بالحياة الشخصية لفيرجينيا وولف , حيث انه اثناء التفكير في ذكريات الماضي يأتي الموت كالزلزال ليهدم مجرى الحياة السعيدة مما يسبب الاحساس بالحداد و هذا ما يوجب ضرورة التعامل مع الوقت على انه الوسيلة المناسبة لتقبل حقيقة الموت و الاستمرار في الحياة. تم في هذه الدراسة اتباع دراسة ادبية لإظهار العلاقة المنطقية بين الحياة الواقعية للكاتبة و اهم المواضيع في الرواية للخروج بنتيجة وهي ان الرواية "تو ذ لايت هاوس" هي تجسيد لحياة فيرجينيا وولف. ومنه يمكن اعتبار هذه الرواية السيرة الذاتية لفيرجينيا وولف.

الكلمات المفتاحية : الشخصيات , السيرة الذاتية , الرواية الحديثة, الذكريات , الطفولة, الموت, الحداد.