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**Modernist Strategies of Character
Representation in Virginia
Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway and To The
Lighthouse**

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المستخلص: إن متابعة واستكشاف مفهوم الشخصية في الرواية الحديثة يأخذنا بالضرورة الى عالم الحداثة المعقد والذي يمجج بكثير من التيارات والاطر الفكرية والفلسفية والنفسية المثيرة لكثير من الجدل والنقاش . ويتناول هذا البحث مفهوم الشخصية في عالم الرواية الحديثة في الفكر الروائي لاحد ابرز ممثليه وهى الكاتبة الانجليزية فرجينيا وولف . وقبل الخوض في عالم الرواية عند وولف والاستراتيجيات التى من خلالها تجسد شخصيات بطلاتها فى اعمالها الروائية التى حققت نجاحا وشهرة كبيرة فان البحث يتطرق للتحويلات التى ادت لظهور الحداثة فى الادب . والمتابع للحركة النقدية لاعمال وولف وكيفية تلقى النقاد والقراء لاعمالها ومدى تفاعلهم مع بطلاتها يلاحظ ان كثير من التهم قد وجهت للكاتبه فيما يتعلق برسم الشخصيات على وجه الخصوص . والاتهام الاساسى الذى استمر على مدار تناول النقاد لاعمال وولف هو انها تفشل فى رسم الشخصيات وان بطلاتها يعانون من ضعف واضح ولايملكون رؤية او اهداف واضحة فى الحياة . والفرضية الاساسية التى يقوم عليها البحث فى هذا السياق هى ان وولف تطبق استراتيجيات الحداثة فى تصوير ورسم الشخصيات وتحقق نجاحا مذهلا فى هذا الاطار, وان الحكم على شخصيات روايتها يجب ان يكون فى سياق رؤيتها للعالم والانسان فى اطار مفاهيم الحداثة وكذلك رؤيتها النسوية واستخدامها لتيار الوعى فى السرد . ومن خلال دراسة نقدية عميقة لرواية " السيدة دالوى " (1925) تسعى الباحثة لاثبات صحة فرضية البحث الاساسية .

كلمات مفتاحية: الحداثة ; تجسيد ; التشخيص ; الوعى ; النسوية

Abstract: Following and exploring the concept of character in modernist fiction essentially takes one to the complex and turbulent world of literary modernism , a world which entails a highly problematic issues and extremely sophisticated literary , critical , philosophical and psychological issues and concerns. This paper explores the world of modernist fiction in an attempt to concretize the transformations and innovations that modernism has brought about to the representation of character as represented in the fiction of Virginia Woolf (1882 – 1941). The main premise upon which the study is based is that this seeming failure and patent weakness of Woolf's characterization is the outcome of the lack of understanding the nature of Woolf's modernist art and the inability to comprehend Woolf's philosophy and the modernist strategies applied in her representation of characters. The paper, therefore, embraces the belief that Woolf means her characters to be astonishingly insignificant. The search, then, is for the philosophy that makes this seeming failure a part of the complexity and force of Woolf's fiction and a manifestation of the modernist strategies she applies in the representation of character. To prove the reliability of this core premise of the study, the researcher is expected to answer some important questions related to Woolf's art and vision; Through a critical reading and analysis of Woolf's *Mrs.*

Dalloway (1925), the researcher endeavors to prove the authenticity and reliability of the core premise of the study.

Keywords: Modernism , Representation , Characterization , Consciousness , Feminism

Introduction

Virginia Woolf (1882 – 1941) is a major narrative voice of modernist fiction and a prominent authority among the representative writers of modernist vision of the world and modernist character. She is undoubtedly one of the most distinguished and important female literary figures in both English novel and feminist literature .Her narrative works and her essays, diaries, letters, biographies and criticism make her a writer of high caliber and show her as one of the main pillars of modernism and feminism. Actually, it is her feminist ideology and her modernist vision which shape and form her strategies of character representation in all her fictional works. She is recognized as one of the most innovative writers of the 20 the century, and she is admired as one of the pioneers of the stream of consciousness as a narrative device. In her novels, Woolf expresses her feminist and modernist vision.

Mrs. Dalloway (1925) is one of the works which incarnate Woolf 's narrative strategies and her concepts of modern life and modern character in a good way . The first remarkable thing about *Mr. Dalloway* is that although the novel is considered one of the popular choices of readers of Virginia Woolf , it is the most misunderstood . In fact , inspire of the achievement that Woolf accomplishes as one of the most prominent modernist female writers, her novels have been an object of assault and criticism .There have been consistent and circulatory charges in analysis of Woolf's works . There have been debates about the absence of social dimension and range in her fiction , the absence of great or huge narrative events or fictional substance , the obvious unconcern with the practical issues of human life and the disappointing portrayal of characters. J. W. Beach , in this respect , states that " Woolf's characters only from time to time appear to comprehend what they need with any definiteness , nor need it with enthusiasm " . (Mushtaq Kadhim , 2020 , 122).Actually , the obscurities that run in the text of *Mrs. Dalloway* and the violation of the traditional accepted conventions of novel writing

indicate that the author does not address the ordinary reader of fiction .It is clear that understanding Woolf's vision and narrative philosophy requires a more sophisticated readership to follow what Woolf describes in her important essay " *Common Reader* " as " the atoms as they fall upon the mind in the order in which they fall " , regardless of the disconnectedness , fragmentation and incoherence of the narrative experience . (1957 , 150) In his preface to Mrs. Dalloway , thus, Molly Hoff writes in his book *Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway . Invisible Presences* (2016 ,vii) :

Literary allusions in *Mrs. Dalloway* abound in bookish relationships that encompass much more than a reading for list for World Literature. Obscurities here concern plots, myths, languages living and dead to such a large degree that they exert a metaliterary influence Extreme syntactical complexity contributes to dream – like logic , or lack of it , which in elegiac poetry an end in itself .(2009 , vii)

Actually , the text violates the principals of classical literary imitation which needs conformity to the conventions of ancient literature introduced by Aristotle in his *Poetics* (335 BC) , the traditional techniques of narration followed in the art of fiction which started in the Eighteenth century by the works of Samuel Richardson (1689 – 1761) Samuel Johnson (1707 - 1784) and Daniel Defoe (1731 – 1684) and the features of nineteenth century realistic novel . At all levels. Virginia Woolf , simply , believes that all these patterns may lead to " the dust and the desert " (*Common Rader* , 146) . *Mrs. Dalloway* is a novel of one woman's life. It examines one day in the life of its heroine Clarissa Dalloway, an upper-class housewife married to Mr. Richard Dalloway ,a politician in the Conservative Party and a member of Parliament . All the events and action of *Mrs. Dalloway* take place in London during one day and night in mid-June, 1923. The narrator follows Clarissa who walks through her London neighborhood to prepare for a party she will host that evening .The incidents and situations of the book take place mainly in the characters' consciousness through multiple interwoven stories about the life of Carissa. A close reading of the story and following the events of this long day in the life of Clarissa Dalloway outstandingly show that the text expresses Woolf's vision of modernist fiction and her concept of modernist character . It is a good representative novel of the author's theoretical views expressed in her non-fiction works . The strategies

used in narrating the story and portraying the characters of *Mrs. Dalloway* and specially the heroine of the work reflect three main shaping factors ; the author's vision of modern life , modernist fiction and modernist Man , her feminist views and the use of the stream of consciousness technique .Through exploring the text and following the narrative journey of Clarissa Dalloway , the researcher endeavors to prove how these factors stand behind the structure of the narrative experience and the construction of the image of the characters .

The author's vision of modern life and modernist fiction is the first factor that shapes the novel and its characters . The world portrayed in *Mrs. Dalloway* is an incarnation of the author's belief that life is " not a series of gig – lamps symmetrically arranged " , but " a luminous halo ; a semi transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end ." (Lodge ,1988 , 88). The text is , thus , not divided into chapters and the events move in a circular rather than a linear movement . While Clarissa moves around across the vast space of the city of London , the narrative point of view shifts from one event to another and from one place to another. The reader never feels a real development of action towards a narrative climax as traditionally done in works of fiction . The setting , in this sense , becomes the whole city of London . There is an utter absence of social range and great or huge narrative substance . Most of the events that make the stuff of the novel are no more than accidental and spontaneous incidents and memories that flow from the mind of the heroine at random without a clear narrative frame.

On reading *Mrs . Dalloway* , the common traditional reader is shocked when he / she soon discovers / she discovers the fragmentary nature of the narrative experience presented by Woolf . The outstanding structural principle of the work is that its sections break into unnumbered episodes and intervals . To effect this narrative structure , Woolf bases the novel on a scaffolding structure , where her narrative is supported by other narratives to aid its construction . This is what Molly Hoff maintains when he takes the text to be connected with writing about writing . He states that in *Mrs. Dalloway* " its borrowed material covers a wide field of texts as it hovers up everything within its reach " (2018, 1) . Molly , in this since argues that Woolf's work presents a portrait of a middle – class woman who joins its

literary predecessors portraits of figures like Moll Flanders , Emma , Anna Karenina , Madame Bovary and Hedda Gabler. It shares them in that it is a novel about woman . Yet , it is different in its weaving of the narrative experience depending on multiple narrative devices including Plato's labyrinthine dialogue and Homer's technique of the rhapsody (2018, 1).

Actually , Woolf carefully stitches the fragments of her text as Clarissa sews her dress . The scenes switch from site to site with unstable shifting narrative point of view with each episode. This labyrinthine structure confuses the reader who follows the short journey of Clarissa throughout this one- day narrative. The evident segmentation of the narrative , certainly disappoints the traditional reader's expectation of identifying the unity or the whole of what is said , and accordingly defeats the effort of searching for depth beneath the surface - scattered parts of the story . With the obvious uncontrolled spontaneity of the narrative stuff , the since of sincerity and suspense , which are part of the literary convention of the art of fiction , almost vanish . The whole experience , thus , appears as if an exercise of language to draw separate images and to compose fragmented episodes.

Following a short summary of events can easily reflect the fragmentary nature of the novel structure and the sudden jumps of events and the narrative point of view . Clarissa Dalloway leaves home in the morning .She walks about London on her way to buy flowers for her evening party. She crosses varied different places like Picaddily Circus , Trafalgar Square and Regent's Park , among many others .All the time she uncovers her conscious sensations of daily life , where she records her impressions about the minute details of what she sees in a random way. She , for example , informs us about the strikes of Big Pen , the shops' windows of display , an airplane in the sky, advertisements and a car bearing an unknown but important personage . All of a sudden she takes the reader to her late teenage years at Bourton, and to the memories of the family's country home. The reader finds it difficult to structure any kind of positive relationship among the disconnected portraits .At last Clarissa returns home and a new flood of different stuff commences . She is visited by Peter Walsh, an old friend from Bourton who has been in India for years. She is now involved in her history with the visitor . We learn that Peter is an old lover of Clarissa. She tells the story of their close relationship and their criticism of each other .She speaks

about her rejection of his proposal of marriage and her choice of Richard Dalloway as a husband. During this brief meeting, however, a flood of past shared memories come to the surface of the text. When Peter leaves, the reader experiences a sense of relief, but soon the outflow of a similar current of ideas and memories takes place when Elizabeth, Clarissa's daughter, enters. The narrative becomes about her childhood, her life, her history tutor and her Christianity, with a flood of disconnected memories as usual. The narrative, then, shifts to the Septimus Warren Smith, a veteran of World War I who is suffering from shell shock. We are told about his Italian wife Lucrezia and his dead soldier friend Evans, his belief that the world has condemned him to death, his suicidal drifts, Lucrezia's taking him to Dr. Holmes and his visit to Sir William, a famous doctor, and the latter's plans to send him to a mental asylum in the country, and his jumping out of the window, killing himself as an act of defiance.

Some episodes are given to Richard Dalloway, his lunch with Lady Bruton, a descendant of a famous general, and Hugh Whitbread, an aristocrat, the gulf between him and his wife and of his plans to take flowers to Clarissa and telling her that he loves her. Then the text moves to the party of Clarissa, where we meet different faces and a flood of disconnected memories and stories about the people attending the party. Beside the scattered disharmonious narrative stories and episodes, a lot of narrative passages are given to many people who appear in some short narrative scenes or just come to the mind of Clarissa like Sally Saton, Sir William Bradshaw, Doris Kilman, Miss Kilman, among many others. The text closes with Clarissa, standing on her staircase and Woolf writing "for there she was" (172).

Northrop Frye, the famous Canadian literary theorist and critic who is considered one of the most influential 20th century critics believes that "reality in literature cannot be presented at all except within the convention of literary structure" (1957, 89). The question that essentially comes to our minds is: Where are these literary conventions in *Mrs. Dalloway*? The text is no more than a fantasy of narrative parodies, and an image of sophisticated self – consciousness. It is no more than layers of motifs within motifs, varied plots and sub-plots and obscure secrets and memories. Where is the significance of the narrative or its characters, then, in this chaotic

world of the text ? , In fact , in *Mrs. Dalloway* , one needs to discard the traditional concepts of novel writing and character representation . The novel should be approached within the framework of Woolf's vision and philosophy as a modernist novelist.

In getting involved in discussing the strategies of representation of character in Woolf's fiction in general and *Mrs. Dalloway* in particular, it should be stated that the question of characterization represents a difficult and widely controversial aspect in modernist art in general and in Woolf's fiction in particular. Martin Gray defines characterization as "the way in which a writer creates characters in narrative so as to attract or repel our sympathy" (1992, 56) .Actually, if we apply this definition on Woolf's characters, we will discover that they lack much to be successful fictional figures . In fact , for all the success and popularity of Virginia Woolf as a novelist and as a literary critic , her fiction has been a target of critical attacks especially in terms of characterization . The critic David Daiches mentions some of the charges directed to Woolf as a novelist . He refers to the failure of characterization , the absence of a real serious content , the loss of social context and range ,the false lyricism and the unconcern for the great events and the important concerns of human daily life .(1970 , 11-12) M. C. Bradbrook sees Woolf's heroines as " preserved in a kind of intellectual vacuum " (Latham , 1970 , 24)

Many of these charges , however , have been subsided and refuted by researchers , scholars and critics with a much better understanding of the nature of the modernist art created by Woolf . Yet , the question of Woolf's failure of characterization , remains a persistent issue in many of the studies dealing with Woolf's works . It also remains a perplexing and obscuring dimension for readers of Woolf . Following the history of the critical reception of Woolf's novels from the thirties up to the present time , one can easily realize that this attitude has been continuously in the main stream of Woolf's criticism ,as illustrated above in the preface of this study . Clarissa Dalloway , the heroine of *Mrs. Dalloway* , is not an exception . She suffers the fate of Woolf's other characters . She is attacked as a failure by many critics , Jermy Hawthorn , for instance , sees her as a figure " composed of incompatible parts " (1975 , 11) The study , however , is not meant to refute such charges and to dispel the assaults rehearsed about Woolf's characters

and about the heroine of Mrs. Dalloway . On , the contrary , the researcher adopts the view that Woolf’s characters are the best ones to express the spirit of modernism and to incarnate the modernist vision of man . The study embraces the vision that Mrs. Dalloway , and other characters of Woolf , are highly significant and successful , on condition that they must not be evaluated under the shadows of the image of the stereotypical figures of the 18th an 19th centuries narrative figures and not judged according the conventions of the 19th century realism.

The pivotal question that the study seeks to answer , then , is ; What are the strategies that Woolf uses in representation of character ? It is , of course, a search for the philosophy and vision that color the author's concept of character and the reasons that cause such confusing , and sometimes disappointing , presence of her characters .The researcher , however , believes that behind what some traditional readers and critics see as a seeming weakness of Woolf’s characters . lurks three main factors that shape her strategies of character representation . .The first is Woolf's concept of modern life and her opinion of modernist man which leads her to adopt a kind of labyrinth plot and excludes narrative linear movement . This is maintained and aggravated by the multiplicity of themes and the streams of allusions which run throughout the structure of what is narrated The second is the author's use of the stream of consciousness – narrative technique . The third is Woolf's feminist vision and her reading of the history of woman under the shadows of the patriarchal culture . Thus , Woolf's characters are to be seen within their author's aesthetic , philosophical and feminist values .To what extent these three factors shape the character of Clarissa Dalloway in *Mrs. Dalloway* is what is discussed in the following part of this chapter.

Mrs., Dalloway is a work created during the most fruitful years of Virginia Woolf as a modernist novelist . It is the harvest of the middle phase which bears the stamp of the stream of consciousness narrative technique, during which Woolf also wrote *To the Light House* . This phase comes after a phase of straightforward narration during which she wrote her novels *The Voyage Out* and *Night and Day* .It also comes before a highly experimental phase in which Woolf wrote *The Waves* , *Between The Acts* and *Orlando* . The novel is regarded by many critics and readers as Wolf's most celebrated work , and at the same time the one which is often misunderstood .

A close reading and investigation of the text of *Mrs. Dalloway* can lead the conscious reader to the conclusion that the author does not address the traditional common / ordinary readers but the elites . Clarissa Dalloway , obviously , lacks much to appear as a distinguished narrative figure in the eyes of the traditional reader of fiction . She will never achieve the fictional status of typical memorable heroines like Jane Eyre of Charlotte Bronte , Maggi Tulliver of George Eliot's , Tess of Thomas Hardy or Elizabeth of Jane Austen . She will never meet the terms of the conventional concept of the protagonist as " the leading character in a play , novel or narrative poem " (Gray , 1992 , 234), She suffers from an evident physical , emotional frigidity and does not leave positive impressions about her character as a heroine of the work.

One of the main reasons behind this seeming fragility of the characters in *Mrs. Dalloway* is the structure of narrative labyrinth followed in the text .It is not the reader alone who is lost and confused amidst the scattered atoms that fall from the incessant shower that floods from the consciousness of the heroine or say the author , the character of Clarissa Dalloway , the heroin of the novel ,and other minor figures are lost and distracted as well . There are no linear movement of plot or great events that secure her a safe space to reveal heroic dimensions , as in the case of her 19th century predecessors. Both the character and the reader find themselves in a maze of textual labyrinth and in a river flowing with disconnected repetitious aisles and passages . Woolf tries to transform what we may call perplexing chaos into of a narrative pattern in which characters are not socially or psychologically sustained . It is evident that the author tolerates this track of narration and conceives it as the perfect order of reality. So, it is done by design and not by accident . The circularity of Woolf's design in *Mrs. Dalloway* is created by the author's elaborating of nonlinear narrative process characterized by jumping from on scene to another and repetition and renewal of past memories. It is a kind of a shapeless ring composition , each ring represents a beginning and end in itself . One ring ends , then another ring commences to make the structure of the text appear as if a chain made of overlapping but separate / disconnected cycles . The character is never given the chance to jump out of the author's intentional maze . Woolf presents the scenes through the subjective perception of Clarissa . Everything about the heroin , her

present life and past appear as a story of Clarissa 's own creation . Thus , as Molly Hoff puts it : " the narrative takes the longest route retracing Clarissa 's past continually , its focalizes wander off course repeatedly , revealing that each approach ending in really another beginning " He also adds Woolf changes the traditional theory of fiction composition . Her narrative discourse moves on two levels . which aim to create and maintain the " labyrinthine intersexuality " . The first is the foreground action and the second is the allusive drift . This makes the text liable to different interpretations and a wide range of variable readings (2018 . 247) .

There is no fixed site for action , and all the locations are temporal , unless we consider the whole space of the city of London as the setting of events . The reader follows Clarissa who moves from one place to another to discover that she moves across loose circular narrative cosmos . Robert Rosenblum , in this sense , believes that *Mrs. Dalloway* is a work " recomposed in a complexity of multiple experiences that evoke simultaneous and contradictory fabric of reality itself " (Doob , 1990 , 33) ..Added to this , the free indirect discourse that Woolf adopts is rich in multiple levels of self – contradictions , illogical choices and utterances which never remain on thing . Simultaneous affirmations and negations coincide in many sites of the structure of what is narrated .Bruss Elizabeth, thus, writes that "failed communication is integral to the Novel's rhetorical design" (1977, 167). How , then , can a solid character of Clarissa crystallize in such design out of which she cannot escape .It is evident that Woolf sees the strength of her modernist fictional experience in such contrived weakness of her characters and their strife in a world that has lost any sense of coherence . This , to a great extent , eliminates the possibility that the reader sympathizes or pities such characters.

An element which contributes to the author's intention of creating a circular / labyrinth pattern is the flood of literary allusions scattered here and there across the story of Clarissa Dalloway , which makes the text highly sophisticated. This fragments the Skelton of plot and distracts the characters. Actually, the reader is similarly distracted, and he / she suffers to follow and understand such allusions, an issue which requires deep and extensive knowledge of literature and its history. The atoms of allusions which fall upon the mind of the reader fall upon the mind of the characters and defeat

any effort for continuity and any search for integration whether in plot or character. As Woolf believes in *The Common Reader* that "certain paths seem to lead to fertile land" (1957, 146) . In *Mrs. Dalloway* these paths are represented in the author's diving in the literature of the past and absorbing from its varied and multiple sources. The text is a good example of intersexuality, where Woolf enriches its discourse with an enormous fund of references to other literary works and makes it a stock of words written by others. This seems a Woolfian tradition that the novelist preaches in *Mrs. Dalloway*. Molly Hoff , in this sense ,states that *Mrs. Dalloway* is " a cento erected on a scaffolding of other narratives " (2018 , 1) . Hoff also argues that an alert reading of the text can lead one to the belief that Woolf's narration echoes the sophisticated humorous writing of Donne and Pope and the tone of the roman and Latin elegists . The author endeavors to take the same road of complexity followed by Virgil, and Chaucer She also utilizes the devices of Ovid, Dante. The text clearly reveals the shadows of James Joyce's *Ulysses* and carries the stamp of Plato's labyrinthine dialogue and the spirit of the mock epic version of Homer's epic, *The Odyssey*. (2018, vii – viii)

This flood of literary sources used in the fabric of the text creates a kind of narrative elusion that does not only distract characters but also obscures plot and language . Both the characters and the readers are , in this sense , confronted with layers of paradoxes from which they cannot escape . In addition to this , the text has no focal topical event or theme to which the action and the choices of the heroine is related . *Mrs. Dalloway* appears as a wonderland containing a stock of variable interests . Clarissa does not struggle for a serious purpose in life or to defend a noble cause or a moral / social concern . The novel is abundant in minor interlocked themes and purposes . Following the journey of the one day in the life of Clarissa , one observes that she jumps from one issue to another without giving enough time for any of these narrative issues to crystallize and develop into a dominant outstanding real significant fictional theme .It can be the story of Clarissa and Richard Dalloway, the story of Clarissa and Peter Walsh , the story of the suffering of Septimus Smith, the story of Clarissa's daughter's Elizabeth , the story of the party , or the story of woman's despair . The character's search and efforts are not accumulating to form an impressive

real solid identity , and the frequency of narrative concerns inhabit any possibility that an issue moves into an exciting conflict or towards any fictional climax .The novel , thus , includes discourse about the streets of London , the shops , the weather , fashion , marriage , love , slavery ,the army and the navy , past , present , friendship , motherhood , homosexuality , love , violence , war , suicide , despair , entertainment , politics , among the innumerable narrative issues that the Dalloway narrator introduces to the fabric of the book . This structural principle breaks the text into disconnected narrative episodes , and negates the possibility of unity of content or character.

The second factor that distorts and distracts the character of Clarissa, the heroine in *Mrs. Dalloway* and causes the underestimation of the skills of Woolf's characterization on the part of some critics is the author's concept of modern life. It is important , here , to state that Woolf's vision of life is shadowed by the ideologies and ideas adopted by " The Bloomsbury Group " .The Bloomsbury Group or " Bloomsbury Set " is a group of English intellectuals, writers, philosophers and artists who were closely associated with the University of Cambridge for the men and King's College London for the women. Most of the members of the group lived, worked or studied together near Bloomsbury in the first half of the 20th century, definitely between 1907–1933. They used to meet at the London home of the artist Vanessa Bell and her sister Virginia Woolf. Their aims were to talk, to share ideas, to support each other's creative activities and to form close relationship as friends . They also meant to discuss what was happening in the world of arts and to organize exhibitions . This group included prominent literary figures like Virginia Woolf, John Maynard Keynes, E. M. Forster and Lytton Strachey. Although its members denied being a group in any formal sense, and insisted that they used to meet as friends, they were united by a strong belief in the importance of the arts. Although the Bloomsbury label describes no single literary theory, the writing of the Bloomsbury group has enhanced the coming of many of the tracks and developments of twentieth-century criticism, such as formalism, Anglo- American new criticism, and theories of biography, gender and narration. One can identify specific aesthetic and ethical concerns that link the most important literary figures of the group .

These concerns have their primary formulation in the theoretical writings of Roger Fry (1866-1934) and Clive Bell (1881-1964).

The members of the "Bloomsbury Group" were linked by a spirit of rebellion against what they saw as the unnecessary conventions. They were against the restraints and double standards of the previous generations. Members of the group reacted against the tradition and ideas of the Victorian age. They wanted freedom to develop and follow their own ideas and lifestyles. They were politically liberal and had liberal ideas about all life concerns and practices of arts. They adopted revolutionary attitudes in life and art. Because the most important Bloomsbury texts belong to the second and third decades of the twentieth century, Bloomsbury theory and practice are seen and approached as a response to and as a part of modernism. The Bloomsbury works and outlook deeply influenced modern literature, aesthetics, criticism, and economics as well as the attitudes towards feminism, pacifism, and sexuality. The impact of the group on the intellectual life of England was actually furthered by the horrible events of the First World War and the great transformations the war brought forth to life. It was also aggravated by the theories of Freud and the increasing interest in the study of psychology under the shadows and lights of his school of psychological analysis.

Following the one-day narrative experience of Clarissa Dalloway in Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, one can find out that the life of the heroine and the world under the shadows of which she moves and acts are the exact incarnation of the author's concept of modern life and her vision of the fictional world. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf presents life as varying and fragmented scenes and situations, regardless of the complexity that this attitude may display to both the character and the reader. Walter Allen refers to this narrative attitude when he comments on the structure of the narrative experience of *Mrs. Dalloway* saying: "her theme is a constant one, the search for a pattern of meaning in the flux of myriad impressions". He also when he adds that "the difficulty of life is reduced to the difficulty of a puzzle" (1964, 190). In the world of Clarissa things overlap, where the author depicts what seems alien and chaotic. Following the movement of the heroine throughout the story of that one day, the reader cannot trace any significant narrative experience or any clear line of thought. Clarissa is

completely lost in the flow of disconnected situations , which do not allow her identity as a heroine of the novel to crystallize or develop .No definite clear tasks are set to Clarissa or any of the characters of the work . Clarissa , and all the characters of the novel , has no real problems to solve or life missions to fulfill . Actually Woolf's characters in *Mrs. Dalloway* as Jean Guiguest sees them " have skeptical view of reality and the denial of a unified world view " (1966 , 417) . The unity of action is lost in view of this extreme diversity that Woolf endeavors to structure in the text . Clarissa and the rest of characters , thus , find themselves lost in a larger loose reality.

As a text , then , *Mrs. Dalloway* presents an image of life in the way Woolf conceives . following the sequence of events of the story , the reader is shocked by a world which is set and turned upside down many times. The situations are not chronologically arranged and the text is not divided into chapters .What the reader gets at the end of Clarissa's journey that continues for one day only is that Clarissa is a woman in her early fifties who is going out to buy flowers for a party she is to have at her house in the evening . The story starts ten o'clock in the morning and ends as the party begins to fade at around midnight , where Clarissa simply appears on the stairs and Woolf comments " for there she was " (1987 , 172) Throughout this day Clarissa wanders up and down the streets of the vast city of London , She actually moves aimlessly from one place to another , not governed by a specific frame of time or place . The setting , thus , loses its significance and importance in the traditional sense of the setting as the time and place of action . In her essay " Life of the Novelist" , Woolf states that the real talented novelist " must expose himself to life " (1967 , 136) . In fact Clarissa is the victim of this exaggerated exposure to life . To give and maintain the feeling of a vast and extended sense of reality and life , Woolf makes the whole city of London , with its streets , traffic , shops , parks and squares the loose frame of the heroine's life . Clarissa is lost as a character among the innumerable objects which she meets and informs about in the crowded streets of London . She even sees herself no more than "a circle dissolved in the air " :

Clarissa was positive , a particular hush ; a suspense before Big Ben strikes . The leaden circles dissolved in air .Such fools we are, she thought , crossing Victoria Street . In people's eyes, in the swing ,

tramp , and trudge ; in the bellow and the uproars; the carriage , motor cars , omnibuses , vans . sandwich men shuffling and swinging , brass bands ; barrel organs ; in the triumph and jingle and the strange high singing of some airplane overhead was what she loved ; life ; London; this moment of June. (6).

In the streets of London, in a world without frame and a setting and without time or place limits, Clarissa is , thus , becomes insignificant figure . She is lost among th cars, shops, vans and the strikes of Big Ben and the roar of airplanes crossing the sky of the big city . Woolf shows that this is the only pattern of life she draws to her heroine . She , thus , writes : " In the streets of London , on the ebb and flow of things , here , she survived " (10) According to Martin Gray the novelists use the setting " to convey information about the mood or temperament of the character " . (1992 , 262) . The setting in this sense contributes to the aim of creating a solid fictional character which acts and moves with attributes of mind and action . This is not the case in *Mrs. Dalloway* . The frameless pattern of life in which Clarissa is thrown makes her character dissolve and vanish among the objects of a noisy world .The world of *Mrs. Dalloway* is one " lacking in the expected novelistic basis " as Joanne Frye believes (1981 , 411) . Actually Clarissa Dalloway is never allowed to manifest herself or her talents as a heroine . She appears throughout the disconnected scenes of the text as a featureless moving object . Between each strike of Big Ben and another , Clarissa moves from one place to another and from one mood to another , without maintaining any stable image or face . The reader feels that her character and the chaotic world of London merge the one into the other. Added to this , wherever she goes a flood of memories from the present and the past soon commence to give further implications of fragmentation and distraction to both Clarissa and the reader .

Added to this , the random exposure to life as Woolf conceives it leads the character of Clarissa Dalloway to get involved in multiple unjustifiable relationships . It is not difficult to note that Mrs. Dalloway is in constant and repeated encounters with many indistinguishable people whether in the streets of London or during the party . Her paths and these of others continuously cross without any logical justification or a real narrative function .The result is that the reader never sees Clarissa able to assume the

burden of a real heroic individual life as the main character of the work . According to Stephen Miko " to be everyone leads easily to being no one " (1988 , 65) . This is exactly what Clarissa represents in Mrs. Dalloway and this what Woolf adopts in her fiction , and admits openly when she comments on the narrative experience of her novel , *The Waves* , stating ; " I am telling the story of the world from the beginning . I am not concerned with the single life " (1978 , 6) .

Throughout the events of the day in the life of Clarissa Dalloway , the character of the heroine is outstandingly overshadowed by the existence of the people she meets or memorizes . Her fellows existence defeat any possible search for identity or self distinction . It is even meant at many sites of the text and at many times of the that day to say that the narrative is not sure to tell about " She " or " They " , It does not appear as a story of one unique voice or of multiple remarkable figures. Woolf always makes the reader feel that to know something about Clarissa he / she must see the people who complete her . Clarissa never incarnates definite limits , and her character and manners vary from one situation to another , according to the people with whom she talks or deals . Thus , Mrs. Dalloway who in the morning wanders aimlessly across the streets of London is not the same one in the evening at the party. When the narrator tells about Clarissa's life and history. it becomes evident that Clarissa with Peter Walsh is not Clarissa with Richard Dalloway or Clarissa with her daughter Elizabeth . Woolf draws the image of the heroin in a way that unquestionably expresses her vision of life as atoms and little things . She makes her part of everything and of all people around her , with the result of showing her as an indefinite moving object . This is openly , informed by Woolf when she writes in the novel :

She being part , of the trees at home ; of the house there , ugly ,rambling all to bits and pieces as it was ; part of the people she she had never met ; being laid out like a moist between the people she knew best , who lifted her on their branches as she had seen the trees lift the mist , but it spread ever so far, her life, herself. (10)

So, as it is evident in the words quoted from the text above, Woolf throws her heroine in a frameless world and a chaotic life . Clarissa, thus, appears as a "mist" on the branches of the trees or as mere "bits and pieces" . She is only recognized through others, and the reader can only get an opinion

about her only from Peter Walsh, Richard Dalloway or Doris Kilman . However, this is not enough to create reliable judgments about her character or to answer the questions of Who is Mrs. Dalloway ? and What mission in the text does she have ? At the same time. Clarissa fails to give sound judgments of others , and her knowledge of people is always incomplete and leads to unresolved puzzles . It is evident that Woolf implies that in such kind of modern life , lack of understanding is an ugly fact , and it is the attribute which characterizes Mrs. Dalloway 's contact with others . Woolf , here , seems to echo or say forego Jacques Derrida 's belief that " even in speech , the idea that the speaker might fully possess the significance of spoken words , if only for a moment , is unproven and false assumption " (Gray , 1992 , 819) . In the party held at the house of Mrs. Dalloway, a lot of people gather and talk , but they never create a fruitful discourse that reveals some prominent textual knowledge or even something of value about their existence and missions in the life.

The third factor that stands behind Woolf 's strategies of characterization in both *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Light House* is the author's use of the technique of the stream of consciousness . Actually , Woolf 's utilization of this technique contributes much to the seeming ambivalence and distraction from which her heroines suffer in both texts . This technique came to the literary scene on the eve of the First World War . It is William James who first coined and used the term " Stream of Consciousness " in his important book *Principles of Psychology* (1980) James introduced this term to describe " the unbroken flow of thought and awareness in the waking mind " (Abrams , 1985 , 180) . It was adopted by some modernist writers like Henry James , James Joyce , Dorthy Richardson and Virginia Woolf to mark a radical transformation in fictional thought and to represent the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the English novel . Those novelists saw this technique as the most adequate one to cope with the shift of interest from the portrayal of the external reality in 19th century novel to the portrayal of the internal reality of man's mind and consciousness in modernist fiction. Martin Gray defines the stream of consciousness as the technique which attempts " to convey all the contents of character's mind , memory , sense perceptions , feelings . intuitions , thoughts in relation to the stream of experience as it passes by , often at random " (1992 . 272)

Virginia Woolf is one of the pioneer modernist English novelists who believed in the vast possibilities that the stream of consciousness technique affords to the novelist . It the most suitable narrative technique to portray the highly chaotic and confusing modern experience and to articulate the subconscious and unconscious aspects of the human psyche and their reflections in the character's thoughts , memories , ideas , impressions and sensations . The use of this technique does not only give the art of Woolf a new depth , but it also makes her one of the most influential modernist female novelists in English literature. The great possibilities and opportunities that this technique secures to the modernist novelist is evident when Woolf praises the art of James Joyce and his use of this technique in her essay " Modern Fiction " , saying “ Mr. Joyce is spiritual ; he is concerned at all costs to reveal the flickering of that important flame which flashes its message through the brain “ (1957 , 190) .

Thus , although the story covers the events of one day , its scenes and situations (it is difficult to say action) go back and forth through Clarissa’s mind and thought to distract the reader and actually the heroine between memories of past and present life . Through streams of thoughts and recollections , Clarissa repeatedly visits and revisits stages of her life in a random , unsystematic and incoherent narration , using all sorts of flashbacks and free flowing thoughts . Actually , the events of the story happens only in the head of Clarissa and other characters . The text becomes a tour in the mind of both the narrator and the heroine , where the reader is taken from one character's switching points of view to another , mostly through streams of their thoughts and consciousness. However , when the reader returns from this extraordinary trip , he / she discovers that the history of Mrs. Dalloway is none , and that the whole experience she affords as a heroine is no more than a moving consciousness. The whole thing was so confusing that nothing was happening and no harvest gained . In fact , Woolf expresses her consciousness of life as a spontaneous stream . Reflections of the stream of consciousness technique appear in the ambivalence , contradiction and fragmentation that color the behavior of Clarissa and her action in most of the scenes and situations of the novel .

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf records the feelings and thoughts of Clarissa Dalloway without any regard to the logical development of the story's events

or narrative sequence .At each single moment of the text , Woolf attempts to reflect all the internal and external forces that influence the psychology of the heroine and in a lesser degree the other figures of the book . This makes the text appear as if made of multiple plots , which hinders the possibility that the story of the novel it moves steadily a head in a clear chronological order . It is only through narrative intervals in which the characters frequently return to their past that the reader can get an idea or say a glimpse of their life and history . This is exactly an incarnation of Woolf's vision of modern life as " s luminous halo and " a semi – transparent envelope " that surrounds people from the beginning of consciousness to the end , referred to above . An evidence of this is clear in the occasion where the reader finds that the time between Clarissa arrival home and Peter Walsh 's visit is no more than a few minutes , but in this short time a flow of streams of consciousness commences to cover twelve pages of the text . The visit which lasts for fifteen minutes produces ten pages of scenes that only take place in the minds of both Clarissa and Peter , where narrative focus shifts randomly from internal to external stuff . stated that When Peter moves towards the home of Clarissa and walks through the streets of London , his mind keeps hovering between the past and the present , in what appears as if unconscious action not controlled by either the novelist or the character .

The use of the stream of consciousness narrative technique makes Woolf's characters appear as troublesome voices . The author indulges deep in the dark infinite regions of the unconscious and subconscious to allow the flow of the characters' psychic manifestations , which comes at the expense of the characters solidarity , and disappoints the reader and defeats all expectations that the characters will become heroic figures. In following their history , w are not to expect or search for any positive demonstration . Mushtaq Kadhim , in this sense , states that " portrayals of Clarissa reinforce our estimation towards a shallow , self – raised woman "(2020 , 123) . For the conventional reader of fiction fails to capture the essence of characterization and challenges the reader's concept of knowing a character . Instead of presenting a fixed reality , Woolf prefers the complex and fluctuating psyche processes . Her fiction , therefore becomes , as Joanne Frye puts it : " an expression of complex patterns of imagery " (1980 , 407).

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf focuses on the mental processes of Clarissa rather than on her action. When she moves about London or receives her guests at the party, layers and streams of consciousness stuff run everywhere and color the pattern of the narrative experience. Clarissa, as well as other fictional figures, show a real disturbing shifting fragmented selves and frameless lives. The reader is faced with successive currents of memories, fears, contradictory issues and unstable moods. It, accordingly, becomes difficult to get a real familiarity with any of the characters or to sympathize with their roles in life. It is hard to distinguish who is the main and who is the minor. It is fruitless to distinguish Clarissa Dalloway from Miss Kilman or Richard Dalloway from Peter Walsh. The narrative figures seldom know what they want or express what they desire. Even the trivial few surface issues that the text displays like Clarissa's choice of Richard Dalloway rather than Peter Walsh and her relation with her daughter Elizabeth remain isolated themes and unresolved issues lost amidst the flood of consciousness flow, and are usually expressed through unfinished and a fragmentary narrative discourse.

It is evident everywhere in *Mrs. Dalloway* that the use of the stream of consciousness narrative technique hinders the physical and emotional growth of the heroine and other characters. Clarissa, throughout the novel appears as an embarrassing mixture of memories and intuitions. The difficulties created by the use of the stream of consciousness narrative technique to both the characters and the readers are referred to by the famous critic Jeremy Hawthorn who expounds that in her fiction, Woolf tries "to give a public significance to matters of privacy, alienation and consciousness" (1975, 18). The complexity implied in the use of this technique is evident when Woolf conveys to the reader the processes that run in the mind and consciousness of one of the characters, Peter Walsh, describing the human self as a fish that "inhabits deep seas and piles among obscurities threading her way between the holes of giant weeds," which suddenly she shoots to the surface and sports on the wind – wrinkled waves" (142 – 143).

A fourth element that plays a major role in formulating Woolf's modernist strategies of characterization in both, *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* is the author's feminist attitude. This factor plays a further suffocating effect to the characters' flourishing and growth and contributes

to their seeming victimization .Woolf's treatment of the character of Mrs. Dalloway can be seen as a part of a new feminist discourse that started to challenge the dominant tradition of dealing with issues of gender in fiction . Woolf's rebellion against the conventional point of view concerning the fictional representation of woman starts theoretically in *A Room of One's Own* (1929) , which Roger Webster regards as a point of departure for the study of woman's literature and the beginning of feminist criticism , and considers Woolf as " a part of a larger movement of women writers who had adopted a specifically radical female point of view as Katherine Mansfield , Rebecca West and Dorthy Richardson " (1996 , 77) .In this work , Woolf sees patriarchy and living under the shadows of male – dominated culture as extremely responsible for the demoralization and elimination of the female character . She believes that the oppression to which women were subjected in patriarchal societies created a deep sense of inherent frailty and inferiority that remained for a long time running in the veins of all women . She , in this sense , addresses women , whom she describes as " creatures of illusion " to resist the tyranny of man and to get rid of this inherited sense of weakness , saying :

It calls for gigantic courage and strength . More than anything perhaps creatures of illusion as we are ; it calls for confidence in oneself . Women have served all these centuries as looking glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size . That serves to explain in part the necessity that women so often are to men . And it serves to explain how restless they are under criticism . The figure in the looking glass shrinks ; his fitness for life is .diminished (1944 , 40 – 41) .

The character of Clarissa Dalloway is the fictional incarnation of Woolf's theoretical ideas about the enslavement of woman across the long patriarchal history expressed in *A Room of One's Own* , Woolf believes that throughout history England has been , and is still , dominated by patriarchy . This is evident when she writes : " No body could fail to detect the dominance of [man] . His was the power and the money and the influence . With the exception of the fog he seemed to control everything " (1994 , 39) . Woolf also makes an association between patriarchy and dictatorship . She sees that the First World War is the natural outcome of the arrogance and ego

centrality of some male figures like Mussoulini, Napoleon and Hitler . They both insisted to see woman as inferior as " Napoleon thought them incapable " and " Mussoulini despises them " (1994 , 35) . Woolf doubts that the woman whose ambition was only to own a room of her own could express any creative powers . Clarissa , then , is a narrative extension of this fragile and oppressed woman . No expectation of solidarity or strength would characterize the representation of this heroine who bears this horrible history of woman upon her shoulders in *Mrs. Dalloway* .

Clarissa feels and admits that she is a vulnerable and disintegrated female figure . Her continuous search for others and the persistent urge to contact with people is an attempt to escape and conquer her internal psychological suffocating sense of weakness. She, in this sense , tries to help some young people and to aid some dull lives . At certain times , she also makes her house a refuge for the lonely to come to . She, however, shrinks and her terror is great when she confronts strong people . That is why Susan Squier sees the day that the reader spends with Clarissa Dalloway as "a long confrontation between the character and her fallibility with the strength of other people to whom she can turn for care" (1981, 274). This, however, does not lead to the remission of her internal fear and terror. This is clear when in many situations, the contact with others does not conquer her overwhelming acute pain caused by the disappointing senses of vanity, suspicion, distraction and triviality. This is fictionally expressed in the scene where Clarissa prefers solitude in her room and spends a long time in front of the mirror looking at her face and body which appear to her as broken fragmented parts, trying to assemble herself into one whole or one single character. But, unfortunately, the attempt fails and the mirror does not save her. Clarissa finally discovers that her contradictions and fears are too deep to be resolved.

Following the current of Clarissa 's action in the novel , one can easily realize that she wastes her life in trivialities ." The party with which Clarissa's day and the novel ends " , says Peter Faulkner , "is the only creative action of which she is capable " (1976 , 127) . The deep inherited sense of inferiority, distraction and weakness create irresolvable psychological suffering to women in general and to Clarissa as an example of the victims of male domination and the oppressive patriarchal culture. When Clarissa fails to find a way out of her present disastrous situation , she thinks that the only way to

escape her miserable life as a woman is to commit suicide . She clings to death as a possible deliverance from the whole meaningless existence . Woolf expresses this diversion to that tragic end saying : " She always had the feeling that it was very , very dangerous to live even one day . " (9) Clarissa 's inclination towards death is fictionally dramatized when she was in the country and had the vision of a white dawn , and she reads in a book spread open in front of her Shakespeare's words in the play *Cymbeline* (1623) " Fear no more the heat o'the sun / Nor the furious winter/s rages " (10) Clarissa's mediation about Septimus , who commits suicide because of the catastrophic upheavals of the war during the events of the story , gives her a kind of momentary psychological relief and a temporal sense of emphatic oneness.

To conclude this paper , then , it becomes evident that *Mrs . Dalloway* is a work which literally expresses the author's philosophy and her vision of life . Man and the art of fiction .The critical analysis of the work , based on the close reading of the text and its critical reception , reveals that it is a major modernist text written by a novelist who successfully represents modernism and its strategies of narration . In her portrayal of the modernist image of the characters in *Mrs. Dalloway* , Woolf is guided and directed by three major constituents ; her vision of modern life and modern character , her feminist attitude and the use of the technique of the stream of consciousness . The character of Clarissa Dalloway is exactly an incarnation of the author's understanding and application of these three constituents . Woolf does not fail in characterization in *Mrs . Dalloway* , as some critics believe , but the image of the heroine and the other narrative figures , is the natural outcome of Woolf's adoption of the modernist strategies of structuring a fictional text and presenting modern life and modern character .

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