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Modernist Reading of Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*.

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Letter of Recommendation

This thesis entitled Modernist reading of Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* by Til Bahadur Khawash has been completed under my supervision. He carried out this research from December, 2010 to July, 2011. I hereby recommended this thesis is to be submitted for viva voce.

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Letter to Approval

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Abstract

The main objective of this project is to analyze Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* from the modernist perspective. Applying modernism as a tool, the project will analyze symbols, myths and the contemporary society and its impact in the psychology of the characters. The raising consciousness among the people in the early twentieth century is analyzed through their activities and dialogues. The use of symbols has joined the life and literature in the modernist text. The stream of consciousness used in the text represents the distinct ideas of the people in the twentieth century. The features of modernism are applied in the text to show it as a modernist text.

I. *To The Lighthouse* and Modernism

This project will analyze Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* from the modernist perspective. There are various ways of analyzing the modernist texts but considering the limitation of time, available resources and the model of thesis, the project will analyze the symbols, myths, characters, and nature etc. which show the modernist features. In the simple story of the Ramsays, a middle class family she has presented her vision of the contemporary society. She has used the different characters from the different fields. Taking the characters from the different fields, she has analyzed the society from different perspectives. This is a fictionalization of the contemporary society.

To the Lighthouse is a story of a middle class English family, named the Ramsays. This is a book of three parts in three movements. All of it is laid at the summer house of the Ramsays in the Hebrides, the Window occupying an afternoon and evening, Time Passes constituting an interlude of ten years during which the house remains unoccupied, and the Lighthouse a morning at the end of these ten years. Despite the inherent complexities of Woolf's many themes and stream of consciousness narrative, the plot is very simple. Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay, their children and numerous house guests including Lily Briscoe, the central consciousness of the Lighthouse section are vacating in the remote Hebrides islands. An expedition to a nearby lighthouse is put off by Mr. Ramsay because he thinks that the weather won't become clear next day and it is impossible to go there unless the weather becomes clear. The dinner is over, they talk about the social and political issues in the party and

a long interlude of ten years begins. In this second part of the novel nothing important happens. The Great War has broken out and there is a terror everywhere and people are leaving their residences. Mrs. Ramsay dies suddenly, Prue Ramsay dies of problems related to childbirth and Andrew Ramsay is killed in an explosion in France. Not only the Ramsays but also many others lost their relatives during that period and ten years later the peace is ascended; Lily Briscoe completes her painting and the trip is successfully executed by Mr. Ramsay and his children James and Cam.

The First World War changed the consciousness of the people and the modernist writers tried to represent such changes in their writings. They experimented new techniques in their writings and show their frustration in writings. Modernism is a new phenomenon developed in the early twentieth century after the First World War (1914-18). This term is used to identify new and distinctive features in the subjects, concerns, and styles of literature and arts. *To the Lighthouse* is one of the breaks from the traditional norms and values. The features of modernism are defined in various ways but most critics agree that it involves a deliberate break with some of the traditional bases not only of Western art but of Western culture in general. Woolf has presented the characters of different minds. Mrs. Ramsay is the character of the traditional Victorian values. She remains inside the four walls of the house; keeps her children and family in an order; and she is always worried about the degrading norms and values. The organization of dinner party is the example of her attempt to protect the norms. On the other hand, Lily Briscoe is a character of modern thoughts. She does not care about the norms and values of the society and always keeps her busy in painting in which she is presenting her views about the world. The modernist thinkers and artists questioned the traditional social norms, moral values and formed a new kind of style. But some believe it is not a radical break rather the modernist writers

revived the traditional way of writings in different way. Michael Bell mentions that modernism is not an original movement, but an effect produced by highly self-conscious avant-grade authors such as Marcel Proust, James Joyce, Thomas Mann, and Ezra Pound whose works depend on less on their personal and national context than an awareness of one or more of the others.

The literary historians believe the beginning of the modernist revolt as far back of the 1890s, but the modernism is widely used after the First World War. The modernist literature got its direction in the year 1922 with the publication of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, and Virginia Woolf's *Jacob's Room* and many other experimental works of literature. The cause of emergence of the modernist literature according to M. H. Abrams, "The catastrophe of the war had shaken faith in the moral basis, coherence, and durability of Western civilization and raised doubts about the adequacy of traditional literary modes to represent the harsh and dissonant' realities of the postwar world" (17). So, the modernist literature includes the experiences of war, violence, insecurity and anarchism in the society. The writers deals with the psychology of the post war people in their writings; most of the people in the contemporary society were pessimistic, so their text also are pessimistic but some of them such as *To the Lighthouse* deal with the both aspect of people and focuses in optimism. The novel begins with a project of going to the Lighthouse and passing so many problems the mission is completed and the novel ends with Lily's new vision. Her new vision is the new vision of the people in the post war world. In the period of great pessimism, Mrs. Woolf has observed the optimism and new chances in the changing world. Blending the art and literature she has expressed the new ideas about the future world. This is a distinct feature of modernism in this text.

The features of modernism vary according to the critics. Richard Ellman and Charles Fiedelson have categorized modernism into nine categories: symbolism, realism, nature, cultural history, the unconscious, myth, self conscious, existence and faith. This project will analyze these modernist features in the text. Virginia Woolf has used symbols, myths, nature, history etc to represent the social reality of the contemporary world in this novel and while doing so she has used the stream of consciousness narrative. These all are the features of modernist writings.

To the Lighthouse is rich in the use of symbols. The title itself is symbolic and it is a destination of the novel. Symbol, in broader sense, is anything which signifies something. In literature the term 'symbol' is applied only to a word or phrase that signifies an object or event which in its turn signifies something or suggests a range of reference, beyond itself. Literary historians believe that the French writer Charles Baudelaire and his contemporaries had begun the symbolist movement. This French technique influenced through out Europe and America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The poets such as Arthur Symons, W. B. Yeats, Ezra Pound, Dylan Thomas, and T. S. Eliot became the great symbolists of the twentieth century. In the decades after the First World War, the writers exploited symbols which are in part drawn from religious and esoteric traditions and in part invented. The symbols are used in setting, at agents, at actions, or at objects in this novel. The summer house is a place of gatherings and meetings where the parties were done by the aristocratic people. The novel is set in the summer house in the beginning but when the party is over, it is left alone for ten years. This is a symbol of war effects in the psychology of the people in the post war era. The characters such as Mrs. Ramsay are given mythic representation in the text. She protects James from any harm caused by Mr. Ramsay as Rhea had protected her son from his father. Through the use of symbols, modernist

writers express their frustration about the modern world and their desire to establish a peaceful society.

Modernism is also affected by Realism. It is a movement in the writing, especially of novels during the nineteenth century. It is also applied to designate a recurrent mode in various eras and literary forms of representing human life and experience in literature. In novels reality is represented by the use of complex characters with mixed motives that are rooted in social class, operate in a developed social structure, interact with many other characters and undergo plausible everyday modes of experience. This is a fictional attempt to represent the contemporary society.

Quoting Ian Watt, Deborah Parsons in his *Theorists of the Modernist Novel* says:

Ian Watt for example, defines the classic realist novel as based in ‘the premise, or primary convention, that the novel is a full and accurate report of human experience’ and ‘therefore under an obligation to satisfy its reader with such details of the story as the individuality of the actors concerned, the particulars of the times and places of their actions, details which are presented through a more largely referential use of language than is common in other literary forms’. (1957: 32)

So the modernist literature is the artistic collection of the experiences of the individuals. Virginia Woolf recollects her childhood experiences and the socio-political activities in the text. Through Lily’s artistic creation, she has tried to give new vision of the world. The focuses on the subjectivity of the characters shows the inner ideas of the individuals and that adds the multiplicity in the modernist text. In *To the Lighthouse*, the characters have distinct views about the society. Mrs. Ramsay thinks that the future is optimistic and she expresses it through her desire of going to the Lighthouse and Mr. Ramsay thinks that it won’t be possible to go there because

time doesn't favour them. The male dominating gaze of Charles Tansley and Lily's desire of doing something new in the society provides the subject of interpretation in the novel. This is the realistic feature of modernist literature.

One of the new features of Woolf's and many other modernist writers is the representation of time in their writings. Narrative in the novel typically follows the passage of time as it is experienced within the minds of its characters, rather than the straightforwardly forward-moving plot of standard realism. So, they take hundred of pages to cover the period of only one day, as in Joyce's *Ulysses*, or as in Woolf's *Orlando*. In *To the Lighthouse* also the time setting is unique, the first part has a setting of one afternoon to evening covering eighty nine pages; the second part has time setting of ten years but it covers only fourteen pages and last part covers forty six pages which has a setting of one morning.

Modernist writers were affected by the post- Darwinian biology of the nineteenth century. The post-Darwinian thinkers such as Emile Zola developed the theory of Naturalism. Naturalists believe that human being exists in the order of nature and does not have a soul or any mode of participating in a religion or spiritual world, and human character and behaviour are entirely determined by two kinds of forces, heredity and environment. The modernists use nature as a part of life and as a means of getting solace from the devastated world.

The use of nature in the modernist literature links the Enlightenment, the Romanticism and the Modernism. In Enlightenment humanism, the separation of humanity from nature is at its most systematic in the philosophy of Rene Descartes. Reason, including understanding, self-awareness, and choice, is for Descartes the quality that distinguishes humankind from non- human nature. Nature, including the human body, is mechanical. Animals are denied reason and all but rudimentary

sensation. The Enlightenment philosophers used nature to give reason to anything. The nature for the Romanticists is the source of knowledge. The Romantic gaze frequently belongs to a lone figure stilled in contemplation of immanent nature, or of landscapes suggestive of infinity- mountains, chasms, oceans, distant plains. Coleridge in 'Frost in Midnight' listens to the breathing of his sleeping infant together with other sounds of natural process, or in 'The Aeolian Harp' to music produced by the wind. The modernist writers take nature as their subject matter to escape from the devastative world. They use pastoral settings and their journey in writings is from the artificial urban area to the remote, peaceful natural sites as shown in *To the Lighthouse*. In the text Mrs. Ramsay is preparing for the journey to the Lighthouse which is remote from the residential areas.

In the post World War era the tradition of using traditional myths in writings developed. James Joyce, T. S. Eliot, W. B. Yeats and other modernist writers have used myths in their writings differently. Myth is a story or plot, whether true or invented. Most of the myths are derived from the culture and social rituals. They have their own value which is neither true nor false. Their uses of myths in writing vary according to the writers but the commonality among them is they all are influenced by the Greek mythologies. The mythical structure of Joyce's *Ulysses* is based on Homer's *Odyssey* where as T. S. Eliot's poem *The Waste Land* also is the combination of various ancient myths. The modernist writers use myths to represent the modern world with the consciousness of writers so that their writings become different from the classical literature as James Joyce says, "I would say that the difference between classical literature and modern literature is the difference between the objective and the subjective: classical literature represents the daylight of the human personality while modern literature is concerned with the twilight, the passive

rather the active mind” (45). From this comment also it becomes clear that the modernist writers use myths to represent the inner consciousness of the people.

Along with the use of myths, in the decades of 1920s, Sigmund Freud’s concept of psychoanalysis became popular in the literary writings. Freud proposed that the literature and other arts like dreams and neurotic symptoms, consists of the imagined and or fantasized, fulfillment of wishes that are either denied by reality or are prohibited by the social standards of morality and propriety. The forbidden, mainly sexual wishes come into conflict with the ‘censor’ and are repressed by the sensor into the unconscious realm of the artistic mind, but are permitted to achieve a fantasized satisfaction in distorted form that serve to disguise their real motives and objects from the conscious mind.

Jacques Lacan further transposed Freudian concept of psychoanalysis into the language of structural linguistics initiated by the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. As desire and connection is created through language, he explains this through Saussure’s signifier and signified, which are seen not as referring to objects but to psychic representations created by their interplay and by culture and history, within language, the subject vainly tries to represent itself. The subject is an effect of the signifier, put into language. Language becomes a mask to disguise the impossibility of desire. The unconscious is less something inside the person as an intersubjective space between people. According to Lacan, ‘the unconscious is structured like language’. Rejecting the sexual relation between mother and son, he focuses on the individual’s relation to the law and to language, which allow for the continuance of social relationships. Psychoanalysis, thus analyses the relationship between the human psychology and the society. In *To the Lighthouse*, James, a six years young boy, always loves his mother and hates his father because mother says ‘yes’ to the fiction of going to the

Lighthouse and father says 'no' because the weather won't permit the excursion. Here we have the classic Oedipal situation where the child fancies that he can strike his father with a blade and thus get rid of the enemy to reach the promised land, the full possession of the mother: such bliss, however, is forbidden by culture, which is founded on the incest taboo.

The modernist writers use a self-conscious narrator to analyze the mind of the contemporary people. Most of the events are narrated rather than spoken. Virginia Woolf analyzes the society through the consciousness of Lily Briscoe, Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay and many other characters in this novel. Lily wants to live in the artistic world and always keeps herself busy in painting her canvas until the novel ends. Mrs. Ramsay wants to keep her household but she is emotional and Mr. Ramsay tries to be a man of reality. Every aspect of the society is analyzed in the modernist literature through the stream of consciousness technique. The long narrations in the text show the communication gap among the modern people. And, through the long dialogues the author is expressing his own views about the society. They use their autobiographies, their feelings and attitudes as subject matter of their writings to interpret the overall aspects of the society.

The stream of consciousness is a technique of production of work in which there is an unbroken flow of perceptions, thoughts, and feelings in the conscious mind and it has been adopted to describe a narrative method in modern fiction. The characters use long dialogues and they in fact become their monologues. So, sometimes interior monologue and stream of consciousness are taken interchangeably, which expresses the inner feelings and emotions of the characters.

Some critics believe that the most remarkable feature of Virginia Woolf's career as an author is her innovative experiments with form and content. During her

life, she moved from one experiment to another, literary and social criticism, biography and autobiography and the novel are fields on which she wrote, but she is primarily known as a modernist novelist who preferred the stream of consciousness method. As a modernist she believed that the conventions of the novel were no longer adequate for expressing the contemporary man's situation.

Today Virginia Woolf is best known for her feminist writings *A Room of One's Own*, and *Three Guineas*, where she discusses the situation of women throughout the modern history displaying its own kind of independence in her feminism. She broke the tradition of protesting patriarchy in the name of feminism. She thought that the cause of female domination is not only the males but the problem is inherent within the females as well. Her concerns were: men's anger at women, misunderstanding between sexes, and psychological conditions of women's upbringing. She imagined a society where there was gender equality. She imagined an Androgynous society. Androgyny is a union of both sexes in one individual but the term in feminism refers to the culturally acquired characteristics rather than biologically determined ones. In this present novel she has shown the feminist issues in different way. The contrasting ideas of Lily and Mrs. Ramsay about the family show the changing attitudes of females in the modern society. Lily's decision of being unmarried shows the independence of the women and this is itself an answer to the patriarchal domination.

In *To the Lighthouse* Virginia Woolf sought to come to terms with her parents' stifling Victorian marriage and events of her own childhood, as well as to explore such feminist issues as the necessary, or even desirability of marriage for women and the difficulties for women and the difficulties for women in pursuing a career in the arts. A striking mix of autobiographical elements, philosophical questions, and social

concerns, *To the Lighthouse* is generally considered to be Woolf's greatest fictional achievement. So, Harold Bloom says, "Woolf's finest novel is *To the Lighthouse*, which is a miraculous concentration of varied gifts" (1).

There are as many views as there are the viewers. *To the Lighthouse* also is analyzed in different ways by different critics in different time and context. John Bennet calls the alternate light and shadow of the lighthouse the rhythm of joy and sorrow, understanding and misunderstanding. David Daiches's analysis of the Lighthouse is the analysis of the twentieth century society. The post war people were alienated from the society. People in the society had no belief on others, they were not ready to share their problems with each other because the devastative war had clearly divided the psychology of the people. So, they wanted to be unique and unaffected by the other social factors. The Lighthouse is the symbol of free, independent and rigid isolated individual in the twentieth century. He says:

The Lighthouse.... Standing lonely in the midst of the sea is a symbol of individual who is at once a unique being and part of the flux of history. To reach the lighthouse is, in a sense, to make contact with a truth outside oneself to surrender the uniqueness of one's ego to an impersonal reality. (36)

To the Lighthouse was written after *Mrs. Dalloway* and critics believe that it is a study of her father's behaviour. In her diary of 14th May, 1925, Woolf has written:

I'm now all on the strain with desire to stop journalism and get on to *To the Lighthouse*. This is going to be fairly short; to have father's character done complete in it and mother's; and St. Ives and childhood; and all the usual things I try to put in- life, death, etc. But the centre is father's character, sitting in a boat, reciting we perished, each alone,

while he crushes a dying mackerel. However, I must refrain. I must write a few little stories first and let the lighthouse simmer adding to it between tea and dinner till it is complete for writing out. (18-9)

Woolf is trying to represent her own family through the Ramsays in an artistic way. All the characters in the novel are relatives of the Ramssays and this family background is similar to her own family. So, Paul Fisher has analyzed this novel as an autobiographical text. He saw the personal experiences of the author in this novel. She observed the social changes in the society and tried to represent them in this novel. In his criticism Fisher has asserted:

To the Lighthouse is the most autobiographical of Virginia Woolf's novels. It is based on her childhood experiences, and children's perceptions and desires; it is at its most trenchant when exploring adult relationships, marriage and, indeed the changing class- structure of its time. (7)

Critics think that the Ramsay couples are representatives of her parents. She has put her experiences in the novel. Jean Guiguet has depicted *To the Lighthouse* as an elegy. He claims that Mrs. Ramsay's death is the death of Woolf's own mother Julia who died in 1896 when she was only thirteen. He writes:

Of Virginia Woolf's relation with her mother we know little. Yet from the violence of the shock which the 13-year-old girl felt at her loss we may conclude that between mother and daughter there were certain deep affinities which became fixed and idealized at the same time through this premature death. *To the Lighthouse*, being an elegy could only have as its central figure a being wholly and unreservedly loved. (238)

There are many similarities between the life of Virginia Woolf and the Ramsays family. Virginia Woolf was the daughter of the philosopher Sir Leslie Stephen and many thinkers, philosophers used to visit him. In the novel, Mr. Ramsay is the philosopher and he is visited by his philosophy students such as Charles Tansley. Mrs. Ramsay is her own mother because Julia was dead when Virginia was sixteen and here Mrs. Ramsay dies in the middle of the novel and her role remains incomplete. The death of Andrew is also compared with the death of her own brother Thoby who was died of typhoid in 1906. If we analyze these elements this novel becomes an elegy.

Beside the autobiographical elements some critics believe that there is the impact of modernist art in this novel. Erich Aurbach says that after the First World War (1914-1918) the novel writing tendency got many changes. This was because of the development of new technology, raising consciousness among the people, and new kind of social structure. To represent the frustrated and divided mind of the people James Joyce, Marcel Proust, T. S. Eliot, Virginia Woolf etc. developed multiple narrative techniques in their writings. Such types of multiple narratives and random occurrence of actions have created difficulties to analyze the characters or plot but this is a distinct feature of writing. After reading *To the Lighthouse* he says:

Yet what realistic depth is achieved in every individual occurrence, for example the measuring of the stroking. Aspects of occurrence come to the fore, and links to other occurrences, which before this time, had hardly been sensed, which had never been clearly seen and attended to, and yet they are determining factors in our real lives. What takes place here in Virginia Woolf's novel is precisely what was attempted everywhere in works of this kind. (129-30)

Aurbach sees these types of commonalities in all the writings of modernist literature. The modernist writers show the contemporary reality with the help of art and literature. Sharon Kaehele and Howard German think Mrs. Woolf's interest is in human relationships and her emphasis on the transience of life is combined with a concern of art and artists. They say:

The action is presented in two strands; one of these deals with the journey of Mr. Ramsay, Cam and James to the Lighthouse, provides ideas about character and time, and contributes on understanding of Lily's final vision. Presented in alternate chapters, the other sequence of events describes Lily's thought while she paints on the terrace. This action culminates in her vision which draws together the major ideas in the novel. (199)

The modernist writing is highly affected by the modern art. They use art in their in their writings to present their views of the world. Through the use of art they concretize their ideas about the way of life in the contemporary society. In this novel Virginia Woolf has used Lily Briscoe as an artist and completion of her painting with a new vision shows Woolf's own vision of the world.

Virginia Woolf was a feminist writer influenced by the formalistic approach in writings. So, Christopher Reed sees the connection between formalism and feminism in this novel:

To the Lighthouse is Woolf's most eloquent investigation of connections between formalism and feminism. The painting of Lily Briscoe struggles over is expressly to the predictable 'pink women in the beach' painted by the contented men amid a swarm of admiring little boys (TTL23) and is connected to her refused marry or play a

traditionally feminine role. Making its focus the stable pyramid of a woman and a child framed in the window of a house, her picture fulfills Woolf's belief in a woman's art that renders important what had been considered insignificant. (120)

In this way many critics have presented their views about this novel in different context. Virginia Woolf belongs to the Bloomsbury group, a group of painters, artists, writers, and thinkers of the contemporary time, so most of the critics think that her writing is highly affected by their thoughts. Virginia Woolf is one of the pioneers of the modernist writings. She wants to represent a new kind of society in a distinct way in the present novel *To the Lighthouse*. This project tries to find out those elements such as symbols, myth, nature, consciousness in the text to prove it as a modernist text.

II. *To the Lighthouse* as a Modernist Novel

To the Lighthouse represents the social reality of the modern world. Virginia Woolf analyzes different aspects of the society using different symbols, myths and consciousness of the characters. The impact of war in the mind of the people is seen in the novel. The fragmented psychology of the people is shown through the stream of consciousness technique. The First World War created the division among the people. There was no belief on the other people and they lack the communication. Mrs. Ramsay's desire to go to the Lighthouse is the desire of leaving the modern chaotic world and adopting the primitive society. Her desire never becomes completed and she dies suddenly. The novel moves around the periphery of Mrs. Ramsay's life and death. This is the fate of the modern people and hence, this shows the modernity of the text. Lily's painting has added the impact of modernist art in literature. Either other people believe or not she is determined to complete her painting and at last she becomes successful. Along with the completion of her painting Mr. Ramsay and his two children, James and Cam reach to the Lighthouse and the novel ends with the new vision of Lily Briscoe after ten years. This shows the labour and determination of the modern people.

The modernist writers represent the contemporary society through the use of different symbols, and myths. In *To the Lighthouse* Virginia Woolf has used these modernist techniques in her own way. She has used symbols in her own way. The title of the novel itself is symbolic. The Lighthouse is the symbol of fixity, rigidity, and individuality of the modern era. In the post war era people wanted to remain alone in the peaceful area. The allocation of the Lighthouse in one corner of the sea and Mrs. Ramsay's desire to go to the Lighthouse shows the desire of the people to live in isolation. Mr. Ramsay is a rigid person and he is compared with the Lighthouse:

It was his fate, his peculiarity, whether he wished or not, to come out thus on a spit of land which the sea is slowly eating away, and there to stand, like a desolate sea-bird, alone. It was his power, his gift, suddenly to shed all superfluities, to shrink and diminish so that he looked barer and felt sparer, even physically, yet lost none of his intensity of mind, and so to stand on his little ledge facing the dark of human ignorance, how we know nothing and the sea eats away the ground we stand on that was his fate. (32)

The Lighthouse is there since very long time. It is unaffected by the human activities of the world. In the same way Mr. Ramsay's thought is unaffected though other people do not know his thought. He is the head of the family and wants to play his role to manage the family but other family members do not like his ideas and he thinks that they don't like him because he is a man of fact not fiction. When he says weather won't permit them to visit the Lighthouse, James takes him as an enemy but he is again rigid in his decision. He is passing through different ups and downs in his life. His philosophy is not practicable in his own family but still he has a power to rule his family. Although he is powerful, he is isolated in the family like the Lighthouse in the next corner of the sea.

The novel begins with the project of going to the Lighthouse. In this sense the Lighthouse is the destination point of the novel. The modernist writers were frustrated from the modern society and they wanted to go far from their residence. Mrs. Ramsay wants to go to the Lighthouse because she thinks, "There was freedom, there was peace, there was, most welcome of all, a summoning together, a resting on a platom of stability" (45). This is the desire of all the people in the modern world. Not only Virginia Woolf but also other modernist writers such as W. B. Yeats, Kafka used such

type of symbols in their writings. The Ramsays have to struggle to reach to the Lighthouse. In the beginning their journey is postponed because of the bad weather and after that the war breaks out and they have to wait for ten years to go there. During those years Mrs. Ramsay and her two children are passed away. Mrs. Ramsay's desire remained unfulfilled this shows that all cannot fulfill their desire. When Mr. Ramsay, James and Cam reach to the Lighthouse, the novel ends. This is the optimistic vision of the modern world.

Mrs. Ramsay always sits by the window. This shows the female status in the early twentieth century. The window is the symbol of transition. People at that time were in the phase of transition of Victorian and the modern thinking. Mrs. Ramsay has organized a party inside her window but she watching outside from the window, she wants to go to the Lighthouse. The negligence about the guests indicates the adaptation of the modern norms and values leaving the traditional ones. Mrs. Ramsay is a house wife but she always thinks beyond the window and this is the rising awareness among the females in the twentieth century. Mrs. Ramsay is a beautiful woman but her beauty is inside the four walls of the house she did nothing except looking outside from the window. So, Lily thinks:

One wanted most some secret sense, fine as air, with which to steal through keyhole and surround her where she sat knitting, talking, sitting silent in the window alone; which took to itself and treasured up like the air which held the smoke of the streamer, her thoughts, her imaginations, her desires. (147)

Lily thinks that the patriarchy has put the women inside the window and women themselves have accepted it like Mrs. Ramsay. The life of female is passed inside the window. The window is a demarcation of the inner and outer consciousness of the

modern people. Desires of women are locked inside the house and they cannot go beyond it as Mrs. Ramsay is doing in the novel through the use of window Mrs. Woolf is showing the condition of the females in the society. Lily's thinking of going beyond the patriarchal ideology is an answer to the patriarchy that thinks women can do nothing without males.

Not only the window but also Lily's painting is remarkable answer to the patriarchal society. Lily is a painter and a guest of the Ramsays. She is painting her ideas in a canvas but the people like Charles Tansley do not believe that she can paint or write anything. Tansley has remarked many times 'women can't write; women can't paint'. In the beginning Lily is confused about her subject of painting. Her problem in painting is how to organize the things in the painting. But at last she completes her painting with her new vision, "It was done; it was finished" (154). Lily's painting remains incomplete for a long time but she is determined to complete it. She wants to give answer to Tansley's women can't paint; women can't write:

Then her eye caught the salt cellar, which she had placed there to remind her, and she remembered that next morning she would move tree further towards the middle, and her spirits rose so high at the thought of painting tomorrow that she laughed out loud at what Mr. Tansley was saying.(67)

Lily always plays with her picture and completes it. Lily's painting is the impact of art in the modernist literature. Virginia Woolf was influenced by the modernist artists in the Bloomsbury groups. Her own sister Vanessa Bell was a painter and she had suggested in Woolf's writings. Leonard Woolf has also agreed with this claim, "Leslie Stephen must have been in many ways an exasperating man within the family and he exasperated his daughters, particularly Vanessa Bell" (65). In the Bloomsbury group

there were painters; thinkers; philosophers etc. And their impact on her writings is obvious. Lily's painting has made the text a mixture of art and literature.

Modernist literature is a journey and *To the Lighthouse* also follows the same trend. This is the journey of the Ramsays but their journey is affected by the bad weather. The weather is the symbol of obstacles in the life. Human life is affected by many problems. The desire to go to the Lighthouse is the desire of progress but it is affected by the bad weather. The negative connotation of weather shows the hindrances in life. The second part of the novel is full of description of the bad weather, "The nights are full of wind and destruction; the trees plunge and bend and their leaves fly helter skelter until the lawn is plastered with them and they lie packed in gutters and choke rain-pipes and scatter damp paths" (95). These terrible nights are the symbol of war and death in the novel. At last the weather becomes clear again and they complete their journey. So, bad weather is the symbol of war and clean weather is peace.

Fear of death is one of the themes in the modern novels. The boar's skull described in the text is the symbol of death. In the garden a boar's skull is pinned on a small branch. When dinner is over everyone goes to sleep but Cam cannot sleep well as she sees the boar's skull. Mrs. Ramsay tries to control Cam's fear, "But think Cam, it's only an old pig" said Mrs. Ramsay, "a nice black pig like the pigs at the farm. But Cam thought it was horrid thing, brancing at her all over the room". She covers the skull with her green shawl and makes it as a beautiful mountain but she is hiding the truth which is impossible. People want to escape from the fear of death but it is impossible to do so because death is always with us. Mrs. Ramsay's unsuccessful attempt to hide the boar's skull shows the intention of the people to live longer but the death of Mrs. Ramsay and two of her children prove that death cannot be stopped.

Repeating the skull time and again in the text the author is showing the inevitability of death.

The modernist writers use symbols in their own way. Through the use of symbols they represent the frustration, pessimism in the society. Comparing her feelings upon completing *The Waves* with those she had when finished *To the Lighthouse*, Virginia Woolf wrote:

What interest me in the last stage was the freedom and boldness with which my imagination picked, up used and tossed aside all the images, symbols. I am sure that this is the right way of using them- not in set pieces, as I had tried at first coherently, but simply as images never making them work out, only suggest. Thus I hope to have kept the sound of sea and the birds; down and garden subconsciously present doing their work underground. (165)

This shows that Woolf has used symbols very carefully and *To the Lighthouse* is rich in symbols. The frequent repetition of symbols have functioned as objective co-relative in the novel, they have unified the meaning of the text. T. S. Eliot says that every text needs objective co-relative to give meaning. This novel fulfills this condition through the symbols.

Along with the symbols Virginia Woolf uses myth in *To the Lighthouse*. She has used the ancient pagan myth in the text. Through the use of myths the modernist writers imagine a peaceful world. The people in the modern world were very much frustrated due to the chaotic situation. Therefore, they created a mythic world to get some solace from the present. The modernist writers use their own created as well as the classical traditional myths in their writings and the main objective of using myth is to represent the situation of the modern world. Like many other modernist writers

such as T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, W. B. Yeats etc. According to Michael Bell, the Modernist writers use myths in different ways to show the multiplicity of the society and to show the relation of one's psychology to the society. Myth does not have any scientific value but the Modernists use ancient as well as their created myths to translate the modern terminology as 'unselfconscious' and 'self-conscious'. He sees the varieties of myths in modern literature:

Modernist literary myth-making is most essentially an awareness of the primordial creative activity of human beings as imagined in the creation of poetic and fictional worlds, and including therefore the world of modernity. In so far as creative literature is itself a form of mythopoeia, it stands independently of prior mythic content or anthropological justification, and reflects speculative analyses and judgements of modernity. (123)

In the present text, Virginia Woolf has reflected the sociopolitical scenario through the use of myths. She shows the changing awareness among the people in the society through the use of ancient Greek myth and the Freudian Oedipal myth in this text, though in her diary she claims that she had not read any myths of Freud or Frazer. Critics believe that in the Bloomsbury groups there were many friends of Freud and Jung and from them she probably got the ideas of such myths.

Woolf has crystallized her concept of feminism through Mrs. Ramsay using the pagan myths. Mrs. Ramsay can be compared with Rhea. Mrs. Ramsay protects her children from any possible harm as Rhea protects her son from father. In the pagan myth Rhea was the oldest among the gods, child of Gaea, Mother Earth and Uranus, Father Heaven. When her brother Cronos, overthrew Uranus, Rhea became the wife of Cronos and the queen of the universe. It was predicted that Cronos would be

dethroned by his own child as he had done his father. Frightened from the prophecy, Cronos swallowed all his children bore by Rhea. Rhea was a good loving mother so, wrapping a stone in swaddling clothes and substituting it for Zeus, she had the child spirited to Crete. It was Zeus who later delivered his brothers and sisters by forcing Cronos to disgorge them.

Like Cronos, Mr. Ramsay is sometimes cruel to his children. He is the head of the family so he has power and authority, “Let him be fifty feet away, let him not even speak to you, let him not even see you, he permeated, he prevailed, and he imposed himself. He changed everything” (120). He has dominance over his children. Rhea had has six children, three sons and three daughters where as Mrs. Ramsay has eight, four boys and four girls. Both mothers have protected their children from their husband. Rhea protected Zeus from physical harm and Mrs. Ramsay tried to guard James from the psychological wounds. When Mr. Ramsay says that they won’t go to the Lighthouse, she convinces him to modify the decision.

Another similarity in both the family is the youngest child rebelled against their father. Zeus dethroned Cronos and gave life to his brothers and sisters where as James is also ready to protest his father, “now I shall be left to fight the tyrant alone” (125). It is said that Cronos was philosopher and he had brought Golden age in Italy but at last he had to surrender in front of his own child. In the same way, Mr. Ramsay is a philosopher and a real being, “his writing is real” (17). In the beginning he thinks that they cannot go to the Lighthouse but at last he is ready to go there with James and Cam that is he is defeated. So, we can say that Mr. Ramsay, Mrs. Ramsay and James are the correspondence of Cronos, Rhea and Zeus.

The physical attributes of pagan goddess are given to Mrs. Ramsay. She is compared with the queen:

Like some queen who, finding her people gathered in the hall, looks down, and acknowledges their devotion and their prostration before her [. . .] she went down, and crossed the hall and bowed her head very slightly as if she accepted what they could not say: their tribute to her beauty. (59-60)

Not only physical but the also psychological qualities of Mrs. Ramsay are of the goddesses. She is possessed of an intuitive knowledge and wisdom and exercises a dominion over those around her, seeming almost to cast spell upon them. Lily Briscoe is sensitive to this aspect of her character. She sees Mrs. Ramsay as “unquestionably the loveliest of people the best perhaps” (35). Mrs. Ramsay is the most beautiful woman. Her beauty is the beauty of the Greek Goddesses. These aspects of Mrs. Ramsay show that she is equivalent to pagan gods. By giving the pagan attributes to Mrs. Ramsay Woolf is representing the ideas of the patriarchal society. The patriarchy represents the women as beautiful and submissive character. She wants to evoke the consciousness among the females in the society through this representation.

Another famous myth of interpretation is the myth of Oedipus. Sigmund Freud analyzed Sophocles’ *The Oedipus Rex* and claimed that every child, in unconscious level, has a desire of killing his father and marrying his mother. Oedipus killed his father, married his mother and bigoted children but when he new the truth, he blinded himself and went to self exile. In the same way, Freud claims, that we were all destined to divert our first sexual impulses toward our mother and our first hatred and violence toward our father.

Virginia Woolf has developed a triangular relationship among Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Ramsay and James. The love hate relation is developed from the beginning of the novel. James, a six year young boy, hates his father, “But his son hated him” (27) and

loves his mother, “Casting ridicule upon his wife, who is ten thousand times better than he was (James thought)”... (3). When Mr. Ramsay says they cannot go to the Lighthouse, James’ hatred reaches to the top, “had there been an axe handy, or a poker, any weapon that would have gashed a hole in his father’s breast and killed him, there and then James would have seized it” (3). Seeing the hatred of her son to his father Mrs. Ramsay is solicitous and fearful for James as Jocasta might have been for the young Oedipus, “what demon possessed him her youngest, her cherished” (27).

James’ jealousy and feeling of rivalry with his father were because of his unconscious desire to claim his mother’s body. The sexual relationship between his parents created him such desires. Mr. Ramsay has come to get sympathy from his wife that James does not like:

He hated him for coming up to them, for stopping and looking down on them; he hated him for the exaltation and sublimity of his gestures; for the magnificence of his head; for his exactingness and egotism (for there he stood, commanding them to attend to him); but most of all hated the twang and twitter of his father’s emotion which, vibrating round them, disturbed the perfect simplicity and good sense of his rations with his mother. (27)

James hates the presence of his father when he is with his mother. He always wants to be covered in the arms of his mother but Mr. Ramsay interrupts them. Mrs. Ramsay reads a story of a fisher man and his wife to satisfy him but she stops when her husband comes. James wants to recall Mrs. Ramsay’s attention toward him by pointing a word. But, “Nothing would make Mr. Ramsay move on. There he stood demanding sympathy” (27). From here James realizes that mother belongs to his father and his hatred increases and his rivalry again increases.

Mrs. Ramsay dies in the second part of the novel but the oedipal relation of James and his father remains the same. In the last section when they are going to the Lighthouse, James recalls his mother and thinks that his mother was better than his father, “she alone spoke the truth; to her alone could speak it” (139). When Mr. Ramsay tries to talk with Cam, James becomes furious, “He had always kept this old symbol of taking a knife and striking his father to heart. Only now as he grew older, and sat staring at his father in an impotent rage, it was not him, that old man reading, whom he wanted to kill, but it was the thing that descended on him”(137).

Here another triangular relation is developed; Mrs. Ramsay is substituted by Cam. When Mr. Ramsay is wining her James thought pitilessly, “now she will give way. I shall left to fight the tyrant alone” (125). This shows his desire to possess his sister. Freud writes of the ambivalence the child feels toward his father, the conflict between tenderness and hostility. He concludes that unless the child is successful in repressing the sexual love for the mother and hostility for the father, while concomitantly allowing the natural affection for the father to grow, neurosis will be the result. Significantly, at the end of the finally accomplished journey to the Lighthouse, James experiences his rapport with Mr. Ramsay. Cam addresses herself silently to James, “You’ve got at last. For she knew that this was what James had been wanting, and she knew that now he had got it he was so pleased that he would not look at her or his father or at anymore” (153).

The relation of the father and the son remained the same till the end of the novel. The hatred of son to his father remains after the death of his mother. This shows that the mother factor can be substituted by other female characters as well. This Oedipal relation has not only showed the mythic pattern of the novel but also combined the events in the text.

The modernist writers use nature in their writings in a symbolic manner. So Fiedelson thinks that the modernism and symbolism are nearly synonymous. The nature in the modern literature is the impact of Darwinism and the other naturalists such as Emile Zola. Not only the literature but also the art is influenced by the nature. The nature provides the subject matter for the writers. This novel is also the interaction of human beings and nature. The modernist writers show that how the human life is affected by the nature. In the novel the life style of the character is affected by the nature. Nature is the part of life.

The nature has played positive as well as negative role in *To the Lighthouse*. The novel is the interrelation of human beings with the nature. The naturalists believe that every human activities and behaviour are affected by the surrounding environment and this is true in this context. The characters depend upon the environment rather their fate or any unseen force. In the beginning the Ramsays are planning to go to the Lighthouse but they can go there if the weather is clean that affects them in each section so nature is dominating the novel.

The first part deals with the relation of nature and human activities. The setting of the novel deals with beautiful and degraded environment. The Ramsays are come to their summer house to spend their summer vacation. This house is situated on the coast of the sea and looks beautiful and they had left the town because this is destructed. Mrs. Ramsay observing the natural beauty of the house and surrounding exclaims, 'how beautiful'! (9). This is beautiful:

For the great plateful of blue water was before her; the hoary
Lighthouse, distant, austere, in the midst; and on the right as far as the
eye could see, fading and falling, in soft low pleats, the green sand

dunes with the wind flowing grass on them, which always seemed running away into some moon country. (9)

The frustrated people of the modern world wanted to go beyond their society and they wanted to live a lonely life. This desire is expressed by Mrs. Ramsay in this novel. Mrs. Ramsay finds the sublime in nature. The beauty of the summer house is achieved in such a way that she had not got such natural beauty before. The passage shows that people in the city are bored and they need some relief that is found in the nature. This is the desire of the modern people to go back to the nature.

All characters are affected by nature in one way or other. "I'm in love with this all" (14), Lily's response to William Bankes shows that she loves nature very much and her painting is also affected by nature. Lily's painting is concretizing her ideas about the modern world. She is playing with nature in her canvas. She is trying to give coherence to the nature, "I shall put the tree in the middle" (61-2). She is visualizing the nature and giving shape to her canvas. Nature is the source of creation in the modernist art and literature. So, they do not go far from the nature.

Nature is used in different purpose in the novel. Sometimes it is the source of knowledge, sometimes it is a means of fun and sometimes it is the source of entertainment. Mr. Ramsay is a philosopher and he seems to be different from others. Sometimes when he changes his mind, others ridicule him by comparing his notes with a cuckoo, "But how extra ordinarily his note has changed! It was like a cuckoo: in juke he gets out of tune; as if he were trying over, tentatively seeking, some phrase for a new mood, and having only this at hand, used it, cracked though it was" (24). The comparison of Mr. Ramsay and cuckoo is the comparison of human and nature. Human activities are changing with nature. He changes his attitudes like a cuckoo which changes its song according to the season.

Mr. Ramsay himself is affected by the naturalists. He does not believe in god or Heaven, “when she said Heaven, she had no notion what that meant, ‘think of kitchen table then’, he told her, when you are not there” (17). So, Mr. Ramsay thinks that there is no Heaven and people are thinking about those things that are not available to them. He loves nature and wants to remain in nature.

Mrs. Ramsay imagines a beautiful ecosystem everywhere. She covers a horrific skull with her green shawl and thinks the skull is like, “a mountain, a bird’s nest, a garden and there were little antelopes” (83). She believes that life is possible in nature but we have to preserve its originality. The skull is the symbol of barrenness but she has covered it with green shawl which is the symbol of fertility. She thinks that the barrenness of the modern world can be changed with new ideas. Production is possible in the destructed world as well. Such type of optimistic vision is shown through this natural symbol.

The second part of the novel deals with the relation of human and nature in a horrible manner. This part deals with the death of the characters. Their death is the death of individuals in the world. The surrounding environment is discussed before the death of each individual. This shows the relation of nature and death. The death of Mrs. Ramsay, Prue, and Andrew is given in parenthesis. This shows the superiority of nature over human beings. The War has broken out. So there is terror in the society. The nature also seems to be horrific, “The autumn trees, ravaged as they are, take on flash of tattered flags kindling in the gloom of cool cathedral caves where gold letters on marble pages describe death in battle and how bones bleach and turn for away in Indian sands” (94). This shows the war is going to happen and the discussion of nature itself is signifying this. Thus the nature cannot be unaffected by the human activities and it gives good and bad signals in the human activities. The novel is

invaded by the dark nights. The dark night is the symbol of darkness created by the war. The modernist writers use the dark images in their writings to represent the society as well as the psychology of the modern people. After the party the characters are hopping for the bright future but it never came during ten years. This is the hopeless waiting of the modern people.

The third part deals with clean weather that made Ramsay's journey possible. It is a fine morning, "so fine the morning except for a streak of wind here and there as if sails were stuck high up in the sky or the clouds had dropped down into the sea" (135). In the clean weather they complete their journey. In this way the nature is discussed as the same way human life goes on. Through the use of nature Virginia Woolf has shown the interrelation of nature and human being and conveyed the message of balancing the nature. The human activities and nature are presented side by side in the novel. There is no discussion of any supernatural power or fate in the text. They behave how the nature favours them. This is one of the impacts of naturalism in modernist literature. The raising consciousness about the environmental conservation is also seen in the modernist text like *To the Lighthouse*. Virginia Woolf wants to inform all the people in the world to preserve the nature and she also shows the possible dangers of environmental degradation in the human life.

The modernist novelists try to represent the modern society in their fictional manner but their representation of reality is different than the classical realism. Deborah Parsons argues, "Intrinsic to an understanding of the modernist novel is its preoccupation with the relation of lived reality and aesthetic form" (21). However, they didn't believe that a concentration on the external aspects of life conveyed the fullness of human experience, or that the presentation of a character's thoughts and emotions by an all-seeing omniscient narrator (both typical of the formal strategies of

the nineteenth-century novel) could offer a representation of modern life that was at all 'realistic'. Indeed by implying that it was able accurately to represent contemporary reality, and failing to acknowledge its own artifice, the traditional form of the novel would end up misrepresenting it. Virginia Woolf has analyzed the contemporary social reality in a form of fiction in this novel. The characters are taken from the contemporary society and the story is their day to day activities.

She has depicted the contemporary society through time setting and careful characterization in the present novel. This novel analyzes the changing concepts of marriage, sociopolitical scenario and the contradiction between the sexes in the early twentieth century. The time setting of the novel is 1910-1920 and the novel is divided into three parts. This novel is a story of the Ramsay family; the characters are the relatives of Ramsays and they are taken from the society. The day to day activities of those people is the plot of this novel. The gatherings, parties, love affair, engagement, marriage etc. are the subject of discussion. Besides these family activities, the socio-political issues such as the passing of the Reform Bill, increasing expenditure, poverty, unemployment etc. have also occupied space in the novel. Through these elements she analyzes the contemporary society. The division of the novel represents the society of before, during and after the First World War. The modernist realism is different from the nineteenth century realism. So in this novel, Woolf has analyzed the modern society and its impact on the psychology of the characters. She is trying to represent the frustrated psychology of the people of the early twentieth century.

The first part moves around the Ramsays' dinner party. In the beginning Mrs. Ramsay has organized a dinner party in their summer house. This organization of the party shows the continuation of the Victorian tradition of the middle class people. They want to preserve the norms and values of the society and this is the reality of the

early twentieth century. In the dinner party different types of guests are participated but they are engaged on their own talks. They are talking about the politics, social status and so on but their attention is not about the preservation of the traditional norms. This shows the degrading condition of the Victorian values. When the party is over their main attention is to sleep:

Disappearing as stealthily as stags from the dinner-table directly the meal was over, the eight sons and daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay sought their bedrooms, their fastness in a house where there was no other privacy to debate anything, everything: Tansley's tie; the passing of the Reform Bill; seabirds and butterflies; people; while the sun poured into those attics, which a plank alone separated from each other so that every footstep could be plainly heard and the Swiss girl sobbing for her father who was dying of cancer in a valley of the Grisons; and lit up bats, flannels, straw hats, ink-pots, paint pots, beetles, and the skulls of the small birds, while it drew from the long frilled strips of seaweed pinned to the wall a smell of salt and weeds, was in the towels too, gritty with sand from bathing. (6)

The combination of personal appearance and the political issues such as Tansley's tie and the Reform Bill show the artistic imagination of Mrs. Woolf in the text. She represents the socio-political issues joining with the individual affairs. This shows the political consciousness among the modern people. In the party, their discussion about the Reform Bill is the political issue of 1911. At that time the Reform Bill concerning the liberal government's determination to limit the power of the House of Lords was passed. This was one of the burning political issues of the contemporary time.

The social hierarchy between the rich and the poor was a burning issue of the early twentieth century England. The poor were living a miserable life but the aristocrats were busy in giving parties. For the middle class like the Ramsays, it was becoming difficult to preserve such norms and values because of the increasing expenditure and degrading life style of the people. England was going through the problems of poverty, corruption and social injustice at that time. Mrs. Ramsay thinks about the problem of poverty, high birth rate, and lack of justice, unemployment, “more profoundly she ruminated the other problem, of rich and poor, and the things she saw with her own eyes, weekly, daily, here or in London” (7). The high expenditure in England made the life of the people difficult and so they were giving up the tendencies of parties at that time.

The dinner party is a symbol of the Victorian values and norms but they do not discuss about these norms rather they are affected by the sociopolitical condition of England. There are the social issues and they are discussed from the beginning of the novel. Their discussion about the political issues go on till the party ends. When party is over, they are talking about the policy of Labour Party and Lily wants to be untouched by such issues but she is conscious about the day to day political activities of the contemporary time. When they are sitting for the dinner, they start their discussion about politics again:

They had begun at dinner about politics, thus giving a turn to the whole poise of the evening, making the weight fall in a different direction, as if, Lily thought, seeing them go, and hearing a word or two about the policy of the Labour Party, they had gone up on to the bridge of the ship and were taking their bearings, the change from poetry to politics struck her like that. (81)

The whole discussion in the dinner party is dominated by the political issues of the contemporary time. This discussion about the national politics and its impact on the daily life has given a political color to the novel. The discussion of politics and other individual affairs rather than the norms and values of the family is the political consciousness of the people in the early twentieth century. The cause of the devastating World War I was the politics and the solution of that problem is in the politics itself, people thought and they always raise the political issues in the top of their discussion.

Not only the politics, but also love affair and engagement of Minta and Paul Rayley have also got its space in the novel. Minta and Paul Rayley had not returned back yet, "Minta Doyle and Paul Rayley had not come back then. That could only mean, Mrs. Ramsay thought, one thing. She must accept him or she must refuse him" (40). This shows that they are going to marry; it becomes clear at last section of the first part, "they're engaged; she said, beginning to knit, 'Paul and Minta'" (88). The love affairs and marriage in the novel is the continuation of Victorian way of writings. But, Virginia Woolf here is representing the family affairs in a distinct manner. She compares the conjugal life of Minta and Paul and the single life of Lily Briscoe. Lily's decision of remaining single is the changing attitude of marriage in the early twentieth century. The women in the twentieth century take marriage as a burden of their life and they wanted to be free from any kind of torture of males in the family or in the society. In this sense Vicki Mahaffey thinks, "Objections to marriage became a kind of shorthand for objections to the overall constraints on women in particular and on passive listeners more generally" (109). Through Lily Briscoe, Virginia Woolf is giving her views about the present situation of marriage and she demanding for the equality of gender roles in the society.

Mrs. Ramsay is representative of the Victorian ideologies and thinks that single life is useless, “an unmarried woman has missed the best of life” (36). Every one should marry and live a conjugal life, she thinks but Lily on the other side thinks that women are independent and they can live without male partners. The love affair and marriage of Paul and Minta is analyzed by Mrs. Ramsay and Lily differently. Mrs. Ramsay thinks that Minta has done right thing but in fact their relation ends tragically.

They were ‘in love’ no longer; no he had taken up with another woman, a serious woman, with her hair in a plait and a case in her hand (Minta had described her gratefully, almost admiringly), who went to meetings and shared Paul’s views (they had got more and more pronounced) about the taxation of land and values levy. Far from breaking up the marriage, that alliance had righted it. They were excellent friends, obviously, as he sat on the road and she handed him his tools. (130)

Through the break of their relation Virginia Woolf is showing the lack of belief among the people in the modern world marriage is not taken as a part of life in the modern world and the same thing is seen from the marriage of this couple.

Mrs. Ramsay is a matchmaker and she wants Lily to marry William Bankes but Lily rejects it. She is determined to remain unmarried throughout her life. These contrasting views of Lily and Mrs. Ramsay show the conflict between the Victorian and modern values of marriage. When the Rayleys’ marriage becomes unsuccessful, Lily thinks that she got victory over Mrs. Ramsay and believes that Mrs. Ramsay would also accept the fact if she had been alive. She thinks:

So that was the story of the Rayleys, Lily smiled. She imagined herself telling it to Mrs. Ramsay, who would be full of curiosity to know what had become of the Rayleys. She would feel a little triumphant, telling Mrs. Ramsay that the marriage had not been a success. (130)

The sexuality and marriage in the modern society is not satisfactory. Virginia Woolf herself was sexually abused by her half-brother Thobby and her marital life with Leonard Woolf was not good. That's why she takes marriage as a destruction of life. Mr. Ramsay, the father of eight children sometimes feels boring because they disturb him in different ways. So Mrs. Ramsay thinks, "he would have written better books if he had not married" (50). The modern women take marriage as unnecessary burden in life. They think that marriage always disturbs the creative potentiality of human beings. Mrs. Ramsay has also accepted this fact in this novel. She thinks that her husband is very much disturbed by his family and it would have been better if he had not married at all. Through Mrs. Ramsay's realization, Virginia Woolf is showing the rejection of marriage in the modern society.

The novel deals with the impact of the First World War as well. In the second part of the novel Virginia Woolf has analyzed the society and the psychology of the people affected by war. Terror and uncertainty created by the war is presented through the use of dark symbols. The whole section is invaded by the dark nights. The darkness is the invisibility of the people in the modern society after the war. People lost their life and property in the war. This section deals with the destruction of the world and sense of loss of the life and properties in the war.

When the party is over, the guests and family members go to sleep hoping for the bright future. But the situation never becomes suitable for them. An unknown fear spreads in the mind of the people; there is uncertainty everywhere. Mrs. Ramsay dies

suddenly; the war breaks out; and people are leaving their houses. In their empty houses, the presence of army is seen:

So with house empty and the doors locked and the mattress rolled round, those stray airs, advance guards of great armies blustered in, brushed bare boards, nibbled and fanned, met nothing in bedroom or drawing-room that wholly resisted them but only hanging that flapped, wood that creaked, the bare legs of tables, saucepans and china already furred, tarnished cracked. (95)

People left their houses due to the fear of war and they lost everything in the war. In their empty houses the army was searching the enemies and they were destroying their residences but there was no sign of life in those houses. This is a pathetic condition in war time. Unnatural death of Prue and Andrew are the important issues to show the contemporary situation. Prue was died of the problems related to childbirth, “[Prue Ramsay died that summer in some illness connected with childbirth, which was indeed a tragedy, people said. They said nobody deserved happiness.]’ (98). Prue’s death indicates the maternity death in the twentieth century.

The Ramsays lost another family member Andrew as well. He was killed in an explosion, “[A shell exploded. Twenty or thirty young men were blown up in France, among them Andrew Ramsay, whose death, mercifully, was instantaneous.]” (99). This is the scenario of the War. The young people were involved in army and they participated in the war. There were bombs and mines everywhere and many were killed. Andrew is one of the representative but many young people lost their life prematurely during the war. The war created a pathetic situation in the society. The peace ascended but they have the wound of war in their psychology. The Ramsay family is only representative; not only Mrs. Ramsay died but many others lost their

beloved during that period, “Many families had lost their dearest. So, she was dead; and Andrew killed; Miss Prue dead too, they said with her first baby; but everyone had lost someone these years. Prices had gone up shamefully, and didn’t come down again neither” (101).

The above passage shows the reality of that time, the difficulty for survival due to war. The life style of the people got degraded because of the Great War and the high economic expenditure in the war. They were bound to live with the divided psychology due to the loss of their relatives. Then war was ended but in reality the life of people was not changed; it did not bring any positive changes in the daily life of the people. After ten years the peace ascended and people start coming back, “then indeed peace had come. Message of peace breathed from the sea to shore” (105). The life is not better than of the war time because of corruption, sense of insecurity, and many socioeconomic problems. The people after the war were hopeless and frustrated because there was no sign of progress in their life. They were always in their own problems and the state was not paying attention towards its people. This is the reality of the country after the war.

The third part goes with hope and hopelessness of the people in the society. They have once again returned back to their society. Now they have new ideas of doing something for the society and everything is becoming favorable to them. The weather becomes clear and Mr. Ramsay is ready to go the lighthouse with James and Cam. All the characters of the novel are gathered together at once and they have new courage to do something. This is the optimistic idea of Virginia Woolf herself. The same family setting is there in this part but they are departed during this long period. Lily again sits to complete her picture and at last she completes it with her new vision.

In this way, this novel shows the reality of the early twentieth century.

Virginia Woolf has fictionalized the contemporary world in a real manner. The representation of reality in her novel is distinct from the nineteenth century realism. *To the Lighthouse* is different than the novels of George Eliot, Jane Austen, or any other nineteenth century realist writers. Their novel also have family setting, there are parties, marriage ceremonies etc. but they were different than of twentieth century. The Victorian realistic novel ends with happy marital life but this novel has ended with the separation and completion of journey. The attitude of marriage is different in traditional novels the female characters are always seeking a handsome man but here Lily rejects the purpose and remained unmarried. When the relation between Paul and Minta degrades she thinks every one should accept that every marriage doesn't have a happy ending, even Mrs. Ramsay would accept if she was alive:

For a moment Lily standing there with the sun not on her back, summing up the Rayleys triumphed over Mrs. Ramsay, who would never know how Paul went to coffee-houses and had a mistress; how he sat on the ground and Minta handed him his tools; how she stood here painting, had never married, not even William Bankes. (130)

Lily here thinks as a winner and her idea of remaining single was right because the marriage is not the source of happiness rather it ends with separation. Marriage cannot fulfill the desire of the people because the couples are mentally divided by the war. Due to the distinct thoughts, they cannot remain together and their marriage ends. This is a reality of the modern society. The male partners take their wives as sexual workers only and dissatisfied husbands often visit their mistress and that becomes the cause of divorce in the family. Paul and Minta's marriage also could not remain longer and they got separation. Virginia Woolf has analyzed the society and the

psychology of the early twentieth century people in this novel. Her idea of representing the reality is different. Rather than concentrating on external events and scene, she asserts, modern novel should be concerned instead with the life of the mind, in all its conscious, subconscious and unconscious workings. The writer needs to break from the limits of materialist realism, and find new methods and forms for representing this life in all its immediacy and multiplicity.

The modernist writers use self conscious characters to represent the reality. The story of the individuals becomes the plot of the novel. Through the consciousness of the characters, the modernist writers show the distinct views of the people in the society. Due to the war, people of the contemporary world became frustrated and alienated. The multiple narratives show the alienation of the characters. The use of consciousness of the characters represents their position in the society. Mrs. Ramsay's consciousness shows the traditional female consciousness and Lily is conscious about their position in the modern world. The distinct consciousness of the characters is the modern thinking of the people in the society. They take the world in their own way; Mr. Ramsay seems to be pessimistic in his vision about the world as he thinks that there is no way to go to the lighthouse but Mrs. Ramsay is optimistic because she thinks that the weather will become clean very soon. These two contrastive ideas are the two distinct ideas of the modern people.

A focus on the subjective consciousness of the individual mind has become one of the defining features of the modernist novel, identified as both its principal theme and dominant technique. The modernist writers used the stream of consciousness narrative to show their attitude towards the society through the characters. The long narratives create the communication gap among the characters in the novel and the communication gap shows the psychological condition of the

people. In this sense Deborah Parson thinks, “To understand some of the different kinds of narrative focus subsumed by the stream-of-consciousness label, it is useful to have some awareness of the ideas that dominated psychological and philosophical thought at the beginning of the twentieth century” (56). The modernist writers think that their fictions must be different from the classical realism and so they focus on the psychology of the characters. A fundamental aspect of their new realism was a shift of focus in the representation of character and consciousness, in the light of the pervasive influence of psychological thought at the turn of the century and how it repositioned the individual in relation to the world around him.

This novel delves into the mind of its characters in a stream of consciousness approach. The characters’ thoughts and feelings blend into one another and the outward actions and dialogue come second to the inward emotions and ruminations. In the dinner party sequence, for instance, Woolf changes the point of view frequently with transitions often marked by the sparse dialogue. While shifting the point of view from person to person, Woolf develops her characters through their thoughts, memories, and reactions to each other.

Virginia Woolf has created self-conscious and moody characters through the use of stream of consciousness technique. They are telling their own stories and presenting their attitudes towards other characters. Through the omniscient narrator Woolf is presenting her own view as well. She has analyzed the society and the mind of people by the use of stream of consciousness in the novel. She has brought the characters from different fields and they have different attitude and behaviours that she is presenting through the use of stream of consciousness narrative. Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay, Lily Briscoe, Mr. Tansley, have their own attitudes and that is shown through the stream of consciousness narrative.

Mr. Ramsay is the head of the family and a teacher of philosophy but he seems to be a pathetic character because other characters do not know his philosophy properly. He is a realist as Andrew answers Lily that his father's books are about, "subject and object and the nature of reality" (17). He is a man of fact and always thinks objectively. He rejects the idea of going to the Lighthouse because he thinks weather won't favour the journey and this became the cause of debate between him and his son. He seems to be different from the others as he thinks differently. He thinks that he is different from other because of splendid mind:

It was a splendid mind. For if thought is like the keyboard of a piano, divided into so many notes, or like the alphabet is ranged in twenty-six letters all in order, then his splendid mind had no sort of difficulty in running over these letters one by one, firmly and accurately, until it had reached, say the letter Q. he reached Q. very few people in the whole of England ever reach Q. (24)

People's thought is affected by various problems. His thoughts are also affected by the family affairs and other social problems and people think that he is a failure, "he was a failure that R was beyond him. He would never reach R" (25). From here we come to know that the distinct thoughts create alienation among the people. His ideas are different from others and he thinks differently, sometimes he seems to be pessimistic and people think that he is a failure. He is not able to hold the family because of his own rigid opinion of the society. He is an alienated character in the novel and at last he surrenders in front of his son as he is ready to go to the Lighthouse. In the text Woolf shows how the desires of the people are affected by the different situations through the use of stream of consciousness technique. She has analyzed the consciousness of the characters in their monologues.

In chapter XVII of *The Window* begins with Mrs. Ramsay wondering what she has done with life as she directs guests to their seats and ladles out soup. She sees her husband at the far end of the table frowning. “What at? She did not know. She did not mind. She could not understand how she had ever felt any emotion or any affection for him” (60). As she thinks about her displeasure and disconnectedness with Mr. Ramsay, he notes that she would not speak out loud her inner feelings. There is strict difference between her actions and her thoughts, “Raising her eyebrows at the discrepancy- was what she was thinking, this was what she was doing- lading out soup- she felt more and more strongly, outside that eddy; or as if shade had fallen, and, robbed of color, she saw things truly” (60). Being outside the eddy is her sense of being past everything, through everything out of everything. Completely out of touch with Mr. Ramsay and everyone else at the table, she instead focus on how shabby the room is, how sterile the men are, and how she pities William Bankes. Finding meaning and strength again in her pity, she gets part her mental weapons enough to ask him an innocuous question about his letters.

The point of view shifts abruptly to Lily Briscoe, who is watching Mrs. Ramsay intently and imagining her thoughts Lily is able to read Mrs. Ramsay pretty clearly- ‘How old she looks, how worn she looks, Lily thought, and how remote’ (61). She wonders why Mrs. Ramsay pities William Bankes, and realizes that ‘the life in her, her resolve to live again had been stirred by pity’ (61). Lily does not find Bankes pitiable but she recognizes that Mrs. Ramsay is fulfilling some need of her own. Lily thinks about how Bankes has his work, then her thoughts switch to her own work, and she starts imagining her painting and the adjustments she will make. As if to remind the readers of the setting, Woolf has Lily taken up: ‘the salt cellar and put it down again in the flower in the pattern in the table-cloth, so as to remind herself to move the

tree' (61). Lily moves around her own thoughts, sometimes she takes her painting in one corner sometimes in another. She observes her painting from different perspectives and at last she finds her new vision in her painting.

After all of Lily Briscoe's thoughts, Mr. Bankes finally responds to Mrs. Ramsay's inquiry as to whether he has found his letters. Lily observes how he lays down his- 'spoon precisely in the middle of his plate, which he had swept clean, as if, Lily thought (he sat opposite to her with his back to the window preciously in the middle of view), he were determined to make sure of his meals' (61 2). As if she can read people's thoughts, Lily's attention turns to Charles Tansley as she makes observation about him. She notes that his appearance is meager and unlovely, but she is still drowning to his blue deep set eyes. Mrs. Ramsay pities him as well as she asks him about his letters.

Tansley's response is incorporated into the text, not as a direct quotation, as if he does not wish to join in the banal conversation but instead wallow in his thoughts, 'For he was not going to talk the sort of rote these people wanted him to talk. He was not going to be condescended to by these silly women' (62). Tansley holds the women and their ways in disdain, he finds them silly and superficial. Why do they get dressed up for such occasion? He is wearing his ordinary clothes. Women, 'did nothing but talk, talk, talk, eat, eat, eat. It was the women's fault. Women made civilization impossible with all their 'charm', all their silliness' (62). By portraying his inner frustrations Woolf lets the reader know exactly how Tansley feels about dinner parties, women and civilization as a whole. Tansley thinks that the tendency of giving parties is the loss of time only, it has no value at all and he also feels alienated in the party as he is disable character. Through Tansey's consciousness Virginia Woolf represents the attitude of people towards the disables as well.

By shifting the point of view from character to character, Woolf shares each character's thoughts and feelings, opinions and realization to one another. The dynamics between the characters are expressed more fully by their thoughts than by their words. The light dialogue serves to break up the transitions in perspective. By blending people's inward feelings and keeping dialogue to minimum Woolf develops her multi-dimensional characters in a unique and memorable way. Through the use of stream of consciousness, she has presented different views of the people in the society. Their rising consciousness shows their new ideas about the society in the post war situation.

In this way, Virginia Woolf uses myths, symbols, nature and consciousness of the characters to represent the social reality of the contemporary world. The fragmented psychology of the people is captured by the fragmented style of writing. Different types of symbols are used in the same place and different characters use differently. Contrastive symbols such as dark nights and Lighthouse in a same place shows the ups and downs in human life. The sociopolitical scenario of England and the degrading situation of the Victorian norms and values represent the transition of Victorian Edwardian era to the modern era. The First World War and its impact on the psychology of the characters show the fragmented situation of the modern world. The consciousness of the characters is their consciousness about the modern world. Woolf's own emotions, feelings and experiences are depicted in a fictional way. This is the modernity of the text. The Oedipal relation of James with his parents shows the impact of Freudian psychoanalysis in the author. Similarly, Lily's art and Carmichael's poetry show the combination of art and literature in Modernism

III. Representation of Psychological Reality in *To the Lighthouse*

Virginia Woolf has represented *To the Lighthouse* as a modernist text because it fulfils the conditions of the modernist features in literature. She has challenged the traditional way of writing fiction. The use of myths and symbols represent the consciousness of the characters and social reality of the early twentieth century. In the simple story of a family, she has raised the burning issues of the contemporary world. The increasing awareness among the women is shown through Lily's painting. It is the combination of art and literature. She believes that art and human life are inseparable. The psychological consciousness of the people in the transition period after the First World War is the issue of the text. The characters from different fields and their own identity in the novel show the multiplicity of the modernist writings. Their feelings and emotions are providing newness in the text and their new visions of the world is the vision of the author herself as she imagines a peaceful and coherent society in the post war world.

Different symbols are used in the text to show the fragmentation and alienation of the characters. The Lighthouse situated in one corner of the sea and people's desire to go there is the desire of modern people to leave the society and to live in isolation. They want to go to the Lighthouse because it is the symbol of peace and rigidity. It is unaffected by the activities of the human activities in the world. The text is the journey of the Ramsays and the Lighthouse is their destination. Mrs. Ramsay dies before going to the journey and after ten years Mr. Ramsay and his two children complete the journey. The light in the Lighthouse is invisible in itself but it can visualize the other things. The light of the tower represents the omniscient narration in the novel. From the top of the tower everything in the world is observed and new vision about the world is created. Lily's painting is the combination of art

and literature. The modernist writers were affected by the modernist art and Virginia Woolf is also using same technique in this novel. Through the use of artistic vision she has created a peaceful society in the modern world. Lily's painting gives the new vision about the modern society. The demarcation line in her canvas shows that life and art are separate but they go side by side and the vision of life can be seen in art.

The nature is used in a symbolic manner and it has related the modernist literature with Romanticism. Like the Romanticists, the Modernists also use nature but in a distinct way. Every activity of the characters in the novel is affected by the surrounding environment and the nature is used in such a way that it is a part of human life. The dark nights and the ongoing war are represented simultaneously in the second part of the novel. The stormy night is the symbol of terror and danger of the War. The dark nights create an unknown fear in the psychology of the characters. The fear of death and uncertainty is seen everywhere as it is represented symbolically. The boar's skull pinned in the garden creates an unknown fear in Cam's mind. Mrs. Ramsay's unsuccessful attempt to cover the skull with her green shawl is a human desire of escaping from the death. Light symbols are used in the later part of the novel to complete the journey. The fine morning after ten years shows the hope of the people about the modern world and it has given the optimism in the text. Through the use of these different symbols, Virginia Woolf has analyzed the psychology of the people.

Through the use of myths, Woolf has analyzed the contemporary situation of the women in the early twentieth century. The women are given ornamental beauty but they are enclosed inside the four walls of the house and limited in their roles. Mrs. Ramsay's beauty can do nothing in decision making in the family, her desire of going to the Lighthouse remain unfulfilled and she dies before going there. In contrast to

Mrs. Ramsay, Lily Briscoe is an independent woman. She is determined to remain single and completing her painting. She wants to answer the patriarchy that women can do nothing without the help of male. Rejection of marriage is the concept of modern women and changing attitudes about sexuality and family life in modern society. Lily's consciousness and interpretation about the world has shown the capacity of women that is equal to the males.

The Oedipal relation of James with his parents shows the alienation of children to their parents. The distinction of ideas creates the contradiction among the people as shown in the novel. New types of ideas are developed along with the change in time but all the people cannot accept all the changes and they become alienated in the society. Through the use of stream of consciousness of the characters distinct ideas of the progress of the society are presented in the text. The psychology of the war victims is analyzed in the novel. The fear of insecurity and uncertainty of future in the post war world has affected the mind of the people.

The fragmented writing of the text is made coherent by the repetition of the symbols and dialogues. Most of the things are repeated in different context and that shown the linearity of the text. For example James hatred in the beginning is repeated in the last section that has made the text coherent. The unity in fragmentation and alienation has made this novel as a modernist text. The text has an optimistic vision and this optimism is the way of living in the modern society.

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