ATILIM UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

ENGLISH CULTURE AND LITERATURE MASTER'S PROGRAMME

REVERBERATIONS OF THE GREAT WAR IN VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *MRS. DALLOWAY* AND *TO THE LIGHTHOUSE*

Master's Thesis

Hilal ÇELİK

Ankara-2025

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Thesis Advisor

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Ankara-2025

ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

This is to certify that this thesis titled "Reverberations of the Great War in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*" and prepared by Hilal ÇELİK meets with the committee's approval unanimously as Master's Thesis in the field of English Culture and Literature following the successful defense conducted on 26/06/2025.

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ETHICAL STATEMENT

I accept and acknowledge that I have prepared this thesis study, prepared in line with the Thesis Writing Guidelines of Atılım University Graduate School of Social Sciences;

- within the framework of academic and ethical rules;
- presented the information, documents, evaluations, and results in a way that meets the rules of scientific ethics and morality,
- I have referenced each work from which I have benefited while preparing my thesis, and that
- I hereby present a unique study.

I hereby also understand that I shall accept any loss of rights against my behalf in cases otherwise.

26/06/2025

Hilal ÇELİK

ÖZ

ÇELİK, Hilal. Virgina Woolf'un Mrs. Dalloway ve To the Lighthouse Eserlerinde Büyük Savaş'ın Yankıları, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2025.

Bu tez, Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın etkilerini Virginia Woolf'un Mrs. Dalloway ve To the Lighthouse eserlerinde modernizm, bilinç akışı anlatım tekniği ve Albert Einstein'ın Görelilik Teorisi ışığında incelemektedir. To the Lighthouse eserinde James Ramsay'in "Hiçbir şey yalnızca tek bir şey değildi" (138) ifadesi, Virginia Woolf'un tüm eserlerindeki modernist gerçeklik anlayışını oluşturmaktadır. Bu çok katmanlı gerçeklik ve görelilik düşüncesi, Woolf'un anlatım teknikleri ve temaları aracılığıyla yansıtılmaktadır. Hem Mrs. Dalloway hem de To the Lighthouse, savaşın bir sonucu olarak kimlik, zaman ve mekân ile ilgili geleneksel kesinliklerin yıkıldığı, dönüşmüş bir dünyayı tasvir etmektedir. Tezin amacı, nasıl Virginia Woolf'un bilinç akışı tekniği kullandığı ve Albert Einstein'ın Görelilik Teorisi'nin savaş sonrası dönemde gerçekliğin parçalanmış ve öznel doğasının keşfini analiz etmektir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Savaş, Çok Yönlü Gerçeklik, Albert Einstein'ın Görelilik Teorisi, Modernist Roman, Bilinç Akışı

ABSTRACT

ÇELİK, Hilal. Reverberations of the Great War in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and To the *Lighthouse*, Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2025.

This thesis examines the effects of the Great War in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* through the lenses of modernism, modernist narrative techniques, and Albert Einstein's Theory of Relativity. In *To the Lighthouse,* James Ramsay's assertion that "nothing was simply one thing" (138) embodies Virginia Woolf's modernist expression of reality in all her works. This idea of multifaceted reality and relativity is reflected by means of Woolf's narrative techniques and themes. Both *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* portray a transformed world where traditional certainties about identity, time and space are shattered as a consequence of the war. The aim of the thesis is to analyze how Virginia Woolf's employment of modernist narrative techniques and Albert Einstein's Theory of Relativity illustrate her exploration of the fragmented and subjective nature of reality in the post-war era.

Keywords: War, Multifaceted Reality, Albert Einstein's Theory of Relativity, Modernist novel, Stream of Consciousness

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INTRODUCTION

Virginia Woolf, alongside James Joyce and Dorothy Richardson, is considered to be one of the pioneering figures who helped shape modernist British fiction. She was born as Adeline Virginia Stephen in 1882. Her mother, Julia Duckworth, had had three children—George, Stella and Gerald—from her first marriage, while her father, Leslie Stephen, had had a daughter named Laura from his first marriage. Having both been widowed, Julia and Leslie married and had four more children together: Thoby, Vanessa, Virginia and Adrian (Goldman 3-4). In *Virginia Woolf: The Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse on Her Life and Work*, Louise DeSalvo describes Woolf's parents as "the archetypal serene and secure family of Victorian ideology, with Julia Stephen in the role of the angel/mother in the house and Leslie Stephen in the role of the Victorian patriarch" (19). Her childhood in such a crowded household passed between London and St. Ives in Cornwall, where the entire family spent their summers for a few months every year until she lost her mother, Julia, at the age of thirteen in 1895. Her father mourned his wife's death for a long time but he did not allow his children to mourn, and he was a cruel man. Woolf lost her half-sister Stella three years later, in 1897, and her brother Thoby nine years later, in 1906. Woolf and her sister Vanessa were educated at home and improved themselves in their father's library, whereas the brothers attended Cambridge University. Leslie Stephen was a distinguished Victorian author, critic and editor; therefore, Virginia Woolf grew up in a household which was visited by famous writers of the age (Livesy 117-118).

Woolf did not get any formal education, as Quentin Bell states, but she was in control of her father's library. After the father died, she continued her informal education through the acquaintance with her brother Thoby's Cambridge circle of friends (xv). "In 1905, Thoby began holding Thursday evenings at home with his Cambridge friends Clive Bell, Leonard Woolf, Lytton Strachey and others; this was the beginning of what came to be called the 'Bloomsbury Group'" (Bishop 2). She got married to Leonard Woolf in 1912, whom she met through Thoby. Woolf completed her first novel, *The Voyage Out,* in 1913, and she had a nervous breakdown and attempted suicide for the second time in her life (Livesey 119). Despite her psychological breakdowns, Leonard was always proud of her

works, and he supported her talent and encouraged her. The fact that Leonard launched the Hogarth Press in 1917 enabled Woolf to be involved in a social circle of writers and to follow the latest trends in literature and art, to be published and become famous. *Jacob's Room* was published in 1922, *Mrs. Dalloway* in 1925, and *To the Lighthouse* in 1927 when she was 45. She was a prolific writer of various genres including novels, stories, reviews, essays, lectures and letters as well as diaries. She continued to experience nervous breakdowns all through her lifetime until she ended her life by drowning herself in the river with stones in her pockets in 1941 at the age of fifty-nine (Livesey 119-121).

Virginia Woolf's works are generally analyzed through feminist and psychoanalytic literary criticism. However, her works reverberate the effects of the Great War. Thus, Mark Hussey defines Woolf as "the theorist of the war" and emphasizes "the centrality of war in her life's work" (3) in "Living in a War Zone: An Introduction to Virginia Woolf as a War Novelist." Jean Thomson notes that Woolf is not generally considered a war writer because she abstains from depicting bloody war scenes. However, "it is startling to realize that she can so poignantly describe the effects of war experiences on social and personal mental health and relationships" (55). Furthermore, in *Virginia Woolf and the Great War,* Karen L. Levenback asserts that Woolf cannot be considered an impassive observer of war; she has references to it, and her works are reconstructed to show the connection to the war (2-3). Levenback focuses on Virginia Woolf's sensitivity to war, her war-consciousness, and how she constantly represented the effects of the Great War on characters in her works and on her life (5, 8), expressing, "Woolf demonstrates a progressive awareness of the ways in which the situations of soldiers and civilians are linked by the very realities of war that are ignored both by history and theory." (7)

Woolf did not write about the Great War only in her novels: war was a central theme in her letters and diaries. To exemplify, in August 1914, Woolf expressed how the impending war made people feel and the general atmosphere of it in society in one of her letters:

> We left Asheham a week ago, and it was practically under martial law. There were soldiers marching up and down the line, and men *digging trenches* and it was said that Asheham barn was to be used as a hospital. All the people expected an invasion—Then we went through London—and oh Lord! what a lot of talk there was! Roger [Fry], of course, had private information from the Admiralty, and had been seeing the German Ambassadress, and Clive [Bell] was having tea with

> Ottoline, and they talked and talked, and said *it was the end of civilisation*, and *the rest of our lives was worthless*. (my emphases) (*Letters 2*, 51)

Because she lived through the war, it was a part of her daily life; scenes of war appear in her diaries again and again. On the first of February in 1915, she wrote:

> In St James Street there was a terrific explosion; people came running out of Clubs; stopped still & gazed about them. But there was no Zeppelin or aeroplane—only, I suppose, a very large tyre burst. But it is really an instinct with me, & most people, I suppose, to turn any sudden noise, or dark object in the sky into an explosion, or a German aeroplane**.** And it always seems utterly impossible that one should be hurt. (*Diary* 1, 32)

This scene is later used at the beginning of *Mrs. Dalloway,* which shows how insecure, terrified and anxious she felt in the war atmosphere. War permeates all aspects of life and does not let people forget itself. At times in the hustle and bustle of the day Woolf forgets it but "suddenly one has come to notice the war everywhere" (*Diary 1*: 100). More importantly, the war changes the mood of human beings: "I could feel the entire absence of emotion in myself & everyone else" (*Diary 1*: 5). The same lack of emotions is reflected by Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus in *Mrs. Dalloway*.

Virginia Woolf's concern in war began after the death of her close friend Rupert Brooke and her brother-in-law Cecil Woolf in the war, and the return of her brother-in-law Philip Woolf, who was wounded by the shell which killed his brother Cecil (Levenback, *Virginia Woolf and the Great War* 13, 33). She was able to observe Philip closely and created the character of Septimus in *Mrs. Dalloway*. In her diary, she describes Philip's feelings in a way that Septimus does in the novel: "I think perhaps Philip felt himself a little of a hindrance, as no doubt, he always feels himself now —an outsider, a spectator; unattached & very lonely" (*Diary 1*: 248). Moreover, in her letters she describes the shift in Philip as "Leonard was there yesterday and found him fearfully dark and dismal, and apparently breaking down in health into the bargain" (*Letters* 2: 404-5). Her observation of Philip made her see the destructive effects of the war on soldiers who experienced the trench warfare and she writes, "how little one believes what anyone says now [about the war]" (*Letters* 2: 178), seeing "Poor Philip—so I feel him worn and dogged, but not much life in him" (*Diary* 2: 88). Woolf expresses how the war formed the everyday consciousness saying "Our generation is daily scourged by the bloody war" (*Diary* 2: 51), and the war "destroyed illusion and put truth in its place" (*A Room of One's*

Own, 12). The war shattered all values and brought a new reality to the human mind, as Woolf elucidates in her letters, essays, and diaries, which find their reflection in the novels *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse.*

Virginia Woolf's interest in war as a catastrophe of humanity is closely related to her style. The historical, scientific, technological, ideological, social and cultural changes of the early 20th century, as well as the war, made the authors of the time look for new ways of expression. Modernists, in other words, developed new forms and techniques to describe the pains of the early 20th century individual, such as stream of consciousness, interior monologue and free indirect speech. These were attempts to decipher and record a certain form of existence influenced by the alteration of the concept of reality. Influential intellectuals such as Darwin, Marx, Freud, and Einstein altered the Victorian worldview completely, which resulted in a fractured and fragmented psyche. Modernists, through their innovative techniques, reflected this psyche in their novels. In that respect, *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* are modernist masterpieces that present war-stricken characters that also suffer from the strains of a transition from the Victorian Age to the twentieth century.

This thesis examines the effects of the Great War in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* through the lenses of modernism, modernist narrative techniques, and Albert Einstein's Theory of Relativity. In *To the Lighthouse,* James Ramsay's assertion that "nothing was simply one thing" (138) embodies Virginia Woolf's modernist expression of reality in all her works. As Mark Hussey asserts "Virginia Woolf's art tells us not about an external, objective Reality, but about our experience of the world. One of the most salient points she has to make is that the experience is of being in the world is different for everyone and endless, a process of constant creativity" (*The Singing of the Real World* xiii). Woolf does not deal with ontological reality, which deals with what exists-the nature of being. Instead, she deals with epistemological reality, which is constituted by how people understand, perceive and experience that reality. Whereas ontological reality focuses on reality as it is, independent of the perceiver, epistemological reality focuses on the perceiver's perception and is open to intuition. This idea of subjective, multifaceted reality and relativity is reflected by means of Woolf's narrative techniques and themes. Both *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* portray a transformed

world where traditional certainties about identity, time and space are shattered as a consequence of the war. The aim of the thesis is to analyze how Virginia Woolf's employment of modernist narrative techniques and Albert Einstein's Theory of Relativity illustrate her exploration of the fragmented and subjective nature of reality in the post-war era.

To this end, the first chapter of the study, which is a theoretical discussion, will provide a history of modernism in English literature. Seminal figures, such as Darwin, Marx, Freud and Einstein, and their contributions to the modern worldview are elaborated on as a backdrop to the discussion of the novels. The second chapter analyzes and discusses how *Mrs. Dalloway* embodies the change of reality as a devastating result of the Great War. The stated change is interpreted in line with the idea of subjectivity and Einstein's theory of relativity, two factors determining the modernist concept of reality. The protagonists of the novel, Septimus Warren Smith and Clarissa Dalloway, are scrutinized to depict the effects of the war on the soldiers and the civilians. While Septimus suffers from shell shock and commits suicide as he cannot adapt to the new reality, Mrs. Dalloway struggles to stick to the Victorian values and lighten the effects of war by seeking refuge in the beauties of life, such as buying flowers, throwing parties and getting people together at her parties. Woolf makes use of modernist narrative devices of stream of consciousness, interior monologue and free indirect speech so as to illustrate the multi-faceted quality of reality; in James's expression, nothing is simply one thing. The third chapter focuses on *To the Lighthouse* and once again evinces the change of reality due to the effects of war alongside the emergence of modernity. Discussion of four characters from the novel, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Ramsay, Lily Briscoe and James, displays how different people are influenced by not only the war but the complexity of existence in the modernist age as well. The conclusion will restate the findings of the study with reference to Einstein's Theory of Relativity, highlighting how the repercussions of the Great War necessitated a new perception of reality, which prioritizes subjectivity and individuality.

CHAPTER 1: MODERNISM IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

The Modernist Age or Movement is a distinct period with all its values, attitudes, and way of life, as well as important historical, social, economic, and scientific developments. Although it is difficult to define the movement with certain dates, the modernist period is generally thought to span from the 1890s to the 1930s. In order to portray what the movement means in all its aspects, it is wise to start with an analysis of the previous period, the Victorian Age.

The Victorian Era is associated with the reign of Queen Victoria from 1830 to 1901. England reached its highest point of development as a world power and became an empire where the sun never set. This period could be said to be peaceful, stable, and prosperous in that the country did not experience any wars in the homeland under Queen Victoria's reign. However, this was one of the most complicated ages, which witnessed rapid developments and changes in all fields of life and science.

To illustrate, England is the first country to be industrialized in the world. The construction of railways and the increase in the number of factories alongside the growth of population and the mass production altered the way of life based on the small scale of agriculture and the ownership of land to an urban city lifestyle as goods could be transported all around the country and the world. While Paris had been the most prominent city in the Western world in the previous decades, London replaced it. The middle class reached economic and political power with small investments and the provision of the right to vote to all male citizens, including the low middle class, with the Reform Bill of 1832.

Although the Early Victorian Period witnessed some troublesome years in the beginning, the Mid-Victorian Period (1848-1870) comprised the years of Victorian prosperity, stability and optimism. The Great Exhibition, opened by Prince Albert in Hyde Park in London in 1851, illustrated the exhibits of modern industry and science while the Crystal Palace demonstrated the extent of Victorian technology and modern architecture to the world. The working class obtained the right to vote with the Second Reform Bill of 1867, and the working hours and child labour were constrained. Agriculture flourished with the introduction of Free Trade and regulations of taxes on produce. The Education

Act of 1870 made schools widespread all over the country, and the Education Act of 1880 introduced compulsory education between the ages of five and ten. Religion played an important role in keeping the monarchial order and moralistic values in Victorian society ("The Victorian Age" 891-904). "Victorian society was organized hierarchically…race, religion, region, and occupation were all meaningful aspects of identity and status…." ("Victorian Era").

As a consequence of scientific, technological, political and cultural advancements, the Victorians believed they lived in a stable and orderly life, and they were content with it. For this reason, sometimes they were defined as self-complacent people. However, their sense of self-complacency was shattered by a number of scientific, philosophical, historical and cultural developments worldwide. In *Modernism 1890-1930,* edited by Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, a chronology of such significant events that marked the age is listed. Some of the most significant political events are the Bolshevik Revolution, World War I, the breakup of the Austrian Empire and the Irish Independence. In terms of science, the split of the atom, the invention of the cinema, the discovery of X-rays and radium, and the formulation of the first quantum theory were achieved. In addition, many artistic movements ranging from Impressionism to Cubism took place between 1890 and 1930 (McFarlane and Young 571-612).

Alongside those historical hallmarks, Charles Darwin, Friedrich Nietzsche, Henry Bergson, William James, Carl Jung, Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, and Albert Einstein transformed the ideological landscape and mindset of the Victorians. Charles Darwin was a biologist who asserted that species evolve over generations by the process of natural selection, and the ones with the advantageous aspects have the chance to survive and reproduce. In that respect, according to Gowan Dawson, the theory of evolution was such a popular subject in the 1840s and 1850s that it "became the basis for fiery working-class campaigns for political reform and … the topic of fashionable bourgeois dinner-table discussions" (9). However, his Theory of Evolution discredited the long-lasting Christian belief in the creation and led to the questioning of religion, which Nietzsche furthered by stating, "God is dead". Henry Bergson changed the subjective perception of time by showing the difference between the objective time measured with minutes, hours, days and years and experienced time by individuals. In "Time as a Protagonist in *To the*

Lighthouse", Paul Sheehan explains Bergson's theory linking to Woolf's employment in her novels:

> "what is given to" consciousness – its immediate data – is inescapably temporal. he calls this" *la durée*, or duration, the crux of which is freedom from the determinations of mechanistic causality. Woolf's characters often evince this momentary deliverance, experiencing the movement of time as an intuitive, psychological phenomenon rather than an objective or absolute metric" (69).

Likewise, William James introduced the theory of stream of consciousness, which shows that the human mind does not follow a logical order, yet flows like a stream from one idea to another and from present to past, from the important to unimportant, which demonstrated that human beings are not simple beings. Jung supported the fact that human beings are complex creatures through his theory of collective consciousness. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engel's *The Communist Manifesto* and Marx's *Das Kapital* contributed to a change in the stable order of the Victorian Era. Marx emphasized the idea that economic structures shaped social and cultural life. Marx argued that capitalism led to "all that is solid melting into air" (Marx and Engels 8). As Stevenson contends,

> … philosophers such as Bergson, Nietzsche and William James all suggest a change in something as fundamental as the relation of mind and the world—a kind of epistemological shift from relative confidence towards a sense of increased unreliability and uncertainty in the means by which reality is apprehended in thought. Reflecting this general shift, the work of such thinkers helps confirm the opening decades of the century as a time of change as revolutionary in philosophy—and in the outlook of the age as a whole—as in art. (11)

By the end of the Victorian era, as Stevenson pointed out, old certainties and confidence in the perception of reality were subverted. The most important figures who contributed the most to destabilization of perception of reality, in addition to the above-cited figures, are Sigmund Freud and Albert Einstein.

Freud, quoted as one of "the most influential intellectual legislator[s] of his age" ("Sigmund Freud"), is an Austrian neurologist and the founder of psychoanalysis. He wrote a number of books in addition to numerous case histories and individual articles. He delved into various fields of life, ranging from psychology to psychiatry, sociology to religion, and art to literature. He worked on identity development, war trauma, sexuality, complexes and defense mechanisms, the topography of the mind, and interpretations of dreams. Therefore, he is a cultural, intellectual and medical revolutionary. His theories

that particularly altered the Victorian mindset are instinct theory, pleasure and reality principles, mind model, and repression.

Freud employs the analogy of an iceberg to define the levels of the mind as preconscious, conscious and unconscious. According to this theory, thoughts and perceptions dwell in consciousness; memory and stored knowledge are stored in the preconscious, whereas the unconscious is the domain where all fears, instincts and selfish motives exist. The most important among those levels is the unconscious mind because, as Freud emphasizes, it determines human behaviour to a great extent (McLeod). The most striking part of this theory is the value it attributes to the unconscious. This theory explains that most human behaviour is not in control of humans as opposed to the Victorian view, which evaluates humans as rational beings, and the concept of rationality which governed the eighteenth-century ideology, as exemplified in *To The Lighthouse* by Mr. Ramsay. This importance given to the unconscious is further scandalized through Freud's instinct theory. Freud suggests that human beings are governed by two instincts that are life and death instincts:

> …two kinds of processes are constantly at work in living substance, operating in contrary directions, one constructive and assimilatory and the other destructive and dissimilatory. May we venture to recognize in these two directions taken by the vital processes the activity of our two instinctual impulses, the life instinct and the death instinct? (*Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 43)

The human brain struggles to construct a balance in between life and death instincts. In other words, the human mind oscillates between these two drives, which Freud summarizes as "the phenomenon of life could be explained from the concurrent or mutually opposing actions of these two instincts" in *Civilization and Its Discontents* (754). This idea that humans have the instinct of death within their psyche is in contradiction with rational Victorian individuals in that an intelligent mind does not wish death. Moreover, sexuality is rooted in life instinct, which is the greatest Victorian taboo. Yet, "… sexual instincts, which are so hard to 'educate'… often succeed in overcoming the reality principle, to the detriment of the organism itself" (*Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 4).

Freud's innovative understanding of sexuality challenged Victorian society, which was dominated by the middle class and distinct moralistic values and virtues such as

respectability, sobriety, earnestness and prudishness, devotion to hard work, national pride, obedience, respectability, repressed sexuality and insistence on female innocence and submissiveness. In the light of Freud's personality principle, the human psyche consists of three interrelated components that are id, ego, and superego. Id represents human being's uncontrollable feelings, instincts, desires and pleasures such as libido or aggression. Ego functions as the moralistic side of the mind and a mediator between id and superego, trying to balance the primitive desires and unconscious behaviour and over-controlled values and rules of social life. Superego is the authoritarian voice of human mind which always judges every act and feeling in line with the morality of the bearer's society. In that respect, superego is the controlling and censoring mechanism of the mind. Because human beings have forbidden desires and immoral fantasies, superego asks for repression and denial which may lead to defense mechanisms.

The overemphasis on the importance of sexuality and the animalistic side of the id implies that humans are not actually such civilized and advanced creatures. The unconscious, on the other hand, shows that human beings do not have as much control over their lives as they think and that they cannot be reliable from the outward appearance, as the unconscious hides real inward feelings and thoughts behind restrictions and taboos. Freud states that human beings possess fantasies and have complicated minds and emphasizes the importance of dreams, as they are the expressions of the hidden, repressed and socially unacceptable real personalities of individuals. Until then, the modest view of humans as simple beings was challenged by Freud, who revealed that humans are actually complex creatures who struggle with the constant interactions with id, ego and superego.

Freud was criticized during his lifetime and over the centuries but his psychoanalytic theory and psychoanalysis with his introduction of free association technique enabled writers to enter into the depths of the inner world of characters and express repressed memories and traumas of characters. After World War I, shell-shocked soldiers were attempted to be treated through this technique and their inner worlds were displayed. Freud also asserted that repressed memories, fears and instincts appear in the form of language slips in the repetition of the abrupt emergent words as well as the dreams (Martin 4, 19). He believed that dreams are important and they are full of symbols which signify people's different facets. As a result, Freud's new concepts mentioned above

contributed to a new understanding of reality in the modern era. Consequently, Victorian ideology, which defines human beings as reasonable and rational creatures who lead humble lives committed to the requirements of monarchy, religion and social codes and ethics, is defunct. After Freud, it has been recognized that human beings are complex creatures with sophisticated mental and psychological mechanisms. Human beings are no more simple creatures defined by political and religious ideas.

Albert Einstein is equally a prominent figure who undermined the scientific, philosophical, artistic and literary thinking habits and reality perception of not only the twentieth century but today, as well. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for photoelectric effect theory in 1921. Einstein is generally accepted to be the most significant physicist of the twentieth century ("Albert Einstein"). He was a German physicist who is most known for his Theory of Relativity. According to Theories of Relativity, "Einstein suggests that no law or observation can be universally reliable, but depends, among other factors, on the position of the individual observer" (Stevenson 70). The perception of time changes according to the observer, unlike what Isaac Newton claims. Newton argues that time is stable for everyone. However, Einstein shows that time passes differently for everyone. Scientifically or physically, if an object moves fast, time slows down for it. Psychologically, time is subjective, and its perception changes depending on the mood of the person experiencing it. To illustrate, if someone is engaged in an exciting activity in a certain place, time moves fast for him since he is not bored at all. If there is an observer in the same place who finds nothing interesting in the experience, time passes more slowly for him. Because one is excited and the other one is bored, their perception of time differs. Einstein's theory has proven that our perception of time is subjective and relative, which marks the death of another certainty that Victorians valued. Einstein added time to the category of solid matters, which Karl Marx declared to have melted. In his "Why the Novel Matters", D. H. Lawrence alludes to Einstein's idea of relativity by stating "We should ask for no absolutes, or absolute. Once and for all and forever, let us have done with the ugly imperialism of any absolute. There is no absolute good; there is nothing absolutely right. All things flow and change, and even change is not absolute" (qtd. in Childs 65).

Einstein's Theories of Relativity had direct influences on modernist art and literature. "The tendency towards narrative relativity, before and after Einstein, is perhaps the most striking aspect of Modernist fiction, from Conrad and James to Proust and Woolf, in its use of perspective, unreliability, anti-absolutism, instability, individuality and subjective perceptions" (65), according to Childs. Childs compares realistic novels, which adopt Newton's perception of reality, to modernist novels, which resonate with Einstein's conceptualization of reality. On the other hand, Victorian novels depict an impartial world which is ruled by stable and predictable, objective and reliable scientific facts. Events follow a chronological order, and spatial relationships are defined by empirically observed universal principles in the nineteenth-century novel. However, modernist novels exploit non-linear, fragmented, subjectively perceived time concepts and a new understanding of space. Einstein's four-dimensional space-time continuum is reflected in the use of new literary techniques such as stream of consciousness in modernist literature since it offers ambiguity and flexibility. Childs encapsulates the impact of Einstein's scientific theory on literature by stating that "in relativity and in Modernism, the beginning of any analysis had to take into account point of view, perspective, and parallax, the apparent change in the position of an object that is caused by an alteration in the observer's position" (68). In other words, new science defends an ambiguous worldview, which is also unpredictable like human behavior and supports a multi-faceted reality concept. Child makes another reference to D.H. Lawrence with his short poem titled "Relativity," in which "while not understanding them, Lawrence 'likes' the idea that atoms might change their minds, space might shift around, and matter might be 'impulsive'" (67-68). Similarly, Einstein's denial of the presence of an absolute universal time and space with his Theories of Relativity found its repercussions in literature and art in his own words: "The really important factor is ultimately intuition…The subjective sensation is a reality. There is only a psychological time, different from the time of physicists" (qtd. in Stevenson 108). Moreover, his idea that time and space are interconnected and that when one of them changes, the other one changes as well, changed the long-established scientific worldview in the twentieth century.

The production of literary works could not be expected to be produced from a society whose foundations are obsolete in that literature is characterized by change,

dynamism and innovation. With consecutive social, historical, scientific and technological advancements, the growth of the cities, the spread of factories, the invention of the car and telephone, and the Modernist movement opposed to the Victorian worldview, which is associated with rationality, absolutism, realism, positivism, order, and objectivity with its class distinction and its emphasis on religion. Daniel Joseph Singal, in his article "Towards a Definition of American Modernism", differentiates "Modernism" and "modernity/modernization" by stating that although they have etymological similarities, they are not synonyms, and they need to be distinguished from each other and should not be used interchangeably:

> Modernism should properly be seen as a culture—a constellation of related ideas, beliefs, values, and modes of perception—that came into existence during the mid to late nineteenth century and that has had a powerful influence on art and thought on both sides of the Atlantic since roughly 1900. Modernization, by contrast, denotes a process of social and economic development, involving the rise of industry, technology, urbanization, and bureaucratic institutions, that can be traced back as far as the seventeenth century. (7)

Modernism adopts new forms of expression with its focus on individualism, inconsistency, instability and relativity. Modernism is one of the most important changes and upheavals that transformed the world and worldview in the history of literature and in all disciplines such as art, painting, philosophy, psychology, music, architecture and politics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Scott-James notes in 1908 that "just as authority has been undermined in religion and morals, so too in art. The old accepted standards cannot satisfy a changing age… The old fixed canons of taste have lost their validity… the novelist ignores the earlier conventions of plot …vocabulary, literary structure, and orthodoxy of opinion…" (qtd. in Stevenson 1).

Virginia Woolf complains about the restrictions and limitations of realistic fiction and invites writers to be bold and fearless:

> …if a writer were a free man and not a slave, if he could write what he chose, not what he must, if he could base his work upon his own feeling and not upon convention, there would be no plot, no comedy, no tragedy, no love interest or catastrophe in the accepted style, and perhaps not a single button sewn on as the Bond Street tailors would have it. Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end. Is it not the task of the novelist to convey this varying, this unknown and uncircumscribed spirit, whatever aberration or complexity it may display, with as little mixture of the alien and external as possible? We are not pleading merely for courage and sincerity; we are suggesting

> that the proper stuff of fiction is a little other than custom would have us believe it. (“Modern Fiction” 106)

Woolf believes that “everything is the proper stuff of fiction” (164). She contends that modernist fiction does not have to have a linear story with a beginning, a climax, a series of actions or adventures, a falling action and a striking conclusion which resolves all question marks and is narrated by an omniscient author as employed in the traditional novel, which denotes the eighteenth and nineteenth century fiction. At the same time, she emphasizes the fact that life is complicated and fuzzy. It is not like the way the Victorians tend to believe, which is orderly and predictable.

As a corollary to what Woolf asserts, Stevenson states that modernist fiction involves “techniques in which objective certainties dissolve and the human scene of the novel is markedly suffused with the consciousness of the figure observing and narrating it. This modification in the attention of fiction indicates a significant departure… a break from earlier interests and conventions” (24). Jesse Matz in *Modern Novel: A Short Introduction* summarizes the afore-mentioned ideas as follows by expressing the massive extent of the change witnessed in the modern age:

> … modern novelists start with the belief that modernization has changed the very nature of reality, and … fiction also has to change its very nature in order to survive. They tell us that the modern novel, therefore, does things differently—that it sets itself against literary norms and conventions. Experiment, innovation, and improvisation are its hallmarks. New styles and structures are the result, and these are often shocking, surprising… These are some of the fundamental tendencies of the modern novel (6).

While the age was undergoing successive radical changes in all areas of life, the emergence of the World War I became the most striking phenomenon that marked modernism.

> It has often been argued that the Great War caused an unprecedented revolution in the general outlook in England and the European countries because of unprecedented slaughter, the unprecedented involvement of “noncombatants” and the unprecedented scale of the demonstration of bureaucratized, technologically assisted inhumanity. (Kershner 37)

The war, which took place from 1914 to 1918, resulted in the deaths of approximately 8,500,000 soldiers and 13,000,000 civilians and is called the Great War because of its massive death toll (“Killed, Wounded, and Missing”). The bloody news from the battlefields, the rising death numbers of the soldiers, grieving families, the sounds

of bombings, and the frightening presence of warplanes all led to a deep questioning of life. The soldiers who went to the war returned to a country that was no longer the same as the one they had left behind. The devastating effects of the war led to a questioning of the advancements brought by modernization and profoundly shook people's sense of reality. Therefore, as Signal indicates, "modernism arose as a reaction to modernization. However, while modernists appreciated the vitality and creativity of technological advancement, they criticized the dehumanizing effects it brought" (8).

One of the dehumanizing effects of the World War I is making people question themselves, their beliefs, ideologies, and their place in society and the universe. The war changed the English culture so deeply that Samuel Hynes, in his book *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture,* not only wrote about the physical, political, financial and psychological devastating effects of the war but also illustrated how people's ideologies changed:

> Even as it was being fought the war was perceived as a force of radical change in society and in consciousness. It brought to an end the life and values of Victorian and Edwardian England; but it did something more fundamental than that: it added a new scale of violence and destruction to what was possible—it changed reality. That change was so vast and so abrupt as to make the years after the war seem discontinuous from the years before, and that discontinuity became a part of English imaginations. Men and women after the war looked back at their own pasts as one might look across a great chasm to a remote, peaceable place on the other side.(xi)

England before and after the war was not the same. The difference was of an erosion of fundamental values, as expressed by Paul Fussell in *The Great War and Modern Memory*:

> … the Great War took place in what was, compared with ours, a static world, where the values appeared stable and where the meanings of abstractions seemed permanent and reliable. Everyone knew what Glory was, and what Honor meant. It was not until eleven years after the war that Hemingway could declare in *A Farewell to Arms* that "abstract words such as glory, honor, courage, or hallow were obscene beside the concrete names of villages, the numbers of roads, the names of rivers, the numbers of regiments and the dates. (22)

In the atmosphere of complexity, insecurity and uncertainty brought by both modernization and the war, a world that shattered the integrity of the individual could no longer be expressed through the techniques of conventional literature adequately. Instead of traditional literature, which depicted the social, economic political issues of the external

world that concerned everyone, new techniques needed to be developed to convey the subjective world of individuals who felt alienated, fragmented, and alone in such a reality. The protagonist in the modernist novel is an anti-hero and does not have the chance to be a flawless hero who conforms to the norms of the society and who is applauded for heroic deeds he has achieved, as narrated in the traditional literature. The improvements in psychology and psychoanalysis also led to a focus on subjectivity and the inner world. The traditional narrator disappeared, and the focus shifted to the character's consciousness. The inner world of the character is foregrounded since he is a thinking person. Woolf highlights this fact in "Modern Fiction" by pointing out how the mind is full of "impressions" at any time:

> Look within and life, it seems, is very far from being "like this". Examine for a moment and ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives a myriad of impressions—trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel. From all sides they come, an incessant shower of innumerable atoms; and as they fall, as they shape themselves into the life of Monday or Tuesday, the accent falls differently from of old; the moment of importance came not here but there;… (106)

The shift should be directed to the depths of human consciousness as it retains the meaning of life, and the reality is hidden in the mind of an average person in daily life. The real thoughts, intentions, perceptions circulate freely, unlimitedly and constantly during the day. Woolf repeatedly emphasized the necessity of dealing with the mind in her essays highlighting the need to "illumine the mind within rather than the world without" (81) in "Phases of Fiction" as a reaction to the traditional realistic novel's portrayal of the outside world.

In addition to focusing on the inner worlds of the characters, modernists implemented many novelties such as symbolism, rhythm, repetition, poetic language and the use of the characters as reflectors. However, the most well-known modernist techniques are stream of consciousness, interior monologue and free indirect speech, which are used to explore the depths of the consciousness:

> The stream of consciousness was a phrase coined by William James, psychologist brother of the novelist Henry, to characterize the continuous flow of thought and sensation in the human mind. Later it was borrowed by literary critics to describe a particular kind of modern fiction which tried to imitate this process, exemplified by, among others, James Joyce, Dorothy Richardson and Virginia Woolf. (Lodge 42)

In *A Glossary of Literary Terms,* M. H. Abrams defines the term as a narrative technique "that undertakes to reproduce, without a narrator's intervention, the full spectrum and continuous flow of a character's mental process, in which sense perceptions mingle with conscious and half-conscious thoughts, memories, expectations, feelings, and random associations" (299). As Lodge, too, points out, Virginia Woolf makes extensive use of stream of consciousness technique in her works. In *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*, she illustrates the continuous and uninterrupted movement of perceptions, thoughts and emotions within the conscious mind of the characters. As in William James' coinage, the thoughts of the characters flow like a stream without any logical order and connection. Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* portrays a day of Clarissa Dalloway in London. Nothing extraordinary happens in the novel. The reader does not only learn what happens on that day in London but all important events affecting the main characters till that day are expressed through the flows of consciousnesses of each character. A day reflects all history, English society, customs, traditions, literature, and art in the aftermath of World War I.

Stream of consciousness is closely connected with interior monologue. For a long time, the thoughts of the character are reflected to the reader in the novel without the intervention of the narrator without any coherent order, as it happens in stream of consciousness. The character thinks intermittently without the narrator forming any logical, grammatically structured sentences or commenting on the character's "vagaries" or the characters' thoughts. Thus, we have direct access to characters' thoughts (Abrahams 299).

Free indirect speech is another technique which is employed by modernist novelists like Woolf. Free indirect speech

> … renders thought as reported speech (in the third person, past tense) but keeps to the kind of vocabulary that is appropriate to the character, and deletes some of the tags, like "she thought," "she wondered," "she asked herself" etc. that a more formal narrative style would require. This gives the illusion of intimate access to a character's mind, but without totally surrendering authorial participation in the discourse. (Lodge 43)

Whether the narrator narrates in his own diction or the character thinks in his own terms is ambivalent. Punctuation marks such as question marks and exclamation marks appear

as a reflection of the character while the tense of the narration does not change. Lawrence Edward Bowling explains this technique as follows: "It introduces us directly into the interior life of the character, without any intervention by way of comment or explanation on the part of the author" (345).

The use of stream of consciousness technique, interior monologue and free indirect speech in fiction was influenced by the developments in psychology, particularly Freud's psychoanalysis and free association techniques to unveil the hidden feelings, perceptions and fears of patients. Modernist understanding of fiction necessitated a shift in focus towards the inner world of the character and brought subjectivity to the forefront. Unlike the earlier fiction, where omniscient narrators dominated the narrative, the modernist literature prioritized the character and allowed their consciousness to shape the novel. As Stevenson notes, the shift "…from perceived to perceiver, from the world without to the mind within" became common characteristics of fiction by the mid-1920s (27). Similar to Bowling, "... Gerard Genette suggests the interest of narrative of turn of the century was caught between what it tells (the story) and what tells it '(the narrating)' and was moving increasingly towards 'domination by the latter (modern narrative)'" (Stevenson 27).

Therefore, modernist novels are accepted to have complicated narrative techniques as they do not follow a traditional linear storytelling and move from one idea to another and from one consciousness to another. The reader is expected to read attentively and comprehend the order of the events from the impressions, thoughts and feelings of the characters. Throughout the modernist novels, discordant, disintegrating and disjointed sentences, even fragmented sentences, only phrases and words form the pages. Some writers, even, do not follow any grammatical rules and sentence structure is broken as a reflection of the consciousnesses of the characters. As modernist writers focus on technical experimentation with language, symbols are used as compressed expressions of thoughts and feelings. They deliberately preferred to use a difficult, complex poetic language. Repetition and rhythm play a crucial role in the prose, and it creates a musical quality.

In conclusion, the modernist age underwent continuous waves of change. In *Mrs. Bennet and Mrs. Brown*, Woolf famously states, "... on or about December, 1910, human

character changed" (4) and maintains that "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. Let us agree to place one of these changes about the year 1910" (5). Meanwhile, Einstein's relativity began to shape literature, as exemplified by Dorothy Richardson's main character in *Pilgrimage*, "All that has been said and known in the world in language, in words… The meaning of words changes with people's thoughts. Then no one knows anything for certain. Everything depends upon the way a thing is put, and that is a question of some particular civilization" (2: 99). Yet, World War I could be described as a concrete historical event which brought about the greatest transformation in modernist literature, elevating the questioning of the concept of relativity to its peak. Woolf expresses the horror she felt in her essay "The Leaning Tower": "Then, suddenly, like a chasm in a smooth road, the war came" (*Collected Essays* 167). Likewise, Henry James lamented "the plunge of civilization into this abyss of blood and darkness," emphasizing that it "so gives away the whole long age during which we have supposed the world to be, with whatever abatement, gradually bettering, that to have to take it all now for what the treacherous years were all the while really making for and meaning is too tragic for any words" (qtd. in Bradbury, *The Modern World: Ten Great Writers* 16).

The literature produced in such an age and by such an age could not have existed within the confines of traditional literature. To reflect the spirit of the age, the development of techniques which prioritize subjectivity and relativity was needed. The novelists employed the technique of stream of consciousness to reveal the authentic mind of the alienated and fragmented character. They also used interior monologue and free indirect speech to foreground the diction of the character. Thus, modernist fiction is the end product of subjectivity and relativity, which will be illustrated through *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* by Virginia Woolf.

CHAPTER 2*:* ECHOES OF THE GREAT WAR IN *MRS. DALLOWAY*

Mrs. Dalloway is one of the most renowned works of modernist literature that utilizes modernist narrative techniques such as stream of consciousness, interior monologue and free indirect speech. It is Virginia Woolf's fourth novel (Marcus, viii-ix). Given that the novel was published in 1925, it represents twentieth-century England and the worldview in the aftermath of World War I. It epitomizes the reflection of the shift in the perception of reality and its relativity as Paul Tolliver Brown puts forward in "The Spatiotemporal Topography of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*: Capturing Britain's Transition to a Relative Modernity", the writer also states that "the Great War serves as the definitive historical event dividing an old world order from the new. As the war came to an end, Britain began to come to terms with a very different understanding of reality" (22). Thus, *Mrs. Dalloway* effectively represents the reverberations of the Great War both on the individual and collective societal level with the new understanding of reality affected by Einstein's Theory of Relativity.

As Anna S. Benjamin describes in "Towards an Understanding of the Meaning of Virginia Woolf's '*Mrs*. *Dalloway*'", "Woolf presents in the short hours of one day thirty-four years of Clarissa's past at Bourton and London. Thirty-four years have molded her mature life since she was eighteen at Bourton" (222). Woolf explains one day from morning to evening in the life of Clarissa Dalloway and conveys Clarissa's life since she was eighteen years old. As the novel does not follow a traditional story line, the reader is presented with the month in which the novel takes place as June on page three, whereas the approximate time of the day as morning is mentioned on page twenty-three for the first time, and the year as 1923 on page eighty (*Mrs. Dalloway*). The reader can track the passage of the hours with the chimes of Big Ben and St. Margaret's clocks all through the novel. The novel brings together two separate stories happening simultaneously: one of them being Clarissa Dalloway's preparation for her party from morning till the end of it and another being a shell-shocked war veteran Septimus's suicide. Septimus and Clarissa do not know each other and their individual worlds do not overlap, being from two different classes. However, their stories complete each other in representing the turmoil of life after World War I.

In Clarissa's part, the story starts when she leaves home to buy flowers for her party. When she turns back, she finds out that her husband, Richard, is invited to Lady Bruton's house in the afternoon but Clarissa feels sorry for not having been invited to this meeting. Her friend and ex-lover Peter Walsh pays a short visit to her unexpectedly when she retreats to her room. Through some of their dialogues and through their visits of their consciousnesses to their past, the reader learns Clarissa's refusal of Peter's marriage proposal and her preference to marry Richard to be an upper-class lady. When they meet some thirty years later, they question themselves whether they still love each other and what would have happened differently if they had not been separated. They have romantic and nostalgic moments years later. When Peter asks Clarissa if she is happy with Richard or not, Peter cannot get the answer upon her daughter's arrival into her room, and he leaves to come back for the party in the evening.

Although the main characters of the novel are Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Warren Smith, they do not recognize each other, and they never see each other in the novel. Septimus is presented in St. Regents Park sitting on a bench with his Italian wife, Lucrezia, waiting for the appointment with the psychiatrist Sir William Bradshaw, and the reader is provided with his present schizophrenic mental state after World War I. Septimus, who was planning to be a poet as a lover of Shakespeare, enlisted wholeheartedly with patriotic feelings when the war broke out. Experiencing the horrors of the trench war and the death of his best friend and possibly his lover, Evans, he lost all his hopes for his country and humanity. According to him, he has lost all his feelings and suffers from deep post-traumatic stress disorder. That is why he undergoes therapy with doctors. Septimus ends his life by jumping out of the window when Dr. Holmes arrives to take him to an asylum as he loses all his desire to live and the meaning of life. Peter hears the ambulance which carries Septimus while he is walking through the streets of London and observing the change England has experienced during these years in his absence.

Richard comes back from Lady Bruton's visit with a bunch of flowers, intending to tell Clarissa that he loves her. Unfortunately, he cannot utter his love for Clarissa. Clarissa finds herself questioning the distance she feels with her husband. After the preparations, Clarissa is ready for her party, in which even the Prime Minister participates. With her best friend and lover Sally Seton's participation at the party together with Peter's,

Clarissa finds herself in complicated feelings. When Sir William Bradshaw and his wife come late for the party, attendees find out that one of his patients has committed suicide. This event makes Clarissa have controversial feelings as she thinks it spoils her party, and at the same time, she empathizes with Septimus. She finds him courageous enough to embrace death. The novel ends with Peter's thoughts and feelings: "What is this terror? What is this ecstasy? ....What is it that fills me with extraordinary excitement? It is Clarissa, he said. For there she was" (*Mrs. Dalloway* 213).

It should be noted that this novel is about war (Hussey 1991, Joyes 2008, Levenback 1999, Malik 2019). For example, in "Virginia Woolf's Keen Sensitivity to War: Its Roots And Its Impact On Her Novels", Nancy Topping Bazin and Jane Hamovit Lauter contend that "obviously the stress created by the war continues to mar the daily lives of Woolf's characters long after the battles have ended. Such examples also reflect how World War I continued to impinge on Woolf's consciousness long after it was over" (19). In the novel, the destructive effect of the Great War is narrated through Lucreiza's consciousness, referring to Septimus's employer, Mr. Brewer: "…something happened which threw out many of Mr. Brewer's calculations, took away his ablest young fellows, and eventually, so prying and insidious were the fingers of the European War, smashed a plaster cast of Ceres, ploughed a hole in the geranium beds, and utterly ruined the cook's nerves at Mr. Brewer's establishment at Muswell Hill" (*Mrs. Dalloway* 95). Woolf showcases how the war started with great hopes for the soldiers like Septimus. He "was one of the first to volunteer. He went to France to save an England which consisted almost entirely of Shakespeare's plays and Miss Isabel Pole in a green dress walking in a square" (95). The society and his employer Mr. Brewer's expectation of manliness developed in the trenches in a short time, and Septimus became a successful soldier and was promoted. He fought and shared everything with his officer, Evans.

As Bazin and Lauter point out, "in *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf demonstrates the cost of war not only through the suffering of Septimus and his wife but also through unhappy experiences of minor characters and through the memories and thoughts of all her characters. Woolf sets the tone of postwar English life in the first few pages of the novel" (18). Similarly, Christopher Herbert notes in "Mrs. Dalloway, the Dictator, and the Relativity Paradox" that "…though fighting stopped five years previously, war still

overshadows the scene…the carnage of the world war is not over at all, but renews daily, all these years later, in the private lives of innumerable survivors" (108). While Woolf emphasizes the official end of the war by revealing ongoing destructive effects on individuals whose relatives are killed in the war, she expresses how the war inflicts deep sorrow in all individuals regardless of gender: "This late age of world's experience had bred in them all, all men and women, a well of tears. Tears and sorrows; courage and endurance; a perfectly upbright and stoical bearing" (*Mrs. Dalloway* 12). Woolf illustrates the individual's fragmented world, which is full of complex binary oppositions such as "tears" and "bearing". In the aftermath of the war, the individual is expected to endure hardships without complaint and exhibit perseverance and strength.

The passing of the car which belongs to the royal family creates disturbance among the onlookers and causes them to think "of the dead; of the flag; of Empire" (21) and "in a public house in a back street a Colonial insulted the House of Windsor which led to words, broken beer glasses... For the surface agitation of the passing car as it sunk grazed something very profound" (21). Royalty must have reminded people of the massacres which were committed during the war and questioned people profoundly about whether it was worth it. Woolf might also want to reflect the distance between the royal family and the public, and the reality of each party is completely separate.

In the same way, accompanying Hugh Whitbread to buy necklaces for Evelyn after lunch at Lady Bruton's, Richard Dalloway finds himself contemplating "the worthlessness of this life" (125) on his way home. His interior monologue reflects the ongoing effects of the Great War in everyday life:

> Really it was a miracle thinking of the war, and thousands of poor chaps, with all their lives before them, shoveled together, already half forgotten; it was a miracle. Here he was walking across London to say to Clarissa in so many words that he loved her. Which one never does say, he thought (127)…. It was a great age in which to have lived. Indeed, his own life was a miracle; let him make no mistake about it; here he was, in the prime of life, walking to his house in Westminster to tell Clarissa that he loved her. Happiness is this, he thought. (129)

He contrasts the brutal reality of the death numbers and his miraculous survival in such a period after witnessing the war. The post-war survival guilt experienced by Richard and Septimus is felt differently. Woolf references that civilians have started forgetting the horror of the loss of thousands of young soldiers through the character of Richard and that

the civilians have a different agenda than Septimus and Lucrezia. Time passes with different emotions for those who live at the same age but experience different levels of the same event, which is war. Thus, this moment of buying flowers for Clarissa and his ability to express his love to her becomes a revelatory moment for Richard to show the societal psychological dimension of the impacts of the war. It is clear that the war made people question the meaning of life and reality.

As Nancy Bazin and Jane Lauter also state, "Woolf provides a glimpse into the scope of injuries inflicted by the war. She is also presenting the various ways war disrupts individual lives and the different ways people cope with this disruption" (18). Another character influenced by the war is Elizabeth's tutor, Miss Killman, whose "brother had been killed" in the war (*Mrs. Dalloway* 136). She was fired from her post since "she would not pretend that the Germans were all villains when the only happy days of her life had been spent in Germany!" (136). Therefore, "all her soul rusted with that grievance sticking in it, her dismissal from school during the War—poor, embittered, unfortunate creature!" (14). In the aftermath of the war, Killman tries to find solace by eating a lot and devoting herself to religion and Clarissa's daughter, Elizabeth. Furthermore, Woolf makes a reference to the war through the character of Miss Helena Parry at the party. As Marlene A. Briggs denotes *Mrs. Dalloway* "provides an incidental account of civilian bombardment that features Clarissa's aunt" (468). In the novel, the aunt is described as "an indomitable Englishwoman, fretful if disturbed by the war, say, which dropped a bomb at her very door" (*Mrs. Dalloway* 196). Woolf illustrates the effects of the war on daily life through Clarissa's aunt. Although the war is over, its traces still persist in human consciousness.

Thus, Woolf emphasizes that despite being indirectly affected by the war, civilians also had to face another dimension of reality, which questioned their identity in the new world, and that it is impossible to assume that they are immune from the scars of the war. However, not all characters are affected by the war in the same way and equally. While Septimus Warren Smith, as a soldier who fought in the war, carries the effects of the war more deeply, Mrs. Dalloway and other civilians show fewer visible signs of its impact. Nevertheless, the war altered the perception of reality for both them and Septimus. Consequently, this chapter will focus on Septimus first so as to illustrate how the Great

War distorted the understanding of reality. Then the civilian perception will be covered through Mrs. Dalloway and other minor characters. Thus, the chapter will demonstrate how confused ordinary people are in the period in which the War is one of the most tragic occurrences.

2.1. Septimus as the Embodiment of the Effects of the War

Septimus Warren Smith is the most significant character who reflects the catastrophic effects of the war in the novel and functions as a counterpart to Clarissa Dalloway. Before he goes to France in World War I to fight for England, he is an optimistic, cheerful and vivacious character who is interested in literature and Shakespeare and is in love with Isabel Pole. However, the war changes his character, and especially after he loses his friend Evans in the war, he loses all his connection to life and belief in humanity. He gets married to an Italian woman, Lucrezia, but he complains that he has lost his capacity to be able to feel. His mind is trapped between the past and the present since war memories haunt him, and he experiences mental torture and hallucinations. Literature does not even create the effect it did before the war. He is not understood by his wife, Lucrezia, or by the doctors who examine him. Overwhelmed by the effects of the war trauma, suicide seems to be the only option for him, and he ends his life by throwing himself out of the window of a building.

The novel is narrated by a third-person narrator. However, through the use of stream of consciousness, free indirect speech and interior monologue, the characters' psychology, sense of self and personal language are brought to the forefront. Although Septimus is not the narrator, through these techniques, he takes on the role of a narrator. Throughout the novel, examples of the use of stream of consciousness are detected. When Septimus enters the novel, he is seated on a park bench waiting for the doctor's appointment. His first thought is: "the World has raised its whip, where will it descend?" (17). Next, his attention shifts to the traffic jam and he wonders whether he has caused it or not. In the meantime, a plane flies over the park advertising a product. When he looks up to decipher what the plane advertises in the sky letter by letter, the reader is presented with his hallucination and his extraordinary mind through an interior monologue:

> So, thought Septimus, looking up, they are signaling to me. Not indeed in actual words; that is, he could not read the language yet; but it was plain enough, this beauty, this exquisite beauty, and tears filled his eyes as he looked at the smoke words languishing and melting in the sky and bestowing upon him in their inexhaustible charity and laughing goodness, one shape after another of unimaginable beauty and signaling their intention to provide him, for nothing, forever, for looking merely, with beauty, more beauty! Tears ran down his cheeks. (25)

Septimus sees a commercial plane advertising an ordinary product in the sky. Why he responds to the plane that way is indefinite, but he certainly sees the letters of the advertisement as a message from God although at this point of the novel, the significance of the scene is not obvious. His following ideas come pages later due to the interruption of the novel by his wife's thoughts and actions. Now, his mind flows from one idea to another:

> Men must not cut down trees. There is a God. (He noted such revelations on the backs of envelopes.) Change the world. No one kills from hatred. Make it known (he wrote it down). He waited. He listened. A sparrow perched on the railing opposite chirped Septimus, Septimus, four or five times over and went on, drawing its notes out, to sing freshly and piercingly in Greek words how there is no crime and, joined by another sparrow, they sang in voices prolonged and piercing in Greek words, from trees in the meadow of life beyond a river where the dead walk, how there is no death. (28)

As illustrated in the quotation, Septimus thinks of several issues and phenomena one after another. His thoughts wander around without any logical connection from trees to God, from hatred to sparrows. The thoughts are irrelevant to each other because modernist writers know that that is how the mind works, and they aim to get into the chambers of the mind and reflect the reality of the character in relation to time and space with all its complexity. As for them, reality cannot be explained through only one simple way, and traditional narrative techniques such as the omniscient third-person narrator cannot adequately explain Septimus's mental torture. The novel is filled with such examples of stream of consciousness.

Septimus is a veteran who fought in the Great War as has been mentioned before. He represents how the war influences the veterans who came back from the war. Septimus is introduced into the novel "... with hazel eyes which had that look of apprehension in them which makes complete strangers apprehensive too" (17). Septimus's psychological turmoil is reflected by his physical appearance. He returned from the war five years ago

as a sufferer of deferred-shell shock as Sir William Bradshaw diagnosed (201). Septimus's perception of the world, described with the imagery of the "whip"—in" the words "the World has raised its whip, where will it descend? (17)—illustrates the insecurity, instability, ambiguity and cruelty of the world like the battlefield. The whip symbolizes both authority over someone and the power to hurt the victim. Therefore, Septimus feels the world has raised its whip over him, and he is waiting as a victim. The fact that he hallucinates his friend Evans right after the whip can be interpreted as the influence of the war on his perception of the world. In other words, his pessimistic understanding of the world is closely associated with him being a veteran suffering from shell shock as can be seen in his hallucinations. In addition to hallucinating about his friend Evans, Septimus's fractured sense of reality makes him see a real dog transforming into a man: "No crime; love; he repeated, fumbling for his card and pencil, when a Skye terrier snuffed his trousers and he started in an agony of fear. It was turning into a man! He could not watch it happen! It was horrible, terrible to see a dog become a man! At once the dog trotted away" (75-76).

A similar pessimism, in addition to his perception of the world as a raised whip, can be seen in his reaction to a banging sound while he is in the park. Whereas Clarissa shows an ordinary reaction to the sound of the motorcar, which is described as "a pistol shot in the street outside!" or "the violent explosion in the street" (16), for Septimus "everything had come to a standstill" (17) and "some horror had come almost to the surface" "before his eyes" because "the world wavered and quivered and threatened to burst into flames" (18). War trauma has changed Septimus's perception of reality, making ordinary surroundings appear threatening and unstable. Moreover, Septimus is far away from the present moment and lives in the moment of the war, which shows that time is not the same for everyone. That's why he hallucinates his friend Evans coming toward him. The metaphor of fire shows the depth of his inner pain. His feeling that he is being looked at and pointed at by the crowd might have reminded him of his war memories. "It is I who am blocking the way, he thought. Was he not being looked at and pointed at; was he not weighed there, rooted to the pavement, for a purpose? But for what purpose?" (18).

The very scenes analyzed above can be interpreted as the embodiment of the focus of the thesis, "Nothing was simply one thing," alongside the modernist concept of reality,

which is multiple, subjective and fractured, and Einstein's Theory of Relativity. In the scene above, Septimus's and Mrs. Dalloway's notions of time and space are different from each other, and within psychological time and the tunnels of the mind, in the reminiscences from the past, the reality resides. Likewise, the passing of the car and the crowd remind a minor character, Mr. Bowley, of the war, who thinks: "poor women waiting to see the Queen go past—poor women, nice little children, orphans, widows, the War—tut-tut" and his eyes fill with tears (23). Moreover, in "all the hat shops and tailors' shops strangers looked at each other and thought of the dead; of the flag; of Empire" because "…the surface agitation of the passing car as it sunk grazed something very profound" (21). Mr. Bowley's reaction to the same scene is totally different from that of Septimus and Mrs. Dalloway, which once again emphasizes the ideas of relativity and subjectivity. Although they inhabit the same physical world, their perception of it is entirely different. Just as Einstein's theory distorted the absolute concept of time and space, Woolf shows how experience can change one's comprehension of reality and surroundings and portrays a world where time, space, and consciousness are no longer objective but are shaped by the subjective individual understanding of the mind. Septimus's experience of the past and the present at the same time shows Woolf's belief that time is not linear and that it is shaped by individual experience. Although Evans is physically dead, he simultaneously exists as dead and alive in Septimus's mind. As Paul Tolliver Brown notes in "The Spatiotemporal Topography of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*: Capturing Britain's Transition to a Relative Modernity", "Woolf … explores the idea that spatiotemporal perception has undergone a change since the war by introducing a shell-shocked central character who is incapable of situating himself in a circumscribed presence in space or a present moment in time" (29). Septimus's sense of reality has changed so much that nothing is simply one thing for him. His experience shows that time and reality are not fixed, absolute or objective and depend on the observer's angle.

Septimus does not always hallucinate or is not always cut off from reality or the moment he is living in. Even in such cases when he is engaged in the present, his perception of reality is distorted by the war. For example, when he realizes that his wife

is not wearing her wedding ring, he feels abandoned by his wife. This change leads him to think that the world is also changed forever:

> … he, Septimus, was alone, called forth in advance of the mass of men to hear the truth, to learn the meaning, which now at last, after all the toils of civilisation—Greeks, Romans, Shakespeare, Darwin, and now himself—was to be given whole to…. "To whom?" he asked aloud. "To the Prime Minister," the voices which rustled above his head replied. The supreme secret must be told to the Cabinet; first that trees are alive; next there is no crime; next love, universal love, he muttered, gasping, trembling, painfully drawing out these profound truths which needed, so deep were they, so difficult, an immense effort to speak out, but the world was entirely changed by them forever. (75)

For Septimus, voices, scenes, images, historical references and philosophical thoughts are all mingled, which reflects his consciousness. His trauma has profoundly changed his perception of reality, and he has lost his integrity. Time he experiences at the moment is fragmented and interwoven with earlier historical civilizations and the present time in his view. He tries to find "the truth" and "the meaning". This passage also exemplifies Woolf's employment of the stream of consciousness technique to describe the pain Septimus suffers from.

Woolf's description of the character's controversial shifts of feelings in such short spatio-temporality is apparent in Septimus, echoing Einstein's Relativity Theory. In one moment, he loses the integration between the outside world and himself. In another moment, he finds himself reconnected to nature. An individual might realize different layers of reality within the interconnectedness of the present, past and even future while evaluating the internal or external world. The dark side of the war reverberates in Septimus so deeply that his mind is always preoccupied with the evaluation of the scenes from the battlefield and trenches through the third-person narrator:

> …when Evans was killed, just before the Armistice, in Italy, Septimus, far from showing any emotion or recognising that here was the end of a friendship, congratulated himself upon feeling very little and very reasonably. The War had taught him. It was sublime. He had gone through the whole show, friendship, European War, death, had won promotion, was still under thirty and was bound to survive. He was right there. The last shells missed him. He watched them explode with indifference. (96)

Septimus, as a soldier, was expected to show manliness in the trenches. Before the war, he was a frail and slender poet who came to England to work. His employer, Mr. Brewer, seeing his thin body and knowing that he will join the army soon, asks him to

develop manliness, which, according to George L. Mosse, requires control of "passions", a "harmonious and well-proportioned bodily structure", and "commitment to moderation and self-control" (101). For that reason, he could not show his reaction when Evans and his friends were killed; he had to suppress his possible emotions of fear, sadness, disappointment and pity. After the war ended, while he was in Milan, he was anxious because he had lost his ability to feel and taste and there was something missing in him. He had "thunder-claps of fear" (96), waking up early. "He could reason; he could read Dante, for example, quite easily…, he could add up his bill; his brain was perfect; it must be the fault of the world then—that he could not feel" (98). He thought "the world itself is without meaning" (98). In time he has lost his love and admiration for literature after witnessing human violence and horrors in war. When he reads Shakespeare now, he believes that he has been revealed Shakespeare's hidden message behind the beautiful lines, which are "loathing, hatred, despair" (98) of humanity. Septimus's problem is his inability to feel, and the reason for this is what he has become aware of as reality during his war experience, which, according to Roger Poole, is the common experience of the soldiers in World War I (189-190). The war trauma has distorted his perception of reality although it did not show its shocking effects at that very time of the war when Evans was killed. This belated nature of the traumatic event is described by Caty Caruth in *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History:*

> … trauma is not locatable in the simple violent or original event in an individual's past, but rather in the way that its very unassimilated nature—the way it was precisely not known in the first in stance—returns to haunt the survivor later on. … trauma seems to be much more than a pathology, or the simple illness of a wounded psyche: it is always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available. This truth, in its delayed appearance and its belated address, cannot be linked only to what is known, but also to what remains unknown in our very actions and our language. (4)

Not only the loss of Evan but also all the catastrophe Septimus experienced on the battlefield was so cruel and savage that his brain is intermittently distorted with the images from this harsh reality of the war. Having been exposed to such torment, the real traumatic occurrences do not desert his present mind and he cannot find peace in the never-ending war in his mind. A trauma victim cannot know the destructive effects of the traumatic event right after the exposure but months or years later these effects manifest themselves

by frequent remembrances. Even the person who is traumatized experiences derealization and dissociation as the aftereffects of the tragic event.

Similarly, in "Failed Witnessing in Virginia Woolf's "*Mrs. Dalloway*"", as Kaley Joyes maintains, "… [Septimus's] repressed emotions—fear, grief, and anger—find alternate modes of expression via hallucination" (73). The pain he suppressed at the time displays itself five years after the war in Septimus as survivor guilt: he feels that he committed the worst of the crimes:

> So there was no excuse; nothing whatever the matter, except the sin for which human nature had condemned him to death; that he did not feel. He had not cared when Evans was killed; that was worst; but all the other crimes raised their heads and shook their fingers and jeered and sneered over the rail of the bed in the early hours of the morning at the prostrate body which lay realising its degradation; how he had married his wife without loving her; had lied to her; seduced her; outraged Miss Isabel Pole, and was so pocked and marked with vice that women shuddered when they saw him in the street. The verdict of human nature on such a wretch was death. (*Mrs. Dalloway* 101)

Septimus first uses "human nature" to refer to the destructive effects of the war. It is the war that made him commit the sin of not caring for Evan's death and not feeling anything, and it is the war that condemns him to death. He feels himself "a wretch", a lowdown human being for losing his emotions. Secondly, he refers to Doctor Holmes when he uses the expression "human nature": "Holmes is on us," he would say, and he would invent stories about Holmes; Holmes eating porridge; Holmes reading Shakespeare—making himself roar with laughter or rage, for Dr. Holmes seemed to stand for something horrible to him. "Human nature," he called him" (155). Furthermore, Dr. Holmes, whom he defines as "—the repulsive brute, with the blood-red nostrils" (102), causes his death when he hears him climbing the stairs. Thus, the verdict of human nature is carried out.

Septimus sees himself as a 'wretch' and is obsessed with the idea of suicide. "The whole world was clamouring: Kill yourself, kill yourself, for our sakes. But why should he kill himself for their sakes?" (102-103). At the same time, he believes there is "an isolation full of sublimity; a freedom" in death (103), and when he hallucinates Evans and other soldiers, he utters "communication is health; communication is happiness" (103-104). As Lucrezia tries to keep her husband busy with something, Septimus makes her write some lines that come to his mind. Then, he states that he is "a young man who carries

in him the greatest message in the world, and is, moreover, the happiest man in the world, and the most miserable?" (93). His sentences are irrelevant, fragmented, and full of literary images he remembers from his earlier readings and his memories from the war. The cleaning girl who reacts to Septimus's papers by laughing causes Septimus to remember the cruelty of humanity and their capacity to "tear each other to pieces" (155).

Septimus evaluates himself as "fallen" and tries to explain how people, even doctors, cannot understand those who fall. He cannot distinguish past horrors from present reality. Woolf criticizes the inadequacy of the mental health treatment system in the aftermath of the war and shows the indifference of doctors through the depiction of Dr. Holmes, who does not understand human psychology. He diagnoses "headaches, sleeplessness, fears, dreams — nerve symptoms and nothing more" (101), and the only possible solution he can offer him is to relax in bed for a long time and for Lucrezia to keep him busy. When Dr. Sir William Bradshaw examines Septimus, he does not speak of "madness" but he describes the situation as "not having a sense of proportion" (107). Septimus cannot think logically, he feels contrasting emotions in a very short span of time, and he identifies himself with different mythological and historical characters, and he even associates himself with being God. "So they returned to the most exalted of mankind; the criminal who faced his judges; the victim exposed on the heights; the fugitive; the drowned sailor; the poet of the immortal ode; the Lord who had gone from life to death; to Septimus Warren Smith" (107).

The Great War, which was to end all wars before World War II, distorted the great hopes and expectations of the twentieth-century individuals like Septimus and contributed to the pessimistic worldview. Although Septimus is alive, he has turned into a dead man in this new world. The war brought persistent negative beliefs about the individuals themselves, humanity, and the world. The new reality of the world and humanity is narrated here through Septimus's point of view:

> One cannot bring children into a world like this. One cannot perpetuate suffering, or increase the breed of these lustful animals, who have no lasting emotions, but only whims and vanities, eddying them now this way, now that … the truth is that human beings have neither kindness, nor faith, nor charity beyond what serves to increase the pleasure of the moment. They hunt in packs. Their packs scour the desert and vanish screaming into the wilderness. They desert the fallen. (99)

However, at another moment, Septimus believes a revelation has come to him, and he understands that "Communication is health; communication is happiness" (103-104). The key to recovering and to being reintegrated with the world and to finding the meaning in this world lies in communication. This fact is exemplified with his participation in Lucrezia's hat-making process. For the first time for days, he starts to speak as he used to do and reacts to the hat. Lucrezia promises not to surrender Septimus to the doctors because she also sees that doctors are inadequate to heal Septimus. However, she cannot stop Dr. Holmes's intrusion into their house when he comes to take him to the asylum. Finally, feeling that he cannot continue without Lucrezia, Septimus commits suicide by throwing himself out of the window.

> …There remained only the window, the large Bloomsbury-lodging house window, the tiresome, the troublesome, and rather melodramatic business of opening the window and throwing himself out. It was their idea of tragedy, not his or Rezia's (for she was with him). Holmes and Bradshaw like that sort of thing. (He sat on the sill.) But he would wait till the very last moment. He did not want to die. Life was good. The sun hot. Only human beings—what did they want? Coming down the staircase opposite an old man stopped and stared at him. Holmes was at the door. "I'll give it you!" he cried, and flung himself vigorously, violently down on to Mrs. Filmer's area railings. (164)

Before his suicide, Septimus's epiphany or cry for the necessity of communication is another reality of the post-war world, which shell-shocked soldiers suffer from and cannot find in society. As stated by Karen DeMeester in "Trauma, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and Obstacles to Postwar Recovery in Mrs. Dalloway", "modernist literature is a literature of trauma. In the 1920s, it gave form and representation to a psychological condition that psychiatrists would not understand for another fifty years" (77), both Dr. Holmes and Sir William Bradshaw do not have the necessary knowledge of psychology or psychiatry, which only requires active listening of the patient. They do not attempt to ask about the details of the causes of Septimus's suffering, and they fail to communicate with Septimus, just labeling him discordant to the society, as stated in the words of Demeester:

> The ultimate paradigm of the trauma survivor and modernist man emerged in the aftermath of the First World War—the shell-shocked war veteran. The severely traumatized war veteran, whom Septimus Smith epitomizes, embodies the essential characteristics of the fragmented, modernist subject. The discoveries the World War I veteran made during the war alienated him from his past by undermining his prewar assumptions about himself and the world that had

> previously given order and meaning to his life. His traumatic war experiences shattered the cohesion of his consciousness and left it fragmented, a stream of incongruous and disconnected images and bits of memory devoid of the connections and relationships necessary to give meaning to those experiences. Septimus Smith suffers not from a psychological pathology but from a psychological injury, one inflicted by his culture through war and made septic by that same culture's treatment of its veterans ! (80)

As Karen Demeester explains "Virginia Woolf's characterization of Septimus Smith in *Mrs. Dalloway* illustrates not only the psychological injuries suffered by victims of severe trauma, such as those endured by soldiers in combat, but also the need for survivors to give meaning to their suffering in order to recover from post-traumatic stress disorder" (77). In *Virginia Woolf and the Great* War Karen L. Levenback, in addition, evaluates the indifference of society as the main cause of Septimus's suicide:

> The reason for Septimus's suicide is not as Bradshaw assumes owing to shell-shock, but to the shock occasioned by recognition of the power of the postwar world to ignore or to suppress. To assume (as Bradshaw does) that Septimus was suffering from deferred shell-shock is to neglect to acknowledge culpability and responsibility. Deferred shell-shock does not cause his death, as Woolf makes clear by putting this opinion in the mouth of Dr. Bradshaw. What causes his death is Smith's recognition of individual powerlessness in an indifferent postwar world. (78)

Assuming *Mrs. Dalloway* as "a war novel", Levenback puts forward that "in *Mrs. Dalloway,* Virginia Woolf sought not to endorse suicide as an answer to living in the postwar world but to dramatize a situation that had long been ignored and allowed to become more widespread and harmful" (*Virginia Woolf and The Great War* 81). That's why, veterans' tendency to commit suicide reverberates as the most irreparable effect in the aftermath of the war in the twentieth century world. This tendency is caused as much by the war as by the veterans' inability to connect with the values of the modern society that is fractured with technological developments, erosion of social values and the development of the new concept of reality. Septimus's case might be evaluated and comprehended in these terms. He commits suicide not only because of the deferred effects of shell shock but also because of the inexpressibility of the human mind, which Woolf conveys through stream of consciousness, free-indirect speech and interior monologue. Although Septimus does not die in the wartime, he commits suicide as a result of what he experienced in the war. The war is his murderer.

2.2. Clarissa Dalloway's Search for Meaning

Clarissa Dalloway is another protagonist present throughout the novel from the beginning to the end. At the beginning of the novel, Clarissa is a fifty-two-year-old woman who has recovered from a serious prolonged influenza, which has made her sensitive and fragile. Having spent most of her time in bed for a long time has caused her to question her thoughts about life, love and the meaning of life. She chose to marry Richard Dalloway, who has a governmental post, in spite of her feelings and love for Peter Walsh owing to her desire to be a "mistress" in a comfortable, secure, upper-class milieu. Despite representing "the public-spirited, British Empire… governing-class spirit" (*Mrs. Dalloway* 85-86), she seems to be busy with superficial high-class engagements such as giving parties, fashion, flowers and city life. She is depicted as living retrospectively in her mind and alienated from her environment, her husband and her daughter, Elizabeth. She displays controversial feelings because she sometimes desires to live life to the fullest or sometimes finds herself thinking about death and aging. "She felt very young; at the same time unspeakably aged" (10). She does not share her real feelings and thoughts with people and controls herself and tries to behave in line with the expectations of society. She always lives in the past memories and questions her decisions about getting married to Richard by choosing reason and abandoning her passionate love for Peter. At the end of the novel, she confronts her fear of death and reconciles with her desire to continue to live.

Woolf juxtaposes the effects of the war on a combatant at an individual level through the depiction of Septimus and on civilians as outsiders on a collective societal level through other characters. For Clarissa and the people who are busy with their daily errands in London in June, the war and death ended eventually. However, for the veterans and civilians who have lost their loved ones, the war still continues and has not truly ended. This fact is revealed in the novel as follows:

> The War was over, except for someone like Mrs. Foxcroft at the Embassy last night eating her heart out because that nice boy was killed and now the Old Manor House must go to a cousin; or Lady Bexborough who opened a bazaar, they said with the telegram in her hand, John, her favourite, killed; but it was over, thank Heaven—over. It was June. The King and the Queen were at the Palace. (6-7)

Unlike Septimus, the veteran, Mrs. Clarissa Dalloway was created by Woolf to reflect the effects of the war on an upper-class civilian. She does not seem to be influenced much by the war. To exemplify, Clarissa does not have any close family members who died in the war or experienced the war from the trenches of the battlefields. She remembers some memories from the war but she never talks about how the war made her felt openly. For instance, she remembers the war when she is looking at the window of a glove-shop because "… before the War, you could buy almost perfect gloves. And her old Uncle William used to say a lady is known by her shoes and her gloves" (13). The comparison between the time "before the War" and the present time shows that life is different after the war. Although she seems to deal with trivialities of daily life such as shoes and gloves, remembering her uncle's reflection of the war, she shows the hidden collective consciousness of war trauma in the depths of her mind. Trauma is not only an individual's inner struggle but also has an outward effect, influencing the collective consciousness of the society around the sufferer and shaping the spirit and perceptions of the society altogether. Similarly, the traumatic effect is reflected by the narrator as "there was an emptiness about the heart of life; an attic room" (35) in her.

Although Mrs. Dalloway is indirectly affected by the destructive war, she has already learnt to suppress her feelings and to adopt a stern strong appearance probably because of the war and her long-term bed-ridden illness, which might be interpreted as the Spanish Influenza that appeared towards the end of World War I. In her struggle with the war and its aftermath, she has developed a utilitarian perspective towards life; now her sole aim is just to make "an offering, for the sake of offering" (135) by bringing people together. She knows that "every time she gave a party she had this feeling of being something not herself, and that everyone was unreal in one way; much more real in another" (187-188). She is unhappy with herself and the life she lives under the effects of the war, which brings about chaos, disorder and lack of social stability. In that respect, throwing parties for her circle of friends and people of her status is, in fact, an attempt to provide order and stability. Thus, she aims to pursue the pre-war lifestyle and worldview, which are in stark contrast with the chaos of the Great War. In "Mrs. Dalloway: 'What's the Sense of Your Parties?'" Morris Philipson underlines this fact through these words:

> … [Mrs. Dalloway and her guests] are believers in the maintenance of the values of the etiquette that regulates relationships within their social class; they are believers in the legality which regulates the impersonal relationships within their nation; and they are believers in the humanistic morality which relates them to the idea of mankind-including those no longer alive but who have created their civilization, and those not yet born who will inherit their civilization. (130-131)

Organizing parties is her way of coping with the traumatic events she has faced in life. Undoubtedly, the war contributed to this way of thinking as Woolf describes the general mood after the war in her diary: "I could feel the entire absence of emotion in myself & everyone else" (*Diary 1*: 5). The repetition of "The War was over" (*Mrs. Dalloway* 8) and "it was over, thank Heaven-over" (7) in Clarissa's flow of mind from the very beginning of the novel reflects the remnants of dehumanizing war news or scenes in her mind. In order to forget the horrible psychology of the war-time, she wanders around London noticing the beauties around her and feeling grateful for her present situation because she "loved: life; London, this moment of June… The King and Queen were at the palace" (6). "What she liked was simply life… "That's what I do it for," she said, speaking aloud, to life" (134) and "no one in the whole world would know how she had loved it all; how, every instant…" (135). As David Dowling, too, emphasizes, parties represent life, "a way of avoiding her acute awareness of mortality" (80). In "The Symbolic Keyboard: *Mrs. Dalloway*", Allen McLaurin states the importance of her parties for Clarissa as follows :

> Scientific, religious, and heroic faiths have been smashed by the First World War. The cross, the aeroplane, the monument of Queen Victoria are no longer acceptable whole-heartedly, for they no longer bring human beings together. All that Clarissa Dalloway can do is literally bring them together at a party, so that for one moment they feel their common humanity. This is itself only a symbolic gesture, a greeting to other beings across the emptiness which she sees at the heart of life. (13-14)

However, her parties do not last forever just like her sense of security and purpose in life. Her struggle to stick to a Victorian lifestyle is fragile, and the modernist self surfaces on occasion. With an abrupt change in her mood, the insecure, instable, disillusioned, the individual who also experienced World War I is expressed as "…always [having] the feeling that it was very, very dangerous to live even one day" (*Mrs. Dalloway* 11). Her thought reflects how the Great War brought the feeling of insecurity into the lives of the twentieth-century world.

Just as shell-shocked veteran Septimus is always obsessed with the idea of death, Clarissa's mind is frequently haunted with the idea of her death: "… did it matter then, she asked herself, walking towards Bond Street, did it matter that she must inevitably cease completely; all this must go on without her; did she resent it; or did it not become consoling to believe that death ended absolutely?" (11). Right after those ideas, she gets into a bookstore, and there in a book she sees the following lines, which might be interpreted as a reference to the psychology of a war victim: "Fear no more the heat o' the sun/ Nor the furious winter's rages" (12).

Upon these lines from Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, which are repeated by Clarissa and Septimus from time to time throughout the novel, the effects of the war on Clarissa are reflected through free indirect speech as seen in the following quotation: "This late age of world's experience had bred in them all, all men and women, a well of tears. Tears and sorrows; courage and endurance; a perfectly upbright and stoical bearing (12). It is not obvious whether these lines are Clarissa's thoughts or the narrator's comment. That they are just uttered upon Shakespeare's lines hints that even though Clarissa is an upper-class civilian, she is also a sufferer of war trauma, and she cannot be immune from the new stoical spirit developed by the society in the aftermath of the war. Through Clarissa, Woolf emphasizes that the Great War affected all human beings profoundly and contributed to the emergence of a new depressive human being.

The use of stream of consciousness technique enables Woolf to depict a disintegrated, fragmented and instable war-affected civilian, Clarissa. Thoughts of war and death take Clarissa to the happiest moment of her life when she feels in harmony with her existence, the 'kiss scene' with her lover Sally Seton. When she was a young girl, she had a friend who is not conventional at all. Sally Seton was a rebellious young girl who appalled the company at the table by talking about revolutionary ideas. Once she kisses Clarissa, and Clarissa later describes that event as the happiest moment of her life by quoting from Shakespeare's *Othello* : "if it were now to die 'twere now to be most happy" (39). Although she once considered it "the most exquisite moment of her whole life (40), she now finds Othello's words meaningless: "No, the words meant absolutely nothing to her now. She could not even get an echo of her old emotion" (39). Just as Septimus cannot feel like the old Septimus, Clarissa does not feel the same as she was in the past. Although

it was the reality, which she evaluates as "what was this except being in love?" (40) of that time and that space, Clarissa's spatio-temporal reality is different at present. As explained in the introduction part, one of the objectives of the thesis to be proved, "Nothing is simply one thing", echoes here in that everything is subjective, and reality is determined within the coordinates of one's interpretation of that moment and location as a whole and reminds the reader of Einstein's Theory of Relativity once again.

Clarissa's first reaction to Septimus's suicide is significant because it reflects a seemingly indifferent attitude of the civilians to the devastating effects of war trauma experienced by the soldiers. As stated earlier, Clarissa does not know Septimus; she does not even know his name. At the party, Sir William announces the suicide of a young man without even uttering his name : "A young man (that is what Sir William is telling Mr. Dalloway) had killed himself. He had been in the army." Oh! thought Clarissa, in the middle of my party, here's death, she thought" (201). For her, what matters is the disruption of her party by the thought of death, rather than the death of a young man. In that respect, as Levenback indicates, "Clarissa's party reaffirms the chasm between civilians and combatants" (*Virginia Woolf and The Great War* 77). Rather than empathizing with Septimus's case, she feels as if her party is affected negatively with the mention of "death" only later to give further thought to the young man and his death:

> … He had killed himself—but how? Always her body went through it, when she was told, first, suddenly, of an accident; her dress flamed, her body burnt. He had thrown himself from a window. Up had flashed the ground; through him, blundering, bruising, went the rusty spikes. There he lay with a thud, thud, thud in his brain, and then a suffocation of blackness. So she saw it. But why had he done it? And the Bradshaws talked of it at her party! (*Mrs. Dalloway* 202)

Her initial selfish reaction to the news of a veteran committing suicide is also shared by Septimus's doctors and society as Karen DeMeester points out:

> …Society, represented in the novel by Septimus's doctors and by Clarissa Dalloway herself, however, silences and marginalizes the war veteran and thereby prevents Septimus from beginning to recover, which results in his suicide, a desperate but futile last attempt to communicate. Septimus's psychological pain does not cause his suicide. It is caused by society's refusal to let him give meaning to that pain ("Trauma and Recovery in Virginia Woolf's "*Mrs. Dalloway*"" 653).

However, she is not totally indifferent to Septimus's case; in a very short time Clarissa surrenders to the sense of emptiness caused by the war and Septimus's story. "She

had the oddest sense of herself invisible; unseen; unknown" (*Mrs. Dalloway* 13). Despite the delight she has being with the Prime Minister and other prominent people in the party, she finds "hollowness" in parties, and they no longer make her profoundly happy:

> Indeed, Clarissa felt, the Prime Minister had been good to come. And, walking down the room with him, with Sally there and Peter there and Richard very pleased, with all those people rather inclined, perhaps, to envy, she had felt that intoxication of the moment, that dilatation of the nerves of the heart itself till it seemed to quiver, steeped, upright;—yes, but after all it was what other people felt, that; for, though she loved it and felt it tingle and sting, still these semblances, these triumphs (dear old Peter, for example, thinking her so brilliant), had a hollowness; at arm's length they were, not in the heart; and it might be that she was growing old, but they satisfied her no longer as they used. (191-192)

From time to time, she finds herself questioning "what did it mean to her, this thing she called life?" (134) thinking earlier during the day, "it was very, very dangerous to live even one day … did it matter that she must inevitably cease completely; all this must go on without her; did she resent it; or did it not become consoling to believe that death ended absolutely?" (11). "After that, how unbelievable death was!—that it must end;" (135). Clarissa's fragmented psyche, the difference in her interior reality she is familiar with and the exterior reality she displays towards society, is also emphasized by Cornelia Burian in "Modernity's Shock And Beauty: Trauma And The Vulnerable Body In Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*":

> Clarissa's physical fragility in the face of aging and illness signifies the fragmentation of her identity, as becomes obvious early on in the novel's mirror scene. Clarissa appears as a coherent self only in front of others; when alone, she feels shattered into irreconcilable fragments. Sitting at her dressing table, she [feels her] self-alienation caused by a traumatic shattering of her identity. … Despite her sense of psychic disintegration, Clarissa is able to piece together her shattered self into "one centre, one diamond, one woman' (37), which suggests a defense against trauma. (70-71)

Clarissa's fragmented psyche and her depressive perspective on life are caused not only by the war but also by her sister's death. Her sister Slyvia dies when a tree falls on her. Peter also sees this event as the cause of Clarissa's morbid persona projection. Her morbid and faithless "phase", according to Peter,

> came directly after Sylvia's death—that horrible affair. To see your own sister killed by a falling tree (all Justin Parry's fault—all his carelessness) before your very eyes, a girl too on the verge of life, the most gifted of them, Clarissa always said, was enough to turn one bitter. Later she wasn't so positive perhaps; she thought there were no Gods; no one was to blame; and so she evolved this atheist's religion of doing good for the sake of goodness. (87)

The pain Clarissa suffers from her sister's loss could be parallel to Septimus's wound in that they both lost the ones they loved the most. Both Clarissa and Septimus have developed this stoic appearance and display a fearless stance toward death and repeat the same lines from Shakespeare (Fear no more the heat o' the sun) as Hermione Lee emphasizes in *The Novels of Virginia Woolf:*

> The quotation from Cymbeline is appropriate, not only to their mutual sense of death as a triumphant escape, but also to their situations. The lines are spoken over one who only appears to be dead, by those who don't know themselves to be her brothers. So, Clarissa is unaware of her kinship with Septimus; so, neither of them can be thoroughly known and understood by those who look at and speak to them. The lament is spoken for Imogen, an outcast from her society, and an innocent victim of cruelty and lies: and isolation from society is experienced both by Septimus and Clarissa. 'Fear no more the heat o' the sun' casts an air of serenity over the encounter with death to which the whole book leads up. For the major connection between Clarissa and Septimus is, of course, that his death enables her to encounter hers. (110)

Although as a civilian and a warrior, experiencing the war from different angles, both Clarissa and Septimus struggle with the traumatic effects of the war. Upon hearing of Septimus's suicide at the party, Clarissa goes to an empty room to think over death. Interestingly, she does not pity him, and even she thinks that "she felt somehow very like him—the young man who had killed himself. She felt glad that he had done it; thrown it away while they went on living" (204) because "Death was defiance. Death was an attempt to communicate; people feeling the impossibility of reaching the centre which, mystically, evaded them; closeness drew apart; rapture faded; one was alone. There was an embrace in death" (202). She has the same thoughts towards life and death as Septimus. They share similar traumatic responses. "But this young man who had killed himself-had he plunged holding his treasure… "If it were now to die, 'twere now to be most happy,"? (202-203). Clarissa reaches a revelation that the man embraced death when he felt the happiest in his life, and he did not want to lose that happy moment. When he killed himself, he was no more fragmented but whole; for that reason she does not pity him:

> The young man had killed himself; but she did not pity him; with the clock striking the hour, one, two, three, she did not pity him, with all this going on. There! the old lady had put out her light! the whole house was dark now with this going on, she repeated, and the words came to her, Fear no more the heat of the sun. She must go back to them. But what an extraordinary night! She felt somehow very like him—the young man who had killed himself. She felt glad that he had done it; thrown it away while they went on living. The clock was striking. The leaden

> circles dissolved in the air. But she must go back. She must assemble. She must find Sally and Peter. And she came in from the little room. (204)

Clarissa reflects the unstable and multifaceted nature of human understanding of reality and life. On the one hand, she wants to be dead as can be seen from her praise of Septimus's choice. On the other hand, she accepts that she has to go back to the other room where people are and where she constructs her orderly life. The inconsistency between her desire and the realities of the world echoes the theory of relativity. For people around her, she is the center that holds all of them together: a strong woman who provides order and stability. In fact, she is a fragile and vulnerable woman desiring death. The only way for her to live this life is to reconcile past, present and future altogether, as Clarissa understands at the end of her party.

Mrs. Dalloway represents the civilian point of view towards the Great War. Even though her initial response to Septimus's death is indifferent and egoistical, soon it is understood that she, too, was deeply affected by the war. She embodies the effects of the war in her consciousness and that's why she seeks comfort and peace in her parties.

2.3. Lucrezia, a Victim of the War

Lucrezia, Septimus's Italian wife, is also profoundly affected by witnessing her husband's suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder alone away from her country. When the novel starts, Lucrezia is disappointed and finds herself questioning their marriage. Her expectations remain unfulfilled in her marriage as they cannot form a meaningful communication with each other because of Septimus's fractured psyche. Lucrezia witnesses Septimus's utterances that he will kill himself (18), his commentary on the letters of the plane in the sky as "they are signalling to" him and his abrupt drowning into tears (25), his hallucinating that "Evans was behind the railings!" (28) and his claim "[Peter] …was actually walking towards them. It was Evans!" (78). Septimus cannot escape the haunting effects of the war, and his symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder are very obvious. However, Lucrezia does not truly understand the seriousness of his condition in the beginning. For her "… such things happen to everyone. Everyone has friends who were killed in the War" (74). For her, the war reality was living in Italy, meeting with soldiers in cafes, and making hats. She thinks "it was cowardly for a man to

say he would kill himself" (27) and "rather would she that he were dead" (26), and she does not want the society to notice his abnormal situation and tries to hide his strange reactions from people. Lucrezia symbolizes the seeming indifference of the post-war society to the war trauma of the survivors.

It is clear that Septimus's sense of reality is not aligned with the reality of the external world and, more importantly, Lucrezia's sense of reality. In line with Einstein's theory of relativity, the subjectivity of reality is emphasized with the comparison between the perceptions of Lucrezia and Septimus. This difference can be witnessed in the scene where Septimus realizes that she is not wearing their wedding ring. He thinks "their marriage was over … with agony, with relief. The rope was cut; he mounted; he was free, as it was decreed that he, Septimus, the lord of men, should be free; alone (since his wife had thrown away her wedding ring; since she had left him)" (75). In fact Lucrezia has lost weight, and the ring becomes loose on her ring finger and slips off. Therefore, Lucrezia puts it in her purse.

The only time Septimus and Lucrezia feel that they can really communicate and live in the moment is during Septimus's participation in Lucrezia's hat-making process. The woman who would rather have her husband dead now thinks she "Never had she felt so happy! Never in her life!" (158) and "They were perfectly happy now" (161). Lucrezia understands Septimus's cry for healthy communication, and she decides not to surrender her husband to the hands of the doctors, and even if they take him, she says that she will go with him. "They could not separate them against their wills… No one could separate them, she said" (163). Unfortunately, as Masami Usui states in "The Female Victims of the War in *Mrs. Dalloway*", "this temporal happiness, ironically, ends with Septimus's suicide. Lucrezia is left alone, childless and homeless now in a foreign country. She is now confronted with the difficulty of returning to Italy. … Lucrezia's double inability to express her self as a woman and as an Italian is as strong and profound as Septimus's shell shock" (158).

Lucrezia does not lose her husband in wartime; however, she ultimately loses her husband because of the war. Woolf demonstrates that the war still continues to give victims long after the guns have gone silent. It is not only the combatants who suffer but

also those who love them are also forced to witness their gradual disappearance as Virginia Woolf and her husband Leonard watch Philip's sufferings.

2.4. Peter Walsh, the Outsider

Peter Walsh is another non-combatant civilian character in the novel who is not directly influenced by the war but a character who witnesses the changes in post-war England. Peter was abroad from 1918 to 1923, and by virtue of his absence, he does not know how England changed after the war. When he comes back from India, he finds a different London that has been changed by the war and its aftermath. He is introduced through Clarissa's flow of thoughts as her ex-lover on the first page of the novel before he appears in the novel as a character. His function in the novel is important in that his presence reflects the theory of relativity and subjectivity apart from displaying the shift London has undergone in time.

The first example reflecting the relativity and subjectivity he is involved in is the park scene. As soon as he leaves Clarissa's house, he goes to St. Regent's Park, and there he sees a couple quarreling. He does not know them but the reader recognizes them as Septimus and Lucrezia. He is naturally unaware of the direness of Septimus's condition and views the couple as an element of the nice overall scenery:

> And that is being young, Peter Walsh thought as he passed them. To be having an awful scene—the poor girl looked absolutely desperate—in the middle of the morning. But what was it about, he wondered, what had the young man in the overcoat been saying to her to make her look like that; what awful fix had they got themselves into, both to look so desperate as that on a fine summer morning? The amusing thing about coming back to England, after five years, was the way it made, anyhow the first days, things stand out as if one had never seen them before; lovers squabbling under a tree; the domestic family life of the parks. Never had he seen London look so enchanting—the softness of the distances; the richness; the greenness; the civilisation, after India, he thought, strolling across the grass. (79)

The indifference of society to war sufferers is highlighted by the narrator. Peter cannot estimate that Septimus is a shell-shocked veteran who is experiencing a hard time healing from the dreadful war memories. Peter thinks that they are just arguing as a normal couple does. While they have internal wars in their own consciousnesses, Peter has a good time and is fascinated with the beauty of London. Nothing is simply one thing at that moment once again. In line with Einstein's relativity theory, whereas one can observe

completely different events in the same place at the same time, the reality of that place and time differs according to the observer with the influence of the individual, subjective and changeable perspective of the human mind. Therefore, external reality contradicts internal reality, and reality cannot be examined through a single dimension.

Woolf also uses Peter to reflect on the changes the war brought to the society and reality through Peter's point of view. He is overwhelmed by the change as expressed in his thoughts: "after the voyage, [London] still seemed an island to him, the strangeness of standing alone, alive, unknown, at half-past eleven in Trafalgar Square overcame him. What is it? Where am I? (58). He feels estranged after such a long time. At the same time, the war changed the social norms and individual behaviour. As Peter observes:

> Those five years—1918 to 1923—had been, he suspected, somehow very important. People looked different. Newspapers seemed different. Now for instance there was a man writing quite openly in one of the respectable weeklies about water-closets. That you couldn't have done ten years ago—written quite openly about water-closets in a respectable weekly. And then this taking out a stick of rouge, or a powder-puff and making up in public. On board ship coming home there were lots of young men and girls—Betty and Bertie he remembered in particular—carrying on quite openly; the old mother sitting and watching them with her knitting, cool as a cucumber. The girl would stand still and powder her nose in front of everyone. (80)

The changes Peter observes are due to the disappearance of the traditional moral values and adoption of new patterns of behaviour that the age brought along. The girls making up, young men and women talking in public or the man writing about water-closets in a magazine were unthinkable according to old social norms. However, they are the daily facts of the new era that Peter witnesses.

Peter cannot see the fingerprints of the war in these changes as he has been out of England for a long time. Woolf might also portray Peter to function as an outsider to the Great War. His feelings are completely different from Septimus's or other civilians', who followed the news from the streets of London. Upon seeing soldiers marching in the street, Peter's description of them also shows society's distance from the reality of war which soldiers have to face. For him, war is not associated with the catastrophe the soldiers faced during the war or the post-traumatic stress disorder they go through after the war. Peter glorifies the soldiers and the war:

> … Boys in uniform, carrying guns, marched with their eyes ahead of them, marched, their arms stiff, and on their faces an expression like the letters of a legend written round the base of a statue praising duty, gratitude, fidelity, love of England…every one, in their steady way, as if one will worked legs and arms uniformly, and life, with its varieties, its irreticences, had been laid under a pavement of monuments and wreaths and drugged into a stiff yet staring corpse by discipline. One had to respect it… (57)

Peter's expressions such as "duty, gratitude, fidelity, love of England" are so distant from what Septimus and Lucrezia actually have to experience. These words form a striking contrast with Septimus's hallucinations and suicide while emphasizing the sense of subjectivity and relativity.

Another case of relativity exposed through Peter is about his remembrance of how he suffered when Clarissa rejected him. While they were young, he was in love with Clarissa, and he declared his love for her. She rejected him for his social status in addition to his personality. Peter understandably does not enjoy thinking about those days. Therefore, he complains about the capacity of the human brain to go back to past memories: "For why go back like this to the past?...Why make him think of it again? Why make him suffer, when she had tortured him so infernally? Why?" (48). Later in the novel, he turns to those days again against his will: "Never, never had he suffered so infernally! ... because he was in Hell!" (69). Apparently, Peter experienced torturing days as a result of Clarissa's refusal. He believes it was "the terrible scene which he believed had mattered more than anything in the whole of his life" (71), and he could not sleep for nights, and he cried a lot. Peter now accepts that he had absurd demands and impossible things from Clarissa in the past. Now he believes Clarissa would not have rejected him if he had not been so absurd (70). Therefore, Peter's judgement of himself and Clarissa has changed, and he sees the event in a new light. The emphasis on the subjective perception of time as a changeable reality and the strength of the human mind to travel in the past and the present through the use of stream of consciousness are exhibited in the alteration Peter goes through.

Peter represents the objective of the thesis, "Nothing was simply one thing", and emphasizes the subjectivity of an individual perception of "the misery, the torture" (89) by saying "Nothing exists outside us except a state of mind" (63). Although he had difficult days after Clarissa rejected him, "Still, the sun was hot. Still, one got over things.

Still, life had a way of adding day to day" (72) for him. Similarly, while the sound of the passing ambulance which carries the dead body of Septimus represents "one of the triumphs of civilisation" (166) for Peter as a first thought, it reminds him of death at the same time: "this ambulance; and life and death" (167). Thus, reality differs from person to person, and even for a single individual, the reality of one moment is not the same as any other moment in his or her life.

As a result, meaning is formed in accordance with time and space. The same feelings can never be experienced. Reality is evaluated within the scope of specific time and space for each individual. Brian Philips encapsulates the subjectivity of reality in "Reality and Virginia Woolf" as:

> the great contradiction in Woolf's method is that her portrayal of the inner lives of characters, by showing that all experience is individually conditioned and that every object is seen differently by everyone who looks, implies that the subjective is inescapable, even as her primary act as a writer is to claim objective knowledge of the workings of other people's minds. (424)

2.5. Conclusion

To conclude, although the title of the novel is *Mrs. Dalloway,* and in terms of physical time the novel only seems to present a day in the life of a woman, Clarissa Dalloway, the novel represents the devastating effects of World War I on the combatants, civilians, society, culture and altered perception of reality in the lives of the people in twentieth century England. By reflecting the traumatic and destructive impacts of the war on the daily and inner lives of the characters, Woolf exploits new narrative techniques such as stream of consciousness, interior monologue, free indirect speech and non-linear storyline to depict the changing modernist relativist worldview of the age. Even though Albert Einstein's Theory of Relativity is related to the physics and scientific world, modernist writers were inspired by it to reflect the inconsistent, multi-faceted and fragmented identity as the end product of the war and the age. Woolf's use of new narrative techniques, the subjective perception of time, space, reality, and the shift of characters' consciousness between the present and past illustrate the signs of Einstein's Theory of Relativity. While the changing reality as a result of the war is exemplified through Septimus's psychological turmoil as a first-hand witness to the battlefield in an individual dimension, the societal level of the war as civilians is reflected through

Clarissa, Lucrezia, Peter and minor characters such as Mrs. Foxcroft, Lady Bexborough and Mr. Brewer. All the characters echo the objective of the thesis, "Nothing was simply one thing," in their interpretation of reality just as Einstein shifted the absolute nature of time and space of conventional science and brought a new fluid subjective mindset of reality with his groundbreaking revolutionary ideas. *Mrs. Dalloway* presents the fragmented condition of the human beings struggling to find a meaning of theirs as a result of the war, modernity and scientific changes in the new world. Through this perspective, *Mrs. Dalloway* does not simply depict one day in London; it unveils the universal theme and notion that "nothing is simply one thing" in evaluation of the objective truth.

CHAPTER 3: THE WAR AND BEYOND IN *TO THE LIGHTHOUSE*

As Mark Hussey contends in *Virginia Woolf A to Z: A Comprehensive Reference for Students, Teachers and Common Readers to Her Life, Work and Critical Reception, To the Lighthouse*, written after World War I and published in 1927, is "... probably her most widely read [book]. It concerns a large Victorian family, the Ramsays, seen before and after World War I" (301). The novel, which was awarded the Prix Femina (Milles 161), an award given to the best foreign novelist in France, is considered one of the best examples of modernist novels, as expressed by Maud Ellmann in "A Passage to the Lighthouse": "Petite and perfectly formed for academic study, replete with symbolism and 'modernist' innovation, this handy novel has become the quintessential set text" (95). However, it must be acknowledged that *To the Lighthouse* invests more in interior monologues and free indirect speech rather than stream of consciousness as the novel deals mostly with the present experience. Flashbacks or reminiscing about the past is rare unlike *Mrs. Dalloway*. The novel is divided into three parts, "The Window", "Time Passes" and "The Lighthouse" covering the years from 1910 to 1920, and each part reflects the effects of the Great War, which brought a new understanding of reality expressed with James's epiphany that "nothing was simply one thing", which aligns with Einstein's Theory of Relativity on individuals and society in a different manner.

"The Window," the first part of the novel, depicts an evening in the lives of the characters Mrs. Ramsay and Mr. Ramsay, who host several guests at their summer house in the middle of September on the Isle of Skye in the Hebrides off the west coast of Scotland before World War I. The novel opens with Mrs. Ramsay's promise to her six-year-old son, James, that they will go to the lighthouse the next day if the weather allows. The first part of the novel focuses on James's incessant question of whether they will go to the lighthouse the next day or not and Mr. Ramsay's disappointing his son by forecasting that the weather will not be fine. James feels hatred for his father because of his cruel nature, which is reflected throughout the novel.

Mr. Ramsay is a self-assertive, well-educated philosopher as well as an intolerable, complex and difficult person as a father for his family and husband for Mrs. Ramsay. He believes reason plays an important role in reaching truth, which sometimes renders him

an indifferent and insensitive person. He always works hard and worries about whether his works will be appreciated and remembered by the upcoming generations. Mrs. Ramsay, on the other hand, is an uneducated, emotional, passionate and understanding conventional lady whose aim is to look after her husband, her children and her house. She cares about people who are in need, and she tries to get people together in her dinner parties at home. For her, the truth is reached only for a short while by creating beauty.

The most important guest of the house for the development of the novel is Lily Briscoe. She starts painting Mrs. Ramsay's portrait. As Mrs. Ramsay believes that marriage is important, she would like Lily to get married to Mr. Ramsay's old friend, William Bankes. However, thinking marriage is not a necessity for everyone, Lily does not agree with Mrs. Ramsay.

The afternoon depicted in "The Window" is quite ordinary except for a guest proposing to another one, one guest losing her brooch, and James's disappointment about the trip to the lighthouse. One event to note is that Mrs. Ramsay has done her best to be flawless all day, and she feels content with her achievement of harmoniously bringing together all the guests with different characters at the dinner table when the lights are lit. When everyone is at the table, she leaves and watches all the people from a distance, thinking this memorable moment has already become a past event. She joins her husband, who is alone in a room. Displaying his insecure characteristic qualities, Mr. Ramsay indirectly demands his wife tell him that she loves him. Mrs. Ramsay is not a person who can easily express her love verbally. However, when she says that she agrees with him that the weather will not be suitable to go to the lighthouse, he infers that she means to say that she loves him.

"Time Passes", the shortest part of the novel, sets a completely disparate atmosphere from "The Window". Mrs. Ramsay dies suddenly; World War I breaks out. Her son Andrew is killed in the war, and her beautiful daughter Prue dies giving birth. The family does not visit their summer house for a long time, and the house falls into a state of ruin under the inevitable effects of time and nature. The housekeeper, Mrs. McNab, employs some other women to repair the house from the damage when the family decides to return ten years later. Lily Briscoe is the first to arrive.

In “The Lighthouse” part, Mr. Ramsay decides to complete a belated lighthouse expedition with his son James and his daughter Cam. Before they depart, he displays his bad temper and seeks understanding and sympathy from Lily Briscoe. However, she cannot comfort him as well as Mrs. Ramsay did in the past. The Ramsays start their journey, and Lily Briscoe decides to complete the painting she started ten years ago. During the journey, James and Cam are determined to pursue a hostile attitude towards their father as they hate their father’s tendency for self-pity. However, Mr. Ramsay seems to have changed in time and tries to communicate with his children. He appreciates and praises James for his skill as a sailor for the first time, and James feels himself close to his father for the first time. Lily Briscoe tries to find the inspiration and the right angle to complete her painting, which she started before the war, while observing the family on the boat approaching the lighthouse. When the family lands on the island, both Cam and James think that the lighthouse they have seen from their house across the bay is entirely different from the present one in front of their eyes. The novel ends when Lily Briscoe finally grasps what Mrs. Ramsay has meant to everyone around her, and thus she completes her painting.

As Frank Baldanza asserts in “*To the Lighthouse* Again”, the novel contains “autobiographical aspects” (548) in which Woolf describes her father, Leslie Stephen, as Mr. Ramsay and her mother, Julia Stephen, as Mrs. Ramsay. Before writing the novel, Woolf mentions the subject matter of her next novel in her diary as, “This is going to be fairly short: to have father’s character done complete in it; & mother’s & St. Ives & childhood; & all the usual things I try to put in—life, death &c. But the centre is father’s character, sitting in a boat, reciting We (sic) perished, each alone, while he crushes a dying mackerel” (*Diary 3*: 18-19). Woolf expresses the importance of her mother in her “A Sketch of the Past” and her desire to pen her mother:

> Until I was in the forties - I could settle the date by seeing when I wrote *To the Lighthouse*, but am too casual here to bother to do it- the presence of my mother obsessed me. I could hear her voice, see her, imagine what she would do or say as I went about my day’s doings. She was one of the invisible presences who after all play so important a part in every life… (80). It is perfectly true that she obsessed me, in spite of the fact that she died when I was thirteen, until I was forty-four. … But I wrote the book very quickly; and when it was written, I ceased to be obsessed by my mother. I no longer hear her voice; I do not see her. (81)

She interprets what she does by writing the novel as "what psychoanalysts do for their patients" (81), which underlines the fact that she has a very personal and private motivation to write the novel apart from her literary drives. After Woolf wrote the novel, she felt reconciled with her loss and seemed to have completed her delayed mourning for her mother and father: "I used to think of him & mother daily; but writing The Lighthouse, laid them in my mind. And now he comes back sometimes, but differently. (I believe this to be true—that I was obsessed by them both, unhealthily; & writing of them was a necessary act). He comes back now more as a contemporary" (*Diary 3*: 208). Besides, the novel influenced her sister Vanessa Bell on her first reading, and she articulated how she had seen their mother and father depicted so vividly by Woolf that "I can hardly consider anything else. In fact for the last two days I have hardly been able to attend to daily life" (*Letters 3*: 572).

In *Virginia Woolf: The Major Novels,* John Batchelor reaffirms the autobiographical aspect of the novel by referring to other familial losses Woolf experienced: "*To the Lighthouse* is the most elaborately elegiac of all Woolf's performances. It is in part a memorial for three people whom she loved, Thoby (again) who is the model for Andrew Ramsay, killed in the war, Stella Duckworth, her half-sister, who died of a complication of pregnancy and is the model for Prue Ramsay…" (93).

To the Lighthouse is not simply an autobiographical novel. Woolf chooses the characters from her parents to present the destructive effects of the Great War. As Bazin and Lauter mention in their article "Virginia Woolf's Keen Sensitivity to War: Its Roots and Its Impact on Her Novels", "... [Woolf] continues to link her personal trauma of a series of family deaths with the trauma created by World War I. She connects the effect of a mother's death on the outlook of her family and the effect of a brutal war—and its countless deaths—on the outlook of a nation" (20). Likewise, in "Hume, Stephen, and Elegy in *To the Lighthouse*", Gillian Beer emphasizes that "[a]ll Virginia Woolf's novels brood on death, and death, indeed, is essential to their organization as well as their meaning. Death was her special knowledge: her mother, her sister Stella, and her brother Thoby had all died prematurely. But death was also the special knowledge of her entire generation, through the obliterative experience of the First World War" (31). As Beer

concludes “In *To the Lighthouse,* Virginia Woolf still tried to hold within a single work … the experience of family life and culture, before and after the First World War.” (32).

Although “The Window” depicts a pre-war world, Woolf uses symbols, images and expressions in the first part of the novel as harbingers of the Great War. Mrs. Ramsay’s description of her children due to their conflicts at home as “[s]trife, divisions, difference of opinion, prejudices twisted into the very fibre of being (*To the Lighthouse* 6)” expresses the very human nature that caused the horrors and destruction of the war:

> Strife, divisions, difference of opinion, prejudices twisted into the very fibre of being, oh that they should begin so early, Mrs. Ramsay deplored. They were so critical, her children. They talked such nonsense. She went from the dining-room, holding James by the hand, since he would not go with the others. It seemed to her such nonsense — inventing differences, when people, heaven knows, were different enough without that. The real differences, she thought, standing by the drawing-room window, are enough, quite enough. (6-7)

She wants them to keep their innocence and happiness despite the conflicts arising from differences created by human beings and never turn into “long-legged monsters” (42) because she knows that enmity caused by differences in points of view towards life is the main reason for wars and devastates the hopes for people’s lives. Although she sometimes finds peace and comfort in the waves of the sea, she is horrified as if she foresaw the imminent atmosphere that the war could create with the imagery of the waves: “like a ghostly roll of drums remorselessly beat the measure of life, made one think of the destruction of the island and its engulfment in the sea” (12). The references, particularly to the “ghostly roll of drums”, remind one of the drummers leading the troops in the battlefield, while “measure of life” and “destruction” imply images of death. Another reference to the impending war could be the Army and Navy Stores catalogue James is seen cutting with her mother on the first page of the novel (3) since Woolf chooses the Army and Navy Store catalogues out of an almost infinite number of printed materials. The boar’s skull (82), which is hanging on the wall of the nursery, could also be linked to the war as a reminiscence of death, as is also suggested by Jonathan Bate in “Arcadia and Armageddon: Three English Novelists and the First World War” (160).

Additionally, Woolf refers to Lily Briscoe and William Bankes as “allies” since they have some things in common on several topics (13), like the allies in World War I.

Mrs. Ramsay, waiting for the return of her children Prue and Andrew and guests Minta and Paul for dinner and getting anxious about the likelihood of their getting drowned, comforts herself thinking that "holocaust on such a scale" (57) is not possible. Having experienced the war before she wrote the novel, Woolf here might refer to the unprecedented number of deaths of a generation of men and the destructive consequences of the war through the expression of "holocaust". Similarly, a microcosm of the war could be said to be created by Jasper's routing of the flock of starlings with a gun (19). Woolf might intentionally use a military term, "rout," which means defeating an enemy instead of chasing birds as a common children's play, thinking that the novel was written in the post-war period. In addition, Mrs. Ramsay reads James a story where "there were numbers of soldiers with kettledrums and trumpets" (42), which makes her think again about why the children have to grow up and lose their childhood joy. After reading this line, she thinks over all her children as if she foresees the future destructive war which will shatter her children's world. Another war imagery is used when Mrs. Ramsay is laughed at by everyone because of her serious comment on the inequality of the English dairy system: "She was laughed at, fire-encircled, and forced to vail her crest, dismount her batteries" (75). Woolf chooses to use phrases such as "fire-encircled", "vail", "crest" and "batteries" "as if she were describing a battlefield scene from the war. Mr. Ramsay describes himself as a "soldier" waiting in his "armour" (26) to describe his duty in his lifelong war to achieve his self-fulfillment. His recitation of the line "Someone had blundered" from Alfred Lord Tennyson's poem "The Charge of the Light Brigade" is heard seven times in the novel (14, 18, 22, 24). Using free indirect speech, Woolf describes Mr. Ramsay's state of mind through Tennyson's expressions from his poem:

> He shivered; he quivered. All his vanity, all his satisfaction in his own splendour, riding fell as a thunderbolt, fierce as a hawk at the head of his men through the valley of death, had been shattered, destroyed. *Stormed at by shot and shell,* boldly we rode and well, flashed *through the valley of death,* volleyed and thundered — straight into Lily Briscoe and William Bankes. He quivered; he shivered (my emphasis). (22)

Woolf alludes to Tennyson's poem, which includes expressions like "boldly we rode and well", "stormed at shot by shot and shell" and "the valley of death" ("Tennyson" 1133-1134). As John Batchelor notes, "Tennyson's poem implicates him in the patriarchal

military values which will take the life of his son Andrew in the Great War" (112-113). Woolf uses warfare language and implies the upcoming destructive atmosphere of the Great War in "The Window" section. Furthermore, she might want to criticize the heroic language of most Victorian poetry, which honours war as a heroic deed before World War I.

Woolf also uses "no-man's land" in Chapter 17 of "The Window", which takes place before the war, to describe the emptiness although the term appeared after the trench warfare in the Great War: "Lily Briscoe watched her drifting into that strange *no-man's land* where to follow people is impossible and yet their going inflicts such a chill on those who watch them … as one follows a fading ship until the sails have sunk beneath the horizon (my emphasis)" (61). As Karen L. Levenback points out in *Virginia Woolf and The Great War*, the term no-man's land acquired its popular current meaning as a war term by the beginning of World War I. Therefore, the reader of the novel was familiar with the term as an element of military terminology when it was published (94-95). Woolf may have intentionally planned to imply that the upcoming catastrophic war looms in these lines. It also shows that the massacre on the battlefield in the Great War was so huge that it is reflected in the language she uses even to describe the prewar world anachronistically.

Another warrior imagery Woolf uses is accomplished through Charles Tansley, who is a working-class representative. Tansley aspires to be an important intellectual or a scholar and is angry with the people who remind him of his class and who do not appreciate him. He is first compared to a "raised hammer" (66) to emphasize the intensity of his anger. Then war imagery is used to express his disdain for upper-class people: "He could almost pity these mild cultivated people, who would be blown sky high, like bales of wool and barrels of apples, one of these days by the gunpowder that was in him" (66). Through Tansley, Woolf anticipates bodies blown into the sky with gunpowder and the scattering of the dead soldiers like apples. Woolf juxtaposes Andrew's death, despite his upper-class background and promising educational future, and Charles Tansley's survival, emphasizing the indiscriminate destructiveness of the war regardless of upper-class social status.

"Time Passes" part portrays how the Great War years change and degenerate the summer house of the Ramsays. In Makiko Minow-Pinkney's wording from *Virginia Woolf and the Problem of the Subject: Feminine Writing in the Major Novels*, "What is literally destroying the house is rain, rats and wind, but what is figuratively destroying it is the First World War" (99). The disintegration of the stability, order and security of the pre-war world is depicted through the destruction and the decay of the house. "The books and things were mouldy… there was plaster fallen… the carpet was ruined… there were clothes… They had the moth in them" (*To the Lighthouse* 101). The noise of the wind is described as mourning and expressing the grief in the house "with an aimless gust of lamentation" (94) and "advance guards of great armies" (95). Woolf once again uses war vocabulary to question the winds blowing to the objects in the house: "Were they allies? Were they enemies? How long would they endure?" (94). Furthermore, Woolf compares the soldiers who die on the battlefield to "leaves" which cover the land as the dead bodies of the soldiers scatter in and around the trenches: "The nights now are full of wind and destruction; the trees plunge and bend and their leaves fly helter-skelter until the lawn is plastered with them and they lie packed in gutters and choke rain pipes and scatter damp paths" (95).

Woolf depicts the devastation of the war by focusing on the effects of nature on the house. Some passages focus on what happens outside the house rather than what happens inside the house, i.e., nature. The empty house is left to the hands of nature and natural events happening outside but felt inside the house; the silence of the house is at times interrupted by natural forces:

> But slumber and sleep though it might there came later in the summer ominous sounds like the measured blows of hammers dulled on felt, which, with their repeated shocks still further loosened the shawl and cracked the tea-cups. Now and again some glass tinkled in the cupboard as if a giant voice had shrieked so loud in its agony that tumblers stood inside a cupboard vibrated too. Then again silence fell; and then, night after night, and sometimes in plain mid-day when the roses were bright and light turned on the wall its shape clearly there seemed to drop into this silence, this indifference, this integrity, the thud of something falling. (99)

"The thud of something falling" is a prophecy, an ominous prophecy for the death of Andrew, since the next lines in brackets read, "[A shell exploded. Twenty or thirty young

men were blown up in France, among them Andrew Ramsay, whose death mercifully, was instantaneous.]" (99).

Woolf, as a civilian who personally witnessed the bombs falling in London streets during the war, powerfully reflects the long-lasting psychological impacts of the war on civilian consciousness (*Diary 1*: 32, 63). She depicts the destructive, shocking atmosphere the war created for a long time, 'night after night', through the change in the objects such as teacups, the cupboard and the shawl in the house, which represents pre-war stability, order and 'integrity'. In the following paragraph, right after the brackets announcing Andrew's death, Woolf portrays the bloody battlefield on the surface of the sea with ship imagery. There are people on the beach to enjoy and be inspired by the "divine bounty" of the scene, from which they hope to get a "message" and "vision" (*To the Lighthouse* 99) who are interrupted by a passing ship: "There was the silent apparition of an ashen-coloured ship, for instance, come, gone; there was a purplish stain upon the bland surface of the sea as if something had boiled and bled invisibly, beneath. This intrusion into a scene calculated to stir the most sublime reflections and lead to the most comfortable conclusions stayed their pacing" (99). Woolf paints Andrew's blood-stained image using powerful symbolism. With the war, the old world was destroyed, and "the mirror was broken" (100)—as "nothing could survive the flood" (93), the old order cannot continue.

To further the agency of nature, Woolf portrays storms, which stand for the war, as "idiot games" of "leviathans" by using touching literary imagery to describe the chaos and the destruction of the war:

> Night after night, summer and winter, the torment of storms, the arrow-like stillness of fine weather, held their court without interference. Listening (had there been any one to listen) from the upper rooms of the empty house only gigantic chaos streaked with lightning could have been heard tumbling and tossing, as the winds and waves disported themselves like the amorphous bulks of leviathans whose brows are pierced by no light of reason, and mounted one on top of another, and lunged and plunged in the darkness or the daylight (for night and day, month and year ran shapelessly together) in idiot games, until it seemed as if the universe were battling and tumbling, in brute confusion and wanton lust aimlessly by itself (100)… never fully harmonised (105)

She refers to the destruction of the old-world order and absolute reality like Einstein's theory of relativity shattering Newton's conception of the world. There are no certainties,

and nothing has a fixed meaning. It is difficult to "compose from their fragments a perfect whole or read in the littered pieces the clear words of truth" (95). "How aimless… how chaotic, how unreal" (110) the world has become after the Great War fractures reality. In "An Analysis of Mrs. Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*", S. H. Derbyshire summarizes "Time Passes" as "contain[ing] a most thorough picture of the change that occurred in life philosophies during the war, from the solid security of the pre-war days to the insecure self-consciousness of the post-war period" (354).

The house symbolizes what the Great War caused in the houses experiencing war all over Europe. Furthermore, Woolf uses the analogy of the blackouts performed to protect cities against air bombings during the wartime: The sentence "One by one the lamps were all extinguished… the lamps all put out" (93) echoes "a comment made by the foreign secretary, Sir Edward Grey, in early August 1914, and recalled in memoirs he published two years before Woolf 's novel appeared. 'The lamps are going out all over Europe', Grey is said to have remarked, 'we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime.'" as quoted in Randal Stevenson's *Literature and the Great War:1914–1918* (119). At the beginning of Part 2, Andrew's sentence "It's almost too dark to see" and Prue's expression "One can hardly tell which is the sea and which is the land" (93) might also refer to the darkness and the death that the war will bring.

In addition, Woolf exploits the storm imagery to refer to the same effects of the war in the following words: "…it seemed as if the *universe were battling and tumbling, in brute confusion* and wanton lust *aimlessly* by itself" (my emphasis) (100). In other words, it is suggested that after the war, the world becomes chaotic, devoid of meaning, without order, and without a divine plan. "Nothing, it seemed, could survive the flood, the profusion of darkness" (93). "The house was left; the house was deserted. It was left like a shell…" (102). Jonathan Bate comments on the word 'shell' as "having already encountered a shell exploding in France we hear yet another echo of war" (161). As Tammy Clewell emphasizes in "Consolation Refused: Virginia Woolf, The Great War, and Modernist Mourning":

> In the "Time Passes" section of the novel, Woolf not only depicts the destructive forces of passing time and of the war years on the Ramsays' summer home; she also puts extreme pressure on one of the central tropes of elegiac poetry: the

> pathetic fallacy. An integral component of the genre's compensatory machinery, the pathetic fallacy personifies a natural world that mourns along with the bereaved" (210).

"The cataclysmic traumas of the First World War" (Clewell 198) and "the catastrophic losses of the twentieth century" (199) are so huge that traditional narrative techniques fail to put them into words. Consequently, Woolf resorts to the pathetic fallacy, which is defined as "the attribution to inanimate nature of animate, even human, characteristics" (Childs and Fowler 169) to denote the insufficiency of the traditional elegy form to express the magnitude of World War I trauma. Jonathan Bate expresses how skillfully Woolf makes use of nature to describe the effects of the war: "The pastoral theme has the amplitude to be accommodated and used creatively by very different kinds of novelists. For Woolf, it is a structural and metaphorical device that enables her to write herself and the war into the long tradition that explores innocence and experience, childhood and adulthood, idealism and disillusionment" (162).

The impact of the war on the society is, too, reflected through the deterioration of the house. For instance, the workforce diminishes as the men of the society are at the battlefield. Consequently, "with the war … help being hard to get, the house had not been cleaned as [Mrs. McNab, the housekeeper,] could have wished" (*To The Lighthouse* 101). She also expresses that the war made traveling difficult and the family delayed their arrival to the house many times because of the war: "And once they had been coming but had put off coming, what with the war and travel being so difficult these days; they had never come all these years" (101). Mrs. MacNab refers to the impacts of war on the economy as well, saying, "Prices had gone up shamefully and didn't come down again neither" (101). Mrs. MacNab, as a spokesperson for Woolf, believes that everything was better before the war or, in other words, everything went worse after the war. In Mrs. McNab's words, "Many things had changed since then … many families had lost their dearest. So [Mrs. Ramsay] was dead; and Mr. Andrew killed [sic]; and Miss Prue dead too, they said, with her first baby; but everyone had lost someone these years" (101). Woolf highlights how commonplace and unimportant it is for one to lose someone in the war by repeating the names of the dead people again and again as if they were pieces of the news. The most

obvious representation of this fact is the loss news of Andrew; his death is mentioned in the novel several times through the consciousness of many characters.

Andrew's death in The Great War is compressed into the following lines with square brackets for the first time in the 'Time Passes' as "[A shell exploded. Twenty or thirty young men were blown up in France, among them Andrew Ramsay, whose death, mercifully, was instantaneous.]" (99) in the novel. The square brackets symbolize the wartime journalism, the inexpressibility of emotions, or the inadequacy of the language to describe the destructiveness of the war, and Woolf criticizes the uncertainty of the exact number of casualties with the description of "twenty or thirty men" and how war diminishes human lives to inexact numbers. The deaths of Mrs. Ramsay and Prue are also compressed in square brackets without mentioning the feelings these events create in the characters or the funerals for them: "[Mr. Ramsay stumbling along a passage stretched his arms out one dark morning, but, Mrs. Ramsay having died rather suddenly the night before**,** he stretched his arms out. They remained empty]" (95). The death of Mrs. Ramsay, the most important character of the first part, is conveyed as a side event to Mr. Ramsay's empty arms. She does not even become the subject of the sentence, and her absence is accessory to Mr. Ramsay's grief. Objectification of Mrs. Ramsay's death via the brackets and the sentence structure is further emphasized by the revision Woolf made in her final draft of the novel. As Susan Dick points out, Lily visits Mrs. Ramsay's grave with Prue and Andrew during the war but this scene was removed by the author later (qtd. Levenback, *Virginia Woolf and The Great War* 110). By that, Woolf prevents the reader from responding to her death emotionally. The same attitude is maintained in announcing the deaths of Prue and Andrew.

Prue's death is briefly conveyed in brackets again: "[Prue Ramsay died that summer in some illness connected with childbirth, which was indeed a tragedy, people said. They said nobody deserved happiness more.]" (98). Maud Ellmann expresses that "[Andrew's] death, along with those of Mrs. Ramsay and her daughter Prue, who dies in childbirth, are telegraphically reported in square brackets in 'Time Passes' reminiscent of the dreaded telegrams to the bereaved in World War I" (96). Similarly, Gillian Beer comments on Woolf's compression of the information by writing, "The answer in "Time Passes" is to see the object through time and to use a discourse which points to human

absence, sometimes with playful comfort… sometimes in mourning or ironic abruptness, as in those passages cut off within square brackets" (42). Laura Marcus evaluates the use of parentheses as "a way of finding an alternative narrative temporality, a modernist simultaneity which breaks with the conventions of linear form" (107).

Moreover, in the "Time Passes" section, the Great War is reduced to the information in square brackets, alluding to the restrictions made by the government officials to hide the horrors and devastation of the battlefield. Woolf uses a poetic language and personifications of nature to depict the destructiveness of the Great War. In "*To The Lighthouse* and The Great War: The Evidence of Virginia Woolf's Revisions of "Time Passes"", James M. Haule analyzes the differences between Woolf's revision of the typescript before the 1927 publication of the novel and the latest version and detects several alterations Woolf made in "Time Passes". "… Direct reference to the war has been altered and drastically reduced. … Direct identification of the war with male destructiveness and sexual brutality has been eliminated altogether" (166). To illustrate, "the mindless warfare, the soulless bludgeoning," which was in the holograph, was later deleted. Similarly, the phrase "ask them what the war had been about—did they know?" (172) was removed. In another case, the darkness was associated with war in the holograph but later in the printed version, it is linked to night (167). Haule concludes that Woolf did not want to write "the history" (167) but wanted "to move the section from particular to the universal" (177). In *The Great War and the Language of Modernism*, Vincent Sherry, referring to James M. Haule, asserts that Woolf employs square parentheses to reflect a search for consolation, peace and silence to distance the violence in Andrew's death. The square parentheses also aim to alleviate the horrors of the war by imprisoning the wounds inflicted by the Great War trauma in the cultural subconsciousness into the short middle part of the novel:

> The imaginative vocabulary that Woolf attains thus bespeaks a tranquility coincident, in Haule's reading, with the healing motive and distancing intent in her art of the parenthetical bracket. For him, this punctuation serves as an emblem of the central section and as an instrument of its consistent motive: to sequester the ordeal of war in this middle period of the book and lower the violence of Andrew Ramsay's death, within this bracketed language, into the discrete silence of a parenthetical aside. (294)

In other words, as Sherry points out, for Haule, Woolf wants to repress the traumas of the Great War as the traditional narrative forms cannot adequately articulate these unprecedented pains because of the inexpressibility of the war scenes with the existing diction.

Another proof for the inexpressibility of the ordinary pre-war language can be associated with the revival of public interest in poetry, which is expressed in square brackets as well: [Mr. Carmichael brought out a volume of poems that spring, which had an unexpected success. The war, people said, had revived their interest in poetry] (*To The Lighthouse* 100). People seek new ways to describe themselves in an inexpressible world where reality has been turned upside down and traditional literary forms fail to serve people's ability to articulate themselves. Poetry is not a new form of expression or communication. However, it is undoubtedly not the standard form of communication. Therefore, a new interest in poetry can be interpreted as seeking refuge in it, as the standard means of communication fails to express the concerns of the new individual and the conception of reality after the war in line with Einstein's shattering of the Newtonian absolutism. The traditional prose form is ineffective at expressing the traumatic experiences of the war. Therefore, poetry with fragmented sentences filled with images and symbols must have been revived to express the fragmented psyche of the individual in a world where there is no universally accepted fixed reality. How deeply Carmichael felt upon learning of Andrew's death is expressed in these lines: "He looked the same — greyer, rather. Yes, he looked the same, but somebody had said … that when he had heard of Andrew Ramsay's death (he was killed in a second by a shell; he should have been a great mathematician) Mr. Carmichael had "lost all interest in life." What did it mean — that?" (144). It is clear that the loss of people in the war, especially those with whom one has close ties, causes deep, unprecedented sorrow in people and changes people's outlook on life and harms people's conception of reality as well as language.

The part "Time Passes" ends with the word "Awake (106), and "The Lighthouse" illustrates a post-war world which is different from the first and the second parts. Mrs. McNab, who is there to prepare the house for the Ramsays and the guests, "tears the veils of silence" (96). She hires Mrs. Bast and her son George to bring the house into its pre-war state. However, Mrs. Bast, who knows the house and the Ramsays from before the

war, finds everything changed. She thinks "… they'd find [the house] changed… They might well asked, what had been done to it?... They'd find it changed" (104-105). With Lily Briscoe's arrival, the atmosphere of the house changes with the mild winds "Then indeed peace had come. Messages of peace breathed from the sea to the shore" (105). Mr. Carmichael finds the house "much as it used to look years ago" (106). Mr. Ramsay tells Lily that "You find us much changed" (111). Lily cannot find the words to articulate the void she feels years later: "For how could one express in words these emotions of the body? express that emptiness there?" (133) and "it was a house full of unrelated passions" (111).

John Batchelor rightly points out that the Great War had a shattering influence not only on individuals but also on societies. He contends, "The novel is also an elegy for the pre-war world. In the eyes of the survivors whom we encounter in Part 3, … life's continuity has been severed by the convulsion of the Great War, and the remembered Edwardian and late-Victorian world dramatized in "The Window" is irretrievably past, recoverable only by art" (93-94). Likewise, as Stella McNichol asserts in *Virginia Woolf and The Poetry of Fiction*, "Woolf suggests through the piling up of image on image that despite the anguish of death and the destruction of war man can yet find some way of making sense of life, or, in Mrs. Ramsay's terms, of bringing the scattered fragments of life into coherence" (110). Woolf reflects this theme through her poetic language, which is full of repetitions, symbols and pathetic fallacy, through interior monologues, free indirect speech and stream of consciousness of the characters she created. Even if one is fractured, from the pieces remaining a new reality is formed. Therefore, how the main characters Mrs. Ramsay, Mr. Ramsay, Lily Briscoe and James struggle to give meaning to life after, in Laura Marcus's words, "the First World War fractures history and reality" (92) will be analyzed in the following sections.

3.1. Mrs. Ramsay as the Embodiment of the Pre-War World

Mrs. Ramsay is the epitome of prewar human character. She is a fifty-year-old mother of eight children who is the symbol of stability, order and duty in a world which is to be distorted by the impending war. James thinks that she "was ten thousand times

better in every way than [Mr. Ramsay] was" (*To The Lighthouse* 3) as she protects her children from her husband and Charles Tansley, who is a flatterer of Mr. Ramsay. Despite being a pre-war character, she has inconsistencies in herself and she is aware of the difference between her seemingly strong external reality and questioning inner reality "When she looked in the glass and saw her hair grey, her cheek sunk, at fifty, she thought, possibly she might have managed things better — her husband; money; his books" (5). However, she has a strong will to go over hardships and fulfill her responsibilities and never feels regretful for her deeds. For Charles Tansley, she is the most beautiful woman he has ever seen (10). William Bankes thinks that "there was something incongruous to be worked into the harmony of her face" (22) although he finds her beautiful. Her husband is the person whom she respects the most, and although her husband has anxieties about his future, "she had complete trust in him" (85) as a traditional, obedient and prudent Victorian woman. She is also humble as she considers that "she was not good enough to tie his shoe strings" (24) and "often felt she was nothing but a sponge sopped full of human emotions" (24). She is aware of her beauty and the fact that she is admired and loved by everyone because of her simplicity (30). However, Mr. Carmichael's avoidance of her causes her to question whether she is thought to be displaying that the reason why she helps and gives people is because she wants to be liked and appreciated by people due to her vanity. This moment causes her to notice not only her own but also human beings' egoistic and detestable "pettiness" and flaws (30). She never wants her children, James and Cam, to grow up, and she is aware that these moments of childhood are the happiest times for them as if she felt the frightening future that awaits them. When she shares this anxiety with her husband, he gets angry and acts relying on his reason, and he accuses her of being pessimistic and irrational since she adopts a depressive view of life. Although he seems to be desperate and gloomy with his anxieties about his future state, Mrs. Ramsay thinks that her husband is more optimistic and happier than she is in general, as he is busy with his studies and does not think about human worries. There are fluctuations in her feelings. She does not assume herself to be pessimistic, but she seems to worry about life and worldly issues in general in her private thoughts:

> There it was before her—life … She took a look at life, for she had a clear sense of it there, something real, something private, which she shared neither with her children nor with her husband … she was always trying to get the better of it, as it

> was of her; … she remembered, great reconciliation scenes; but for the most part, oddly enough, she must admit that she felt this thing that she called life terrible, hostile, and quick to pounce on you if you gave it a chance. There were the eternal problems: suffering; death; the poor. There was always a woman dying of cancer even here. And yet she had said to all these children, You shall go through with it. (43)

Mrs. Ramsay lives in the period when "... on or about December, 1910, human character changed" (*Mrs. Bennet and Mrs. Brown* 4), in Woolf's words. Therefore, she exhibits inconsistency in her thoughts about life. On the one hand, she sticks to the values of the old world, i.e., the Victorian Age; on the other hand, she suffers from the uncertainty brought about by the modernist world shaped by the erosion of values, industrialization and urbanization. Consequently, she is depicted as a woman embodying Victorian concerns from an exterior point of view, and inside she is a woman unsure of her values, which boils down to the idea that nothing is simply one thing.

One of the most important Victorian concerns is about predetermined gender roles. Traditional women are expected to be obedient, silent and introverted characters due to social expectations and norms. Just as Clarissa of *Mrs. Dalloway* cannot tell her love for her husband, Mrs. Ramsay cannot meet her husband's expectations. Mr. Ramsay, in spite of being a rational and serious man, is always in need of his wife's sympathy and comfort. He simply wants to hear her utter her love for him. She knows and understands her husband's demand; yet she cannot do it. "He wanted something—wanted the thing she always found it so difficult to give him; wanted her to tell him that she loved him. And that, no, she could not do. He found talking so much easier than she did. He could say things—she never could" (89). It does not mean that she does not love him. She only cannot articulate her love even if she knows that Mr. Ramsay blames her. She imagines him calling her a heartless woman: "So naturally it was always he that said the things, and then for some reason he would mind this suddenly, and would reproach her. A heartless woman he called her; she never told him that she loved him. But it was not so—it was not so. It was only that she never could say what she felt" (89).

Ironically, Mrs. Ramsay expects the same thing from her husband; she wants him to say, "I love you", probably because he is talented with words. Sitting in the same room, reading books of their own taste, husband and wife exchange glances. Surprisingly

enough, both spouses have the same expectations of each other, as observed in Mrs. Ramsay's reflection:

> She knew that he was thinking, You are more beautiful than ever. And she felt herself very beautiful. Will you not tell me just for once that you love me? He was thinking that, for he was roused, what with Minta and his book, and its being the end of the day and their having quarrelled about going to the Lighthouse. But she could not do it; she could not say it. Then, knowing that he was watching her, instead of saying anything she turned, holding her stocking, and looked at him. And as she looked at him she began to smile, for though she had not said a word, he knew, of course he knew, that she loved him. He could not deny it. And smiling she looked out of the window and said (thinking to herself, Nothing on earth can equal this happiness)— . (89)

In the relationship between the husband and the wife, the multi-faceted reality is expressed again. Although Mr. Ramsay believes that his wife is a "heartless woman" based on his evaluation of her from the outside, she thinks that this is not the reality. The reality is that she expresses her love in silence, which is her way of communication. Woolf also shows that the people who have close bonds misunderstand each other despite sharing the same time and space, as "nothing is simply one thing".

The multi-faceted quality of human reality is illustrated through Mrs. Ramsay even in the pre-war world. She is cognizant that human beings are not merely defined by their outside appearance: "When life sank down for a moment, the range of experience seemed limitless" (45). While observing herself and the people around her, Lily Briscoe and Augustus Carmichael, she says that people own "unlimited dark and unfathomably deep resources" (45) inside them behind their external appearances, and this causes her to question life again. In the evening when the novel starts, on Mr. Ramsay's comment that the next day the weather will not be good enough for the lighthouse visit, Mrs. Ramsay, without any certain reason, starts contemplating the harsh reality of life and religion:

> We are in the hands of the Lord?" she wondered. The insincerity slipping in among the truths roused her, annoyed her. She returned to her knitting again. How could any Lord have made this world? she asked. With her mind she had always seized the fact that there is no reason, order, justice: but suffering, death, the poor. There was no treachery too base for the world to commit; she knew that. No happiness lasted; she knew that. (46)

Mrs. Ramsay displays a complex character who goes between the traditional certainties of the old world and the uncertainties of the twentieth-century world. While she seems to

have an unquestionable belief in God, she thinks about how chaotic and unjust the world is. However, her return to knitting symbolizes her desire to keep the order, stability, reason and happiness of the traditional world although she is aware that pain, death and poverty are inevitable realities of the existing world.

Her gloomy understanding of life contradicts and accompanies her desire to bring order into this miserable life. One way to do it is getting people together around a dinner table, knitting stockings for the lighthouse keeper's son, arranging marriages for people around her, and helping the needy. Those activities represent her Victorian side. Thus, Woolf portrays Mrs. Ramsay's joy in hosting everyone, like how Clarissa Dalloway does. As Suzan Dick also expresses in "Literary Realism in *Mrs. Dalloway, To the Lighthouse, Orlando and The Waves*"; "Mrs. Ramsay is experiencing a moment of heightened consciousness, a perception of 'reality', which Woolf called a 'moment of being'" (61) thanks to her such deeds. In one of these moments of being, she achieves her integrity:

> … just now she had reached security; she hovered like a hawk suspended; like a flag floated in an element of joy which filled every nerve of her body fully and sweetly, not noisily, solemnly rather, for it arose, she thought, looking at them all eating there, from husband and children and friends; all of which rising in this profound stillness… seemed now for no special reason to stay there like a smoke, like a fume rising upwards, holding them safe together. (*To The Lighthouse* 75-76)

Woolf describes Mrs. Ramsay with bird imagery as powerful as a hawk providing safety and order for her family and her acquaintances. She feels as if she won a victory, providing "stillness," and even though the moment is ephemeral on a physical level, it will be permanent and eternal in the minds of everyone:

> Nothing need be said; nothing could be said. There it was, all around them. It partook, she felt, carefully helping Mr. Bankes to a specially tender piece, of eternity; as she had already felt about something different once before that afternoon; there is a coherence in things, a stability; something, she meant, is immune from change, and shines out (she glanced at the window with its ripple of reflected lights) in the face of the flowing, the fleeting, the spectral, like a ruby; so that again tonight she had the feeling she had had once today already, of peace, of rest. Of such moments, she thought, the thing is made that remains for ever after. This would remain. (75-76)

Her sense of well-being is so deep and strong that she feels "nothing need be said" as "there is a coherence in things, a stability". Stability is favoured over change; it is a power

against “the flowing, the fleeting, the spectral”. The expression spectral denotes death and may be interpreted as a prophecy of the approaching war, while the ruby implies majestic order. Although she is aware of the inconsistencies in her thoughts within the same day, she manages to freeze some moments which will remain permanent in people’s minds. For her, the meaning of life is bringing all of them together at the same time. When a person believes that s/he is integrated with the stillness, peace and rest of the limited moments experienced, this is the meaning of life in a world where old certainties are destroyed with modernity and the war in as seen in William Butler Yeats’s famous line “Things fall apart, the centre cannot hold” from “The Second Coming” (1880-1881).

After dinner Mrs. Ramsay detaches herself from the others to evaluate the night like a judge. Having achieved her self-confidence, she celebrates her victory:

> Is it good, is it bad, is it right or wrong? Where are we going to?... The event had given her a sense of movement. All must be in order. She must get that right and that right… Yes, that was done then, accomplished; and as with all things done, become solemn. Now one thought of it, cleared of chatter and emotion, it seemed always to have been, only was shown now, and so being shown struck everything into stability. (81-82)

She is so sure of her success that she believes that stability and order will permeate those present that evening. For example, according to her, Paul and Minta, who decide to get married that evening, will remember that “moment of being”:

> They would, she thought, going on again, however long they lived, come back to this night; this moon; this wind; this house: and to her too. It flattered her, where she was most susceptible of flattery, to think how, wound about in their hearts, however long they lived she would be woven; and this, and this, and this, she thought, going upstairs, laughing, but affectionately, at the sofa on the landing (her mother’s) at the rocking-chair (her father’s); at the map of the Hebrides. All that would be revived again in the lives of Paul and Minta; “the Rayleys”—she tried the new name over; and she felt, with her hand on the nursery door, that community of feeling with other people which emotion gives as if the walls of partition had become so thin that practically (the feeling was one of relief and happiness) it was all one stream, and chairs, tables, maps, were hers, were theirs, it did not matter whose, and Paul and Minta would carry it on when she was dead. (82)

It must also be acknowledged that her sense of confidence and self-fulfillment is not without doubts. While she is watching the night outside her window, she asks herself, “Where are we going to…?” (81). The narrator answers: “Her world was changing; …

[elm trees] were still" (81). More importantly, the same reflection of Mrs. Ramsay can be associated with Einstein's Theory of Relativity. There are no absolute certainties as the contradiction between her world and the trees and between moments of her self-doubt and self-confidence proves. The expression that the external world is fixed whereas her inner world changes echoes Einstein's ideas that movement and stillness are not absolute but change according to the observer. She believes she has achieved stillness, peace, and harmony for the people around her who will remember them after she dies. Nothing will remain when one dies but these moments of stillness, in Woolf's expression of moments of being, are the ones that will remain only. Mrs. Ramsay experiences Henri Bergson's expression of psychological time, as Stella McNichol puts forward, "the time covered is very short indeed, but the psychological experience undergone in it is vast (101). There is no division of past and present for Mrs. Ramsay at those defined rare moments. She experiences a timeless moment of being, which is the meaning of life, an ecstasy, or a miracle in Woolf's words. This 'moment of being' is also expressed by Prue watching her mother from a distance on the stairs "That's my mother," thought Prue. Yes; Minta should look at her; Paul Rayley should look at her. That is the thing itself, she felt, as if there were only one person like that in the world; her mother" (84). Being one, a unified existence, is what matters in life for Mrs. Ramsay's life.

In "Reality, Physics and Consciousness in Virginia Woolf's *To The Lighthouse*", Paul Tolliver Brown links Mrs. Ramsay's dinner table to Einstein's curvative quality of the objects in space-time depending on their weight: "Mrs. Ramsay's greatest achievement of unification in the novel is relativistic and occurs at the dinner table where she orders her environment like a large body of mass influencing the curvature of spacetime" (44). Brown thinks that Mrs. Ramsay brings entirely different people of different backgrounds and qualities with her large body mass:

> Not only does the relative force of Mrs. Ramsay bring others together spatially, but she also has the capacity to warp and slow time… Time is frozen. Just as in the theory of general relativity [. ..] time [. . .] appears to run slower near a massive body …Mrs. Ramsay's attractive force has a similar effect to that of gravity on the temporal dimension as well as the spatial. She has the capacity to slow time until the moment can crystallize (45).

Brown makes a reference to Einstein's idea that time slows near large bodies of mass (46). According to Einstein, as one approaches the speed of light, time slows down. Mrs. Ramsay is an active woman dealing with different errands all through the day, from storytelling, comforting her husband, and preparing dinners for people to helping poor people. She has the capacity to freeze time, creating stillness for the people around them, as can be seen at the dinner table when she lights the candles. With her gravitational existence, she attracts everyone around her as giant objects bend spacetime that can be interpreted according to Einstein's theory. In other words, she draws everyone around her into her orbit and creates permanent moments when time halts.

Deborah Guth, in "The Myth and *To the Lighthouse*", describes the moment when Mrs. Ramsay lights the candles at the table as taking over the role of the lighthouse, detaching the exterior lights peeping from the windows, protecting everyone around her from the absolute exterior reality, and creating her own subjective reality:

> during these moments her vision becomes reality, and reality becomes a floating illusion outside. She has reached her lighthouse, has become that point which glows in the distance around which all assembles and acquires meaning; a point outside of time which projects it mysterious light over the dark moving waters of life. Once more the centre of things, she basks in the reflection of the light which she herself has created, this static and self-contained world where longing echoes and answers itself. (240)

Although Mrs. Ramsay harbours some human complexity, insecurity, and doubts stemming from the changing world before the war inside her, her moments of being are the times she feels her whole integrity. In such cases, she illuminates the people in her orbit and acts like a lighthouse for the sailors. Her physical appearance ends in "The Window Part". Her sudden death is presented in square brackets like a piece of news without any clue about the reason. However, her permanent impact is presented through other characters, mostly by Lily Briscoe in the following parts, and, as she always wished, she survives in the minds of people. Thus, she triumphs again and again!

3.2. Mr. Ramsay's R in the Alphabet of Life

In the first part of the book, Mr. Ramsay is a typical Victorian relying on social and cultural certainties even though cracks in his ideology can be sensed in his anxieties and insecurities. Though he has achieved the status of a professor of philosophy, the

greatest metaphysician of the time for Charles Tansley, his sense of self-worth is shaky. The shaky grounds in his psyche and socio-cultural ideology are completely altered after the war. Thus, Mr. Ramsay is the embodiment of changing times and changing values. The Mr. Ramsay before the war and after the war are different, and in this respect, he simply symbolizes the transformation the society underwent after the war.

According to Alex Zwerdling, Woolf "had turned Leslie Stephen [her father] into a symbol of his age and made him stand for all the conventions of Victorian domestic life … [she] most detested" (182). As stated earlier, Mr. Ramsay is modelled around Leslie Stephen. Consequently, Mr. Ramsay is characterized as a man of reason, representing the rationalism of the Victorian Age. As a devoted Victorian, he is "incapable of untruth" (4), which refers to the absolute truth of the Newtonian world. In his view, "courage, truth, and the power to endure" (4) are the qualities necessary for people. Moreover, Zwerdling describes his belief in the clear-cut roles that genders have in society as follows: "In *To the Lighthouse,* Mr. Ramsay is presented as an advocate of absolute sexual polarization, the Victorian assumption that each sex is assigned its sphere and must remain in it. Although he is above such crude pronouncements as Tansley's 'women can't write, women can't paint', … he does idealize the traditional divisions" (183-184). Therefore, he is incapable of showing his feelings and compassion for his wife and his children. He harshly criticizes them and makes them confront the harsh realities of life, in contrast to Mrs. Ramsay, who can empathize with everyone and even tell lies to make people happy.

His crude Victorianism and rationalism are best illustrated in the discussion over the possibility of visiting the lighthouse. The novel opens with Mrs. Ramsay saying to her son James "Yes, of course, if it's fine tomorrow…" (3) meaning the family will visit the lighthouse if the weather is fine. Mr. Ramsay replies "But… it won't be fine" (3). As a man of reason and rationality, it is impossible for him to declare that it may be a fine day tomorrow to go to the island when the barometer illustrates a possible storm. As his point of view is linear and scientific, he cannot look at the world from different perspectives like Mrs. Ramsay, and as a man of facts, he cannot give hope or tell lies to his children like her.

> What he said was true. It was always true. He was incapable of untruth; never tampered with a fact; never altered a disagreeable word to suit the pleasure or

> convenience of any mortal being, least of all of his own children, who, sprung from his loins, should be aware from childhood that life is difficult; facts uncompromising; and the passage to that fabled land where our brightest hopes are extinguished, our frail barks founder in darkness (here Mr. Ramsay would straighten his back and narrow his little blue eyes upon the horizon), one that needs, above all, courage, truth, and the power to endure. (4)

Trying to comfort and console his son is unthinkable and unacceptable for Mr. Ramsay. He only sticks to the facts of life. Lily defines Mr. Ramsay as "he is petty, selfish, vain, egotistical; he is spoilt; he is a tyrant; … he has … a fiery unworldliness; he knows nothing about trifles" (18). What she means is that his crude attitude to life prevents him from the little pleasures and problems of the world and locks him into his rationalism. For that reason, Edward Bishop associates him with "empiricism" while Mrs. Ramsay represents "intuition" (85).

Despite his ostensible Victorian self-complacency, deep down he experiences self-doubt and insecurity. He is a philosopher, and he is traditionally expected to have the wisdom and the capacity to deal with the matters of the world. However, he is worried about his legacy. He is always worried about how long his fame will last and whether his books will be read by the next generations and whether the children are laughing at him. He views the success of a mind on a scale ranging from A to Z, like in the alphabet. He believes he has reached Q but he is worried about the other letters:

> What comes next.? After Q there are a number of letters the last of which is scarcely visible to mortal eyes, but glimmers red in the distance. Z is only reached once by one man in a generation. Still, if he could reach R it would be something. Here at least was Q. He dug his heels in at Q. Q he was sure of. Q he could demonstrate. If Q then is Q — R — Here he knocked his pipe out, with two or three resonant taps on the ram's horn which made the handle of the urn, and proceeded. "Then R . . ." He braced himself. He clenched himself. (25)

In his following thoughts, he admits that "in that flash of darkness he heard people saying - he was a failure- that R was beyond him. … he had not genius, he laid no claim to that…" (25). Hence, Mr. Ramsay has some doubts. In that respect, he personifies the pre-war society, which includes the gem of the modernist change. His total change happens after the war, as it did with the Victorian society.

At the end of the first part, after the dinner, Mr. Ramsay seems to exhibit Mrs. Ramsay's perception of life for a limited time when he retreats from the crowd of the

house. In their room, Mrs. Ramsay reads a poem from a book, which summarizes her perspective in life: “And all the lives we ever lived / And all the lives to be / Are full of trees and changing leaves” (86). Upon this scene, they have a speechless communication with their looks, which fortifies and makes him forget all the tension he had at the dinner table:

> all the little rubs and digs of the evening, and how it bored him unutterably to sit still while people ate and drank interminably, and his being so irritable with his wife and so touchy and minding when they passed his books over as if they didn’t exist at all. But now, he felt, it didn’t matter a damn who reached Z (if thought ran like an alphabet from A to Z). Somebody would reach it—if not he, then another. … he felt roused and triumphant and could not choke back his tears (86).

Mr. Ramsay is also aware of his wife’s life philosophy that life is hidden in ordinary things and in daily miracles when they are alone. He is to grasp her philosophy after the war.

His wife’s place is so huge in him that in “The Lighthouse” part, after her death, Mr. Ramsay and the children are portrayed to have completely changed, losing their life energy. His loneliness is emphasized in his repetition of the leitmotif “how we perished, each alone” six times in the novel (twice on 110, 124, 126, 142, 153) from William Cowper’s “The Castaway” poem, as asserted by Roger D. Lund (77). The void of Mrs. Ramsay’s absence is so huge that it gives him too much pain, and he seeks the sympathy Mrs. Ramsay always gave from Lily: “This was one of those moments when an enormous need urged him, without being conscious what it was, to approach any woman, to force them, he did not care how, his need was so great, to give him what he wanted: sympathy (113). On the day of the trip to the lighthouse, his sorrow is expressed by simple, short but emotionally loaded words: “‘Such expeditions,’ said Mr. Ramsay, scraping the ground with his toe, ‘are very painful’” (114). He regrets that the journey had not been completed in the lifetime of his wife before the war. Mr. Ramsay does not only lose his wife but also loses his daughter and his son Andrew, who was a promising mathematician, in the war. Like in *Jacob’s Room*, Woolf reflects war trauma through the “unspeakableness,” in the words of Cathy Caruth, in silence. Traumatic experiences cannot be articulated by the experiencers. Lack of communication, alienation, and dissociation are all observed by all the survivors of the “Time Passes” part following the Great War years together with the familial losses. Congratulating James for steering the ship “like a born sailor” (153), Mr.

Ramsay reaches a reconciliation with his ego and has the epiphany of his wife's life philosophy that the meaning of life is found not in the intellectual realm but in the ordinary small everyday acts.

Mr. Ramsay's thought about seeing the lighthouse is remarkable in that it is likely that he has reached the letter R through this expedition, which might stand for "Reality" at that moment, whereas it might have represented "Reason" for him in the first part of the novel before the Great War. Otherwise, he might have reached Z, as is ambivalent from the short sentence, "He sat and looked at the island and he might be thinking, We perished, each alone, or he might be thinking, I have reached it. I have found it, but he said nothing" (153). Woolf reflects how Victorian absolutism resolves into subjectivity and how the reality of time and space changes the perceiver's understanding of the same truth and how "nothing is simply one thing" for not only Mr. Ramsay but also for all human beings. Mr. Ramsay is aware of the change he has undergone and admits it to Lily Briscoe, saying, "You'll find us much changed" (111).

3.3. Lily Briscoe's Artistic Vision

Lily Briscoe is one of the guests at the Ramsays that summer before the war. She is a woman beyond her time since she does not want to get married and she does not abide by the Victorian values. She is also different from the others because she is an artist, and she functions in the novel both as an artist having difficulties with her art and with apprehending people at the Ramsay house. These two themes coincide through Mrs. Ramsay because she tries to paint a portrait of her in the first part of the novel to no avail. She suffers from the inexpressibility of issues, people or objects through art caused by the changing concept of reality due to the Great War and rise of modernity. Thus, she cannot complete the portrait just as she cannot develop an insightful and complete understanding of Mrs. Ramsay. Only when does art have complete freedom and autonomy can she complete the painting, having understood Mrs. Ramsay.

The parts Lily Briscoe appears in the novel can be likened to a Künstlerroman which is defined by J. A. Cuddon in *A Dictionary of Literary Terms* as "a novel which shows the development of the artist from childhood to maturity and later" (352). In their development, the artist deals with problems related to art such as the purpose of art, limits

of representation, and the artist's relationship to art. Similarly, Lily Briscoe deals with a major problem of the artist: what relationship does art have to reality?

Before modernism, art is associated with mimesis, an art theory that goes back to Aristotle's *Poetics*. Aristotle defines art as imitation of life. In the words of Peter Childs and Roger Fowler, "Aristotle's 'imitation' combines a sense of the literary work as the representation of some pre-existent reality, with a sense of the work itself as an object…" (120). Therefore, art is the object that imitates or copies another object outside it, i.e., from life. This understanding of art ends with the beginning of modernism. "The previous dominant modes had been a poetics of mimesis, verisimilitude and realism. By contrast, Modernism marked a clear movement towards increased sophistication, studied mannerism, profound introversion, technical display, self-scepticism and general anti-representationalism" (Childs 22). As regards *To the Lighthouse* and Lily Briscoe, she is a traditional artist before the war who questions the capacity of art to convey reality. After the war, she is a quintessential modernist who can transcend mimesis and manages to complete her painting.

In Chapter Three, Lily Briscoe enters the novel while she is painting Mrs. Ramsay and James. Even at the very beginning, Lily, who Mrs. Ramsay describes as "an independent little creature" (13), has difficulty putting her models on the canvas. Lily thinks that she can visualize the scene in her brain; however, when she starts painting, "the demons set on her who often brought her to the verge of tears and made this passage from conception to work as dreadful as any down a dark passage for a child" (14). In Chapter Nine of the first part, Lily Briscoe's struggles with her art or painting can be observed once again. Looking at Mrs. Ramsay and James, her models, and comparing what she sees to her painting, she is utterly frustrated. "She could have wept", the narrator announces: "It was bad, it was bad, it was infinitely bad! She could have done it differently of course; the colour could have been thinned and faded; the shapes etherealised…" (35). When Mr. Bankes looks at her painting and asks why she put that purple triangle on her canvas, she realizes that she does not really have the answer (38). On his further questioning of her methods of painting, she confesses that "…she could not show him what she wished to make of it, could not see it even herself, without a brush in her hand" (39).

Her problematic relationship to her models or reality as conceived in the theory of mimesis is rendered through a dialogue she has with Andrew. Lily asks Andrew about the subject of his father's books. However, she does not understand what Andrew explains to define his father's work:

> Whenever she "thought of his work" she always saw clearly before her a large kitchen table. It was Andrew's doing. She asked him what his father's books were about. "Subject and object and the nature of reality," Andrew had said. And when she said Heavens, she had no notion what that meant. "Think of a kitchen table then," he told her, "when you're not there". (17)

Andrew wants to explain an abstract idea through a concrete object to explain his father's philosophy. The idea of a table without an observer makes the table completely abstract and theoretical, which excludes empiricism and the experience of a human being. As Suzan Dick denotes, "for Mr. Ramsay, the reality of facts and solid objects is the truth" (61), which probably is incomprehensible for an artist like Lily Briscoe. Paul Tolliver Brown expands on Dick's idea and points out, "Mr. Ramsay's table exists independently of its observation, whereas Mrs. Ramsay's table is a participatory 'object' interacting and changing within the forces of her consciousness" (48). It takes a ten-year period for Lily to understand the true essence of Mrs. Ramsay's philosophy, if not the metaphor used by Andrew.

Ten years later, Lily Briscoe is presented as a different sort of artist, one that is not limiting herself with mimesis. Instead, she is a post-impressionist who does not care about reflecting the crude reality of objects but their impressions on her mind, which is made manifest with the last sentence of the novel: "I have had my vision" (154). As Sharon Wood Proudfit denotes, Lily Briscoe has been accepted as a post-impressionist painter since John Hawley Roberts wrote an article on the subject in 1946 (27). Post-impressionism, as a modernist art movement, is the first school of art to reject realism and the notion of mimesis (Childs 22). Modernism "set the artist free to be more himself, let him move beyond the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of light. Now human consciousness and especially *artistic* consciousness could become more intuitive, more poetic; art could now fulfill *itself*" (Bradbury and McFarlane 25).

Lily Briscoe moves further and further into an abstract notion of art that is far away from realism. She complains about the inadequacy of language to reflect reality in the first part, saying, "One could not say what one meant" (14). In the third part, ten years later, at the age of forty-four, Lily turns back to the Ramsay house at the end of the second part of the novel with the peace after the war. "The Lighthouse" part opens with her existentialist questions and her quest for the meaning of life after the world has experienced the Great War and the Ramsay family loses Mrs. Ramsay: "What does it mean then, what can it all mean? … What did she feel…? Nothing, nothing—nothing that she could express at all" (109). Inadequacy of language is followed by another comment: "Like everything else this strange morning the words became symbols, wrote themselves all over the grey-green walls. If only she could put them together, she felt, write them out in some sentence, then she would have got at the truth of things" (110). Words becoming symbols refers to a language that acquires a new nature. In the traditional sense, though arbitrarily, the signified and the signifier get together to form the sign. Sign has a certain meaning that is not symbolical. A symbol, on the other hand, "is an object, animate or inanimate, which represents or stands for something else" (Cuddon 671). To put it more simply, the word "apple" refers to a certain fruit in the ordinary sense of the language. Symbolically it might be used to refer to carnal knowledge and sin as eating the apple is believed to be the reason for Adam and Eve's fall from the grace of God. Consequently, just as with her art, Lily Briscoe's notion of language gets abstract so as to enable her to reach truth.

However, reaching truth does not happen so quickly and easily. After the traumatic losses the war has caused and the death of Mrs. Ramsay, at that moment she can only reach an epiphany about the meaning of life:

> What is the meaning of life.? That was all — a simple question; one that tended to close in on one with years. The great revelation had never come. The great revelation perhaps never did come. Instead there were little daily miracles, illuminations, matches struck unexpectedly in the dark; here was one. This, that, and the other; herself and Charles Tansley and the breaking wave; Mrs. Ramsay bringing them together; Mrs. Ramsay saying "Life stand still here"; Mrs. Ramsay making of the moment something permanent (as in another sphere Lily herself tried to make of the moment something permanent) — this was of the nature of a revelation. In the midst of chaos there was shape; this eternal passing and flowing (she looked at the clouds going and the leaves shaking) was struck into stability.

> Life stand still here, Mrs. Ramsay said. "Mrs. Ramsay! Mrs. Ramsay!" she repeated. She owed this revelation to her. (120-121)

This moment does not last long and can happen only in the form of an epiphany, a sense of insight and understanding but one that is momentary, not permanent. For that reason, she continues her questioning later. She keeps asking, "What does it mean? How do you explain it all? ... "the whole world seemed to have dissolved in this early morning hour into a pool of thought, a deep basin of reality" (133). However, the epiphany, despite its temporariness, is achieved through art. As the Ramsays complete the long-awaited trip to the lighthouse, Lily Briscoe completes her painting.

According to Bradbury and McFarlane, Lily Briscoe completes her painting thanks to the modernist sensibility that includes not a universal and totalizing harmony but a harmony within the artwork (25). In other words, modernists, aware of the impossibility of a fixed, meaningful existence and universe after the Great War, try to provide meaning through and in art. Lily Briscoe's final understanding of art is totally away from realistic representation. She does not try to copy an image of Mrs. Ramsay on the canvas. Her second visit to the Ramsay estate provides a more profound understanding of both Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay. She does not stick to her previous obstinate ideas about the couple. Now, she can sympathize with Mr. Ramsay and compliment his boots, to which he responds with gratitude. Likewise, she gives up idealizing Mrs. Ramsay:

> There must have been people who disliked her very much, Lily thought …. People who thought her too sure, too drastic. Also her beauty offended people probably. How monotonous, they would say, and the same always! They preferred another type—the dark, the vivacious. Then she was weak with her husband. She let him make those scenes. Then she was reserved. Nobody knew exactly what had happened to her. And … one could not imagine Mrs. Ramsay standing painting, lying reading, a whole morning on the lawn. It was unthinkable. Without saying a word, the only token of her errand a basket on her arm, she went off to the town, to the poor, to sit in some stuffy little bedroom. (145)

After assessing Mrs. Ramsay from other people's perspectives, Lily decides that "one wanted fifty pairs of eyes to see with… Fifty pairs of eyes were not enough to get round that one woman with" (147). Lily, like Woolf, thinks that multiple perspectives are necessary to evaluate a situation to understand it fully, and she also understands that it is difficult to judge others, and "nothing is simply one thing", as James says. At that moment,

in line with Einstein's relativity theory, with the change of time and space, the reality changes as the reference point changes.

She reflects on Mrs. and Mr. Ramsay's marriage: "It was no monotony of bliss—she with her impulses and quickness; he with his shudders and glooms… Such a dignity was theirs in this relationship" (148). Again, she bursts into tears, "Mrs. Ramsay! Mrs. Ramsay!" … feeling the old horror come back—to want and want and not to have (150). Lily feels as if Mrs. Ramsay were there: "One wanted, she thought, dipping her brush deliberately, to be on a level with ordinary experience, to feel simply that's a chair, that's a table, and yet at the same time. It's a miracle, it's an ecstasy" (150). She understands that the aim of Mrs Ramsay and art is the same, which is turning ordinary experience or objects into an ecstasy and a miracle, as Suzan Dick states Lily "discover[s] that she seeks to achieve in art what Mrs. Ramsay achieved in life, a moment when the ordinary and the extraordinary are perceived as one" (61). Dick adds that "her realization that the artist's vision is a fusion of the ordinary and the extraordinary unites on a theoretical level of the perceptions of reality enacted by Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay" (62). Lily needs to combine what she sees around her at that moment and the memories together with her imagination to complete her picture. Dick concludes that "reality is both the solid world and the intangible one behind it" (62). One can understand the meaning of life and the worthiness of living to reach such epiphanic moments. When Mr. Ramsay reaches the lighthouse, when she accepts Mr. Ramsay as Mrs. Ramsay did, she completes her picture as Alex Zwerdling also defines:

> By the end of her journey to the lighthouse, Lily has resolved many dilemmas for herself. She accepts her singleness, her need to paint. She accepts and acknowledges her hostility to Mrs. Ramsay's beliefs and machinations. Recognizing her love for Mrs. Ramsay, Lily moved beyond it to a love and respect for herself dependent on and integrated with her mature assessment of Mrs. Ramsay (198-199).

For Lily Briscoe, as an artist, "a brush… [is] the one dependable thing in a world of strife, ruin, chaos—that one should not play with, knowingly even (112). Lily here refers to the redemptive quality of art in a world where the past reality is distorted by the complexities of the new world in the aftermath of the war, where the words become

symbols and art becomes free from traditional limitations. For that reason, in the end, she looks at the empty stairs where Mrs. Ramsay and James are supposed to sit and pose for her, and she draws a line in the centre of the canvas. She does not need dictates or the oppression of realism; resorting to her newly liberated mind, "she drew a line, in the centre. It was done; it was finished. Yes, she thought, laying down her brush in extreme fatigue, I have had my vision" (154).

As is seen in the case of Lily Briscoe, not only politics or philosophy but also art is influenced by modernism and the war. She represents the artist who goes through realism and modernism respectively and joyfully in the unlimited freedom and independence of modernist art, which helps her complete her painting she started ten years ago.

3.4. James's Journey to Reality

Just as Lily Briscoe's story can be read as an example of Künstlerroman, James's story can be described as a Bildungsroman, a type of novel, according to Cuddon, which explains the development of a person from childhood to youth (79). Childs and Fowler underline "gradual growth to self-awareness", "a harmonious negotiation of interior and exterior selfhoods and a reconciliation that involves the balancing of social role with individual fulfillment" (18). James's development spans from a childish and one-dimensional understanding of reality to a complex and many-layered conception of reality. James Ramsay plays a significant role in the depiction of the destruction of absolute reality and understanding the relativity of reality, which could be reached depending on time and space as a result of the postwar disillusionment together with the loss of his family members. In short, his development is moving from the idea that reality is fixed to "nothing was simply one thing" (138).

In the first part of the novel, James Ramsay is six years old, and he is portrayed as "sitting on the floor cutting out pictures from the illustrated catalogue of the Army and Navy Stores… with heavenly bliss" (3) as his mother appeases him that the expedition to the lighthouse will take place. As a child, his reality is determined by acquiring the things he desires, and he "in the wheel of sensation has the power to crystallise and transfix the moment upon which its gloom or radiance rests" (3). As Mrs. Ramsay expresses, he is

passionate about going to the lighthouse, and he is transfixed on the idea. When the father says the weather will not be fine the next day after checking the barometer, his sense of reality cannot accept the concrete data acquired from it. He is almost obsessed with the idea, and his hatred of his father is partially due to the fact that the father does not foster his fantasy. His devotion to his mother can be explained through the same fact.

On the first page of the novel, the reader learns that he feels immense love for his mother, whereas he feels deep hatred for his father. James thinks of his mother, Mrs. Ramsay, as "ten thousand times better in every way than" (3) his father. Upon Mr. Ramsay's ill-omened ideas about going to the lighthouse, Woolf uses war imagery to describe his anger: "Had there been an axe handy, or a poker, any weapon that would have gashed a hole in his father's breast and killed him, there and then, James would have seized it" (3). James's grudge that he bears for his father is repeated later: "He hated him for the exaltation and sublimity of his gestures; for the magnificence of his head; for his exactingness and egotism (for there he stood, commanding them to attend to him); but most of all he hated the twang and twitter of his father's emotion which, vibrating round them, disturbed the perfect simplicity and good sense of his relations with his mother" (27). His father's expectation of his mother's sympathy during the moments James spends with her mother is reflected to be the most essential reason for this deep hatred for the father. As a child, he has a simple reality, which is the mother spending all her time with him and the fulfillment of his desires immediately.

Towards the end of the first section of the novel, James's mother introduces him to the concept of multi-dimensional reality. There is a boar's skull hanging on the wall of the nursery in their house. Cam, who is two or three years younger than James, is afraid of the skull, while James is not. Consequently, James insists that the boar's skull should remain on the wall in the nursery, as opposed to Cam, who is afraid of it. Mrs. Ramsay covers up the skull with her shawl and consoles her daughter that it is not there, as she has covered it. After Cam goes to sleep, this time she consoles James that the skull is still there, and she has not taken it down. The skull is both present and absent according to the perception of the observer. Although he is only six years old, he is introduced to the perception of the relativity of reality by his mother, which might be the first step of his development in terms of the complexity of reality.

In “Time Passes” part, James does not make his appearance, and no information about him is given. In the last part of the novel, ten years later, James Ramsay appears as a sixteen-year-old boy who has lost his desire to go to the lighthouse and is reluctant for this delayed journey demanded now by his father. As he is disillusioned after the harsh realities of the Great War, the loss of his brother in war, and the deaths of his mother and sister, James seems to exhibit the same angry attitudes with his father on the boat. With his sister Cam, they have vowed “to resist tyranny to the death” (122) and fight their father. Cam describes James as “the lawgiver” (125) and a resolute “godlike” (126) person while “her father [is] most suppliant” (126). Therefore, the brother and the sister join in the hatred for the father. James, for example, remembers his anger for his father and attempts to find the reality behind it while his father reads a book on the boat. James takes such a simple fact personally and is provoked so easily:

> … James felt that each page was turned with a peculiar gesture aimed at him: now assertively, now commandingly; now with the intention of making people pity him ; and all the time, as his father read and turned one after another of those little pages, James kept dreading the moment when he would look up and speak sharply to him about something or other. Why were they lagging about here? he would demand, or something quite unreasonable like that. And if he does, James thought, then I shall take a knife and strike him to the heart (137)

Interestingly enough, his anger is followed by some sort of understanding: he is angry with his father but at the same time he starts to question the real source of his rage: “He had always kept this old symbol of taking a knife and striking his father to the heart. Only now, as he grew older, and sat staring at his father in an impotent rage, it was not him, that old man reading, whom he wanted to kill, but it was the thing that descended on him—without his knowing it perhaps” (137).

He is disturbed that his every move is followed by his father, but his anger does not stem from his Oedipal complex or the fact that the father shatters his childhood dream of going to the lighthouse but from the patriarchal roles imposed on his father by the society. As a father, he cannot show his emotions, and he acts wisely because these are expectations of the society from Mr. Ramsay. James does not want to kill his father physically but he wants to kill his dominant character whose roles are imposed by the

society and the institution of family. In other words, James wants to destroy the absolute values his father carries as a result of cultural, historical and social inheritance.

His desire to stab his father not because of his personal but social identity may be interpreted as the beginning of his forgiving his father. However, it does not happen so quickly. While going to the lighthouse on the boat, he is still the James ten years ago: he still remembers how he depicted the lighthouse in his fancy: "The lighthouse was then a silvery, misty-looking tower with a yellow eye that opened suddenly and softly in the evening" (138) and how his father let him down. His frustration of his father is still so strong that he compares his father to an indefinite destructive force: "Something, he remembered, stayed and darkened over him; would not move; something flourished up in the air, something arid and sharp descended even there, like a blade, a scimitar, smiting through the leaves and flowers even of that happy world [before the war] and making them shrivel and fall" (138). Ironically, James's use of "a blade, a scimitar" to define his father implies a similarity between the father and the son since he repeatedly fantasizes about stabbing his father.

When they land on the island, he is disillusioned with the lighthouse. The lighthouse present in front of him is not very close to his fantasies of ten years ago. He is so frustrated that he asks, "So that was the Lighthouse, was it?" (138). "The whitewashed rocks; the tower, stark and straight" (138) he sees on the island are so distant from his dream lighthouse but he is not willing to give up on his previous dreams. He concludes, "No, the other was also the Lighthouse. For nothing was simply one thing. The other was the Lighthouse too. It was sometimes hardly to be seen across the bay. In the evening one looked up and saw the eye opening and shutting and the light seemed to reach them in that airy sunny garden where they sat" (138).

His new recognition of the lighthouse proves that reality is not fixed but relative, subjective and has multiple meanings. The reality of a person, a fact, or an object relies on the observer, time and space. The same object, the lighthouse, used to have different meanings in the spacetime of his childhood. The time and the change of location change the reality of the lighthouse for him now. James now reaches "the exploration of layer upon layer below it and the relation of facet to facet in the multi-perspectival exploration

of the reality embodied in that image" (98), in Stella McNichols's words. At this time of revelation, James is illuminated by the idea that reality, like the lighthouse, changes depending on when and how one looks at it. His mother comes to his mind: "She alone spoke the truth; to her alone could he speak it. That was the source of her everlasting attraction for him, perhaps; she was a person to whom one could say what came into one's head" (139). Eventually she becomes the person who can change reality by putting a shawl around it. Just as the boar skull exists and does not exist, James accepts that the lighthouse is both mystical and bare, and accepting this fact enables James to come to terms not only with the lighthouse but also with his identity: "So it was like that, James thought, the Lighthouse one had seen across the bay all these years; it was a stark tower on a bare rock. It satisfied him. It confirmed some obscure feeling of his about his own character" (150-151).

His recognition or acceptance of his identity coincides with his identification with his father. The use of the images he employs to define himself (knife) and his father (a blade, a scimitar) is further strengthened with another similarity. Seeing the lighthouse, he recites a line his father would do: "'We are driving before a gale- we must sink,' he began saying to himself, half aloud exactly as his father said it" (151). The identification between the son and the father is completed when James succeeds in steering the ship. Then Mr. Ramsay expresses his appreciation of his son's success for the first time, and he finally hears his father say, "'Well done!' James had steered them like a born sailor" (153). In "We Perished Each Alone: "The Castaway" and "To the Lighthouse", Roger D. Lund highlights, "For James, the symbolic valence of the Lighthouse has changed. It has become not a symbol of continuity or light or of dependable centrality (images so often associated with his mother); it has become a symbol of isolation and insularity" (90), which might easily be associated with the father and indirectly James.

When James develops a new understanding of the lighthouse, himself, and his father, the Bildungsroman aspect of the novel is complete. The development he achieves throughout the novel includes, as stated earlier, going from a simple and childish understanding of reality to a multifaceted reality. Seeing the lighthouse on a bare piece of rock, he says, "nothing was simply one thing" (138) but he could have said it at the very end of the novel because he sees the lighthouse both mystically and realistically, he hates

and appreciates his father, and he accepts his resemblance to and difference from him at the same time.

3.5. Conclusion

In conclusion, Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* is one of the best representative modernist novels, which reflects the effects of the Great War in a world where reality might be redefined by Einstein's Theory of Relativity. Although Woolf wrote the novel several years after the war took place, the impacts of the war continue to reverberate all through the novel because of the unprecedented scale of the devastation the war inflicted on humanity. Although the tripartite structure of the novel foregrounds the war in the second part, "Time Passes", Woolf presents the changes that the war caused in the literary realm through her unique poetic and symbolic language and employment of stream of consciousness, interior monologue and free indirect speech techniques in the "The Window" part. The emergence of Einstein's Theory of Special Relativity in 1905, which shattered Newtonian absolutes, alongside Virginia Woolf's famous claim that human character changed around 1910, both preceded the Great War and paved the way for a profound transformation in perception of reality and literature, which would bring a chasm with the 1914 war. Therefore, in "The Window" part, Woolf depicts the complicated human beings trying to sustain long-established traditions and codes altered by the scientific, social and cultural changes occurring in the pre-war world. In the "Time Passes" part, Woolf makes Nature the protagonist of the novel, excluding human characters, personifying the Great War with destructive waves and storms devastating the Ramsay house and darkness dominating the atmosphere, and reporting the death of the characters as the censored, impersonalized and insensitive pieces of news of the wartime as a result of the politically repressive attitude of the government through the omniscient third-person narrator. "The Lighthouse" section portrays a post-war world where the human psyche is fractured and fragmented as a result of the unseen catastrophic results of the four-year World War I, and human beings try to find the meaning of life and question the reality. Woolf incorporates the effects and consequences of the war indirectly into the text and reverberates Einstein's Theory of Relativity with James Ramsay's assertion that "nothing was simply one thing".

The idea of the complexity of human mind and reality is illustrated in the novel through the major characters, Mrs. Ramsay, Mr. Ramsay, Lily Briscoe and James, the youngest son of the family. Mrs. Ramsay illustrates an individual trying hard to maintain and find solace in the traditional values in a world about to yield in a catastrophic war. She is aware of the multi-dimensional and vulnerable nature of reality, unlike her husband, who approaches life with a raw Victorian sense of reality. In that sense, he forms a contrast with Lily Briscoe, too, in that Lily Briscoe, as an artist, is aware of the difficulty of perceiving and reflecting reality in an artwork. Her contribution to the novel can be summed up as the questioning of the theory of mimesis. Finally, James, in one respect the most important character of the novel for the scope of this thesis, illustrates the changing essence of reality. His perception not only of the lighthouse but also of his father and his own self once again proves the idea that nothing is simply one thing.

CONCLUSION

The twentieth century world is marked with profound transformations which changed the fabric of human life. Scientific and technological advancements, ideological shifts, urbanization and changing social roles led people to question the meaning of life and seek new worlds in which to retreat. However, the most significant event which intensified this existential questioning was the Great War, unprecedented in both scale and destruction. Throughout the four years of war, civilians faced the painful loss of loved ones from their families, friends or neighbours while soldiers who had been made to fight to defend their countries were confronted with the unforgettable and irreparable horrors of slaughter on the battlefield. Many that were able to survive were maimed and crippled, countless were exposed to lingering effects of shell-shock. The twentieth century individuals were subjected to an atmosphere of fear, anxiety and uncertainty. The war not only destroyed the cities and landscapes but also fractured humanity's perception of life and reality, resulting in search for new ways of expression in literature, which shaped modernism. Virginia Woolf depicts the early twentieth century world, which witnessed the first greatest war the world had ever seen by then and the change of reality because of Albert Einstein's groundbreaking theory of relativity whose traces are detected in her modernist masterpieces *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*. It is found that these two works by Woolf reverberate the effects of the Great War.

Virginia Woolf lived in a period when human nature changed from an orderly world to a complex one as a result of the extensive changes in science, technology, people's perspectives to religion and state and the World War I brought. As Faulkner emphasizes "relativity and subjectivity… [became] the facts of everyday experience" (15), the early twentieth century experienced the zenith of complexity with the war of 1914-1918. Woolf reflects the effects of the war not only on daily life but also on socio-economic, political and ideological arenas in her diaries and letters she penned daily during the war days. These works provide the panorama of the modernist literature and background of her novels. As a result, Woolf is a war writer who reflects the effects of the Great War in her works.

The socio-political events, scientific and ideological changes and technological innovations that took place before, during and after the World War I in the world afftected the novels under study. Karl Marx questioned the class-based society, Darwin shattered the long-established Christian belief system with his Theory of Evolution, Freud introduced the many-layered structure of human-mind, and Albert Einstein shattered the absolutes of the world of physics with his theory of relativity. These changes provide the background for modernist literature since the new world required new literary devices and content for the writers to express its reality. The new modernist narrative techniques such as stream of consciousness, interior monologue and free indirect course are introduced as Woolf makes use of them in *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* in the representation of a world shattered by the Great War and Einstein's theory of relativity.

Mrs. Dalloway illustrates the reverberations of the Great War in the lives of civilians and a soldier who participated in the war. The novel is written in 1925 but it depicts a day from 1923 in the lives of people in London. Clarissa Dalloway prepares for her party which will take place in the evening, and the reader is expected to put the events in a chronological order as not only Clarissa but also all characters' life stories are presented through flashbacks and flashforwards. The shift in human character is discussed through four characters, Septimus Warren Smith, Clarissa Dalloway, Peter Walsh and Lucrezia Smith who witnessed the Great War. The discussion is achieved in line with the relativity theory, and with reference to critics who examined the work before. It is noteworthy that Woolf uses capital letters while writing "War" and the word appears twenty times in the novel. Through the characterization of Septimus, Woolf draws attention to how World War I fractured and distorted the life of an ex-soldier who willingly took part in it to defend his country and criticises the statesmen who started and supported the war. As is stated before, Woolf creates the character from her husband's brother Philip who was wounded in the war and witnessed his brother Cecil's death on the battlefield. Having experienced the fear, anxiety and uncertainty in London streets with the Zeppelins over and having heard the explosion of bombs in London, Woolf found the opportunity to observe Philip's detachment from life and difficulty in adapting to the harsh reality of the shell-shock. Thus, Philip provided a realist perspective in the development of Septimus. Moreover, through Septimus's suicide, Woolf criticizes the inadequacy of the psychiatric

treatment system which failed to prevent numerous soldiers from ending their lives after the war. Woolf conveys the aftereffects of war on civilian dimension through Clarissa who is grateful for the end of the war. Clarissa searches for the meaning of life in a world fragmented by the catastrophic war and the dissolution of all certainties as Einstein changed the absolute realities of the previous centuries. Through the characterization of Clarissa, Woolf exposes that life is hidden in ordinary daily niceties that create beauty by giving parties and getting people together. She creates beauties for the sake of beauty in a world where reality is relative. Woolf also delves into the caves of the brains of Peter Walsh and Lucrezia together with several minor characters to articulate the different perceptions of the same events which take place in the same place at the same time in the way Einstein exemplifies the change of simultaneity of the same event according to the reference frame of the observer. In this novel, Woolf invokes that nothing is simply one thing as James from *To the Lighthouse* says, emphasizing the necessity of subjectivity and individuality. Woolf's deployment of the stream of consciousness, interior monologue and free indirect speech techniques together with flashbacks and flashforwards in a non-linear plot development is the result of the necessity to reflect the changed world properly as opposed to the linear, clear-cut, objective realistic novels of the nineteenth century. In short, *Mrs. Dalloway* is a modernist novel which voices the reverberations of the Great war not only in terms of content but also of form.

The second novel chosen to be analysed in this thesis is *To the Lighthouse*, which was written in 1927. Woolf divides the novel into three parts to render the pre-war period in Part One titled "The Window"; the war-time in "Time Passes" part and the post-war world in "The Lighthouse" part in the lives of the Ramsay family. In the first part, the six-year-old, James, expresses his desire to go to the lighthouse but he is disappointed by his father, Mr. Ramsay, who acts in line with a mind dictated by the absolute truth of science. James's mother, Mrs. Ramsay, on the other hand, tries to comfort her son stating the possibility of going to the lighthouse if the weather is fine the next day. Mrs. Ramsay and Mr. Ramsay, having eight children, host several guests in their house. Lily Briscoe, a painter, wants to draw a portrait of Mrs. Ramsay but cannot complete her painting because of the inadequacy of her art, character and her point of view towards life. Therefore, she suffers from the pre-determined rules of realistic representation of art which limits her

creativity. The protagonist of the first part is Mrs. Ramsay, whose aim in life is creating beauty by gathering her family and her guests at a dinner table, by helping the needy, by arranging marriages for people. Although James utters his sentence "nothing is simply one thing" in the last part of the novel, the relativity of reality according to the framework of observer echoes in the first part of the novel through stream of consciousness, interior monologue and free indirect speech. These modernist devices reflect the subjectivity of reality since each character perceives the world in their own way as expressed through those literary devices. Even though the characters are portrayed to sustain Victorian ideals, the change in human character in 1910s causes the characters to show some complexities, uncertainties and inconsistencies in the pre-war world. Nonetheless, order, stability and security are dominant in the first part of the novel. Woolf depicts the catastrophic war years through the use of pathetic fallacy describing deterioration and destruction of the Ramsay house caused by the storms and winds and the wear time. Woolf reports the death of Mrs. Ramsay, Prue and Andrew in square brackets like the apathetic news or telegram texts. Nature becomes the protagonist in this part and devastates the house as the war shatters and fragments the human psyche. What "man advanced" by civilization is not "supplement[ed]" or "complete[d]" (99) by Nature and there is no harmony with the external outside world and Nature. The external world is blind and dumb to human suffering and the horrors of the war. Third person omniscient narrator describes the darkness and the destruction the war caused by the employment of symbols, personifications, metaphors, similes and poetic language. "The Lighthouse" part illustrates the characters who try to give meaning to life after the incomprehensible and chaotic war. Ten years later Mr. Ramsay completes the promised lighthouse visit with James and Cam while Lily Briscoe completes her painting. With the completions of this expedition and painting, the characters experience epiphanic awakenings. James understands that nothing is simply one thing and Lily Briscoe grasps that one needs "fifty pairs of eyes" (147) to get reality, while Mr. Ramsay relates to his lost wife's life philosophy: one cannot find but create their own reality from small daily moments. Woolf also emphasizes the necessity of art and literature to create meaning in a world which was fragmented by the Great War and the change of understanding of the multi-faceted nature of reality. As Levenback puts "reality … exists in what we see and what we think about

what we see, what we do not see, and whether we think about what we do not see (*Virginia Woolf and the Great War* 52).

All in all, Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* epitomise how the Great War devastated, fractured and fragmented human life and humanity's understanding of reality. The effects of the Great War reverberate directly and indirectly in both novels and both novels echo that reality is not one-dimensional but is constructed by multivalent dimensions, thus, nothing is simply one thing!

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24316812004 Hilal Çelik

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Bibliyografyayı Çıkart	üzerinde		

RESUME

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