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**Modernism, Women and the Stream of  
Consciousness in Virginia Woolf's A Room of  
One's Own**

*An Extended Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for  
the "Master" Degree in Anglo-Saxon Literature and Civilization*

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this work to my father Ahmed, my mother Myriam, my brother Harris, and  
my sister Sahar.

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## Table of Contents

DEDICATION.....	I
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	II
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	III
GENERAL INTRODUCTION.....	1

### **Chapter One:** Modernism and its Impact on Virginia Woolf’s Fiction

1.1. Introduction.....	4
1.2. Modernism .....	4
1.2.1. The Terminology of Modernism .....	5
1.2.2. The Origin of Modernism .....	7
1.2.3. The Concept of Modernism .....	10
1.2.4. London and Modernism .....	11
1.3. Virginia Woolf.....	15
1.3.1. Virginia Woolf and Modernism .....	15
1.3.2. Virginia Woolf and the Stream of Consciousness .....	16
1.3.3. Virginia Woolf’s Influences .....	19
1.3.4. Virginia Woolf and the Modern Fiction .....	20
1.3.5. Virginia Woolf’s Writings .....	23
1.3.6. Virginia Woolf’s Writing Weaknesses .....	25
1.4. Conclusion.....	28

### **Chapter Two:** The Modern Techniques in Writing A Room of One’s Own

2.1. Introduction.....	30
2.2. Women and Fiction .....	30

2.2.1. Women and Gender Issues.....	32
2.2.2. Women in the 16 <sup>th</sup> Century.....	36
2.2.3. Women in the 18 <sup>th</sup> Century.....	39
2.2.4. Women in the 19 <sup>th</sup> Century.....	41
2.2.5. Mary Carmichael.....	42
2.2.6. Virginia Woolf’s Message.....	45
2.3. <u>A Room of One’s Own</u> Literary Review.....	48
2.4. <u>A Room of One’s Own</u> and Modernism .....	51
2.5. Conclusion.....	57
General Conclusion .....	59
Bibliography.....	62

# **General Introduction**

## General Introduction

The period between 1880 and 1930 marked the British literature. The last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century faced the death of the Victorian novel which focused more on the society and its evolution; the nineties was ready to go toward progress; it was like a bridge between the Victorian and the modernist movement.

The Occident of the 1880 witnessed the appearance of a new concept of the society based on reason; leaving religion and faith. In order to develop this society of reason, Freud introduced psycho-analysis. The reason goes with the conscious and the psycho-analysis goes with the unconscious. Virginia Woolf was the first British writer to translate the psycho-analysis of Freud, to introduce the unconscious in the modern literature, and then to add a new dimension in the reason. The psycho-analysis was defined as the aesthetic of the modern and Virginia Woolf set it in her turn as the modernist aesthetic with the aim to give the exact and perfect image of the inner world of the human being.

Woolf challenged the question of women and fought against the stereotypes attributed to them by the patriarchal society, she wanted women to have all the rights, more importantly the right to education and having a legacy and unlike some women; Woolf was convinced that women can enjoy their equality with men.

This research intends to show how modernism as a movement witnessed in England a rapid evolution due to the Russian, the German and the French great writers and this acceleration in the growth shows that the movement was needed and wanted by the British society so it first evolved in London. It also demonstrates how it gave birth to the British novelist Virginia Woolf who was herself influenced by the Russians, the Germans and especially by the French. It explains how modernism was the inspiration for this feminist writer in creating the stream of consciousness and in writing fiction like A Room of One's Own; an essay in which Woolf deals with women and fiction and gender issues through centuries with the message that a woman must have money and a room of her own in order to write fiction.

As a woman and as a feminist, this topic has been chosen in order to demonstrate how a simple woman like Virginia Woolf who did not have access to education; marked the British modern literature with her writings.

The intention of this work is to talk about modernism and how it influenced Virginia Woolf in writing fiction and A Room of One's Own. So, what is modernism as a movement and how did it influence Virginia Woolf in writing her fiction? And what are the modern techniques used in the writing of A Room of One's Own?

In order to find answers to these questions, this work has been divided into two chapters. The first chapter will deal first with the terminology, the origin and the concept of modernism, and then with the influence of modernism in Virginia Woolf's writing fiction.

The second chapter will be devoted to the analysis of A Room of One's Own and the modernist techniques used by Virginia Woolf in writing it.



# Chapter One

### **1.1. Introduction**

The late of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century in Britain marked the start of a new literature. The first half of the 20th century was a very different and varied period; the Edwardian England flourished from 1901 to 1910, followed by the troubled times of the first and the second World War, the decline and the decay of the British Empire -and at the same time there has been the birth of a commonwealth literature in English language, the Russian Revolution and the 1929 crisis.

Literature faced and experienced political, economic and social varieties, and in the same time with a traditional stream, grows an experimental literature called modern or modernist literature. The moderns had an inevitable faith in art, the only value to which they were completely attached to. It is this faith that will crumble until it disappeared in the second half of the 20th century, called post-modernism.

### **1.2. Modernism**

The 20th century movement known as modernism was the rejection of the Victorian era and the middle-class. When Edward VII succeeded his mother Victoria in 1901, Britain entered on a decade characterized by the expansion of imperialism and social stability. The principal source of social unrest became the question of women's rights especially the Suffragette movement. The Married Women's Property Act of 1882 had allowed women to own property in their own right, but they were still denied to vote, it was only in 1828 that British women had the complete right to vote (Cited in Harding, 1992, p.14-15) The Third Reform Act of 1884 and the County Councils Act of 1888, together with the development of universal education after 1870 and the rise of the grammar schools after 1902, implied a political and a social change; the lower middle classes were arriving (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.30)

### 1.2.1. The Terminology of Modernism

The word 'modern' is the same in all languages (French, English, German, Spanish...). 'Modernism is synonymous with internationalism' (Alvarez, 1969, p.42) Something modern is something new, something that progress through time and the modern in England of last year is not the modern of this year. Modernism is an international movement which reached its peak in various countries in various times and in various languages. Modernity is 'a new consciousness, a fresh condition of the human mind' (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.22)

While contemplating the painting of Van Gogh then of Picasso, Herbert Read said:

There have been revolutions in the history of art before today and that there is a revolution with every new generation, and periodically, every century or so, we get a wider and deeper change of sensibility which is recognized as a period... We are now concerned with an abrupt break with all tradition... The aim of five centuries of European effort is openly abandoned (Read, 1968, p.10-13)

Ten years after Read; in writing The Voices of Silence (1978) André Malraux believed that 'there is nothing especially singular and novel about our art and situation at all' (p.17) in the same time the French Rimbaud said "it is necessary to be absolutely modern" (Cited in Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.21)

The world of criticism all agreed on the calling of the word Modern. The Modern Age, The Modern Movement, The Modern Century, The Modern Arts, The Modern Time, or simply Modernism but the German preferred to call it The Modern rather than Modernism.

For some, the term has been used to cover a wide variety of movements like: Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Expressionism, Cubism, Futurism, Symbolism, Imagism, Dadaism, Surrealism... and for others, the term has been used to show the evolution of the literary and artistic tradition (Cited in Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.23) For Flaubert; modernism is an art independent of the humanistic, the

material and the real, an art which is important to the segments of modern arts (Cited in Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.25)

All these are definitions of modernism. So in general, modernism is a movement towards sophistication and mannerism, towards introversion, technical display, and internal self-scepticism (Cited in Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.26) In short, modernism is the art of modernization.

Some critics define modernism as the growing ideals of Romanticism that reached a crisis of culture and a crisis of reality, which involve an unhappy view of history and some define it as the result of capitalism, industrial acceleration and thus the destruction of civilization. The common point of the two definitions is that modernism responds to a scenario of chaos; a linguistic chaos because language have been discredited and because realities have become subjective fictions (Ibid, p.26-27)

Like Romanticism, Modernism becomes a revolutionary movement that came with the beginning of a century, in a period of deep intellectual change with the purpose of dominating the mind and aesthetic of great writers. This movement was marked by a flow of major ideas, forms and values.

For the expressionists; modernism is an expressive form of human evolution which carries the anarchy of men's desire, and for the Surrealist, it is an art of necessity rather than freedom. So for both, modernism is an anti-art (Cited in Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.27) Thus, modernism became a movement which expressed modern consciousness and created modern experience.

Modernism is a subject of extreme semantic confusion but the terminological confusion should not be used as an excuse to disguise some of our difficulties. (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.45)

### 1.2.2. The Origin of Modernism

It was with the death of King Edward VII in 1910 that literature manifests novelty and that Modernism witnessed an enormous cultural change into a brief period of time. Rupert Brooke said, at the end of the Edwardian period in 1910, that the whole machinery of life and the minds of every class and kind of men change beyond recognition of every generation. I don't know that "Progress" is certain. All I know is that change is' (Cited in Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.183) even Virginia Woolf expressed her astonishment in The Common Reader-First Series (2002) saying:

On or about December 1910 human nature changed ... all human relations shifted-those between masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children. And when human relations change there is at the same time a change in religion, conduct, politics, and literature (p.160)

But Richard Ellmann says in his 'Discovering Symbolism', In Golden Codgers: Biographical Speculations (1973) that if a moment must be found for human character to have changed, I should suggest that 1900 is both more convenient and more accurate than Virginia Woolf's 1910'since the modernist theme sounds through the Edwardian period (p.112)

The interwar period which was a period of crisis was also the main phase of the modernist evolution which made Modernism a new stylistic age due to the historical evolution. Actually when the German rejected the term 'modern' in 1909 because for them a change of thoughts (1880-1909) is not something modern, the British accepted it in the same year and modernism started there (1909-1950) (Cited in Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.34)

Modernism led English literature to different trajectories. According to Matthew Arnold -a Victorian with an active sense of modernity and change-, modernism is 'the free activity of the mind, winning new ideas, to judge by reason'. But he had an opposite view because he 'felt chaos, deep personal depression and strong sense of

social anarchy' (Arnold, 1963, p.10) In short, The Edwardian period was disturbed by chaos.

Trilling, who was influenced by Matthew Arnold, agreed in some extent with him and says that modernism is nihilism; a bitter line of hostility of civilization and disenchantment with culture itself (Trilling, 1966, p.34), and it is important for people to know the anthropology of Nietzsche and Freud in order to understand Nihilism and the idea of the modern which is bound up with consciousness of disorder, despair and anarchy (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.41)

It took few months-not even a year- for modernism to grow and Eugene Wolff compares it to a sculptural woman and defines it as a [real] woman,

A modern woman, filled with the modern spirit, and at the same time a typical figure, a working woman, who is nevertheless saturated with beauty, and full of ideals, returning from her material work to the service of goodness and nobility, as though returning home to her beloved child-for she is no young virgin, silly and ignorant of her destiny; she is an experienced but pure woman, in rapid movement like the spirit of the age, with fluttering garments and streaming hair, striding forward... that is our new divine image: The Modern (Wolff, 1962, p.138)

Baudelaire and especially Flaubert brought the French Symbolism -as a continuation of Romanticism- to the modern age (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.36), and according to Connolly, France is the source of Modernism because it is the French -like Flaubert and Baudelaire- who fathered the Modern movement, which slowly moved to UK -and influenced writers like: George Eliot, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and Faulkner. The Modern movement in UK started in 1880 and ended in 1950 and reached the peak in the period between 1910 and 1925 especially between 1910 and the First World War, so in order to find the real meaning of Modernism, one has to study the period from 1910 to 1925 because it witnessed a revolution in English literature (Connolly, 1965, p.4)

On one hand, Georg Brandes said that the German Ibsen is the man of the Modern Breakthrough, and 'modern' literature achieved a synthesis of romanticism and naturalism (Cited in Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.43), and on the other, Paul Alexis believed that the naturalists are the movement of the modern and said that modernism was a mode of knowledge, and its rationalizing and democratizing tendency would bring into the domain of literature for the twentieth century, more science and more truth (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.44)

The Anglo-American modernism and German modernism were two different things, happening at different times, and this is why we have so many labels. So R.P. Blackmur advanced that the common factor among Anglo-American and Germanic modernisms is precisely Expressionism (Blackmur, 1956, p.45), but Graham Hough disagreed with R.P. Blackmur and said that this generalization is dangerous because for him the Anglo-American literature is profoundly influenced by the French, and expressionism-which is purely Germanic- deals with self-expression and personality, a doctrine that has nothing to do with the twentieth century School. One can easily notice that this divergence makes thing complicated (Hough, 1960, p.8-10)

It is clear that modernism as a movement has many tendencies and labels like naturalism, impressionism, symbolism, imagism, futurism, expressionism, and each critic or writer has his own view and conviction about what is the major label of modernism and which one represents its source. In short, modernism was in most countries an extraordinary compound of the futuristic and the nihilistic, the revolutionary and the conservative, the naturalistic and the symbolic, the romantic and the classical. It was a celebration of a technological age and a condemnation of it; an excited acceptance of the belief that the old regimes of culture were over, and a deep despairing in the face of that fear; a mixture of convictions that the new forms were escapes from historicism and the pressures of the time with convictions that they were precisely the living expressions of these things (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.46)

In order to know the present or the future; one should look at the past, so in order to get at the roots of Modernism and know its origin; one should ask questions about the relationship between Modernism and the two major artistic movements of the nineteenth century which are Romanticism and Naturalism. Actually, many critics said that Modernism is 'a resurgence of Romanticism' (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.47) Thus Frank Kermode suggests that the intense subjectivity of the Romantic spirit remains central to the modern arts (2003, p.76)

In short, Modernism is a combination of the growth of socialism, the arrival in England of Nietzsche's philosophy, the explosion in the human sciences of psychology, anthropology and sociology between 1880 and 1920, the New Criticism (Russian Formalism) and the influence of French painters (Harding, 1992, p.21)

### **1.2.3. The Concept of Modernism**

The period between 1880 and 1930 witnessed the pressure of history and the push of modern times which carry with them new hopes and desires and new social and psychical forces. All gave to the character of the modern novel a fascinating consciousness; aesthetic, psychological and historical consciousness, which take the reader into new concepts of mental and emotional association (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.47) but the big issues of the modern consciousness were the problems that faced the modern writers in the making of structures, the employment of language and the social role of the artist himself (Ibid, p.49)

The great works of Modernism had a hope for change, even if they were held by the past; they persisted to grow from the present. It is perhaps due to the characteristic of the modernist writer who removed the optimism and the sensibility of the modern through the tendencies of modernism like: impressionism, post-impressionism, cubism, futurism, expressionism, dada, and surrealism. While writing novels, modernists don't follow the chronology of history or of a character, they rather work through consciousness using metaphors, symbols and images and this creates synchronicity in the novel, so symbolism or imagism is the basis of the Modernist style (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.50) And this according to



Joyce's *Ulysses* makes the modern world possible of art (Joyce, 1982, p.480) Modernist writers used imagination in order to express reality, not through history – because it wasn't possible- but through fiction, so this latter becomes the act of imagining (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.50) What modernism does according to Frank Kermode is to raise the notion not only of form but also of significant time, and Virginia Woolf is herself a feature of Modernist sensibility (Kermode, 2003, p. 82)

The historical period between 1890 and 1950 witnessed many phases like the technological advance, urbanization, the First World War, the world depression and the Second World War, all of these phases gave birth to extraordinary talents and writers whose intelligence and sense of style offered so much work, worthy of detailed consideration (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.18)

Modernism is stylistically exceptionally difficult; it catches a large number of writers who manifest art for us in a major way. Modernism doesn't catch all the important writers of the twentieth century, but enough 'to make the modernist experimentalism an exploration of the most essential literary creation' (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.51)

Modernism has several nationalities. It spreads from Russia to the United States, including the whole Europe. According to Bradbury, Realism humanizes, Naturalism scientizes, but Modernism pluralizes, and surrealizes (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.99)

#### **1.2.4. London and Modernism**

In the history of Modernism, London had always had an ambiguous reputation. It is the obvious centre of English-language Modernist activity, and between 1890 and 1920 it 'sustained and generated a vital sequence of experimental movements and phases' (Bradbury, 1978, p.172), so London becomes the city of modern cities.

The breakdown of the Victorian age was due to two things; The Origin of Species (1859) which gave birth to a new intellectual ferment, and the two following decades which saw the death of the major Victorian writers, thus the English literary culture began to be redirected (Bradbury, 1978, p.178)

After the Romantics and the Victorian came the Modernist. England welcomed at that time many writers and thanks to this came the emergence of the most remarkable English literary writers –among them was Virginia Woolf- and despite their differences, they all had one common point which is the complete separation from the past, and the achievement of a new art. This liberation and novelty is called Modernism; a new phase in society, a new art and a new way of thinking was beginning. C.S. Lewis (1962) said that the greatest of all divisions in the entire history is that separating the present from the age of Jane Austen and Walter Scott (p.95) London in the period from 1880 to 1920 saw a sudden artistic change (Bradbury, 1978, p.179) In short, when the Victorian age was at last over, a new epoch was starting. The passage from the Victorian age into a new monarch (Edward VII), the passage into a new century, the Darwinist and Socialist ideas, the weakening of organized religion, the social change caused by the industrial revolution, the emergence of new social classes, the urban expansion, the violent struggle of the suffragettes to obtain Votes for women, and the democratization registered in the Reform Act of 1867 and 1884 all contributed to the establishment of a newer truer world (Cited in Dodsworth, 1994, p.66)

Wells talking about a suburban heroine who escaped from an oppressive home to study science in London which becomes;

more and more alive, not so much to a system of ideas as to a big diffused impulse towards change, to a great discontent with and criticism of life as it is lived and to a clamorous confusion of ideas for reconstruction (Wells, Ann Veronica, 2005, p.64)

Talking also about another talented American who settled in London, Wells saw this period (back from 1918) as disastrously woolly, he said

England... if it is not the Home of Ideas has at least become infested with them... in England ideas run wild and pasture on the emotions ; instead of thinking with our feelings we corrupt our feelings with ideas, we produce the political and the emotional ideas which are evading sensation and thought (Wells, Ann Veronica, 2005, p.66)

So, London had in one hand the reputation for being hospitable to writers but had in the other hand a reputation for rejecting experimental works, and it is because of this that some writers considered Paris the true capital of Modernist arts and London an anti-capital. Writers were moving towards naturalism and aestheticism so the transactions between Paris and London multiplied (Bradbury, 1978, p.174) There was in Paris a British atelier consisting of painters, who became points of transmission, so most of the new tendencies of Paris in painting and writing- Nihilism, Symbolism, Decadence, Aestheticism, Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Fauvism, Cubism- were quickly assimilated into English (Ibid, p.175)

In 1890s writers settled in the London of Impressionism, Naturalism and Symbolism (Ibid, p. 176) before the 1st World War and the death of liberal England, London could still seem to be the 'centre', even if English literature was dominated by expatriate writers like Americans and Irish (Dodsworth, 1994, p.180)

The period between 1880 and 1920 witnessed a complex mixture of foreign tendencies in English writing and thinking, and this made the spirit of modernism in London alive, so the city was for writers a mixture of reasons. But after the First World War, in 1920, Paris was the centre of attraction of the new generation. Pound said: "now ... there is no longer any intellectual life in England ...and from the post-war years till 1925 the activity of England was mostly apparent in Paris" (Pound, 1968, p.82) The English-language modernism was changing. Henry James bluntly referred to the 'clumsy conventional materialized vulgarized brutalized life of London'. For him, the upper class in England in many ways are very much the same

rotten and collapsible one of the French aristocracy before the revolution' (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.30)

Bradbury summarized the history of London from 1880 to 1914 through a timeline of all the labels that brought modernity into English art. For him; 1890s witnessed a new form of relationship between the writer and the public through 'the transaction from Decadence to Symbolism' (Ellmann, 1973, p.214) In the same decade Symbolism and Naturalism, aestheticism and social conscience, decadent despair and glimpses of Nietzschean or Ibsenite hope, all interfused (Bradbury, 1978, p.184) In 1900 philosophy, ideas and political thoughts dominated the period. 1908 was the emergence of Cubism. The next year came Imagism, and Classicism. 1910 witnessed the death of impressionism, so, came the post-impressionism which was dominated by intellectual innovations, high experiment and artistic display. The following year was dominated by fauvism which is a movement of energetic art and people wanted Nihilism to come back 'the nihilists, the intellectual hopeless people –Ibsen, Flaubert, and Hardy - represent the dream we are waking from' (Lawrence, 2003, p.347) 1912 and 1913 was dominated by Imagism, and the year after by Vorticism. Lewis said that the period from 1880 to 1914 was 'a great era of collective advance' (Lewis, 1970, p.154)

In 1914, London faced the traumatic event of the First World War and for Douglas Goldring, there was nevertheless a close resemblance between the Paris of the last days and the London which woke with a hangover to face the deluge of blood in 1914 (Goldring, 1943, p.190). Talking about the first world war, Owen said: "... everything is unnatural, broken, blasted; the distortion of the dead, whose unburiable bodies sit outside the dug-outs all day, all night, the most execrable sights on earth." (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.200) Even D.H. Lawrence saw an old world ending rather than a new one starting and said:

It was in 1915 the old world ended –In the winter 1915-1916 the spirit of old London collapsed. The city, in some way, perished, perished from being the heart of the world, and became a vortex of broken passions, lusts, hopes, fears and horrors. The integrity of

London collapsed and the genuine debasement began (Lawrence, 2003, p.159)

Lewis said: 'As people look back at them...in a disillusioned society...the critics of that future ay will rub their eyes. They will look to them so hopelessly...What energy! ...we are the first men of a Future that has not materialized! (Lewis, 1970, p.196)

London faced the concentration and the succession of all labels and tendencies until the outbreak of the First World War

### **1.3. Virginia Woolf**

Virginia Woolf (January 25, 1882 - March 28, 1941) was an English author and feminist. Born Adeline Virginia Stephens in London she was brought up and educated at home. In 1895 following the death of her mother she had the first of numerous nervous breakdowns. Following the death of her father (Sir Leslie Stephen, a literary critic) in 1904, she moved with her sister and two brothers to a house in Bloomsbury. She began writing professionally in 1905, initially for the Times Literary Supplement. In 1912 she married Leonard Woolf, a civil servant and political theorist. Her first novel, *The Voyage Out*, was published in 1915. Between the wars, Woolf was a significant figure in London literary society and a member of the Bloomsbury group. In March 1941, Woolf drowned herself in the River Ouse, near her Rodmell residence. She had published ten novels and over 500 essays<sup>1</sup>.

#### **1.3.1. Virginia Woolf and Modernism**

Literature could touch life at both its deepest, and its more exciting. In the earlier years of the twentieth century, really serious literature had become a peripheral occupation which includes a feeling that the writer's diagnosis of moral confusion or perplexity was suspect, springing from a wounded ego or dramatizing self-pity (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.14)

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<sup>1</sup><https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/w/woolf/virginia/>

The Victorian age was an age of transition. Old custom was to be replaced after the nineteenth century, Webbs said 'we are about to enter a new civilization' (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.35) So during the Edwardian decade the Modernist movement was in preparation; Virginia Woolf settled in the Bloomsbury district of London in 1904 and surrounded herself with the brilliant circle of intellectuals and artists of socialist tendencies known as the Bloomsbury Group which included Lytton Strachey, the biographer; J.M. Keynes, the economist; Roger Fry, the art critic and the novelist E.M. Forster (Cited in Harding, 1992, p.26) Modernism produced a cult of difficulty due to the hard work of reading through the complexities of many Edwardian authors (Dodsworth, 1994, p.67)

The Edwardian age represents the British culture. Despite the fact that Women were invisible in literature and the great modern writers were sexist and misogynous, Virginia Woolf was the major feminine Edwardian novelist she was also among the most read Edwardian novelists. In her The Common Reader- First Series (2002), Virginia Woolf criticized Edwardians saying:

materialists... they are concerned not with the spirit but with the body... they write of unimportant things... they spend immense skill and immense industry making the trivial and the transitory appear the true and the ending.... if we tried to formulate our meaning in one word we should say that these three writers [H.G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, and John Galsworthy] were materialists (p.27)

Woolf was disappointed by the materialist writers because they weren't interested by the spirit and because they gave her the feeling that English fiction turns back to them with characters as materialist as writers.

### **1.3.2. Virginia Woolf and the Stream of Consciousness**

An idea is an experience and the experience in its turn split between thought and feeling, so the relationship between the mind (thought) and the world

(experience) formulate the theory of consciousness which defines the psychic life. (Cited in Ford, 1983, p .51-52) William James said in his Principles of Psychology (1957) "...consciousness, then, does not appear to itself chopped up in bits... it is nothing jointed; it flows", he added that a 'river' or 'stream' are the metaphors by which it is most naturally described. In talking of it here after, let us call it the stream of thought, of consciousness, or of subjective life (p.52) like consciousness; experience is a stream and the novelist must communicate it (Ford, 1983, p.345)

When starting writing, Virginia Woolf was limited by old techniques; the techniques of Jane Austen and Georg Eliot (two artists she admired and she was influenced by, even if according to her Jane Austen is superior to Georg Eliot) and this created problems of the relationship between the generations (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.43) the French critic Roland Barthes (1967) believed that the big consequence of this Great Divide - between past and present, art before and art now- is that language became the problematic of the whole literature (p.9) H.G. Wells (2009), claimed that there was 'a definable difference between the novel of the past and ...the modern novel. It lies in the fact that there was a feeling of certitude about moral values and standards of conduct that is altogether absent today' (p.102-110) So, in order to communicate the stream of modern consciousness Virginia Woolf in The Captain's Bed had to break down those barriers and to develop new techniques and methods and get rid with the old themes of love interest and categories of novel like plot, character, comedy, and tragedy because she 'felt the lack of a convention and how serious a matter it is when the tools of one generation are useless for the next' (Woolf, 2014, p.86)

Woolf's novels -which are realistic novels-, hold consciousness of reality and carries realism. The result is a unique picture of life seen with disillusion and delight in the same time (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.205) so her novels which raise problems of reality are pictures of reality. She said in her Granite and Rainbow (1975) that "for the characteristic qualities of the novel... are the very quality that are most incompatible with design and order... it is the gift of the novel to bring us into close touch with life..." (p.63)

Virginia believed that consciousness itself is aesthetic, and its aim is to poeticize the subjective vision women live, "I distrusted the cheapness of reality, and in my novels consciousness is itself aesthetic, a subjective and poeticized state of heightened awareness more properly the domain of women than men" (Cited in Harding, 1992, p.55) The modern novel is the freer novel, and its freedom is to be more poetic and truer to life (Ford, 1983, p.49) She brings to the more aesthetic or Impressionist side of her work an interest in human values which plainly shows the influence of her father, Leslie Stephen (Ford, 1983, p.85)

Stream of consciousness in a narrative novel is a technique which appeared in a movement belonging to modernism. The term 'stream of consciousness' is used to denote the character's thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. It is also used to describe the narrative technique of Virginia Woolf (Harding, 1992, p.37) Narrative consciousness is moving between the interior and exterior perceptions, moving also over past, present and future in an exploration of humane motions. Virginia Woolf developed a methodical technique of stream of consciousness; she explored problems of personal identity, she also explored relationships within the movement of time and memory, thoughts and perceptions (Ibid, p.43) The desire of Virginia Woolf is to recreate a whole universe in the text, to rewrite time, space, the mind and the body in a kind of parallel, relativized world where the text obeys the same laws that govern nature and human experience (Ibid, p.37)

Ford said:

The intention of Virginia Woolf's 'stream of consciousness' writing was to reassert a psychic balance against the influence of the mechanical, the atomized self, to cope with an ever changing being and world rather than remain stuck in the repetitions and recurrences of a fixated past. The attempt was to heal the rift between intellectual abstraction and the ever present flow of feeling. In a much-divided civilization when the claims of technology were becoming more and more insistent, Virginia Woolf, in whose work intellect was suffused with emotion and



emotion controlled by intelligence, pointed a way to unity of being, psychic wholeness and health. In such a fusion, intuitive insight and moral control could coalesce” (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.53)

her great novels like Mrs Dalloway (1925), To The Lighthouse (1927) and The Waves (1931) represent the stream of a sensitive human mind. Virginia uses a fiction that create a relationship between the author and characters, characters and time, the mind and time, so the aesthetic of consciousness goes with the aesthetic of art (Ibid, p.408-09)

### 1.3.3. Virginia Woolf's Influences

Virginia Woolf used the discoveries of earlier Impressionist painters in order to capture not the surface but the essence of her subjects, her best work embodies a vision of how richly the immediacy of experience engages what is substantial in experience (Ford, 1983, p.85)

It is really difficult for critics to ‘discuss with a proper critical disinterestedness’ the writers who; when were students admired other writers. Virginia Woolf was really inspired by the Russian Point of View: The Russian novelist Tolstoy influenced her in writing about life. She was especially influenced by the heroes of Tolstoy, she was also influenced by Jane Austen too; the Clarissa of Mrs Dalloway written by Virginia Woolf has the same characteristics as Emma in Emma written by Jane Austen (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.350)

Virginia Woolf had sexual consciousness, she was pessimistic and influenced by French symbolism. The novels of Virginia Woolf are in some sense fictional inheritances from French Symbolist poetry (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.453) so imagism/symbolism adopted by Virginia Woolf (1912-1915) is a French reference.

E.M. Forster (1962) talking about the use of symbolism by Virginia Woolf said;

Order. Justice. Truth. She cared for these abstractions, and tried to express them through symbols... the epitaph of such an artist cannot

be written by the vulgar minded... she triumphed over what are called 'difficulties' and she also triumphed in a positive senses. And sometimes it is as a row of little silver cups that I see her work gleaming (p.218)

Virginia Woolf used verbal devices and language peculiarities as a precise measurement of character (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.460), according to Forster characters are related to language and image which create the form (Forster, 1962, p.35) and this is how the modern novel emancipated (Friedman, 1966, p.463) She also used isolation in literature which is a source of strength as well as of weakness. It is a way to protest against the disintegration and the confusion of the earlier 20<sup>th</sup> century (Ford, 1983, p.49)

#### **1.3.4. Virginia Woolf and the Modern Fiction**

The modern fiction is a fiction which is experimental in the form; it deals with the consciousness of the human mind. The modern novel has no real beginning since it plunges us into a flowing stream of experience. Its ending is open. (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.481) and it is Nietzsche who has determined the structure of modern fiction (Ibid, p.451)

The Russian Fiction influenced the English one and the Russian Turgenev influenced Virginia Woolf, she said speaking of his novels that they are so short and yet they hold so much. The emotion is so intense and yet so calm. The form is in one sense so perfect, in another so broken (Turgenev, 1933, p.54) so the novel is clear enough but in the same time so complex. D.H. Lawrence said in a letter to Catherine Carswell, 2 December 1916 '... Don't think I would belittle the Russians. They have meant an enormous amount to me, Turgenev, Tolstoi, Dostoievski; - mattered almost more than anything, and I thought them the greatest writers of all time'' (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.95)

James Joyce's Ulysses influenced Virginia Woolf's writings. Joyce used stream of consciousness and many symbols –both dominated the modern fiction- which made the novel a symbolic achievement in fiction (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.458)

The novelists James Joyce and Virginia Woolf agreed with the English literary language of the modern fiction but it wasn't the case for Henry James and Joseph Conrad who modified it because they belonged to an early phase of modernism and kept the traditional fiction, the same thing happened with D.H. Lawrence and E.M. Forster, and according to this latter, in his Aspects of the Novel (1968); words like 'pattern' and 'rhythm' must enter the vocabulary of fictional novel (p.23) Virginia Woolf used imitations of literary models and repetition of motifs, images and symbols in order to write a novel. This technique called "rhythm" is used in the modern novel in order to offset the weakening of its narrative structure (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.453)

Ford Madox Ford (1998) said:

the novel has become indispensable to the understanding of life... it is the only source to which you can turn in order to ascertain how your fellows spend their entire lives... fiction tells us how our fellow [writer] spends his entire life by a full rendering of it, by devising some technical means of exactly presenting the way in which this fellow perceives the world (1998, p.66-67)

but according to Virginia Woolf; fiction is facing loss in relations of life (Cited in Dodsworth, 1994, p.68) This injustice reflects her critical weakness and reveals the impulse in her, a desire to encompass in fiction the whole spectrum of experience in the lives she chooses to represent (Ibid, p.69) According to James Henry (2010) with fiction we see life and we feel that we are touching the truth (p.86) and Wells (2009) added: "we are going to write, subjects only to our limitations, about the whole of human life" (p.76)

Fiction is important in new ideas. English fiction had for several decades been coming to deal with new more intellectual subjects which have been gaining a dimension that might almost be called philosophical (Ford, 1983, p.68) E.M. Forster (1968) claims "That fiction is a lady, and a lady who has somehow got herself into troubles, is a thought that must often have struck her admirers" (p.55)

Before the First World War, male domination had suffered in the rise of the 'new woman' and the suffragette movement (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.21) D.H. Lawrence, found in the relations between man and woman 'the problem of today, the establishment of a new relation, or the readjustment of the old one...' (Lawrence, 2003, p.227) Writing about women and fiction in Granite and Rainbow (1975), Virginia Woolf said that;

The greater impersonality of women's lives will encourage the poetic spirit, all it is in poetry that women's fiction is still weakest. It will lead them to be less absorbed in facts and no longer content to record with astonishing acuteness the minute details which fall under their own observation. They will look beyond the personal and political relationships to the wider questions which the poet tries to solve –of our destiny and the meaning of life (p.29)

So, the poetic spirit and the meaning of life and destiny are characteristics of Virginia Woolf's own fiction. As E.M. Forster (1968) said 'fiction for Virginia Woolf was not a criticism of life ...but rather a re-creation of complexities of experience' (p.87)

Virginia Woolf was an innovator; she tried anything because for her nothing was impossible. In The Common Reader, First Series (2002) she said everything is the proper stuff of fiction, every feeling, every thought, every quality of brain and spirit is drawn upon; no perception comes amiss (p.49) but all this will and excitement has its danger. The fact of trying everything and refusing to select one special thing created a certain chaos but Virginia Woolf strongly believed that 'the novelist must expose himself to life' (Ibid, p.50) In Granite and Rainbow (1975) she said that the true writer stands close up to the bull and lets the horns –call them life, truth, reality, whatever you like- pass him close each time' (p.92)

The novels of Virginia Woolf were produced from those letters which represent dialogue and those diaries which represent interior monologue; this made Virginia her own best critic. Her fiction is reflected by the self-knowledge, facing

difficulties, the heroism of character, the moral courage, the fear of failure and self-dramatization which are the characteristics of the main character of her novels and which reflect her autobiographies. So Virginia Woolf writings are autobiographically true and fictionally credible (Cited in Dodsworth, 1994, p.150)

### 1.3.5. Virginia Woolf's Writings

Even if England was no more the centre of literature, Virginia Woolf was still writing and many of the greatest modernist works appeared in the 1920s, the 1930s was characterized by a reaction against modernism (Cited in Dodsworth, 1994, p.180) there is a certain wider aspect of liberal humanism in some of the writers of the 1910s and 1920s. Virginia Woolf had a liberal humanist culture and 1910 was for her the year when human nature changed. According to Wyndham Lewis (1970) the period between 1920s and 1930s is 'an insanitary trough' between the two world wars (Cited in Dodsworth, 1994, p.180)

The Voyage Out written in 1915 was her first novel. Traditional in form; it held many autobiographies. The characters in The Voyage Out reminded of the one of Jane Austen; sophisticated and cosmopolitan (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.347) Virginia Woolf wrote her novels with the high peaks of European Modernism. She is one of the 20s greatest writer. Her best works are: Jacob's Room (1922), Mrs Dalloway (1925) To The Lighthouse (1927) and The Waves (1931)

Woolf's Mrs Dalloway is influenced by Nietzschean conception: "the artist remains a hero" (Cited in Harding, 1992, p.21) In Mrs Dalloway, Virginia criticizes the social system. Written in 1925, Woolf typically portrays the fragility of mental and social strength and its struggle with terror and loneliness. Time weighs on her (Harding, 1992, p.44) Jacob's Room written in 1922 is Woolf's first stream of consciousness novel (Dodsworth, 1994, p.186); it is a satirical story aimed at men, and their attempts to think or keep up the appearance of thinking (Ford, 1983, p.348) The common point between Mrs Dalloway and Jacob's Room is that a woman should have a room of her own.

To The Lighthouse written in 1927, seems to be prejudiced against the poor and held autobiographies like The Voyage Out and one of the great strengths of To The Lighthouse is its way of transforming tensions into a remarkable subtle and intelligent appraisal of what Woolf called the family system (Dodsworth, 1994, p.187) The ideas and images in To The Lighthouse are attached to the author, who speaks objectively and this justifies the impersonal voice (Ibid, p.158) To The Lighthouse is considered her masterpiece, because of its greater unity due to the achievement of a coherent symbolic structure (Harding, 1992, p.44) In To The Lighthouse, Virginia seems to care about the striving of the individual to achieve fullness of psychic independence and self-realization, she was also preoccupied with the immediate and always-changing surface of life based upon substantial grounds (Ford, 1983, p.85)

The Waves written in 1931 is her most experimental novel. The narrative links are made according to the logic of unconscious association, so that the novel operates as texts of the conscious and unconscious minds of the characters (Harding, 1992, p.44) The Waves shows the progress of time like waves and the painful ending of individual. The period between 1930 and 1933 marked the end of symbolism and the end of modernism, so Virginia Woolf's The Waves (1931) was written to show how the modern period was formidable and how the modern images and symbols can reinforce a character. Actually The Waves proceed through monologue, we move from one mind to another with only minimal stage direction (Cited in Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.459) One effect of modernism was to break down the barriers between literary genres (poems and prose for example) and Woolf's The Waves is a mixture of those two literary genres and is often read like prose poem (Harding, 1992, p.44)

Orlando (1928) is her lightest novel. The beautiful youth Orlando, born an Elizabethan and experienced a change of sex. Besides its feminism, the novel is a brilliant display of wry narrative skill (Ibid, p.44)

Modernism came to an end with the 20s and the Great Depression, and no experimental movement of such depth has happened this century. Bliss (1920), The

Grade Party (1922) The Dove's Nest (1923) and Something Childish (1924) are Woolf novels in miniature which show a moral resilience and wisdom that Woolf lacked (Harding, 1992, p.55)

Virginia Woolf used an aesthetic narrative voice with dominant tone, local movements of consciousness, external and internal to the characters and stream of consciousness narrative (Harding, 1992, p.63) Her characters are of greater freedom, psychological depth and their lives reach freely backward and forward in time (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.397) and these make the novel more precise, and in order to realize how much more conventional Virginia was then she imagined, one should pass from her theories, ideas, and criticism to the study of her practice as a novelist (Ford, 1983, p.346)

### **1.3.6. Virginia Woolf's Writing Weaknesses**

Literature both feeds and is fed by the social process (Ford, 1983, p.48) The World War was not a stable situation and it led to an accelerated degree of social change and economic problems. Arthur Koestler evoked in his autobiography, the emotional impact: '... born out of despair of World War.., of social unrest and economic chaos, the desire for a complete break with the past, for starting human history from scratch, was deep and genuine' (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.35)

Writers were less and less able to deal with private worlds; instead they became increasingly committed to social, political and public comment. According to Beatrice Webb, the sensitivity of the writer due to the social standards judgements was new (Ibid, p.30)

If there is a lack in Virginia Woolf's work, it is that she has also the weakness of the liberal intellectual, she always obscures what is central to her purpose, and she is less aware of the goodness of the private experience (Ford, 1983, p.92) and this can be justified as a lack of confidence not of value. D.H. Lawrence said in a letter to A.W. McLeod, 6 October 1912 "I hate Bennett's resignation. Tragedy ought really to be a great kick at misery". But her works represent an early phase in challenging the polite liberal culture which, more and more, came to seem radically

incommensurate with the challenges confronting it in the twentieth century (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.95) Another weakness in Virginia Woolf's novels is that her models of mature, feminine wisdom are adolescent (Ford, 1983, p.350)

Dorothy Richardson (1873-1957) and Katherine Mansfield (1888-1923) were rivals of Virginia Woolf. This latter said in her diary "I was jealous of her writing [Mansfield] –the only writing I have ever been jealous of" (Cited in Dodsworth, 1994, p.189), and talking about Dorothy, Virginia said "I felt myself looking for faults; hoping to find them ... if she is good then I'm not" (Ibid, p.189) Actually, Woolf and Richardson had different methods of writing; Virginia used the modern element (stream of consciousness) and Dorothy used the traditional elements (plot...) Woolf claimed that she invented the stream of consciousness and Richardson claimed also that she is the founder of the so-called stream of consciousness but she hated the term 'stream of consciousness' used by Virginia Woolf because this latter took the term from French and German. Woolf and Richardson both used their autobiographies as a reference in writing their novels and their common point is their feminism and the stereotyping male thinking, but they were both mistaken because both were helped by men, Virginia was helped by the Bloomsbury members who were all men, and Dorothy was helped by Henry James –the first modernist- and James Joyce (Cited in Dodsworth, 1994, p.190)

The Bloomsbury Group is a group of writers and novelists having as members Virginia Woolf –who was the cleverest one, was also protective of her own group 'Bloomsbury' (Ibid, p.187)-, Roger Fry, Vanessa and Clive Bell, Duncan Grant, Lytton Strachey, Leonard Woolf, J.M. Keynes, Desmond McCarthy and E.M. Forster. Each one was praising the other and this mutual admiration between them made them narcissistic (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.346) this narcissism pushed Virginia Woolf to criticize many writers especially D.H. Lawrence saying that 'he is lacking in style civilization and a sense of beauty' (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.346)

Her intense intellectual life makes her become snob. For example: she said that Georg Eliot is the granddaughter of a carpenter, is poor and has no charm 'raising



herself with groans and struggles from the intolerable boredom of petty provincial society... she had none of these eccentricities and inequalities of temper which give to many artists the endearing simplicity of children' (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.348) Virginia Woolf compared herself to Shakespeare and her experiments in narrative style carry snobbishness (Harding, 1992, p.53)

The wit of Virginia combined with her snobbery mixed with her influence from Jane Austen make her pessimistic, troubled, depressive and hate life, she said in Jacob's Room (2008) 'it is not catastrophes, murders, deaths, diseases, that age and kill us; it is the way people look and laugh, and run up the steps of omnibuses' (p.34), she added in A Writer's Diary (2003) 'life is ... so tragic –no newspaper placard without its shriek of agony from someone... unhappiness is everywhere; just beyond the door; or stupidity, which is worse' (p.28)

It is certain that the death of the great moderns will bring the decline in modern literary quality. Virginia Woolf -who contributed to the establishment of modernism-, was removed from England in 1941 by death. She became influential in Britain in the years after the Second World War. Even if Virginia Woolf is not among the very greatest of English novelists, her fiction leaves one with the impression of a delicate and subtle artist who upheld aesthetic and spiritual values in a brutal, materialistic age. The suicide of Virginia Woolf in 1941 bear witness to the deep, indirect effect of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War on the imagination and the language of the British literature (Cited in Harding, 1992, p.66)

Virginia Woolf remains a pioneering feminist, and one can only regret that the mental instability which led her to suicide in 1941 (terrified by the war and the fear that she was losing her mind) robbed English literature of its most influential and gifted woman since Georg Eliot (Ibid, p.69)

#### **1.4. Conclusion**

The psycho- analysis of Freud which spread all over Europe from the end of the First World War, influenced writing. Writing fiction dealt more and more with the mental psyche and all the elements of the traditional novel, that is, the character -as an individual- and the plot moved to the background in favour of psychological exploration.

Writing was not only used as a means of expression but also as a means for this exploration and investigation of consciousness, so the process of writing allowed the writer to penetrate and to go deeper into the psyche of the characters which in its turn reflects the psyche of the writers.

Writing as a process became a writing of adaptation and fitted itself in order to get with consciousness, to discover and to reveal it. This technique is called “the stream of consciousness”.

# Chapter Two

## 2.1. Introduction

A Room of One's Own is one of the essays written by the modernist Virginia Woolf in 1929. It is addressed principally to women; Woolf sends a message to the reader with the aim, the wish and the hope of changing attitudes.

The essay deals with women and fiction and Woolf uses fictitious characters in order to speak the truth and reflect the difficulties women had in education, in writing and in having money and a room of their own. Woolf used real examples and went through time and space in order to denounce the tragic ending intelligent women had because of the patriarchal society.

## 2.2. Women and Fiction

Women and fiction is attributed to women writers, but if one goes deeper it can mean women and what they are, the fiction they write and the fiction written about them. When saying that “a woman must have money and a room of her own in order to write fiction” (Woolf, 1929, p.7) Woolf clearly shows that talent is not everything.

Women and fiction are problems which will remain unsolved because the subject is controversial and raises all sorts of prejudices.

The writings before the 1st World War marked Woolf because they celebrated the true feelings society had and this is why people remembered them easily without asking questions but when it comes to the writings of the after World War things get completely different and this is why the modern writings are sinister and people cannot remember them even if they are good (p.19) the war both killed the writings and was a shock for women and education. Before the 1st World War writings held illusion and after it they held truth.

Men writers dominated the history of the British literature and Woolf was astonished; she wondered how many books women wrote comparing them to men. She also compared women to animals in order to show the status they had (p.31)

Woolf is looking for truth about the woman, this latter is a subject of curiosity, it attracts the attention of any level of men's education and when it comes to novelists ; all men have written about women but women do not write about men and for Woolf this is unacceptable, she wonders what could be the reason of this inequality and why women are so much interesting to men (Woolf, 1929, p.31), she ponders on those men who wrote about all kinds of women, she was interested on their opinions and she found out that there was a contradiction in what men thought ; some praised women and others completely belittled them, even sages were divided. It was impossible to come to a conclusion and it was humiliating for Woolf because the truth escaped from her so she continued her conquest to the study of women and fiction to reach the truth.

It is pointless to look for the truth in the future if one does not know the truth in the past because the future is made of the past. While pondering, Woolf drew a face; the face of Professor Von X who wrote *The Mental, Moral and Physical Inferiority of the Female Sex* (p.36) this professor was really angry when writing this book about women, maybe the reason of this rage is his wife or maybe he was ugly. The word *Inferiority* made Woolf angry (p.37) because no one has the right to judge a woman and say she is inferior to a little man. The books written about women are pointless because they were written with anger so they don't hold the truth. The writings about women reflect the personality of the writer (men), if he writes with anger; the reader who is a man will share the same point of view and feeling as the writer and will be angry in his turn. Woolf wondered if anger represents power (p.39) in one hand fear is expressed through anger and fear leads us to protection and on the other hand the ego of men is threatened by women and this is why women make men angry. So, in order to protect their superiority men made women inferior.

The struggle between the two sexes is perpetual, and therefore women need strength, courage and confidence. This self confidence is not acquired by saying that women are superior and people are naturally inferior. It may be a good idea but not in real life. On the one hand ; women belong to men and behind each great man

there is a woman, and on the other hand men hate women because women harshly criticize them with the aim to bring them pain and anger so no matter how superior men look outside, when they are with their women they are inferior.

Woolf believed that women had the power to be the mirrors of their men, mirrors that reflect them and the absence of women would deprive the world from its history thus mirrors are essential to the violence in civilization ; take it away and men will die (Woolf, 1929, p.41)

England was a patriarchal society and everything turned around men; men dominated and held everything, so publically men were confident and superior but when it comes to the private life it is the opposite and this is why Woolf was fascinated by the dangerous psychology of women (p.42)

Woolf was surprised by that man who called a woman “the crazy feminist” because that woman said that men are snobs (p.41) what men think of women is not a permanent value because in a century this value will change and women will have ceased to be the weaker sex. There will logically be certain equality between both sexes; all the stereotypes will disappear and attitudes will change.

In the fiction written by men; woman was a subject of imagination, she could be whatever she wants, have all the qualities and the flaws but in reality she was beaten, locked in and put in the margin. Women dominated fiction but was absent from history. In fiction she dominated kings and conquerors but in reality she was the slave of any boy she was forced to marry. In fiction a woman was a poet and inspired literature but in reality she could not read and she was the property of her husband. Women were like toys for men's imagination. They could do whatever they wanted with them; she could be a simple woman or the source of all sorts of spirit and forces. According to Woolf; literature is strewn with the wreckage of men who have minded beyond reason the opinions of others (p.63)

### **2.2.1. Women and Gender Issues**

Woolf used her imagination and invented stories which hold the truth about the bad situation of women.

In colleges, women were forbidden to enter a library unless they are accompanied by members of the college who are of course men or they had to bring a letter of introduction from the Dean (Woolf, 1929, p.12)

Woolf denounced the fact that the lunch served to men in college is soles (a kind of fish) put in a deep dish spread with the whitest cream with brown spots then the partridges with sauces salads and potatoes then pudding accompanied with wine and cigarette served by silent men (p.15), whereas dinner was served late for women, they had soup, beef with vegetables and potatoes, prunes which are not fruits and custard followed then biscuit and cheese came with water (no wine) in order to dry the biscuit (p.22) that is all what they had, and it wasn't good because according to Woolf "one cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well" (p.23); the mixture of beef and prunes at the end of the day is pointless to the good working of the mind.

Lunch before the war was different; men and women were together talking freely and laughing. Woolf noticed that the conversation of the past and the present are the same but the difference is in the tone. Before the war the talking was musical and it changed the value of words (p.16); men and women were singing at lunch before the war.

Woolf was obsessed and marked by the image of masons on a high roof five centuries ago and the image of kings and nobles bringing treasure in huge sacks and pouring it under the earth, all these happened in the place where the college is now. She wondered what happened behind the college (p.24) About the year 1860 money was lacking when it comes to raise it for women but when it is for men; huge amounts are easy to gather and it would suit people that education wasn't important for women because every penny that was normally attributed to the education of women went on building. Even if women worked hard they did not gain much and it was impossible to gain more because they are women. Women of old generations had thirteen children but did not work, they were obliged to stay home and not to work; they were even guarded by dogs.

If they worked and raised money, the coming generations (the one of Woolf for example) would sit, sleep, eat and think well. It is unfortunate that mothers and grandmothers did not work and raise money like fathers and grandfathers so that daughters will benefit from; dinners would be the same for both and access to the library would be easier (without being accompanied by a man or having a letter of introduction from the Dean). Women would be free to write poetry, free to go wherever they want.

If women worked at the age of 15 they wouldn't be the women they are today, but in order to make a fortune women should sacrifice games and memories and forget about family. Woolf illustrates this theory with an example saying that it takes 9 months for a baby to get born, 4 months feeding him and then 5 years playing with him and it is in those 5 years that the child develops his human nature; so he is wild and it is not an easy task for a mother to raise him during that period (Woolf, 1929, p.27) all these multiplied by thirteen (because generally women had thirteen babies). So, it shows that it is impossible for a human being to work, study and raise children in the same time and if women of past generations devoted their lives into gaining money, half of women wouldn't exist, and even if it were possible; the law denied women the right to own money.

Forty eight years later woman had her 1st penny. It wasn't possible before because even if women could earn money, this latter would be the property of their husbands so it is pointless to earn money if one cannot benefit from it. Woolf blames the old generations of women who did not know how to manage their money so that the coming generations will benefit from it like having wine instead of water (p.28) The blame is on women who were busy raising children rather than money, then Woolf pondered on the effect of money on the mind and she found out that money can make a man and woman both a slave or a free person (p.29) Men are safe and prosperous because of money and women are poor and insecure because of the lack of money.



Woolf had many questioning about gender inequalities and according to her the answers are found in the history of those women who overcame stereotypes and prejudices of their gender in order to tell the truth (Woolf, 1929, p.30)

Women acquired in the same day the right for a lawyer, the right to vote and the right for legacy, money seemed the most important. Before 1918 women could work and have jobs. Woolf was afraid not of the hard work but of doing what women did not wish to do and become slaves (p43) It was risky but the coming of legacy and the thought of having money make fear go. It brings a change of temper and freedom. Nothing and no one could take away that legacy; having money (500 a year for ever) without doing effort, even men couldn't hate and hurt them because they own a legacy; they own money.

Women will no more flatter men to have money; women became financially independent. A new attitude was to be adopted toward men. Yes men had money and power but only at the cost of their lives. They had this rage for acquisition; making more and more money, they were like robots conditioned to have money. Woolf had pity for them (p.44) money brings freedom ; the freedom of thinking, according to Woolf; money brings a view of the open sky (p.45), the whole London changed thanks to this legacy, women were still working but it doesn't matter for Woolf because the work of today and a century before are not of the same difficulty (p.45)

Woolf tried hard to look for the reason why women were poorer than men, she wondered under what conditions women lived in the Elizabethan England and why nothing was written by women in that literature while men wrote everything. She wanted to look for the position of women in the History of England (p.48) in Chaucer's time. It wasn't a shame but a right for a man to beat his woman and woman was forced to marry the man her parents chose for her, and if she refuses she will be beaten, locked up and put in the margin and this didn't shock the society since they accepted it.

Two hundred years later, during the Stuarts, the situation remained the same. For men who wrote the history of England; neither Shakespeare's women nor those of the 17th century had personality and character. Woolf said that one doesn't need to be a historian to know that all women of all poems and novels from the beginning of time had tragic ending by being burnt, so how could they have characters (Woolf, 1929, p.49) Women were like dogs, they were the property of men.

### **2.2.2. Women in 16th Century**

When it comes to the Elizabethan woman, no true facts were known, history holds nothing about women at that time only a name of a queen or of a great lady like Elizabeth but even this name was rarely mentioned. Woolf wondered if a random Elizabethan woman had a room of her own, at what age did she marry, if she wrote plays or poems, if she left a biography of her so that one can know more about the Elizabethan women (p.51) Nothing was known about women before the 18th century.

Women had no money and they were married at the age of fifteen, so maybe it was not their fault or the way they were educated if they didn't write poetry. But what did the Elizabethan women do from eight am till eight pm asked Woolf. While pondering on the question Woolf remembered an ignorant bishop who declared that it was impossible for any woman to have the genius of Shakespeare, and while contemplating the works of Shakespeare Woolf could not disagree with that bishop. So, since facts are hard to come by Woolf imagined that Shakespeare had a sister called Judith (p.52)

Shakespeare went to a grammar school, he was a wild boy, he went to London, he loved theatre and worked there, he became a successful actor, he even acted for the Queen Elizabeth I, and everybody knew him. His sister Judith who has the same talent and characteristics as him remained at home. She didn't have grammar lessons but she read books. Her parents asked her to be like other girls and to get married with the son of her neighboring, Judith said that she hated marriage but her father beat her for that then he begged her not to shame him (p.53)

Before the age of seventeen, Judith escaped from home to go to London, she was happy, she loved theatre like her brother but when she wanted to act, men laughed in her face and the manager told her no woman could possibly be an actress. Her genius could not be real, she found herself pregnant by the actor-manager. She could not bear it so she killed herself and lies buried in a lost place (Woolf, 1929, p.54); this might be the true ending of a woman in Shakespeare's day with Shakespeare's genius and it is logical because laboring, uneducated and servile people born in England couldn't have Shakespeare's genius.

Women had genius but it was never mentioned in the history of England and even if there were men authors, poets and novelists who talked about the genius of women, they were suppressed and removed from history. In the Elizabethan age; women like Jane Austen or Emily Bronte existed but they had the same ending as Judith Shakespeare because of their genius. It is pointless to say that this is true or not since no one can prove it, what is true is that a woman born with a gift (genius) in the 16th century will have the same tragic ending as Judith Shakespeare.

Women like Judith Shakespeare must be psychologically strong in order not to lose her health then her life because it is impossible for a woman to be an actor in London without mentally torturing herself. To have a free life in the London of the 16th century for a woman poet is stressful and risky; it might kill her. No matter what she has written, her work has gone unsigned.

A woman who was born with a gift of poetry in the 16th century was an unhappy woman. Woolf questioned what their state of mind was really when they wrote poetry (p.57) No one could define the state of mind Shakespeare had when writing his tragedies Lear and Antony and Cleopatra, because nothing was found about it and to find a woman in the 16th century in an incandescent state of mind is impossible.

It makes no sense that England was ruled by a woman; a powerful woman and no woman at that time wrote poetry, even after the death of the Elizabeth I nothing was written by women. Women didn't take advantage of the freedom and

the greatness of their representative to write. One would expect to find a woman (The Nobel Lady Winchelsea) who suffered psychologically from male domination to write poetry to protest against the stereotypes men attributed to women and to show the suffering in her poems. Her state of mind would be incandescent when writing this kind of poem because for her human race is split into two parts; the first one which is the hated and feared men who prevent women to think and write because for them women are just objects made for dancing and dressing, and the second one is that woman born with genius should encourage herself to write and free her mind from hate and fear. It is such a pity that a woman with such genius wrote about anger instead of joy even if her marriage was peaceful and perfect. No facts were found about those women. A man laughed at her so she laughed back at him thus he got offended and this is gossiping, so more gossip was needed and wanted.

Another woman(whose name is not cited in the novel) loved poetry and had this rage against the stereotypes made by men against women believed that women lived like bats or owls, labor like beasts and die like worms. No one taught her but she excelled in prose, poetry and philosophy that nobody ever read, unfortunately her genius turned to solitude and loneliness, she ended up in isolation, what a mess.

Another one - Dorothy Osborne - who was untaught, wrote letters, even if letters did not count, she wrote like a novelist but with psychological torture of men, she believed that writing a book was ridiculous. And another woman - Lady Dudley -ruled her husband's estates after his stroke and she nursed him at the same time.

A middle class woman – Aphra Behn - who lost her husband and was obliged to live by her wits so she had to work on equal terms with men. In addition to the hard work, she also wrote, she had splendid writings and it is thanks to writing that she freed her mind and with the freedom of mind she could write what she wanted, she influenced other women and she made money by her pen. She proved that money could be made by writing, so writing became important and this is what made in the late 18th century the extreme activity of women's mind and thus this period witnessed a radical change; middle-class women began to write.

And this event is historically of great importance because masterpieces were written by women. Great female writers who were all from the middle-class should thank Aphra Behn because she earned them the right to speak their minds.

If woman's movement began in the 16th century rather than in the 19th century; the Elizabethan literature would be different. England was full of masculine opinions and stereotypes that it was hard for a woman writer to write but it was even harder for a musician or a painter to practice her genius. In the Elizabethan age some men said that a woman acting put them in mind of a dog dancing and others said of women who tried to write music that their composing was like a dog walking on two legs, "it is not done well but you are surprised to find it done at all" (Woolf, 1929, p.61), even in politics women had nothing to do there but it was coming; the patriarchal society would die and women would emancipate.

### **2.2.3. Women in 18th Century**

Woolf was jealous of Victorian talents because she compared them to the poets of her time and found out that such great poets no more existed (p.18) Middle-class women naturally wrote novels, some had better write poetic plays but they wrote novels, others wrote good novels but it could be better novels if they left their manuscripts so that one can know in which state of mind they were when writing novels. Jane Austen's writing Pride and Prejudice shows no sign of hate or fear and Woolf compares it to Shakespeare's Anthony and Cleopatra because none of them showed their emotions, she believed then that Charlotte Bronte had more genius than Jane Austen even if it wasn't fully expressed because she was at war with herself and this is why she died young (p.74-75) Masterpieces of the 18th century were written by women who were so poor that they could not even buy papers, women who knew nothing about life and wrote novels in a sitting-room.

Woolf was questioning the novel-writing and the effect of sex upon the novelist. She found out that the novel is shaped according to the emotion of the relation of human being to human being. It deals with life conflicts and opposed emotions so the life of the character depends on the shape of the novel (p.78) The novel is so complex because it is made with different emotions and judgments but it

catches a large public of different nationalities. What holds them (novels) together is the integrity of the novelist; the conviction that he gives the truth, when someone convinces a person that something will happen so it will happen but it is its nature that will allow people to judge novelist's integrity.

A novel can fail when the imagination becomes confused and cannot distinguish between the true and the false. Woolf wondered if the fact of being a woman will interfere in the integrity of the novelist (Woolf, 1929, p.80), this integrity is the basis of the writer, anger for example plays with the integrity of the novelist because when a woman novelist is locked in when she wants to be free; her imagination will not get mixed with indignation. Anger will dominate her imagination due to fear, oppression, rancor and pain. All these make the novel splendid.

A novel has its value which reflects those of real life. The values of women differ from men's, yet it is the masculine values that dominate. Freedom and fullness of expression were acquired by women but tradition and tools were lacking in their writings. The shape of the novel has been made by men to fulfill their needs but was it shaped for the use of women? Wondered Woolf (p.84)

Some say that women's novels should be shorter because they are always interrupted while writing and because women's brains differ from men's so in order to know if it is true or false one has to study the psychology of women by a woman. Maybe women are incapable of playing football but they are all capable of practicing medicine.

There are as many books written by women than by men. Women no longer write novels solely. They wrote about subjects that they couldn't tackle before. Novels have changed, the natural simplicity, the epic age of women's writing have gone. Reading and criticism gave women a wider range; writing was no more used as a method of self-expression but as an art. Novels experienced novelty.

#### 2.2.4. Women in the 19th Century

The state of mind must be incandescent for a creative mind. The fact that people know so little of Shakespeare is that all his flaws were hidden from the public; therefore he was the greatest poet. It was only in the 19th century that self-consciousness was developed through authors' confessions of state of minds while writing poems and autobiographies. Everything was known about them but nothing about Shakespeare and what he went through when writing Lear.

It is difficult to write a work of genius; great writers suffered in their creative years because of distraction and it was shown in their books of confession (Woolf, 1929, p.58) for women all these difficulties were impossible; to have a room of her own was impossible even in the 19th century. The material difficulties were formidable comparing to the immaterial (mental) ones. The world said to men: write if you choose, it makes no difference to me, but they said to women: write? What's the good of you writing? (p.59) for some great figures of British universities; the best woman was intellectually the inferior of the worst man, and this sentence only reflects the true picture of those great figures.

In the 19th century some women like George Eliot, George Sand or Currer Bell veiled themselves by using male names so that their writings would be accepted, and some others had to cut their names and keep just the first part of it, for example if a woman is named Bertha she has to cut her name and let only Bert so that people will not know that the author is Bertha, maybe it is Bertrand ... women did not have the right to be famous, they should stay anonymous.

The 19th century is a century where a woman wasn't encouraged to be an artist and it is due to the masculine complex which influenced so much a woman's movement and desire; the masculine complex to be superior and women inferior. The history of men's opposition to women's emancipation is more interesting perhaps than the story of that emancipation itself. But people with genius be it men or women shouldn't care about opinions.

The early 19th century writings were made by women for the first time but all were novels; there was no trace of poetry. It is easier to write prose and fiction rather than poetry and play, it requires less concentration. The middle-class family of the 19th century had only one sitting room to share between all the members so the woman never had half an hour of her own; she was always interrupted.

The values of life are reflected in fiction so the difference of values persists. In the early 19th century novel, women showed that they are as good as men and the fact of being criticized altered their values in difference to the opinion of others but only Jane Austen and Emily Bronte faced all the criticism of the patriarchal society thanks to their genius but especially to their integrity (Woolf, 1929, p.81); they wrote like women and not like men, of all the women writers they are the only ones who clearly ignored the cautions given by men. Those later can prevent women to buy literature but they cannot set upon the freedom of their minds.

The early 19th century women novelists faced many difficulties when it came to setting their thoughts on paper. Men never helped women but this latter learned some tricks from them and applied them but they didn't had that sentence "the grandeur of their works was an argument with them, not to stop short, but to proceed" (p.83) This sentence didn't suit women; on the contrary, great female writers laughed at it and created their own sentence which suits their use.

#### **2.2.5. Mary Carmichael**

An imaginary unknown novelist - Mary Carmichael - wrote *Life's Adventure*. Woolf wondered if the feminine character Chloe knows to write the sentences in *Life's Adventure* are not of the right shape, maybe she was afraid of being called sentimental or having a flowery writing, maybe she wasn't herself when writing it, but nothing is sure until one reads the scenes. What is sure is that her novel holds too many facts. The sentences are not of the right shape for the sake of creating, it was a trick made by Mary Carmichael but she has to create a situation and believe in it and do her duty as a writer (p.87)



Woolf used the novel of Mary Carmichael to reflect her lesbianism through the absence of men (Woolf, 1929, p.89) Women having relationship with each others; it was the first time that this happened in literature. The only feeling a woman has for a woman in literature is maybe the one of jealousy but not of love. It is an interesting subject that wasn't tempted before. Before, women were friends, mothers and daughters but not lovers. Before the 18th century; women in fiction were seen in relation to men, they were either prosperous or unhappy, but the 19th century novels, women became more complicated and various; it was the fact of writing about women that pushed men to stop writing poetic drama. Women had other interests than domesticity, before; the fictitious woman was simple and monotonous and literature suffered. Women were forced to get married, jailed at home and do household so it was the man (dramatist) who talked in her place and he chose to hate her.

If Mary Carmichael knows how to write, has a room of herself, had five hundred of her own and her novel deals with a woman loving a woman then something great happened (p.91), it was a novelty that a married woman with children was working and having secretly a relationship with a woman. It was interesting how she reveals that a woman loses her light through loneliness due to her capricious husband.

Olivia -Chloe's girlfriend- represents the woman who was submissive and oppressed for million years and then feels the light falling on her, getting access to knowledge, art, and adventure and reaching out for it. For Woolf, a woman is highly developed and infinitely intricate but there is no proof to measure the precise height of women. Women's height is only measured through the qualities of a good mother or the fidelity of a sister or the devotion of a daughter or the capacity of a housekeeper (p92) Few women went to the universities and many fields were closed for them so it is impossible to prove that they were highly developed and infinitely intricate.

Woolf blamed Mary Carmichael and suggested that she should be more an observer and not bound herself to the upper middle classes because there are so

many new facts for her to observe, she needs to go to the lower class women; those old women who have a vague image of history, even if nothing was found, no history, no biography. Women had obscure lives and all these obscure lives must be recorded and Mary must get deeper and illuminate it (Woolf, 1929, p.97)

If Mary were brave and honest she would tell us what she found in men's spirit and give its true picture. Be truthful and the result will be amazing, comedy will be enriched and new facts will be discovered suggested Woolf (p.98) Woolf was mad at Mary because she broke up Jane Austen's sentence. Mary did not give a chance to Woolf to say that Jane is better than her; maybe it was not done on purpose (p.99) Woolf wanted Mary to face herself with a situation but Mary shows the meaning of all this without facing a situation. She made the simple natural thing while writing a majestic one. She was a naturalist-novelist. She was calm and aspiring and a graceful novelist, she had the staying power (p.101) she did her best, she was not a genius but an unknown girl writing her first novel without having time, money and a room of her own and her novel was good. But if you give her five hundred a year, a room of her own and let her speak her mind; she will write a better novel than Life's Adventure.

When a woman wrote like a woman; she would completely twitch away and shake the feeling of the reader as if the important points were just a little further on. She made things less serious less profound and less humane, she wasn't a genius but she had something that greater women did not ; men were no longer to her the opposing faction. Fear and hatred were gone, she had a free sensibility, and she brought light to many things. She wrote as a woman who has forgotten that she was a woman (p.100)

Women were jailed in a room for million years and if anybody enters one of the rooms; an extremely complex force of femininity will fly in their faces. This creative force differs from the one of men. It was won by centuries and it is a pity to waste it. It is also such a pity for a woman to write like a man and it is the job of education to bring out the differences.

Great men admired, loved, trusted and depended on women but the only thing that men got from this alliance is the pleasure of the body. Women got something that men did not, she sacrifices her life for her children, she is the centre of the system of life, she is fluid in speaking her opinion and thanks to her; the creative power of men would quicken and his sterile mind begin to plot. Every man has his woman, and when this woman goes with her Italian music master, the man goes mad with rage and disgust because the light of his life has gone out.

### **2.2.6. Woolf's Message**

The 20s marked the death of poetry and the development of the average woman and of a prose style completely expressive of her mind. In London no one looked like the other and nobody cared about Shakespeare's plays.

The imagination of Woolf was rhythmically ordered, everything has something to communicate. She compared the mind to a taxi cab, the other sex to a little boy and the opposite sex to a little girl. She gave the image of two people coming separately and meeting each other to take the taxi which means that the sexes are distinct to each other. When the children get into the taxi; the sexes interfere with the unity of the mind (Woolf, 1929, p.104) the mind is a mysterious organ and we depend completely on it. The mind holds much opposition and has a great power of concentrating at any time and at any point, it has no state of being, it brings the world into different perspectives.

After being divided men and women come together again in a natural fusion and the only reason is that it is natural for sexes to co-operate (p.105); the union of man and woman makes the most complete happiness but the two sexes in the mind do not always correspond to the two sexes in the body. Each of them has two powers: one male and one female. The normal state of being is when the two are spiritually co-operating and thanks to this balance the mind uses all its faculties. The androgynous mind is a great mind, creative and incandescent mind (p.106) All the books written by men about women made this latter sex conscious. Man's writing was direct, it indicates such freedom of mind, such liberty of person, such

confidence in himself, it is because the writer is well-nourished, well-educated, free minded, and never been opposed.

When reading the first chapter of a man writing, Woolf notices that the 'I' dominates the writing, and this shows that nothing will grow in the novel and it reflects the blockage of his creative energy (Woolf, 1929, p.108); the 'I' was done in purpose in order to show his superiority and protest against women equality. Virility became self-conscious so men wrote with their male side of the brain and it was a mistake for a woman to read this kind of writing because she will not find what she is looking for. Woolf compared two writings: the first one made by a male side of the mind and it will bring nothing to the woman reader because it deals with a man's world so it is incomprehensible to a woman. The second writing is by an androgynous mind and it gives birth to all kinds of other ideas to the woman reader (p.110) Writing with a male side of the brain makes the novel lack of suggestive power thus impossible to penetrate the feminine mind.

It is fatal to be a man or a woman; pure and simple. The writer must use both sides of his mind equally; he must be androgynous. It is fatal for a woman to speak consciously like a woman otherwise the writing dies. In order to accomplish the art of creation; the marriage between man mind and woman mind must be accomplished. According to Woolf; all who have brought about the state of sex consciousness are to blame (p.111) there must be freedom and peace in order to achieve a full perfect writing. Woolf did in purpose not to talk about merits of both sexes. According to her, gifts of mind and character should not be weighed. The amount of money and the number of rooms don't reflect women's capacities. Sex against sex, quality against quality, superiority and inferiority... all these are immature and futile and pointless (p.114), because when it comes to books it is difficult to judge and to fix labels of merit; a book can be praised and blamed.

Woolf may put a lot of importance to material things but she is right because five hundred a year is for the power to contemplate and a room of one's own is for the power to think for one self. But one may say that the mind should rise above these and the great poets are the poorer but this is not what says a professor of

literature “nine of twelve great poets were university men” and those three did not do well which means that the nine had the best education England may give (Woolf, 1929, p.115)

It is dishonoring that in England a poor child had and has zero chance to be emancipated into the intellectual freedom in which great writings are born because in one hand poetry depends upon intellectual freedom and this latter depends upon material things and on the other hand women have always been poor from the beginning of time, so women have not had, not even, a single chance to write poetry and this is why money and a room of one's own are of extreme importance: it is necessary for a woman to have money and a room of her own in order to write fiction or poetry. Woolf focused on women who wrote books because she considers herself as a critic of modern fiction. She wishes that the coming generations will have money in order to travel and contemplate the past and the future and to write books in order to profit the art of fiction (p.117) because fiction will influence the others.

Great female writer has come to existence because women have the habit of writing naturally. Woolf encourages people to write books because good books are desirable and good writers are good human beings, she said “in your books speak reality because reality lights up people and makes the silent world more real” (p.118) The writer then has the chance to live more than other people in the presence of reality and it is up to her to find it and communicate it to the world. Having money and a room of one's own is living in the presence of reality.

Woolf is sending a message to all women imploring them to remember their responsibilities, to be higher, more spiritual, to be themselves and not to imitate men because women will influence the future (p.119), she is asking women to be supportive and not to hate each other because men already hate them (p.120)

Woolf is blaming women in order to encourage them saying that they are ignorant and they brought nothing to history, they wasted their time in gossiping and prostitution (p.121), women may reply and say that they have borne, bred,

washed and taught at the age of seven all men who run the world. But Woolf reminded them that there have been two colleges in England since 1866, in 1880 a married woman was allowed by the law to possess her own property, in 1919 she was given the right to vote and most professions have been open to them and if they benefit from all these privileges; there will be two thousand women earning five hundred a year (Woolf, 1929, p.121):“don't say you didn't have opportunities, money ... even if you are mothers and you have children, you had the time to learn” (p.122)

Judith Shakespeare was young and died without writing a word but she will always live in women because great poets do not die but she will need women's power in order to live another century in the real life. With money and a room of one's own and having the freedom and the courage to write exactly what women want and facing reality and facts; the Judith Shakespeare will be born. She would come, live and write her poetry if women work for her no matter poverty and obscurity (p.123)

### **2.3. A Room of One's Own Literary Review**

The First World War accelerated the development of modern writing. Virginia Woolf who experienced the war -not only her body suffered but also her mind-, was influenced by it which makes her novels; pre-war novels. A Room of One's Own is a novel sufficient in itself to prove that Virginia Woolf is a writer novelist, not a war writer only (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.207) So, the success of Virginia Woolf depends to a great extent upon the reader's personal attitude (Ibid, p.204) it means that only the ones who experienced the war will really understand her in comparison with the ones who didn't experience the war.

The post-world war faced all manifestations of authority. The 1920's became an era of revolt against signs of the assertive will (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.22) Woolf's novels deal with the real world and expose the main tension of her own social situation (Cited in Dodsworth, 1994, p.187) Virginia Woolf based her fiction on women and society, she wrote the fiction she would like to write and her own particular interest in problems was connected with the “new woman”. Her works

have been a fundamental reality of the twentieth century and a recurrent feature of its fiction (Ford, 1983, p.95)

A Room of One's Own (1929) is a novel of sensibility; the sensibility of the author (Cited in Dodsworth, 1994, p.187) It reflects back her experience. It also reflects and shows the wishes and the hopes she had. 'The private agonies of the writer and artist acquire a public bearing which constitutes the counterpart to their intimations of isolation and loneliness' (Ford, 1983, p.55)

Woolf lived in a very masculine world with a culture of feminine submission. Her novels are addressed to a feminine, feminist public, and her most original achievement created debate among them. Her works of art like A Room of One's Own deal with sexual differences between male and female and the idea of feminine experience. Iris Murdoch questioned this idea saying in The Unicorn (1987) "I think there's human experience; and I don't think that a woman's mind differs essentially from a man's, except in the sense that women are often less well educated' (p.89)

Virginia Woolf's A Room of One's Own deals with the strong oppression of the patriarchal society to women's education in college; her struggle for status based on education became a characteristic mid-century phenomenon (Cited in Ford, 1983, p.32) In his Social Insurance and Allied Services (1942), Sir W. Beveridge says: "In the development of education lies the most important, if not the most urgent, of all the tasks of reconstruction" (p.36)

Her character –which reflects Woolf's own personality-, was dominated by the desire towards individuality and personal freedom as self-expression. Barbara Wootton said in her Social Science and Social Pathology (1978) "equality was sought even at the sacrifice of liberty" (p.37) and the prejudice against the tyranny of the male intellect and its essential egoism and pettiness.

Woolf was aware of the fame she had among women writers, and her obsession to keep her reputation pushes her sometimes to cross the boundaries through exaggeration. For example, in her novel A Room of One's Own (1929) she

directly dealt with the problems of the woman writer by attacking masculine self-importance. In this novel she portrays the traumatic relations between the two sexes, in which she 'neatly displays the irony of women's intellectual incarceration as fodder for male liberation' (Cited in Harding, 1992, p.66)

The technique Virginia Woolf used to write A Room of One's Own, brings the reader closer to life. This technique is called technique of introversion or the narrative introversion which appeared in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Actually it took to Virginia Woolf a lot of time (until the late 20s) to work with this technique simply because she was more into self-consciousness narration –which has nothing to do with the narrative introversion- so she was mostly limited and constrained by realism(Cited in Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.401)

Henry James first used this technique, and then Joseph Conrad adopted it, excelled in it and started writing with it. It wasn't the case for Virginia Woolf who harshly criticized him and the narrative introversion technique, but in the late 20s she discovered that this technique really fulfilled her desires and adopted it in writing her great novels. The aim of this technique is

To free the novel from its earlier limitations –its flat, external realism, its dependence on the material world and the loose contingencies of prose- and to probe more freely and intensely the fact of life and the others of modern consciousness (Ibid. p.408)

And this is what Virginia Woolf really desired. She expressed in her famous essay that if a writer were a free man and not a slave, if he could write what he chose, not what he must, if he could base his work upon his own feeling and not upon convention, there would be no plot, no comedy, no tragedy, no love interest or catastrophe in the accepted style, and perhaps not a single button sewn on as the Bond Street tailors would have it. In her *The Common Reader-First Series* (2002), Virginia Woolf said that

Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; but a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from



the beginning of consciousness to the end. It is not the task of the novelist to convey this varying, this unknown spirit, whatever aberration or complexity it may display, with as little mixture of the alien and external as possible? (p.106)

Unlike the experimental novel, the introverted novel flees from material realism. A Room of One's Own (1929) is a novel in which the main character cooperates with the consciousness of the author. The novel has no plot.

A Room of One's Own is an engaging penetrating essay on literature. It is about the position of women in society and arts. Woolf used a reliable, omniscient and intrusive narrator with single limited point of view, involving references across past time (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.453) Her major character is a woman, who is fighting against the social laws made by the patriarchal society, this main character is also a story teller; she tells the truth the author wants to tell in order to construct fiction. Even if 'some consider the story as a newspaper, because the content is a truth, and because Woolf takes us through the stages she experienced in her life (Ibid, p.458) through the main character; Woolf speaks the truth and shows the sad reality and the bad conditions women have. So this modern novel/essay is more than a story.

#### **2.4. A Room of One's Own and Modernism**

In order to write this piece of art, Woolf; the modernist writer, rejected the traditional elements of the nineteenth century and used modernist elements. She played with words and used irony; the ironical sentences or words reveal their meanings by the situation and the context they are placed in. The irony is used in order to recover the consequent blocking of language which is the difficulty that marked so much the modern writing. But perhaps the most fundamental characteristic of the modern period was itself an irony (Cited in Ford, 1983, p55). For example: "the first duty of a lecturer is to hand you after an hour's discourse a nugget of pure truth to wrap up between the pages of your notebooks and keep on the mantelpiece forever" (Woolf, 1929, p.7), "wise men never say anything else apparently" (p.34), "if not you will of course throw the whole of it into the waste-

paper basket and forget all about it” (Woolf, 1929, p.8), “the rulers French, English and German are so ugly and so stupid” (p.19), “I began drawing cartwheels and circles over the angry professor’s face till he looked like a burning bush or a flaming comet-anyhow, an apparition without human resemblance or significance. The professor was nothing now but a faggot burning on the top of Hampstead Heath” (p.37), “he left millions to charities and colleges that were ruled by himself...he will decide if the hair on the meat axe is human” (p.39), “women have burnt like beacons” (p.48), “cats and dogs go to heaven” (p.52), “women end her days in some lonely cottage half witch half wizard” (p.55), “what a vision of loneliness and riot the thought of Margaret Cavendish brings to mind! as if some giant cucumber had spread itself over all the roses and carnations in the garden and choked them to death” (p.68), “with there must be freedom and peace in order to achieve a full perfect writing out boasting or giving pain to the opposite sex, one may say that pride and prejudice is a good book” (p.74), “beadle though you are” (p.83) and “one blushes at all these capital letters as if one had been caught eavesdropping at some purely masculine orgy” (p.110)

The constant use of ‘I’ by Woolf is done as a way to speak to women as a whole so all women should recognize themselves in what she is expressing. For her “‘I’ is only a convenient term for somebody who has no real being” (p.8), the ‘I’ represents the three Marys ; the first ‘I’ is Mary Seton, the second ‘I’ is Mary Beton and the third ‘I’ is Mary Carmichael and as Woolf said “call me Mary Beton, Mary Seton, Mary Carmichael or by any name you please- it is not a matter of any importance” (p.9) so the ‘I’ is the fictionalized author.

Woolf used also lots of descriptions; the fact of describing brings more explanation to the idea Woolf wants to reach to show the truth and thus makes the reader understand more. For examples: the description of the place she was in (p.9), of the college (p.10), the poem (p.11), the clothes of the congregation assembling (p.12), the outside of the chapel and the activities there (p.13), the meals served to men (p.15), the extreme change nature faced (from beautiful to sinister), the wonderful description of a woman (p.21), the description of the beautiful life men

had and women could have in the college (Woolf, 1929, p.28), description of the London after the 1st World War (p.31), of the way students make their researches (p.33), description of professor Von X (p.36), description of Shakespeare's characters (p.53), description of war and peace (p.79),and description of London from her window (p.103). She even gave statistics to improve her examples (p.121) and also references and footnotes (p.82)

Woolf used a poetic language in her essays as a natural means of expression so comparisons, metaphors and repetitions are employed in order to make the writing poetic thus beautiful.

Metaphor is the central assertion of the modern novel (Cited in Bradbury and McFarlane, 1978, p.495) and Gerard Genette in Figures III (2009) said that without metaphor there are no true memories...no story, no novel (p.156-73) Examples of metaphors: talking about 'thoughts' Woolf said "the sort of fish that a good fisherman puts back into the water so that it may grow fatter and be one day worth cooking and eating ... [...] they had sent my little fish into hiding" (pp.9-10) Her fiction is a spider's web; when the web is destroyed, the work of art is destroyed too because things are attached to material (p.47)

Examples of comparisons: "the spirit of peace descended like a cloud from heaven" (p.10), Woolf compared a guardian to an angel (p.12), she also compared the organization of the congregation assembling to the one of bees (p.12), the domes of the chapels to a sailing-ship (p.13), the body of the congregation assembling to giant crabs and crayfish who heave with difficulty across the sand of an aquarium (p.13), emotion to heat (p.37), women to mirrors (p.41), "keeping her genius is like keeping her chastity, it demands courage to cut it free" (p.56), comparing men to glossy bold and big rat (p.59), "to read this writing was like being out at sea in an open boat" (p.87), comparing Mary Carmichael's novel to a vast chamber with half lights when one doesn't know where is stepping" (p.91), and compared Mary Carmichael to an annoying creature (p.99)

Repetition of the word 'thought' (Woolf, 1929, p.9) 'he' (p.39) 'but' in the last chapter and 'I' in almost all the pages. Woolf admits that the word 'women' dominates the novel: "women-but are you not sick to death of the word? I can assure that I am" (p.120), but this is something obvious because the novelist 'addressed to women' (p.119)

The story happened in two days, Woolf uses narration while moving from one place to another and from one century to another in her imagination and it leads to a progress and the sequence of events, but in reality she is in her sitting-room in London in 25th and 26th October 1928. The time and the space work hand in hand; when moving from one period to another, Woolf moved from one place to another in the same time so time and space progress simultaneously and through fiction she searches for what happened in that period so that a change occurs. As she said; "fiction must stick to facts and the truer the facts the better the fiction" (p.20)

Woolf is slave of her emotions; she has this need to give the course of her thoughts and expose them completely and to get intimate with the reader and get her soul naked in order to be free. Woolf confessed her thoughts by using 'I' when talking of herself and 'you' when talking to the reader, and 'we' to all women and it is called self-consciousness, for example "the name escapes me" (p.11), "I forgot its name", "in a sort of jealousy, I suppose" (p.18) and (p.35), « let us suppose » (p.60)

Woolf even gives her opinion "I give you my thoughts as they came in" (p.10), "I thought" (p.11) and (p.36), "when I tell you" (p.82), "if you would please me" (p.117), "believe me and I have spent a great part of ten years in watching some 320 elementary schools" (p.116), "and I will end now in my own person" (p.113), 'we' (p.96), "do not start, do not blush" (p.89), "wait a moment", "I am almost sure" "she must convince me" (p.88)

She also gives suppositions "if" (p.91), she shows her disappointment "alas" (p.92) She gives orders in the last pages "think ..." in order to raise awareness as a speech and thus sends a message. She shows anger (p.116), she also shows curiosity

(Woolf, 1929, p.37), she adopts a “sterner tone” (p.119), she judges the authors (p.112) and she gives pieces of advice “don’t judge the others” (p.88)

Woolf talks directly to the reader and obliges him to imagine “I must ask you to imagine” (p.30) because imagination added to art fiction becomes reality and thus true facts are easily expressed.

In her writing Woolf used lots of Latin words especially French ones instead of English and this shows the French influence on her and it makes the novel of great importance, she even used French expressions: “ce chien est a moi” (p.57), or “les femmes sont extrêmes, ells sont meilleures ou pires que les hommes” (p.34)

In her essay Woolf used poems in a form of free verses to show that free verses are one of the characteristics of the modern poetry, for example in page 18 she said:

There has fallen a splendid tear  
From the passion-flower at the gate,  
She is coming, my dove, my dear-

Woolf uses lots of images and symbols? one of the major characteristics of the modern writing in order to gain more meaning and value and to strengthen its writing, make it interesting and of deep meaning, the novel holds many images and symbols for example: the face of Professor Von X (p.36) and the image of a monster in representation of a woman (p.50) The use of images and symbols in novels was important for Woolf because it made the modernist writing style. In his The New Pelican Guide to English Literature (1983) Ford said that “the symbolist novel is not about the external reality but about narrating experiences into small blocks of time, connected through repeated images and symbols”(p.453)

To cite real names and real places, and even historical events is a technique used by Woolf in order to make her imaginary fictitious examples being real and it means that fiction will be credible and become truth which makes the reader be

easily convinced. They are proofs in order to make facts come true, it holds a journalistic side, it is like a documentary. Examples of real names are: Jane Austen, Emily and Charlotte Bronte, Mrs. Gaskell, George Eliot, Fanny Burney, Miss Mitford, Charles Lamb, Max Beerbohm, John Milton, William Makepeace Thackeray, Tennyson, Christina Rossetti, Shakespeare, Lord Birkenhead, La Bruyere, Dr Johnson, Oscar Browning, Mussolini, The Pope, Napoleon, Goethe, Freud, Chaucer, Edgar Allan Poe, Joanna Baillie, Mary Russell Mitford, Robert Burns, Anon the Greek poet, Edward Fitzgerald, Carlyle, Flaubert, Keats, Marlowe, Eliza Carter, Tolstoy, Milton, Ben Jonson, Wordsworth, Proust, Sterne, Cowper, Coleridge, Shelley, John Langdon Davies, Oscar Browning. Examples of real places: Bloomsbury (Woolf, 1929, p.31) Geneva, South Africa, Fiji Island, California, British Museum (p.38)

Examples of historical events: Historical facts that led to the emancipation of women: “the Crimean war which led women out of their drawing rooms and the European war which opened the door to the average woman 60 years later and if these did not exist women would not know how to read and write and wouldn't have money and a room of their own” (p.117)

Fiction is the basis of Woolf's novels, fiction is imagination. Woolf gets through fiction in order to send her message indirectly; fiction reflects her life and her thoughts. Woolf gives her own point of view through examples and expresses her feelings through fictitious women characters. For example when Woolf talked about a married woman in the novel who had a relationship with a woman she is giving to the reader an overview of her life (p.90) In chapter five; Woolf uses Mary –a fictitious character- in order to describe her state of mind for example, Woolf shows her disappointment saying “ But, alas... I had slipped unthinkingly into praise of my own sex... and to praise one's own sex is often silly” (p.92)

So many techniques were used by Virginia Woolf in writing *A Room of One's Own* and this is what makes the essay a masterpiece.

## 2.5. Conclusion

Psycho-analysis emerged and the logic of modernism got in. With them; the unconsciousness becomes reason and reality. Virginia Woolf who was the first to introduce Freud's works in England defined the modernist aesthetic as giving the true image of the interior world of the human being.

Woolf's creativity fascinated the world; she brought novelty to the novel of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, her experience in writing made her the leader of the psychological novel. Free women she continued to inspire today's feminists.

# **General Conclusion**



## General Conclusion

Perhaps not too much into writing like other modernist writers, Virginia Woolf is however one of the key figures of the modernist revolution in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For her, the techniques of the traditional novel do not allow the psychological analysis to be perfect because the context is too narrow. Her writing follows the flow of the character's thoughts, which is embodied by the stream of consciousness. The result is such that the time seems expanded therefore longer, subjected to an increase which correspond to the subjectivity of the character.

The stream of consciousness is used to reproduce the interiority of the character and the outside exists only to the extent where it is showed in the psychological world of the character. In other words, the exterior is put in the interior of the character and has value only because it is caught by a character whose thoughts; in constant move, deviates depending on the impact of the outside.

The constant movement of her thoughts is in one hand strong and permanent like a vortex and in the other hand a key concept of Virginia Woolf's technique. In the world of Virginia Woolf, there are no objects, but only subjects and no objectivity, but only subjectivity. She interiorize the novel in order to look for the human psychology and the sense of history thanks to a wandering of her own thoughts and the similarities she builds between the present and the past in her interior monologue.

The stream of consciousness is a technique invented by Virginia Woolf; its aim is to bring a great sense in the understanding of the inner thoughts of the character by getting inside his/her psyche. Only the narrator can control this technique. Its use is quite complicated since Woolf starts with a thought followed by a flow and a river of thoughts and ends with a question in order to start another thought and this question will be clear until the reader reaches the following question.

In the stream of thoughts, Woolf uses fictitious characters and events and mixed them with real characters and events so that things will be real, she also uses all the

things above. In short once Woolf adds to her writing (art) imagination (fiction), truth is approved (reality), so it is with imagination that one creates images and those images developed in a paper with a pen; lead to the truth.

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