

T.C.
ATILIM UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
ENGLISH CULTURE AND LITERATURE MASTER'S PROGRAMME

**REPRESENTATION OF GENDER ROLES IN VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *MRS.*
DALLOWAY AND *TO THE LIGHTHOUSE* IN TERMS OF SOCIAL
FEMINISM**

Master's Thesis

Gülay ERGÜVEN

Ankara - 2022

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Supervisor

Asst. Prof. Dr. Gökşen ARAS

Ankara - 2022

ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

This is to certify that this thesis titled “Representation of Gender Roles in Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To The Lighthouse* in Terms of Social Feminism” and prepared by Gülay ERGÜVEN meets with the committee’s approval unanimously/by a majority vote as Master’s Thesis in the field of English Culture and Literature following the successful defense conducted on 09/06/2022.

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ÖZ

ERGÜVEN, Gülay. Virginia Woolf'un *Mrs. Dalloway* ve *Deniz Feneri* Adlı Romanlarındaki Cinsiyet Rollerinin Sosyal Feminizm Açısından Temsili, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2022.

Bu tezde Virginia Woolf'un *Mrs. Dalloway* ve *Deniz Feneri* adlı romanlarındaki kadın rolleri sosyal feminizm açısından incelenmiştir. Sosyal feminizm, geniş tanımına göre kadınların konumlarını ve sosyal haklarını savunan feminist bir harekettir. Romanların kadın karakterleri Mrs. Dalloway, Mrs. Ramsey ve Lily erkeklerin karar verdikleri bir toplumda kendilerine biçilen rolleri üstlenmektedirler. Woolf'un bu romanları sosyal feminizm açısından incelendiğinde karakterlerin genel özelliklerinin geçmişini hatırlama, özlem ve içe dönüklük olduğu görülür. Kadınlar geçmişini hatırlayarak daha iyi bir zamanda olmak istemektedir. Erkekler ise kadınların ne yapabileceklerine karar verdiklerine şahit olurlar. Sonuç olarak, Woolf'un bu romanlarında, kadınların sosyal baskı altında yaşamalarına dikkat çektiği düşünüldüğünde, *Mrs. Dalloway* ve *Deniz Feneri* adlı romanlarda sosyal feminizm çağrışımı yapan pek çok öge söz konusudur.

Anahtar Sözcükler: *Bayan Dalloway*, *Deniz Feneri*, Sosyal Feminizm, Virginia Woolf, 20. Yüzyıl.

ABSTRACT

ERGÜVEN, Gülay. Representation of Gender Roles in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To The Lighthouse* in Terms of Social Feminism, Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2022.

In this thesis, gender roles are examined in terms of social feminism in Virginia Woolf's novels titled *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To The Lighthouse*. Social feminism, by its broad definition, is a feminist movement that advocates for a certain status and social rights for women. The female characters of the novels Mrs. Dalloway, Mrs. Ramsey and Lily take on the roles assigned to them in a society where men decide. When these novels of Woolf are examined in terms of social feminism, it is seen that the general features of the characters are "remembering the past", "nostalgia" and "introversion". Women want to be in a better time by remembering the past. Men, on the other hand, are in a situation where women decide what they can do. As a result, keeping in mind that Woolf in these novels, titled *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To The Lighthouse*, brings women's life under social pressure into consideration, there are many elements that call social feminism.

Key Words: *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To The LightHouse*, Social Feminism, Virginia Woolf, 20th Century.

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INTRODUCTION

Social feminism states that women are as economically and socially valuable as men by discussing the position of women as individuals. Especially in the 19th century, women were under patriarchal oppression in many countries of the world. This situation is related to the role of individuals in society because of their gender.

Öncül (1944) states that some of the English novels written in the first half of the twentieth century, in addition to the novels written in traditional perspective, completely overturned the novel form up to that time in terms of subject, style and technique and were written according to the personal perspectives they developed. Some novelists deal with the social problems of the day in the form of the novel we know, but some of them, like Virginia Woolf, write to reflect their own private views and thoughts, or to convey their inner worlds and impressions to the reader. Uyar (2018) states that Virginia Woolf's wants to criticize the social order in the most intense way in her novel *Mrs Dalloway*. The purpose of this thesis is to discuss the representation of gender roles in *Mrs Dalloway* and *To The Lighthouse* under the light of social feminism, which refers to changes in the structures of societies through female characters.

First of all, the author's life, her lifetime and uneasiness will be explained. Because Woolf, like many writers of the period, saw two world wars, she only could see first two years of World War II owing to her suicide, and the author was influenced by them and so wrote her articles under this influence. Apart from the war, the patriarchal social order in England at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century is a situation that the author both suffered from and criticized.

The theoretical part which is explained in chapter one dwells on the concept of social feminism. In order to define this concept, an in-depth literature search was conducted, and as a result of this research, some sources were used such as Lemons (1973), Lipschultz (1989), Carson (2022) which describe "social feminism" in the 20th century. In this period, social feminism gained importance by drawing attention to the injustices against women (Lemons, 1973).

The mainstay of this thesis is the male and female characters and their situation under the social feminist perspectives. For this reason, in the second chapter, in

addition to Virginia Woolf's life and writing style, the characters of *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) and *To The Lighthouse* (1927), are examined which are among her two “most popular” (Öncül, 1944) novels.

The gender roles in these two novels, which do not have a specific plot and a timeline in the traditional sense, are not directly regarded as social influence. However, Woolf reflects this influence with the internal conflicts of the female characters and as dominancy of husbands on wives. Mrs Dalloway and Mrs Ramsay, the main female characters in these novels question their inner worlds. In the third chapter, mainly these two characters are examined in terms of social feminism, concerning their desired and current situations.

Finally, the conclusion restates the concept of social feminism and deeply explains the outputs.

CHAPTER 1: THE HISTORICAL AND THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF SOCIAL FEMINISM

Social feminism is a feminist movement which argues for specific accommodations and social rights for women, according to its broad definition. It was first used in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to characterize the women's suffrage movement concerned with social issues affecting women and children (Anderson, 1971). Women considered having the right to vote to be a method for achieving their reform aims rather than as a main goal in and of themselves. After women were granted the right to vote, social feminism continued in the shape of labor feminists, who supported and advocated for women's protectionist legislation and benefits. Social feminism is a subset of feminism that places a strong emphasis on women's experiences and ideals.

Equity feminism encompasses the belief systems formerly known as "Marxist," "Liberal," and "Socialist" feminism (Scraton, 2013), while the past's so-called maternal feminism and the present's radical feminism are both parts of social feminism. Because women are in so many inferior situations, including their ubiquitous involvement in home tasks and relative lack of public authority and power, social feminism is one of the most important sources of empowerment for women.

Women have been able to choose and work for their own goals thanks to a variety of views, which is the essence and core of the feminist desire for autonomy, even if it has not been recognized as such. Biological distinctions are the most visible, and while they are the easiest to see and recognize, they are also the most troublesome.

Feminism is a movement that tries to end sexism, sexist exploitation and oppression (Özcelik, 2017). According to Özcelik (2017), the more popular definition is that feminism is a doctrine that envisages expanding the role and rights of women in society. The word, which emerged at the end of the 18th century, was derived from the Latin word *femine* meaning woman, entered French after 1837 (derived from the word *Female-Woman*) and English in the 1890s by taking the name *womanism* (Özcelik, 2017).

In the 20th century, Social Feminism was discussed alongside Liberal Feminism. Some studies on this subject, such as Fisher et al (1993), discussed this

issue as “by demonstrating how liberal feminist and social feminist theories can be used to reconcile discrepancies in previous findings”.

They applied liberal feminist theory to studies that posited sex-based discrimination as the difference between the experience of women and men entrepreneurs. Social feminism was used to categorize studies that viewed inherent differences as accounting for the divergent outcomes. (Butler, 2003)

Today, we may find widespread parity in men and women's physical lives - if not for individuals, then for populations. Socially created perceptions and ways of behavior are by definition docile, even if they appear to be consistent for single individuals or entire societies. Women's disadvantage, on the other hand, is visible in every political and social context, and it has a logical coherence that has made it the focus of most equity feminist research (Conaghan, 2000). Then, women's resistance towards male domination, logically distant from what women and men share, provides the record of women's assertion of their autonomy and of the impact of their wishes on the society. This is the account of how the change in practice occurred because of women's effort.

Social feminism's functional contribution has a lot to do with modalities of political engagement and the evolution of women's political roles (Black, 2019). By politics, we mean public life in general, and in particular those aspects of public life that deal with the reliable depletion of resources, staff selection, and state policy. Women in urbanized cities have progressed from a mostly domestic position to one that includes the right to participate in political life as freely as men which is the core goal of equity feminism. As a result of their engagement, women have begun to transform political life - the social feminist objective.

The social feminists' second contribution is more significant and subtle. The historical contribution of social feminism was the legitimization of women's political engagement paired with practical support, but it was limited (Safa, 1990). Suffragist ancestors no longer needed to persuade anyone that women can talk in public without being humiliated or fainting. Women's massive participation is increasingly approaching men's; their participation will be equivalent when women's socioeconomic situation is comparable to men's and when men seize the opportunity to erect barriers in their way; however, these do not appear to be conditions that will be seen in the near future.

Social feminist organizations, carrying on after practical and legal liberation, have provided the significant resources for women to enter that masculine world, and these resources included the possible important desire to change political life as well as a domestic model for change (Costantini, 1990). It is the content of social feminist beliefs that has frontal designation for public life, those beliefs created an annex, or better yet, an expansion of political participation, social feminism thus precluded any unconditional involvement in a mixed-sex or male social movement. Social feminism was and still is able to supply the necessary crucial grounding to feminist's attempts at an explicit critique and reformulation of public life and policy across time with high potential for a prime effect on the content and conduct of public life for women (Black, 2019).

The theory of social feminism, on the other hand, contends that men and women are fundamentally different, and that as a result, women approach business differently because they have distinct attitudes and beliefs. Madueño et al. (2016) state these concepts by noting that male conduct is characterized by the establishment of authority, control, attainment of results, and leadership, whereas female behavior is characterized by cooperation, protection, and interpersonal reliance.

Feminists pressed for better relations between the sexes, men and women, new concepts of love free of conflict, a union of equals; radical marriage reforms that would purge marriage of proprietary rights in the society. Also feminists express new definitions of motherhood and new ways to feed the world and care for children.

They wanted to free women from the choking confines of Woman's Sphere, to make every kind of work available to them with equal pay and equal opportunity for training. They encouraged women to make all the problems of community their business, the whole world their sphere. All these momentous changes, feminists knew, awaited a new social consciousness in women, a vital sense of sisterhood and the power to organize, and, first of all, the emancipation of women as individual personalities, a rejection of the limitations proscribed in the traditional definition of Woman, essentially a sexual creature. (Daims, 1976)

Additionally, Social feminism differs from feminism in several ways. Social feminism which is a particular version of feminism (Black, 2019) was first used in the early 20th century to describe members of the women's suffrage movement (Solak, 2020). According to Black (2019) "groups of woman active for social change began to organize in Europe and North America in the early nineteenth century, only through these organizations do we have access to the belief systems that make up feminism".

The purpose of this group was to protest the protection of the laws in a male-dominated society. In the thought of social feminism, it is stated that men and women may have different backgrounds and experiences, and that the success of the individual can be determined not by gender, but by individual experience and behavior (Yener, 2018). In short, the term Social Feminism indicates the class gap and the importance of power for women (Situmeang, 2019).

The 19th century had been the age of woman, the 20th was the rise of woman (Daims, 1976). As Lemons (1973) states, “In the early twentieth century, the women's rights movement became one of the reform efforts that came under the heading of Progressivism”. Most of the women who adopted this movement were social feminists who put social reform before purely feminine issues. The inequalities faced by women caused them to be sympathetic to demands for social reform in general. Thus, this reform movement, which had wide repercussions especially in England, attracted the attention of many individuals, especially writers, and became the subject of many novels.

In fact, this situation was directly related to the welfare of women at that time, 20th century (Carson, 2022). First of all, it is necessary to understand the early periods of the 20th century well. With a general view, we can say that the First World War changed something in this period. In the early years of the 20th century, laws are made for men (Lipschultz, 1989). In the United Kingdom, women could not vote until the Representation of the People Act of 1918 (Schultz, 2012). So that means they were disregarded as human beings or participants in work and social life.

According to the concept of social feminism, women can only be truly liberated if the liberation focuses on the public as well as private lives of the women. This concept does not blame the patriarchal society; rather, it blames the lack of financial independence, and states that capitalism exacerbates the weakened situation of women, when they do not participate in society. The status of women in society is not determined by their biological nature, but by their social relations in a male society (Buchanan; through Mohammad, 2014).

Women had risen to prominence in the nineteenth century, and the twentieth century would see their diversity and complexity finally almost recognized and acknowledged. More women would be able to exhibit their autonomies than ever before. In some senses, these new women had always lived, albeit unnoticed by history and literature. They became a force to be reckoned with, expressing themselves in ways their female parents would not have dared.

Apart from the franchise, the phrase "social feminism" encompasses all the revolutionary changes that feminists advocate and that have been largely disregarded in histories of feminism. Feminists advocated for improved gender relations, new conflict-free love concepts, and a union of equals; radical marriage reforms that would strip marriage of its proprietary rights and ensured the economic independence of wives; new definitions of motherhood, and new approaches to feeding the world and caring for children. They desired to liberate women from the suffocating limits of Woman's Sphere by making all types of job available to them, with equal pay and training opportunities:

Social feminists encourage women to make all the problems of community their business, the whole world their sphere. All these momentous changes, feminists knew, awaited a new social consciousness in women, a vital sense of sisterhood and the power to organize, and, first of all, the emancipation of women as individual personalities, a rejection of the limitations proscribed in the traditional definition of Woman, essentially a sexual creature (Daims, 1976).

CHAPTER 2: VIRGINIA WOOLF'S STYLE AND CHARACTERS

2.1. Virginia Woolf's Life and Writing Style

A highly acclaimed modernist writer, Adeline Virginia (Stephen) Woolf was born on January 25th, 1882, at Hyde Park Gate, Kensington, London. Born into a large connection, her father, Sir Leslie Stephen, was the outstanding Victorian author, Alpinist, and critic editor of the Cornhill Magazine of the Dictionary of National Biography and the Alpine Journal, who also considered a historian. Born as a member of an elite and intellectual family in England, Woolf never went to school and had the opportunity to develop herself thanks to her father's magnificent library (Sarıkış, 2005).

Kley (1999) states that from the time she learnt to write as a tiny kid, Virginia Woolf was a creator of fiction and critique. Her world insights have been praised by a wide range of academic fields, from English Literature to Women's Studies. Not only does her collection of writing appeal to a broad audience, but her life as a whole is fascinating and worth investigating from both a historical and social standpoint. Her story is set against a unique and stunning backdrop: the 19th century, during which she grew into womanhood. Her nonfiction is inspired by the realities of ordinary life, but her fiction distinguishes her from other writers by her ability to name and articulate her world.

Woolf published only nine novels but also hundreds of essays and commentaries through her life. Sinclair (1996) states that "Having discovered her own style of fiction, she was well on her way to literary eminence". In her homeland, where she has long been forgotten, there is a renaissance of interest in her writing. Several conferences are conducted each year to debate fresh approaches to reading Woolf's full body of work, as well as her life, which is as fascinating as her writing, as Kley (1999) states.

Woolf's novels are "among the most highly original and personal contributions in the history of the genre," according to Jeanne Schulkind (Woolf, 2017), who first transcribed and edited these auto- biographical pieces in 1976. Woolf incorporated her

personal life and family into her work, "thus attesting to the solid artistic control she exerted over that material in producing works that have the coherence and inner necessity that mark the finest artistic achievement" (Woolf, 2017). Though she is most recognized for her fictionalized descriptions of what is thought to be her life, she is best known for her critical essays and critiques on social action in the field of women's education. Woolf's fiction and nonfiction are widely read around the world, demonstrating how progressive her views on society, education, and family are.

To better understand this situation, we may look at Woolf's diaries. Woolf suffered her first-ever breakdown in May 1895, when her mother died. This was the first destructive situation that brought her urge to write. This note reflects the second loss in the family which was very devastating: "the blow, the second blow of death, struck on me; tremulous, filmy eyed I was, with my wings still creased, sitting there on the edge of my broken chrysalis" (Goldman, 2015).

These words are one of the first words in Virginia Woolf's diary records. In addition, these words express both how much she suffered and how strong her ability to express is. All of these had been recorded by Virginia Woolf in her memoirs. Woolf, however, recognized her father's dual formative influence on her, the tyrant and writer father, the domestic dictator had been as well an intellectual who shaped her intellectual development, powerfully. Woolf describes this situation with these words: "just as a dog takes a bite of grass, I take a bite of him medicinally" (Goldman, 2015).

Many losses in Woolf's life and constant displacement since her childhood have greatly affected her life. In fact, her missing siblings, who are the most important pillars of her life, are the main characters of some of her books, such as *To The Lighthouse* (1927).

We know that Virginia Woolf was mentally ill when she wrote these books. Over the summer of 1910, Woolf's mental health (Smith, 2014) took a hit and she took a rest cure at a private nursing home in Twickenham, a place which she attended periodically between 1910 and 1915 based on the advice of the Stephen family doctor George Savage, a neurologist who treated her until 1913.

Woolf and Leonard married in August 1912, she was thirty years old, shortly after the marriage, she had another breakdown and her mental health declined severely

over the year that followed resulting in a suicide attempt in September 1913 (Smith, 2014). The couple was advised against having children due to Woolf's mental health, a cause of some regret to her.

As Goldman (2006) states, "the first set of Woolf's experimental short stories *Monday or Tuesday* was published by Hogarth in 1921, followed by her novel *Jacob's Room* in 1922" (17). Woolf's control over the production of her own work was an important matter of her formation as a writer and the Hogarth Press became a significant publishing house during the decades that followed. It was in charge of Freud's first major works in English, starting in 1922, and published major works by key modernist writers such as T.S. Eliot and Gertrude Stein. In 1922, Woolf met the writer Vita Sackville-West, who later joined Vanessa and Leonard as the most significant people in her life. By the time her novel *Jacob's Room* was published, Woolf's reputation as an Avant-grade writer and a major literary critic was integrating. *Jacob's Room* was the first in a series of highly lyrical and formally experimental set of novels that included *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), *To The Lighthouse* (1927), *Orlando: A Biography* (1928), and *The Waves* (1931). In 1932, Woolf published two collections of essays, *The Common Reader* and *The Common Reader: Second series*, she was awarded the 1927-28 Prix Femina prize (Goldman, 2006) for *To The Lighthouse*. That was a time of growing commercial success for her that she took in with great pride as both a publisher and writer.

What was also vital during these years was Vanessa's collaboration with Virginia Woolf, from *Jacob's Room* on, her artwork became integral to the cover design of most of Woolf's work. Though Leonard was quite often her most respected and valued first reader of work in draft, Woolf considered her sister her primary audience: "I always feel I'm writing for you more than anybody" (Woolf, 1980). In 1925, Virginia Woolf started an affair with Sackville-West who was married to the diplomat and writer, Harold Nickolson, the development of their relationship did not affect their marriages, it synchronized with Woolf's most productive years as a writer. As Woolf was writing the last pages of *To The Lighthouse*, she suffered from a deep depression in 1926 and recorded in her diary the watery vision of "a fin passing far out" (Woolf, 1980).

Woolf's marriage to Leonard was as ever comfortable, emotionally central, and conducive to her creative output, in addition to her relaxation and intellectual reflection, she always called him her 'inviolable center' (Goldman, 2006). When Leonard whom Woolf considered her most honest critic read her manuscript of *The Waves* in 1931, he declared it "the best of your books, and "a masterpiece" (Goldman, 2006).

Woolf's novels are most likely classified as impressionistic, a literary style that aims to evoke feelings rather than recreate and document reality. She was one of the most accomplished authors, mastering the method of stream of consciousness, which is one of the most difficult narrative styles to perfect. Her use of word and sentence structure gives the impression that the reader is reading a poem written in prose; this, in turn, is linked to her desire to discover a new narrative style, blending poetry and prose so deftly that her works are both intriguing and challenging to read. Woolf is regarded as one of the best novelists, critics, and short story writers of the twentieth century, as well as one of the first to use the stream of consciousness as a literary device. McTaggart observes that Woolf's "peculiarities as a fiction writer have tended to obscure her central strength: she is arguably the major lyrical novelist in the English language. Her novels are highly experimental: a narrative, frequently uneventful and commonplace, is refracted and sometimes almost dissolved – in the characters' receptive consciousness" (Shukla, 2007).

A general overview on Woolf's use of techniques in her novels, Haunton wrote that she always had "an ambivalent desire because of her vivid awareness of two worlds, one flowing in wide sweeps overhead, the other tip-tapping circumscribed upon the pavement" (Haunton, 1999). In other words, she was perceptible of the reality – one outside in the shape of the diverse phenomena in society and nature, and the other inside the consciousness with its major store of impressions gathered as important moments of existence, and the two realms have their meeting points. Woolf's main technique was the meeting point in time and from the work over the two realms, the material and the mental.

Woolf became a focal focus of the feminist critical movements of the 1970s, with her works gaining widespread attention and widespread debate for encouraging feminism, an aspect of her writing that had previously gone unnoticed (Marcus, 2010).

Virginia Woolf is regarded as one of the most important feminist authors, lauded for both her fictional and theoretical work. Woolf's work, both theoretical and fictional, centers on women, their lives, and histories, according to Laura Marcus (2010), who claims that the relationship between Woolf and feminism is symbiotic.

Woolf's style is both lyrical and painful (Catalano, 2016; Chaudhary, 2018) and the experience of being reduced to short glimpses is so ordered that it naturally takes on the form of poetry, employing words in a poetic manner. The metaphors she utilized in her writings stay with the reader long after the purpose for which they were created is forgotten. Her use of metaphor in the novels evokes in such dazzling ways that poetry's metaphors are more shocking and vivid than conventional prose's metaphors. Woolf's pictures are all pulled from the visible world, and her allusions, refrains, rhythms, images, and metaphors, when combined, create a poetic style.

With all this life and writing story; The fact that Virginia Woolf, who saw two world wars but she just witnessed first two years of World War II that is why she witnessed the death of many of her family, and lived with different people by changing her place of residence, -perhaps rightly- opposes the existing order, put her in a different position in the period she was in. For this reason, reflecting the characters in her own life – her sister's being the main character in *To The Lighthouse* (1927) indicates that she wrote her works very openly to the influence of the environment. For this reason, Virginia Woolf, who defies the current order, could not stand the pressure, stress and mental illnesses she struggled with and committed suicide in 1941.

2.2. Portrayal of the Female Characters in Woolf's Works

The first decade of the twentieth century saw the emergence of a new generation of writers who reacted against the past which they considered the previous generation stood for. As a matter of fact, this period included the 1st and 2nd World Wars in 1914 and 1939. It is a fact that these wars affected not only Woolf but also many writers of that period. So, Woolf belonged to this generation; she spent her childhood and early youth in the early 20th century. Woolf is an outstanding novelist who might have shed much light on the situations women faced, under the light of her past and maybe traumatic youth. At this point, it would not be wrong to say Woolf's youth was traumatic, because academic studies indicate that Virginia Woolf was not

very mentally healthy and even killed herself by committing suicide during the Second World War (Sarıkas, 2005).

In her novels, she highlights women problems of the period from various aspects ranging from financial, familial to intellectual life. Woolf is undoubtedly regarded as one of the most well-known writers of the modernist era; in addition to being a writer, she was also a biographer, an essayist, as well as a feminist. Being a female writer in a patriarchal society, Woolf raised issues on gender and gender roles, challenging the role of the woman of the period in her studies, both in her essays as well as her novels.

The nature of women in “the context of *Mrs. Dalloway* refers to that part of an individual which allows deep emotion, creativity and imagination” (Sinclair, 1996). Their souls' greatest work includes the rejection of any outside force that would dictate it “were this or were that” (6).

Woolf's critical writing technique is not limited to *To The Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, which are the subjects of this study. Woolf, who criticizes the England of the period, challenged the era and the flow by emphasizing social problems such as the conditions concerning the education of women and men, the deprivation of the freedom of women writers to produce literary articles freely, and the effect of sexist approaches on diplomats (Soylu and Medeni, 2021).

In many of her works, Virginia Woolf openly and boldly opposed the patriarchal order of England, the generalized norms and perception prevailing in the country. The dramatic consequences of women being treated as second-class citizens in society affected not only her own writing style but also the characters in *To The Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway*. The idea of women, their identity, and their role became more vivid in her novel *To The Lighthouse*, as she juxtaposed two different types of women, Mrs. Ramsey and Lily Briscoe.

Henke (1981) comments that Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* “offers a scathing indictment of the British class system and a strong critique of patriarchy”. So the women characters in Woolf's novels have some class problems that they do not fit in either in obligations of their marriages or in their inner self, they live as if they were stuck in their desires and the pressure of the society. In the novels *To The Lighthouse*

and *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf shows that those problems which women are faced mainly caused by the patriarchal system that hinders them from expressing and actualizing themselves in one way or another. Woolf then shows that those women are able to resist all regulations that block them from becoming and having a real and reputable part in the real life.

The work distribution between the female and male characters in Woolf's *To The Lighthouse* plainly reflects the depiction of gender stereotypes that disadvantage women. Mrs. Ramsay is portrayed as the house's angel, a concept Woolf defined in her article "Profession for Women" as follows: "She was intensely sympathetic. She was immensely charming. She was utterly unselfish. She excelled in the difficult *arts of family life*. She sacrificed herself daily. She preferred to sympathies always with the minds and wishes of others" (Woolf, 1931).

Despite the fact that Mrs. Ramsay is not specifically characterized in the novel as an "angel in the house," the concept of an "angel in the house" is clearly applicable to her, as evidenced by her diligence in handling domestic problems. Her interests are typically different from men's; she frequently repeats one phrase, "the bill for the greenhouse would be fifty pounds," (28; 41; 42; 46; 69) demonstrating how concerned and realistic she is about house matters, particularly when they have eight children, as well as all other hardships of life, poverty, and the threat of death.

Mrs. Ramsay's next passion is marriage, which she believes is essential for women to make the most of their lives, despite the hardships that it entails. "An unmarried woman has missed the finest of life," she says, despite having endured the problems that it entails (56). She is then defined as a mother and wife whose mission is to maintain harmony at home, where she reigns supreme. Marder (1968) states that "a house may at times take on the sanctity of a shrine in which the mother-priestess celebrates a communion, linking the members of the family circle by way of a mystical life force" (45).

Woolf portrays women as incapable of performing things that men may freely and readily enjoy and do, such as writing and painting, careers that men have the opportunity to prove they are competent of while women have no such opportunity. However, not all women in Woolf's works remain silent and accept the roles and

representations assigned to them by the patriarchal system, as evidenced in Lily Briscoe in *To The Lighthouse* which portrays a woman artist as a rebel against male dominated society ideals and Mrs. Ramsay's idea of marriage.

Woolf is quite concerned with women's problematic representation in literature and therefore attempts to alleviating their too simplistic or lack of visibility altogether by exploring women's complicated interiority through her fiction. Woolf's female characters are highly affected by both men and women in their lives: men often oppress their emotional, intellectual, or artistic abilities, while women oftentimes promote them. Woolf's exploration of women is more complicated and nuanced, giving women complex selves that think and interact with others in equally complex ways. However, these women are still clothed in more of the unknown that society and Woolf's male counterparts have kept them in, showing the massiveness of the task at hand for Woolf, in which she shone a light on women, for probably the first time in western literature. Woolf reflects this with these words in *To The Lighthouse*: "It would never be seen; never be hung even, and there was Mr. Tansley whispering in her ear; Women can't paint, women can't write ..." (34).

This situation is one of the words that best describes the situation of women in this novel and therefore in the period. According to these words, men can do any job, but women's duties are limited in society.

The process was quite hard, for Woolf had to work within and outside of the chains of the patriarchal language system that had limited women thus far: when those women characters did not conform to the traditional notions of femininity, Woolf resisted labeling them because she did not accept to introduce new normalizing categories that would, in turn, participate in further or new oppressive structures.

Woolf's two novels, *Mrs Dalloway* and *To The Lighthouse* which are examined in this study, may be regarded as formative feminist texts, written as nonfiction with the use of some fictional elements. She shares her view through the voice of a privileged woman who guides the readers through a series of thought experiments, analysis of patriarchal structures, and an overreaching message that women should have equal artistic and intellectual possibilities and chances to men.

For example, when we examine *Mrs. Dalloway*, we see that Clarissa Dalloway is the protagonist of the story. Dalloway's point of view is the first in the work, and it is followed more closely than any other character's. We are privy to Dalloway's wandering thoughts as she prepares for the party, she will throw that evening. Mrs. Dalloway is outgoing and concerned about what others think of her, but she is also self-aware. She often ponders the ultimate purpose of life and wonders if happiness is genuinely achievable. Her life fills her with both delight and terror, which she expresses in her struggles to create a balance between her yearning for privacy and her need to communicate with others.

Mrs. Dalloway, in the novel, tries to compare herself to her past, despite her powerful recollections by constantly overlaying the past and the present. She is fearful of aging and death for the most of the novel, even while she engages in life-affirming activities such as purchasing flowers. Mrs. Dalloway spends the day remembering the pivotal summer when she married her husband, Richard, rather than her friend Peter Walsh. Though she is content with Richard, she is not sure she made the right decision about Peter, and she constantly considers her friend Sally Seton, whom she once loved. These words reflect the patriarchal social structure of England at that time, considering the social structure of the author.

When it comes to Mrs. Dalloway's partner, Richard, when the Labour Party takes power, a Conservative member of Parliament, he proposes to publish a history of the renowned English military family, the Brutons. He enjoys being in the country and is an athlete. He is a caring husband and parent. He is committed to social reform, but he also values English tradition. He did not make it into the Cabinet, which is the key governing body. In this novel, Richard is a traditionalist and unable to say that he loves Mrs. Dalloway. He also thinks that people depend on him and need him.

When we look at the novel *To The Lighthouse*, just like Clarrisa, Mrs. Ramsay is a woman who feels the shortcomings of the period. There are words that both characters expect to hear from their husbands and cannot hear.

In all these, we can conclude that, it is obvious that daily matters and fiction are much likely measured by male values and standards, for the type and role of women presented by Woolf in both novels, *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To The Lighthouse* are limited

accordingly to the images and values set by those standards, in terms of representation of women. Women are put in an unfortunate and inferior position by men and the patriarchal system that was prevailing in the 20th century.



CHAPTER 3: ANALYSIS OF THE BOOKS

3.1. The Image of “the Angel in the House”

In the 19th century, “the popular image of the ideal wife/woman came to be, the Angel in the House; she was expected to be devoted and submissive to her husband” (The City University of New York, 2011). The Angel in the phrase, is very weak and ineffectual. The City University of New York (2011), expresses the phrase as follows.

The phrase Angel in the House comes from the title of an immensely popular poem by Coventry Patmore, in which he holds his angel-wife up as a model for all women. Believing that his wife Emily was the perfect Victorian wife, he wrote *The Angel in the House* about her (originally published in 1854, revised through 1862). Though it did not receive much attention when it was first published in 1854, it became increasingly popular through the rest of the nineteenth century and continued to be influential into the twentieth century. For Virginia Woolf, the repressive ideal of women represented by the Angel in the House was still so potent that she wrote, in 1931, "Killing the Angel in the House was part of the occupation of a woman writer". (The City University of New York, 2011)

The following poem highlights a variety of qualities, including how "artless" this woman is and how a woman should be "amiable and innocent." The woman in this poem is described in such a way that she represents the ordinary middle-class woman and the pressures she faces. Because middle-class women did not work, their contribution to society and the family consisted of conforming to these traits and expectations.

Man must be pleased; but him to please
Is woman's pleasure; down the gulf
Of his condoled necessities
She casts her best, she flings herself.
How often flings for nought, and yokes
Her heart to an icicle or whim,
Whose each impatient word provokes
Another, not from her, but him;
While she, too gentle even to force
His penitence by kind replies,
Waits by, expecting his remorse,
With pardon in her pitying eyes;
And if he once, by shame oppress'd,
A comfortable word confers,
She leans and weeps against his breast,

And seems to think the sin was hers;
Or any eye to see her charms,
At any time, she's still his wife,
Dearly devoted to his arms;
She loves with love that cannot tire;
And when, ah woe, she loves alone,
Through passionate duty love springs higher,
As grass grows taller round a stone. (Patmore, 1854)

The type of angel in the house is the type of woman ideally imagined by men in the patriarchal society, and among her virtues, honesty, humility, meekness and innocence are the foremost ones (Moran, 2000).

Dastarlı (2021), in her research, explained the concept of "To Kill or Not to Kill an Angel in the House" as follows.

Until the 20th century, suitable conditions did not exist for women to produce at home, and Virginia Woolf clearly expresses the situation for Victorian women and prompts us to think about the contemporary equivalent of this situation. For example, a woman who wants to write has to use the common living room. They don't even have half hours of their own, the woman's work is always interrupted. ... Woolf's murder of the angel at home seems to be the product of a kind of "masculinization" need to be able to produce. (Dastarlı, 2021)¹

The phrase "killing the angel in the house" here, of course, does not imply a real killing. The phrase here means that women can get rid of their suppressed personality, open new doors, stand on their own feet and criticize the patriarchal social structure of the period. While many studies on this subject argue that "the angel in the house should be killed", many others like Parker (2007) state that "it is necessary to live with the devil". It can be said that Virginia Woolf did not kill the angel in the house completely in her own life, but only with her obstructive and oppressive side (Dastarlı, 2021).

In general, the patriarchal structure in England in the 20th century indicates that this was the way women were viewed at that time. A woman is a worthless being that should only serve her husband. There is no obligation or requirement to participate in business life. For this reason, the novels titled *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To The Lighthouse*,

¹ Since the language of Dastarlı's research is Turkish, the statements have been translated into English by the author of this thesis.

which are discussed in this study, were evaluated according to social Feminism, of this period.

3.2. Male Dominance on Wives and Necessity of Killing the Angel in the House

In the 20th century, women's situation was diminished, by introducing a slew of issues relating to women because of patriarchal society. Women in these centuries were meant to be helpless, weak, fragile, delicate individuals incapable of making judgments beyond deciding some things, ensuring that their husbands could relax and unwind at home away from political problems. Critics claimed that preserving patriarchal beliefs about family and femininity undervalued women's self-image, assuming that they would merely be domestic women with no time or direction to build any kind of image.

Mrs. Dalloway depicts a day in the life of Clarissa Dalloway, who reflects on her life while organizing a party and feels that much of it has been inconsequential. A feminist tone is set from the start, but it is often subtly. Clarissa has decided to buy the flowers for the party herself because her maid is overworked. She immediately recalls a former lover, Peter Walsh.

The author, Woolf, first describes some of the features of Clarissa Dalloway, the protagonist, at the beginning of the novel.

Mrs. Dalloway is someone who obviously hides some feelings and cannot live her thoughts openly but expresses them in a poetic language when she is alone.

How fresh, how calm, stiller than this of course, the air was in the early morning; like the flap of a wave; the kiss of a wave; chill and sharp and yet solemn, feeling as she did, standing there at the open window, that something awful was about to happen; looking at the flowers, at the trees with the smoke winding off them and the rooks rising, falling; standing and looking. (3)

These expressions, even at the beginning of the novel, express the emotional perspective and hopes of the character, and therefore the author. After this part, we always see these shreds of hope, but the patriarchal social structure, the pressure of the male-dominated society, the words of the people around, alienate her from life and push her to despair. However, it is obvious that this is not the case. In a text that begins with hope in this way, what the reader feels when s/he finishes the novel expresses the state of society in the 20th century Britain.

In another quotation below, we see how the character broke up with someone she fell in love with. This separation is reflected to us by the author throughout the rest of the novel. Because the name of the character's lover, Peter, with whom she broke up, is constantly mentioned in the novel. This situation tells us that Clarissa constantly remembers her past, which will be discussed in the following chapters of this thesis.

But with Peter everything had to be shared; everything gone into. And it was intolerable, and when it came to that scene in the little garden by the fountain, she had to break with him or they would have been destroyed, both of them ruined, she was convinced; though she had borne about with her for years like an arrow sticking in her heart the grief, the anguish; and then the horror of the moment when someone told her at a concert that he had married a woman met on the boat going to India! Never should she forget all that! Cold, heartless, a prude, he called her. (6)

In this quotation it is stated that Mrs. Dalloway's separation from Peter is essential and that the heartache is lifelong. Today, we know that in patriarchal societies, women unfortunately do not have as many rights as men. This is also the case at the beginning of the 20th century, when the novel was written. According to the author's description, Mrs. Dalloway is being insulted by her ex-love Peter with words such as "cold", "heartless" and "prude". These insults reflect the oppressive structure of society.

Another quotation describing the situation of women at that time is as follows:

She felt very young; at the same time unspeakably aged. She sliced like a knife through everything; at the same time was outside, looking on. She had a perpetual sense, as she watched the taxi cabs, of being out, out, far out to sea and alone; she always had the feeling that it was very, very dangerous to live even one day. Not that she thought herself clever, or much out of the ordinary. ... She knew nothing; no language, no history; she scarcely read a book now, except memoirs in bed. (6)

This quotation describes some of the aspirations or curiosities of the character. The character's desire to learn something such as language and history shows that women fell behind in education in this period compared to men. It can be deduced that the character who talks about not reading a book did not have the right to do so at that time. In this situation, years later, she compares herself to Peter, who is in a good position, and regrets that she is behind him.

In the meantime, while reading these statements of the author, it is seen that some desires of the characters are constantly mentioned. From this, it can be deduced

that the characters also have some desires which have not been achieved in their lifetime because of male dominance in patriarchal society.

One of the best examples describing the wound caused by the patriarchal structure of the period on women might be this sentence; “This late age of the world's experience had bred in them all, all men and women, a well of tears. Tears and sorrows; courage and endurance; a perfectly upright and stoical bearing” (7).

According to the character's experience, the women of the period succumbed to tears and grief. In the text, Mrs. Dalloway talks about her acquaintances who suffer from this condition. This situation reveals that it was difficult to get love and get together, especially for women at that period.

It is precisely for this reason that Mrs. Dalloway expresses a desire to re-live her life and to recreate something. “Oh if she could have had her life over again! She thought, stepping on to the pavement, could have looked even differently!” (8). These sentences reflect her past regrets and longings. She states that maybe if she could live her life again, she would be in a better place or that she would evaluate the circumstances differently. “But often now this body she wore, this body, with all its capacities, seemed nothing—nothing at all. She had the oddest sense of being herself invisible; unseen; unknown... (8)”

The life she is in prevents her from being herself. In fact, she becomes the “Mrs. Richard Dalloway” (8), instead of Mrs. Dalloway. In this case, the character expresses that she feels strange emotions. She states that she will never be herself again, and that she will never be able to act like herself. The patriarchal social structure of the period prevents women from being as they want.

Mrs. Dalloway describes her frustration in life by stating that she is no longer afraid of anything:

Fear no more, says the heart, committing its burden to some sea, which sighs collectively for all sorrows, and renews, begins, collects, lets fall. And the body alone listens to the passing bee; the wave breaking; the dog barking, far away barking and barking. (28)

Mrs. Dalloway has wanted to reach out to the beauties of the world to this day. However, this is not possible due to the pressure of the society in which she lives. The

quotation above indicates that the character is about to give up something. She no longer focuses on what is around her. We can call it ignorance, or boredom.

...for there's nothing in the world so bad for some women as marriage, he thought; and politics; and having a Conservative husband, like the admirable Richard. So it is, so it is, he thought, shutting his knife with a snap. (29)

The above quotation mentions a bad situation that can happen to women as 20th century in Britain were a time of great political controversy (University of California, 1964). This quotation, on the other hand, describes the difficulty of marrying a man who is engaged in politics, in the patriarchal structure of that period, at a time when men were political. Mrs. Dalloway thinks these words while walking on the street. From this, we can say that women had to be a good house and a good mother, this situation puts pressure on them and wears them out.

She would have been, like Lady Bexborough, slow and stately; rather large; interested in politics like a man; with a country house; very dignified, very sincere. Instead of which she had a narrow pea-stick figure; a ridiculous little face, beaked like a bird's. She had the oddest sense of being herself invisible; unseen; unknown; there being no more marrying, no more having of children now, but only this astonishing and rather solemn progress with the rest of them, up Bond Street, this being Mrs Dalloway; not even Clarissa any more; this being Mrs Richard Dalloway. (10)

Here we see the pressure inside the character. The pressure of unhappiness causes her to tell what's inside to someone else. The words she heard from an old woman, on the other hand, express what a "silly" (60) thought she had. From the beginning of the novel, there is unhappiness and sadness in Clarissa Dalloway. This is due to her inability to find a place in the society she lives in. In England at that time, women were oppressed under the domination of men. Woolf reflects this situation to her readers in *Mrs. Dalloway*.

From the beginning to the end, Woolf's novel *Mrs. Dalloway* describes the unhappiness and despair of women in England of that period. Even though women have an emotional nature, which Woolf reflected in some sentences at the beginning of the novel, it is a fact that women were oppressed in the patriarchal social order at that time. For this reason, women need to "kill the angel" within them in order to gain a place in society. But despite everything, the woman does not lose her emotional self.

Peter always in love, always in love with the wrong woman? What's your love? she might say to him. And she knew his answer; how it is the most important

thing in the world and no woman possibly understood it. Very well. But could any man understand what she meant either? about life? (87).

In this quotation the protagonist of the novel thinks that love is the most important thing. From this, it can be deduced that women want to protect their inner angel instead of killing it.

The same is true in *To The Lighthouse*, written by Woolf in the 20th century patriarchal society. The novel begins by describing something that women cannot do. Woolf states that she likens the characters in the novel *To The Lighthouse* to her parents. Therefore, considering that the main characters, who are in constant conflict in the novel, reflect Woolf's parents, it becomes clear what kind of environment Woolf grew up in.

The novel *To The Lighthouse* obviously occupies an important place in Woolf's life. To understand this, it is necessary to pay attention to Lily, one of the characters of the novel. Lily is forty-four years old in this novel. "Here was Lily, at forty-four" (105). This figure also indicates Woolf's age, based on the novel published in 1927. Therefore, it may be said that Woolf describes the period, her environment and even herself in *To The Lighthouse*. In fact, the death of Lily at the end of the novel means the killing of the angel in the house, that is, exemption from the patriarchal society.

But here it is necessary to think of Mrs. Ramsay as the angel in the house. Because she is a woman who is oppressed under the patriarchal social structure. In this case, the statements made by Woolf in her article titled *Profession for Women* are remarkable:

I turned upon her and caught her by the throat. I did my best to kill her. My excuse, if I were to be had up in a court of law, would be that I acted in self-defence. Had I not killed her she would have killed me. She would have plucked the heart out of my writing. For, as I found, directly I put pen to paper, you cannot review even a novel without having a mind of your own, without expressing what you think to be the truth about human relations, morality, sex. And all these questions, according to the Angel of the House, cannot be dealt with freely and openly by women; they must charm, they must conciliate, they must--to put it bluntly--tell lies if they are to succeed. (Woolf, 1931)

Here we see Woolf trying to kill Angel in the House. From here, the movements, Woolf's crushing under social pressure can be understood. In addition, considering the real life of the characters in the novel, reflecting the England of that period, it is understood that women are dependent on men. Because Woolf is known

to define the relationship between her father and mother with the expressions "difficult" and "exactly dependent on her" (Woolf, 2017).

So much so that there is a male-dominated social order in the novel, and in this order, men say that women cannot be interested in art. "Women can't paint, women can't write ..." (34; 60; 63; 110; 111; 137). The author repeats the same sentence in many parts of the novel. In fact, this sentence is the clearest sentence in the Woolf's novel, describing the pressures of the patriarchal society in the 20th century Britain. With this generalization, she states that women not only cannot paint or write, but also cannot engage in cultural activities.

The main female characters in *To The Lighthouse*, Mrs. Ramsay and Lilly are emotional due to the nature of the women. These emotional beings are so afraid of their husbands at that time that it is forbidden to even think, let alone say, negative things. The following excerpt conveys this to its readers.

And, touching his hair with her lips, she thought, he will never be so happy again, but stopped herself, remembering how it angered her husband that she should say that. Still, it was true. They were happier now than they would ever be again. (41)

Here, Mrs. Ramsay expresses her concerns about her son's future while stroking/kissing his hair. This applies not only to Mrs. Ramsay's son, but to all eight children. Here, the author reflects that the protagonist is emotional enough to worry about the future of her children, and they live in a male-dominated society to be afraid to think about it.

So much so that this sentimentality angers Mr. Ramsay. We understand this with these words. Mr. Ramsay says "You're teaching your daughters to exaggerate" (46) by reproving Mrs. Ramsay. Here they are walking. While walking, Mr. Ramsay is seen getting angry with Mrs. Ramsay all the way. Mr. Ramsay's remarks throughout the discussion are self-justifying. From this it can be understood that women did not have the right to respond to men at that time. Even if she does respond, she gets a bigger reaction each time.

In fact, what Mrs. Ramsay goes through in this novel does not mean she does not love her husband. No matter how insulting her husband may be, oppressive society has taught Mrs. Ramsay to love:

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. (88)

Although Mr. Ramsay constantly accuses his wife, Mrs. Ramsay expresses and believes that she loves him. Despite all his insults, he always loves her, she thinks. In the quotation below, she even fantasizes about his love. In fact Mrs. Ramsay imagines her husband constantly thinking about her beauty. Despite having had a discussion about beauty before, and despite her husband saying the opposite, Mrs. Ramsay is obsessed with her beauty. This obsession stems from what her husband, Mr. Ramsay told her:

Was there no crumb on his coat? Nothing she could do for him? Getting up, she stood at the window with the reddish-brown stocking in her hands, partly to turn away from him, partly because she remembered how beautiful it often is--the sea at night. But she knew that he had turned his head as she turned; he was watching her. 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? (88).

But in the end, her fantasy ended and Mr. Ramsay's words wore her out. As can be seen below, Mrs. Ramsay stops seeing herself as beautiful and expresses her sadness. Furthermore, Mr. Ramsey does not care how he badly affect women's feelings. Mrs. Ramsey and Lily are both exposed his rude behaviors. In this situation, Lily lost her sense and her hopelessness increased.

Instantly, with the force of some primeval gust (for really he could not restrain himself any longer), there issued from him such a groan that any other woman in the whole world would have done something, said something--all except myself, thought Lily, girding at herself bitterly, who am not a woman, but a peevish, ill-tempered, dried-up old maid, presumably. (105).

This situation expresses the intimidation of the individual under social pressure. In societies where women cannot live their feelings and thoughts as they wish, such problems are still seen today. In fact, we see women's innate features, sensuality and daydreaming in these novels, such as *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To The Lighthouse*. For this reason, both novels are mostly about women who cannot express their thoughts clearly and who are oppressed under social and patriarchal structure. In this case, the "angel", which is in the nature of women, is killed by some women under the pressure of the patriarchal society, while in others it continues to live with their

imagination. The characters often question this situation that will be expressed in other parts of this thesis.

3.3. Mrs. Dalloway's Inner Questioning of a Feminine Self Identity without Pressure of the Society in the Light of Social Feminism

Mrs. Dalloway narrates the story of Clarissa Dalloway by offering the reader a peep into one day of her life and a glimpse into her thinking through free indirect discourses and flashbacks. Clarissa's day is consumed by preparations for a party that will be held at her home. Clarissa is more than her excellent taste and manners for mingling, despite her surface-level flawless society-wife features, as the reader discovers. Her resemblance to women is contrasted with her psychological deviancy and vivid memories of her longing for another woman.

In other words, Mrs. Dalloway is a woman who questions the past, is crushed under male domination and is partially regretful. Sarıkaş (2005) explains the situation regarding Mrs. Dalloway as follows:

People at Mrs. Dalloway have very intimate ties; one merges with the other. A character is subject to the influence of what the other sees, hears and hears, and inevitably presented in the novel; It is the complexity of life in which a character's present situation and past experience is a living element, rather than a living character's majestically walking among inanimate objects. The people (characters) in the novel are real people with their own dramas. Coloring the day with people or what goes through one's mind under the influence of daily life; Which is more true is unknown. (Sarıkas, 2005)².

Mrs. Dalloway is set in London just after the First World War and focuses on a typical day in the lives of a few of its residents. It mostly follows the titular heroine, Clarissa Dalloway, as she navigates London in preparation for one of her legendary parties for London's upper crust.

Woolf's novel defies typical narrative in the sense that there is minimal physical activity; there are no rip-roaring adventure tales to be found in the novel. Without sacrificing power, poignancy, or excitement, the action in Woolf's novel might take place inside the character rather than outside in the psychological world. This perspective

² Since the language of Sarıkas's research is Turkish, the statements have been translated into English by the author of this thesis.

elevates the inner world to the status of the outer world, demonstrating how interior experiences may be just as powerful and transforming as external ones.

Clarissa emerges onto the streets of London, marveling at "what a morning" (4) it is, and Woolf begins *Mrs. Dalloway* with a sense of joy in the mundane. Clarissa recalls how "it was utterly absorbing; all this; the cabs passing" (9) as she is awestruck by life's intensity and beauty. These sentences express the novel's focus on the intensity of ordinary experience, especially in the seemingly banal moments that we take for granted so often. In the everyday, daily, moment-to-moment experience of life as it unfolds, Woolf finds enormous dimensions.

In the novel, Clarissa is a complex character who is haunted by the decisions she has made in her life, spending much of the time musing on her past. Clarissa wonders if she chose the proper spouse out of her two male suitors, if she will maintain a rich relationship with her daughter Elizabeth, if she is too engrossed in the superficial world of society, and, finally, if she has had enough significance in her life to live old without regrets.

Clarissa ponders the self and its connection to others as she observes how "absorbing" (6) the world around her is, recalling an old acquaintance and lover, Peter Walsh. The expression "absorbing" here can describe social oppression and the England of the time. Throughout the novel, Mrs. Dalloway remembers her past and somehow judges herself. Already, the regret of not being able to be with Peter is learned by the readers in this part of the novel.

Clarissa Dalloway is a candidate to be Woolf's "Angel in the house" in this novel. Because Clarissa is a character who is in constant questioning, has past pain and wants to change her life. We understand this from the words of Clarissa: "Oh if she could have had her life over again! she thought, stepping on to the pavement, could have looked even differently!" (8).

Here, below, we see that she is where she wants to be but cannot be.

She would have been, in the first place, dark like Lady Bexborough, with a skin of crumpled leather and beautiful eyes. She would have been, like Lady Bexborough, slow and stately; rather large; interested in politics like a man; with a country house; very dignified, very sincere. Instead of which she had a narrow pea-stick figure; a ridiculous little face, beaked like a bird's. (8).

First of all, here, Clarissa has stated that she wants to be dignified and sincere. Here, Lady Bexborough's life attracts her attention and in a way questions herself. Considering that Clarissa is oppressed under the patriarchal social structure, it is seen that there are many things that she wanted to achieve but could not achieve. Because there is a constant wish or if situation. Clarissa, who is understood to be not content with her situation and the environment she lives in, shows this situation in the rest of the novel.

In the same way, considering that Woolf's life took place in an oppressive and patriarchal period, in her era, it can be understood that Woolf had a role in this novel as well.

Mrs. Dalloway is primarily concerned with problems of identity, and it foreshadows *To The Lighthouse*, which is the other novel that is examined in this thesis, in its examination of selfhood boundaries, life's impermanence, and individual purpose. The novel explores the consequences of living in a manufactured self, as well as how to preserve a sense of purpose and freedom when that self creates the guidelines and boundaries for one's whole life. Clarissa cherishes the social self with her enjoyment of organizing parties and bringing people together, while simultaneously valuing the moments when the created self-fades away and the borders between her and the world vanish.

Clarissa has settled into a comfortable, safe, and unchallenging life as the wife of a politician, having grown up practical, idealistic, and rebellious. Clarissa, on the other hand, finds her former lovers teasing her with predictions that are all too true: that she would grow up to be the perfect hostess, marrying "a Prime Minister and stand at the top of a staircase" (8). The cynical attitude here means that her environment is judging her. Although psychologically crushed by male domination from her childhood taught her not to care about those around her, Mrs. Dalloway grew up emotionally and with many regrets at its core.

Clarissa's fear of becoming little more than a home ideal was tapped into by such an insult, and her struggle with this ideal and its purpose is a major theme throughout the work. Clarissa decides not to state of "any one in the world today that they were this or that" (9) because she is afraid that her intricate life experience will

be reduced to such an idea. She does not feel that a simple explanation can adequately depict the fundamental nature of human life.

Clarissa refuses to let social life determine her essential identity and refuses to impose such rigid definitions on others with this mindset. Clarissa prioritizes the kinds of “experiences and insights of connection and appreciation for life that are enabled by one's own inner life” (Shukla, 2007) and identity - one that is determined by oneself, not others, and completely open to new experiences and revision – in preserving her privacy of the soul.

While Clarissa appears to want to perform the role of perfect hostess and society wife that society has assigned to her, she also has a greater inner power that neither society nor the men in her life recognize or support.

Virginia Woolf's voice in social feminist criticism is about gender choice in general. Clarissa Dalloway is a middle-aged woman whose identity is heavily influenced by ideologies and norms of patriarchal society. Her identity is greatly influenced by the discourses and sanctions of the society she lives in. It is not possible for her to have a definite identity without the society she is in. Her identity depends on the attitudes and behaviors of other people. She questions herself because of her female identity, which is constructed with the stereotypical ideas she has been taught. Clarissa has tried to destroy the traditional limitations and binary oppositions between men and women.

The first sentence of the novel, "Mrs. Dalloway said She would buy the flowers herself" (Woolf 5) shows that this novel is a novel about the maintenance of people. Throughout the novel, Mrs. Dalloway is uncertain about her identity. She is indecisive about her gender. Although she is unhappy with being tied to only one person, she feels compelled to choose herself in order to move on with her life. The protagonist of the novel, Clarissa Dalloway, is the wife of Richard Dalloway, who is fond of freedom and has an important place in the environment they live in.

This free-spirited woman also aspires to an aristocratic life. She throws a big party in the evening at their house in Westminster, where they live for more than twenty years, Mrs. Dalloway wants to buy the flowers herself for the party, reminds her of her past, which she observes and perceives around her during her walk to the

flower shop she always goes to. While the one day of Clarissa is told in the novel, details about her past and her thoughts about herself and life are also shared. The inner voices of each character living in the same city, on the same day, reflect life and the present. An ordinary party turns into a life story involving life, death and choices.

Mrs. Dalloway, whose thoughts swing around between the past and the future in her inner world, becomes aware of the outer world when London's big clock tower, Big Ben, rings. Likewise, the difference between the two tenses is emphasized for the reader. Returning to the past many times with her thoughts until that moment, Mrs. Dalloway thinks that when the clock strikes, time can never be taken back. The fact that she thinks about Peter, who has been in India for a long time, "Maybe they were separated for hundreds of years, Peter and the two of them" is an example of the relativity of time, that a certain period of time can change according to people and mood.

As another example, Elizabeth takes a long walk on her way home after shopping with Miss Kilman. She cannot understand how time passes, as she enjoys the freedom in this walk where she is alone with herself and contemplates, and when she learns the time, she sees that it is later than she thought. Since she spends a time zone that she wants and loves, the time zone that is the same every hour seems shorter to her.

In addition, the fact that a certain sequence of events is not followed in the novel, and the thoughts that come and go between the past, present and future are another indication that psychological time is based, not clock time. As Peter leaves Clarissa and walks towards Trafalgar Square, Peter's thoughts swing around between present, future, and past:

He was not old, or set, or dried in the least. As for caring what they said of him—the Dalloways, the Whitbreads, and their set, he cared not a straw—not a straw (though it was true he would have, some time or other, to see whether Richard couldn't help him to some job). Striding, starting, he glared at the statue of the Duke of Cambridge. He had been sent down from Oxford—true. (36)

His concern about the future of finding a job interrupts him thinking while first referring to his current state of not being old or depressed. Right after, he returns to the past with the statue of the Duke of Cambridge she saw on the road.

The time is depicted with these sentences in *Mrs. Dalloway*:

Shredding and slicing, dividing and subdividing, the clocks of Harley Street nibbled at the June day, counselled submission, upheld authority, and pointed out in chorus the supreme advantages of a sense of proportion, until the mound of time was so far diminished that a commercial clock, suspended above a shop in Oxford Street, announced, genially and fraternally, as if it were a pleasure to Messrs. Rigby and Lowndes to give the information gratis, that it was half-past one. (73)

As understood, time divided into hours, minutes and seconds imposes authority, shapes life at intervals that people measure and cut by ignoring their own perception of time. The greatest rebellion against time of this kind shows that something is happening in the inner world of the person.

Sometimes an object, a sound, an image, a smell, a memory, a thought, or similar phenomena evoke others, and the mind changes the flow of thought by switching from one to another among these objects. Mrs. Dalloway goes back to the past and begins to think about her memories, as the creaking sound of the hinges when opening the terrace doors in the morning of the day evokes the sound of the windows in Bourton being opened.

In another example, Lucrezia thinks about her husband's hopeless situation and her own helplessness, while thinking that her comforting family is far away. When she thinks of the beauties of her own hometown, the words "For you should see the Milan gardens" (17) are unknowingly poured out of his mouth and he suddenly interrupts her thoughts. This connotation is not randomly chosen by the author, it is in harmony with the sense of helplessness and loneliness felt by the character. Between these thoughts, she thought, "I am alone; I am alone!" (17) This situation reflects the oppression of patriarchal society.

When Peter leaves Mrs. Dalloway, his head is full of thoughts about her, while the cars he sees on the road will lead him to thoughts about the mechanics that the car evokes for a while. Then he returns to the subject of Clarissa again.

All India lay behind him; plains, mountains; epidemics of cholera; a district twice as big as Ireland; decisions he had come to alone—he, Peter Walsh; who was now really for the first time in his life, in love. Clarissa had grown hard, he thought; and a trifle sentimental into the bargain, he suspected, looking at the great motor-cars capable of doing—how many miles on how many gallons? For he had a turn for mechanics; had invented a plough in his district, had

ordered wheel-barrows from England, but the coolies wouldn't use them, all of which Clarissa knew nothing whatever about. (35)

As it turns out, Clarissa does not care about Peter. He just realizes that Clarissa was a little emotional, but that's it. He returns to his job and continues to deal with cars. Thus, it can be understood that women are not given importance in patriarchal societies.

3.4. Mrs. Ramsay's Inner Questioning of a Feminine Self Identity without Pressure of the Society in the Light of Social Feminism

To The Lighthouse is set in the 1910s on the Isle of Skye in Scotland and follows the Ramsay family, who share their home with a number of other significant characters who appear throughout the story. *To The Lighthouse* is not a plot-driven work, and it is not an easy read; the reader will fight to keep up as the characters' moods, sensations, and introspections fluctuate. Mrs. Ramsay resides in a scenario where her social life is completely limited on one end and her personal life is somewhat balanced on the other.

Characters in the novel are trying to figure out who they are and how to live a meaningful life. Moments escape from the limitations of social life, which are a manner in which characters exist freely outside of time's grasp and decay, are a means in which characters exist freely outside of time's grasp and decay inside the novel. As in Woolf's other books, the impact of time on the self's development serves as a focus of meaning as Woolf investigates individual needs for connection to others, legacy, and permanence. As a result, *To The Lighthouse* reflects the self's struggle to acknowledge and accept life's impermanence.

Mrs. Ramsay loses her sense of self at the start of Woolf's *To The Lighthouse*, after allowing her mind to wander with thoughts of misery, age, and disappointment while staring out the window at the notional lighthouse, and then begins to clear her mind. At the beginning of the novel, Mrs. Ramsay appears dreaming. When the reader continues to read the novel, he sees that this situation constantly confronts him. We can see these daydreams as an internal questioning.

The author begins the novel by remembering her six-year-old boy:

Since he belonged, even at the age of six, to that great clan which cannot keep this feeling separate from that, but must let future prospects, with their joys and sorrows, cloud what is actually at hand, since to such people even in earliest childhood any turn in the wheel of sensation has the power to crystallise and transfix the moment upon which its gloom or radiance rests, James Ramsay, sitting on the floor cutting out pictures from the illustrated catalogue of the Army and Navy stores,¹ endowed the picture of a refrigerator, as his mother spoke, with heavenly bliss. It was fringed with joy (1).

According to this quotation, the author obviously knows that there are things that the main character cannot achieve in life. The thoughts of her reflect that he will get what he wants in the future. Here we see a reflection of her own emotional character on related to her son. Therefore, this can be called an internal questioning and the author tends to question the past without the pressure of society.

These interrogations continue throughout the novel. Throughout the novel, Mrs. Ramsay questions herself and everyone, especially Mr. Ramsay.

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... (3)

Here, it can be seen that Mrs. Ramsay is clearly under male domination. From this internal questioning, we clearly see that the author involved in the protagonist's inner questioning. Mrs. Dalloway is obviously always unfair to her husband, Mr. Ramsay. This situation can be understood as her questioning that she is an individual who is oppressed under the patriarchal social structure and does not have his own decisions.

Almost all of the characters are present for Mrs. Ramsay's dinner party, which takes place in the middle of the novel. With its constant shifts of perspective and the mental state of the individuals, this scene exhibits both Woolf's thematic interest and narrative method. As discussions occur, Woolf captures their disappointments and insecurities about themselves and each other, which were evident in every gesture and word.

Brooding, she changed the pool into the sea, and made the minnows into sharks and whales, and cast vast clouds over this tiny world by holding her hand against the sun, and so brought darkness and desolation, like God himself, to millions of ignorant and innocent creatures, and then took her hand away suddenly and let the sun stream down. (52)

With this quotation, the main character of the novel wants to be in front of a unique landscape. With this questioning, it is possible to dream of a world that she cannot reach.

Personality is depicted with emotions of anxiety and contrasted with calmness and liberation in Mrs. Ramsay's departure from the self scene. Considering how much society places a premium on concepts like self-image, self-esteem, and self-reliance, Mrs. Ramsay, as a mother and wife, is constantly attempting to fulfill her beliefs of what societal roles involve - a pursuit that, although necessary, also exhausts her.

Mrs. Ramsay is crucial to *To The Lighthouse's* structure and development. She is such a mother, soothing, and self-sacrificing figure that most readers will feel a strong connection to her. The exaltation of such a figure, however, is sardonic, as Mrs. Ramsay is Woolf's most despised character. Mrs. Ramsay serves as a symbol of women's oppression, whether in a good or negative way, and her handicap is acquiescence to the system. She is uninterested in the role that society has assigned to her. Women, in addition to men, play an essential role in the continued discriminatory tradition towards women, and women like Mrs. Ramsay contribute to this understanding.

Mrs. Ramsay is the idealized woman type in terms of the 20th century standards, as she has flawlessly performed the responsibilities that have been assigned to her by tradition. She is a wonderful hostess to serve, especially to men. Her primary responsibility is to cope with her husband's selfishness, but she also finds it important to deal with all male egos. For reasons she could not explain, she has the entire opposite sex under her care because of their gallantry and valour. That is why she is always questioning herself throughout the novel, *To The Lighthouse*.

Through *To The Lighthouse*, Mrs. Ramsay successfully took the part given to her and performed her duties as a housewife: caregiver, nurturing, charming hostess, and an attentive wife. She mothered the many people staying at the Ramsay summer house in the Hebrides to an extent that she felt overwhelmed by their coming "to her, naturally, since she was a woman, all day long with this and that; one wanting this, another that; the children were growing up; she often felt she was nothing but a sponge

sopped full of human emotions” (Woolf, 1927) devoting herself unconditionally to her children.

Mrs. Ramsay's responsibilities also extend to her husband; Mr. Ramsay relies on his wife to maintain his shaky ego and shaky sense of self-worth, continually looking to her for assurance and validation of his professional skills. Mrs. Ramsay stipulates him the sympathy he needs and requests until “filled with her words, like a child who drops off satisfied , he said, at last, looking at her with humble gratitude, restored, renewed, that he would take a turn...” (27).

The smile of a child nursing at the mother’s breast asserts the element of mothering in the Ramsay’s marriage, her sympathy and encouragement nurse and sustain her husband’s flimsy ego, performing the role of both a mother and wife for her husband. However, the breast feeding metaphor carries with it the jarring implication of vampirism as if Mr. Ramsay draws the life out of her for she felt “exhausted in body” a feeling she carries out throughout the novel after satisfying her husband’s need for sympathy.

Woolf's novels never shy away from confronting life's most pressing issues. Her work illuminates entire worlds — not just the outward world, which is in perpetual movement and uncertainty, but also the inner world of the human psyche. Woolf digs at how one responds to the external world and reimagines it through the filters of the thoughts that make up one's sense of self and worldview, demonstrating this experience moment by moment. Woolf confronts the reader with how we make sense of our identity and who we are by bringing these inner worlds to life on the page.

What is the motive for drawing a line in ourselves and others? What makes us believe we are so cut off from the rest of the world? Where do we get our confidence in our classifications of heritage and traditions? Woolf's work encourages us to deal with such issues, to rethink our preconceptions and assumptions about them. Woolf deconstructs some common wisdom about these self-beliefs by delving into these existential questions. Woolf offers characters that are bound by such ideas in a readily recognized, fixed self, despite her skepticism of identity categories and their impact on how we behave ourselves.

As Woolf's books demonstrate, self-awareness and awareness are not the characteristics that one possesses or does not possess; they are virtues that one aspires to, despite several setbacks and advances forward along the road. Every individual in her books is an ongoing, and even the most astute character is prone to reverting to ignorance.

Rather than condemning her characters, Woolf expresses sympathy for them, depicting their existence in all their gleam conflicts and emphasizing their subjective goals, needs, and wants. Woolf does not pass judgment, but she does reveal how the few symbols who open themselves up to a wider kind of identity and description – one in which identity is seen as a fluid fiction rather than a solid mandate – are undeniably better equipped to deal with life's change, cruelty, and chaos.

Freed from the desire for personal legacy, from the belief that our lives are self-contained, describable happenings, and fully aware of the deeper connections that exist between oneself and the emotional and spatial world around it, Woolf's more curious characters are better able to comprehend life as it unfolds. Clarissa accepts, even affirms, impermanence in order to identify moments of beauty while also acknowledging that each moment is unique and precious in its own right. They learn to be more introspective and thoughtful, allowing them to connect more intimately with the people and things around them.

Clarissa Dalloway, a woman who feels confined by her social roles while also being aware of their artificiality, is one of Woolf's most human characters *in Mrs. Dalloway*. Her inner life can feel frigid, even loveless, as a result of her detachment from others, yet with this rejection of passion comes a kind of clarity of understanding that others lack. If Clarissa's inner seclusion allows her to appreciate the simple pleasures of life and to feel deeply connected to the world surrounding her, it may also enable her to work toward a greater state of harmony in her interpersonal relationships.

Clarissa's re-entry into life is prompted by Septimus' death, and Woolf proposes a reawakening to life's beauty and a more balanced sense of selfhood. The fact that the self is a mental construct with no essential core does not imply that one may live without one. Identity is crucial for interpersonal connections and one's own mental health, but so is acknowledging that it is not solid. In this way, the novel promotes an

appreciation for even the least glamorous of life's regular experiences and happenings, as well as an understanding of the drawbacks and benefits of opposing self-perceptions.

Woolf investigates how one's concept of self can dictate a feeling of meaning and a method to dealing with the shortness of life, continuing her tendency of studying the self and identity begun in *To The Lighthouse*. In honor of Mrs. Ramsay, the novel's ending can be interpreted as a victory over heteropatriarchy. Mr. Ramsay was always "petty, selfish, vain, egotistical; he is spoilt; he is a tyrant; he wears Mrs. Ramsay to death" (17) Lily laments, and that guy never gave; that man took.

She, on the other hand, would be compelled to make a concession. Mrs. Ramsay was the one who had given. She had died and left all of this, giving, giving, giving. Mrs. Ramsay was the source of her rage" (29, 163). Mrs. Ramsay was thus a victim of heteropatriarchy through her marriage, as well as patriarchy through Mr. Ramsay's oppression. Mr. Ramsay's continual demand for a mirror has been "wearing Mrs. Ramsay to death" (17) as Lily foreshadows, and Mrs. Ramsay does die, probably as a result of Mr. Ramsay's need to be the perfect wife, mother, hostess, and lady. Mrs. Ramsay was good in many ways, as Lily explains, and was always trying to make others happy, even if it was only within the limits of the house.

As Crater implies, Lily is enraged not just at Mr. Ramsay for imposing his role on his wife, forcing her to always pose as an advocate for heteropatriarchy around Lily, but also at Mrs. Ramsay for letting it happen and not having the strength to deviate. However, when Lily paints the final strokes of her brush on her painting, she destroys any hold she had on her own life, and likely on the life of Mrs. Ramsay, who was, paradoxically, integrated into her art.

In England of the period, women are lonely but hopeful individuals because of their dreams. Due to Woolf's approach, we see the feeling of freedom a lot in the novel. The concept of loneliness is felt most of the life of the characters of the novel from the beginning of the novel *To The LightHouse*. Although Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay are fond of their children and spend time together, individuals sometimes return to their inner world. Since they mostly spend time together, their own rooms are their only shelters where they can be alone with themselves. Family members are alienated from society

and other individuals by staying away from traditions and rules and want to return to their inner journeys. By withdrawing to their own rooms, they can easily make fun of Mr. Tansley and talk about the subject they want away from the pressures of their parents.

The children do not like Mr Tansley and make fun of him all the time. Whenever they talk about something interesting, music and history, they humiliate him and therefore get angry at his way of thinking. After the children want to be left alone in their rooms, Mrs. Ramsay approaches Mr. Tansley, who was left alone and unfamiliar with everything, out of pity and invited him to go out to do his business. Mr. Tansley appears in the novel as a self-contained character who is alienated from people and disliked by those around him. Tansley is a character loved and protected by Mrs. Ramsay, who has lived in poverty in the past, has a lot of enthusiasm for what she cannot do. Mrs. Ramsay approaches Tansley with a motherly affection. This situation is due to the fact that the patriarchal social structure in England of the period imposed on women only the duty of a mother.

The balance of hope and despair of the woman in the novel can also be examined. On the first page of the novel, Mrs. Ramsay gives an answer with a conditional sentence to the question that James asks in the hope of wanting to go to the lighthouse. James' willingness to go to the lighthouse depends on good weather. James felt happy as if they were going to leave, and was happy as if a miracle he had been waiting for years would come; The refrigerator, which he cut out of the illustrated catalog of the wood markets, seemed like something from heaven to him with the joy of childhood. Although James is a small child of six years old, he is a sensitive child who does not separate his feelings from each other and puts both his joy and sadness on the moment he is experiencing in his expectations about the future. The concept of hope is explained by James' desire to go to the lighthouse, who is waiting for tomorrow with excitement.

"Yes, of course, if it's fine tomorrow," said Mrs. Ramsay. "But you'll have to be up with the lark," she added. To her son these words conveyed an extraordinary joy, as if it were settled, the expedition were bound to take place, and the wonder to which he had looked forward, for years and years it seemed, was, after a night's darkness and a day's sail, within touch. (6)

However, with his father's negative answer, James is disappointed and loses hope. This negative response destroys all hope of James, he falls into the clutches of despair. James feels murderous hatred towards his father; He is angry enough to consider killing him if he has any weapon at hand. This situation tells us that male dominance is unlimited. This situation affects not only women, but also children. This situation may be expressed by the mother figure in the novel later on.

"But," said his father, stopping in front of the drawing-room window, "it won't be fine." Had there been an axe handy, a poker, or any weapon that would have gashed a hole in his father's breast and killed him, there and then, James would have seized it. Such were the extremes of emotion that Mr. Ramsay excited in his children's breasts by his mere presence; standing, as now, lean as a knife, narrow as the blade of one, grinning sarcastically, not only with the pleasure of disillusioning his son and casting ridicule upon his wife, who was ten thousand times better in every way than he was (James thought), but also with some secret conceit at his own accuracy of judgement. What he said was true. It was always true. (6)

In the novel, the mother figure is in the position of instilling hope. But the father figure is authoritarian and has a word. The patriarchal society structure has always placed women in the position of possessive and compiler.

Another element of hope in the novel is the news that the circus is coming to town. There is a stir inside Mrs. Ramsay and she excitedly invites Tansley as well. They make plans for the future and look forward to that day with hope. As seen in the excerpt below, women cannot do anything if men do not let them.

"will visit this town," she read. It was terribly dangerous work for a one-armed man, she exclaimed, to stand on top of a ladder like that--his left arm had been cut off in a reaping machine two years ago. "Let us all go!" she cried, moving on, as if all those riders and horses had filled her with childlike exultation and made her forget her pity. "Let's go," he said, repeating her words, clicking them out, however, with a self-consciousness that made her wince. "Let us all go to the circus." No. He could not say it right. He could not feel it right. But why not? she wondered. What was wrong with him then? She liked him warmly, at the moment. Had they not been taken, she asked, to circuses when they were children? Never, he answered, as if she asked the very thing he wanted; had been longing all these days to say, how they did not go to circuses. (7)

Mrs. Ramsay thinks about wealth-poverty; she is actually a woman who helps the poor. She hopes to cure any pain that is a wound in society. But after thinking for a while, it becomes unbearable that she does not feel enough and there are too many people in need of help. These problems seem insoluble to her and she despairs. Later, he wants James to be hopeful for the future by stroking his hair, saying that the weather will be good.

Mrs. Ramsay is a housewife who always protects men and defends the patriarchal family structure with her traditional approach. She admires men for running state affairs and argues that men should be free. However, on the contrary, women should marry, establish a family, live in accordance with traditions and obey when they are of marriageable age. Mrs. Ramsay takes a stand for the freedom of men, not the freedom of women.

Indeed, she had the whole of the other sex under her protection; for reasons she could not explain, for their chivalry and valour, for the fact that they negotiated treaties, ruled India, controlled finance; finally for an attitude towards herself which no woman could fail to feel or to find agreeable, something trustful, childlike, reverential; which an old woman could take from a young man without loss of dignity, and woe betide the girl--pray Heaven it was none of her daughters!--who did not feel the worth of it, and all that it implied, to the marrow of her bones!

Their daughters Prue, Nancy and Rose raise their heads from the plate to contemplate their dream place when their mother resents them for Tansley. They want to be free under the harshness and pressure of their mothers and they imagine themselves in a place where they can be free. They want to live a crazy life in Paris. Afterwards, they still marvel at their mother's endless kindness. As can be seen, the women of the period were crushed under the patriarchal male society, but they did not lose hope.

Woolf in this novel; with the character of Mrs. Ramsay, talks about the mundaneness of daily life, her boredom and fear, and her questioning of life. She thinks that the poor family in the lighthouse cannot get news about their life when the weather is bad, they are locked in a tiny place, and they cannot live freely. Mrs. Ramsay is often immersed in her inner journey and complains of boredom and the mundaneness of everyday life. So much so that in society, women will have plenty of time to be bored, as they cannot do anything except some simple tasks.

Whatever she could find lying about, not really wanted, but only littering the room, to give those poor fellows, who must be bored to death sitting all day with nothing to do but polish the lamp and trim the wick and rake about on their scrap of garden, something to amuse them. For how would you like to be shut up for a whole month at a time, and possibly more in stormy weather, upon a rock the size of a tennis lawn? she would ask; and to have no letters or newspapers, and to see nobody; if you were married, not to see your wife, not to know how your children were,--if they were ill, if they had fallen down and broken their legs or arms; to see the same dreary waves breaking week after week, and then a dreadful storm coming, and the windows covered with spray, and birds dashed against the lamp, and the whole place rocking, and not be able

to put your nose out of doors for fear of being swept into the sea? How would you like that? she asked, addressing herself particularly to her daughters. (2)

In the novel, the concept of being and nothingness is emphasized. An ordinary person, Mrs. Ramsay observes the environment, questions life and returns to her inner world. The noise of children playing is one of those moments when she feels her existence. But suddenly the noise stops and she feels the phenomenon of nothingness.

Nature has positive and negative effects on Mrs. Ramsay's ordinary life. Mrs. Ramsay first likes the sound of the waves to a soothing lullaby, then thinks that the same sounds are a hum that ruthlessly paces the flow of life, that instills bad thoughts, and she falls into fear. According to Mrs. Ramsey, nothing in life is permanent, it is temporary like a rainbow. Happiness is momentary, and there may be tears, fear, and sadness afterwards. Every moment is unique and temporary. Human beings are also temporary in this life like a rainbow. This section draws attention to how existence, from being a happy moment, turns into unhappiness right after.

So that the monotonous fall of the waves on the beach, which for the most part beat a measured and soothing tattoo to her thoughts and seemed consolingly to repeat over and over again as she sat with the children the words of some old cradle song, murmured by nature, "I am guarding you--I am your support," but at other times suddenly and unexpectedly, especially when her mind raised itself slightly from the task actually in hand, had no such kindly meaning, but 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, and warned her whose day had slipped past in one quick doing after another that it was all ephemeral as a rainbow--this sound which had been obscured and concealed under the other sounds suddenly thundered hollow in her ears and made her look up with an impulse of terror. (10)

On the subject of marriage, Mrs. Ramsay is the traditional thinker. According to Mrs. Ramsey, a woman of marriageable age should establish a home, serve her husband and have children. Lily, on the other hand, has a free and career-seeking point of view, unlike Mrs. Ramsay. She does not think that the concept of marriage is suitable for her. She thinks it will kill her creativity. The traditional thoughts on Mrs. Ramsay's marriage are stated as follows: "Smiling, for it was an admirable idea, that had flashed upon her this very second--William and Lily should marry--she took the heather-mixture stocking, with its criss-cross of steel needles at the mouth of it, and measured it against James's leg" (18).

In the novel, Mrs. Ramsay returns to her inner world from real life and questions life. She looks around the room and thinks how old things are. She thinks

that the life of things is over, that they are about to disappear, so that objects will cease to exist, just like people. Just as everything in life has a beginning, it also has an end. She questions life and tries to find answers to her questions, thinking it is ridiculous and meaningless what the things are doing there. She complains that she cannot find time to read the books, and according to her, it is a shame to do this. With this approach, she gives importance to the opinions of the society; however, she is also a woman who wants to go to the lighthouse and stay there, to get away from society and her husband's conferences and relax. From time to time, she also wants to live individually, it is good for her to return to herself.



CONCLUSION

Throughout history, the concept of woman, even the ideal woman, has always been discussed, and women have had various roles under the pressure of patriarchal society. These roles are generally in the position of the ruled, not the ruler. This situation has been the subject of the novels by some authors in the 20th century. Virginia Woolf portrays a passive, weak and self-sacrificing woman, oppressed due to the pressure of patriarchal society, as the ideal woman, that is, the angel in the house, and she handles this in her two novels, *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To The Lighthouse*.

Examples related to Virginia Woolf's concept of "killing the angel in the house" detected in her novel emphasize the oppression of women. This concept draws attention to the roles of women in society. In the 20th century, this expression faced by women prevents them from having their own selves or autonomies. For this reason, the author, Woolf, states in her writings that it is necessary to kill the angel in the house, and emphasizes this in her novels as well.

Woolf reveals the situation of England in the 20th century in both of her novels examined in this thesis. When we examine this on the basis of social feminism, we see that readers can question the authority of men. The female figure drawn by Woolf is oppressed under social pressure. Male figures are dominant. In this case, the main characters of both novels remember their past by questioning their inner worlds. Thus, it is understood that they are not satisfied with the situation they live in. The reason why Woolf wants to reflect these women in this way, when examined on the basis of social feminism, reveals that Woolf criticizes this situation. Although Woolf initially works with her characters as having a feminist impulse, women always have the roles preferred by patriarchy such as perfect landlady (Zorluoğlu, 2018). With her skillfully drawn characters and use of language, she reflects all the brutality of the social system in which they live, thus encourages the reader to make their own judgment.

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, when Clarissa leaves her house, she looks at the French shop windows and when the cool morning air takes her back in time, she recalls her days in Bourton, the place of her youth and her first love experience. The squeaky hinges remind her of Bourton's squeaky doors. Clarissa inwardly questiones whether she had

done the right thing in marrying Richard. Not to be violated even by those who were considered to be very close, she believed that one should have some special things of one's own. Since Peter expects a lot from his wife, Clarissa chooses the life represented by Richard and marries him. If she had married Peter, she would not have had the freedom that Richard had given her. If this were not the case, perhaps Clarissa would not have been under the pressure of the patriarchal society. Therefore, this situation can be considered a criticism in terms of social feminism.

Despite the fact that *Mrs. Dalloway* is written as a picture of an ordinary day in the life of an ordinary housewife, it discusses modern disillusionment. In the extent that they mirror fluidity and relativity rather than traditional rigidity and certainty, vagueness and incompleteness are terms that add to the topic of disappointment as experienced by the characters in the text. Woolf expresses her dissatisfaction with modernity's positivistic universalism by removing the imposition of a universal reality. Woolf takes a unique approach to bringing disappointment to light by depicting a scene from the lives of regular people who are torn between the illusion imposed by modernity's values and the reality as experienced.

Specifically, in *To The Lighthouse*, the personal space has suppressed women, preventing them from participating in ordinary activities such as trade, labor, travel, and education, as shown in the majority of Woolf's books. In *To The Lighthouse*, both Lily and Mrs. Ramsay discover that persecution in public life is linked to injustice in private life. Woolf examines men's and women's power and gender, examining how people are constituted as gendered creatures, with culture and society limiting their speech, action, and chances. Mrs. Ramsay's position is depicted as a gentle response compared to her husband's, who emerges as a heroic tyrant and appears to embody the average man who is generally equated to sharp implements, such as an axe, knife, and poker with which his son wishes to attack him. He utilizes aggressive, opinionated, and to some extent patronizing rhetoric to demonstrate his philosophical authority and boldness.

Mrs. Ramsay, one of the characters of the book, is a traditional mother who tries to get everyone married, protects and watches. She carries the weight of the patriarchal order on her back; but she is not crushed under it, she creates strength from

it, as it were. Her only motivation is to see everyone together; she is uncomfortable with the constant production of divisive adjectives among people.

Another important point that can be underlined is that she is found very beautiful by almost all the characters, which emphasizes her unifying feature.

Even Mr. Ramsay, with his fragile nature hiding behind that tough father figure, needs her sympathy and telling her that he loves her. With the love she offers in a thousand ways, Mrs. Ramsay seems to free him a little from the requirements of being a "man"—to always know the truth, to be sensible, to stand strong, not to "succumb" to emotions. One of the most beautiful aspects of the novel, as seen in Mr. Ramsay, is the contradictions people have inside. What makes them so real are the moments when they try to find answers by looking at themselves and sometimes by observing the people around them, "I wonder", "or is this the case?".

Coming back to Mr. Ramsay, he is a domineering and stern character who is a frightening figure to all his children. He always complains that women cannot think of anything. For him, the product of art can only be a decoration. It has no function. This explains that he learned dominance in the patriarchal social structure and a life dominated by men throughout the novel.

Women who are stuck in housework cannot get out of this role in the novels covered in this thesis. The responsibilities of life in the 20th century demand it. Masculinity is dominant in every field except housework. This creates a gender hierarchy. A situation that prevents women from producing is that women are held responsible for the burden of the house and the continuation of life since the modern period, thus the "housewife" category has emerged. Therefore, for example, painting was not put as a choice for women. For this reason, it is said in the novel that women cannot paint. This process is not because the artist has to be a man, but because the woman has to stay at home. Therefore, when Woolf's novels are analyzed in terms of social feminism, it is seen that the author draws attention to the oppressed position of women. It has been argued that if the "angel in the house", which Virginia Woolf says should be killed in particular, is handled from a point of view that discusses being an angel, it will not constitute an obstacle to produce and make art in today's world, and even trigger production. It is important to perceive gender inequality as a field of

struggle. What is claimed in this thesis is never that the woman is willing to maintain an unequal division of labor and tries to turn the conditions in her favor to "save the day" within the conditions she is in. While defending all kinds of equality, it is aimed to determine and explain a way to produce within the existing, and to think about how negative conditions can be transformed into a positive output by following those who turn it into an element of creativity, to see if there is a model through examples, and to make suggestions.



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