ATILIM UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
ENGLISH CULTURE AND LITERATURE MASTER'S PROGRAMME

MARRIAGE AS CONFINEMENT IN VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *MRS. DALLOWAY AND* D. H. LAWRENCE'S *LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER*

Master's Thesis

Aleyna Nur ÇANKIR

Ankara-2025

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Thesis Advisor
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ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

This is to certify that this thesis titled Marriage as Confinement in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and prepared by Aleyna Nur ÇANKIR meets with the committee's approval unanimously/by a majority vote as Master's Thesis in the field of English Culture and Literature following the successful defense conducted on 24/06/2025

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ETHICAL STATEMENT

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

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

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Aleyna Nur ÇANKIR

ÖZ

ÇANKIR, Aleyna Nur. Virginia Woolf'un *Mrs. Dalloway* ve D. H. Lawrence'ın *Lady Chatterley's Lover* Adlı Romanlarında Kısıtlanma Olarak Evlilik, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2025.

Bu tez, Birinci Dünya Savaşı'ndan sonra 20. yüzyıl İngiltere'sinde var olan sınıf ve toplumsal cinsiyet sorunlarını feminist eleştiri ışığında Virginia Woolf'un *Mrs. Dalloway* ve D. H. Lawrence'ın *Lady Chatterley's Lover* adlı eserlerinde inceleyecektir. 20. yüzyıl İngiltere'sinde kadın kurtuluş hareketlerinin daha görünür olması ve kadınların oy kullanma hakkının yaygınlaşmasıyla beraber, kadınların kamu alanlarına, siyasi işlere ve işgücüne katılımları ivme kazanmıştır. Buna rağmen, Viktorya döneminin izlerini taşıyan 20. yüzyıl İngiliz toplumunun kültürel yapısında, kadının evlilikteki ve toplumdaki yeri hala geleneksel bir bakış açısıyla sınırlıdır. Bu tezde, Birinci Dünya Savaşı sonrası birey ile toplum arasındaki çatışmayı anlatan *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) ve *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928) adlı romanlar, kadın, evlilik ve toplum çerçevesinde ele alınacaktır. İki farklı roman ve bu romanların kadın karakterleri üzerinden dönemin toplumsal norm ve kuralları göz önünde bulundurularak feminist kuramcıların düşünceleri ışığında evlilik kadın açısından kısıtlanmaya sebebiyet veren bir kurum olarak analiz edilecektir. Bu bağlamda, incelenen iki romanda da kadın karakterler eğitimli ve toplumda statü sahibi olmalarına rağmen evliliklerindeki baskılardan kurtulamamışlardır. Bu tez aracılığıyla bahsi geçen romanlardaki sınıf, kadın ve evlilik temelli konulara feminist bir bakış açısıyla yaklaşılması amaçlanmaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: *Mrs. Dalloway*, Evlilik, Toplumsal Cinsiyet, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Sosyal Sınıflar

ABSTRACT

ÇANKIR, Aleyna Nur. Marriage as Confinement in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2025.

This thesis will examine the class and gender issues that existed in 20th-century England after the First World War in the light of feminist criticism in *Mrs. Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* by D. H. Lawrence. With the increasing visibility of women's liberation movements and the spread of women's right to vote in 20th-century England, women's participation in public spheres, political affairs, and the workforce has gained momentum. Despite this, in the cultural structure of the 20th-century British society, which bears the traces of the Victorian era, the place of women in marriage and society is still restricted by a traditional perspective. In this thesis, the novels *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928), which portray the conflict between the individual and society after the First World War, will be examined within the framework of women, marriage, and society. Marriage will be analyzed as an institution that causes confinement for women in the light of the ideas of feminist theorists, considering the social norms and rules of the period through two different novels and their female characters. In this context, in both novels examined, although the female characters are educated and have status in society, they cannot escape the pressures in their marriages. This thesis aims to approach the issues of class, women, and marriage in the novels from a feminist perspective.

Keywords: *Mrs. Dalloway*, Marriage, Gender, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Social Classes

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INTRODUCTION

Over many centuries, women have had a complex and ever-changing position in society, one that is frequently influenced by dominant cultural norms, legal constraints, and societal expectations. Women were mostly acknowledged and valued for their roles as mothers, wives, and caregivers, and their contributions outside home were either dismissed or ignored. Women's access to education and professional prospects was severely restricted, which fuelled a cycle of exclusion from public and political spheres and dependency. Significant turning points, such as the attainment of women's suffrage, the acknowledgment of women's rights as human rights, and the realization of the importance of gender equality in all spheres of life, have been made possible by the struggles and tenacity of women. The flourishing of feminism is a reflection of shifting social dynamics and the continuous fight for women's rights and gender equality. A number of international movements that arose to confront the structural injustices that women had to endure can be linked to the origins of feminism. The first wave of feminism emerged in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, bringing legal inequality to the forefront and pushing for women's suffrage. This was a time of groundbreaking efforts to give women the right to vote, a fight that resulted in important global legal victories. As feminism advanced throughout the 20th century, the second wave of feminism addressed equality concerns outside of the voting booth. Reproductive rights, the battle against systematic sexism, and social and cultural injustices were the main topics of discussion during this time. The feminist movement evolved to take on a more diverse character during this period, recognizing the range of experiences that women from various racial and socioeconomic backgrounds had. With its emphasis on individuality, intersectionality, and the place of gender in society, the third wave of feminism, which arose in the late 20th century, provided additional layers to the movement's narratives. As Claire Snyder points out: "In response to the divisiveness of the sex wars, third-wave feminism emphasizes an inclusive and nonjudgmental approach that refuses to police the boundaries of feminist politics" (175). Feminist theory's main emphasis is to examine and question the social norms and customs that uphold gender hierarchies. In an effort to draw attention to and address how women have historically been disenfranchised and mistreated, it challenges the traditional roles that have been allocated to men and women. It is possible to state that the feminist movement was founded in order to uphold women's rights and shed light on the oppression that women experience in systems of patriarchy. The critical approach of

feminist criticism in literature is to examine, evaluate, and comprehend literature from a feminist perspective. It concentrates on how literature either supports or contradicts women's oppression, looks at how women are portrayed in literature, and analyses how patriarchal values have influenced the canon of literature. The literary critic M. H. Abrams states that "A major interest of feminist critics in English-speaking countries has been to reconstitute the ways we deal with literature in order to do justice to female points of view, concerns, and values" (90). Although conditions for women have improved over time compared to before, in the 20th century women were still condemned to a life in which they were oppressed for many different reasons. This situation was also reflected in literature by twentieth-century writers.

This thesis aims to discuss the portrayals of women's position by examining how selected writers, Woolf in *Mrs. Dalloway* and Lawrence in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* reflect women's oppression in marriage. The study will refer to some feminist critics, such as Simone de Beauvoir, Toril Moi, and Virginia Woolf, and their ideas about the concept of marriage, class, and the oppression that women went through as well. In this thesis, the concept of "trap marriage" as a term is used from time to time. This term refers to the fact that marriage is a tool that restricts women's autonomy, self-expression, and sexuality. In this context, the concept of trap marriage does not refer to women being forced into marriage, but to the emotional constrictions they experience in their marriages, and the restrictions they are trapped in within the boundaries of the responsibilities and rules attributed to women by the patriarchal society. The term, trap marriage basically represents the internal and physical constrictions of the main female characters in the novels within the framework of the roles, norms, and the responsibilities they are forced to fulfill in a male-dominated system, and how they cannot break these boundaries within their marriages. The concept of "trap marriage" is based on this critical perspective that historically defines a structure in which women have been made economically, socially, and sexually dependent through marriage. Charlotte Perkins Gilman describes this situation within marriage from a feminist perspective in her work *Women and Economics* as follows: "Although marriage is a means of livelihood, it is not honest employment where one can offer one's labor without shame, but a relation where the support is given outright, and enforced by law in return for the functional service of the woman, the 'duties of wife and mother'" (51). In this context, marriage is not an institution in which both

parties work together, but rather an agreement offered to women in exchange for the service of the roles as mother or wife attributed to them to live. In her *Women and Economics*, Gilman argues that women have been systematically oppressed since the primitive historical process and have been made dependent on the structures of the male-dominated system (5). According to Gilman, the human species is the only animal species in which the female is fed and supported by the male throughout her life so, it can be said that the institution of marriage creates not only an emotional but also an economic dependency relationship because the woman has been removed from being a productive subject, instead, woman is defined through the roles of domestic service like wifehood and motherhood, but this domestic labor within marriage remains unrewarded and unseen. In this context, trap marriage functions as a trap that suppresses women's productivity and restricts their individuality. The fact that marriage is such a restrictive and historically structured mechanism for women, in the ways it is defined, makes them "trapped" in their marriages, and the basis of the concept is based on these views.

Marriage is often described as a nurturing, loving, and free-spirited life for women, bringing two independent and free individuals together. However, this is not the case for women until the age of marriage; the norms and roles imposed on women while they are still girls prepare them for marriage rather than free individuals, and there is always a consciousness in the corner of their lives that their marital responsibilities belong more to the woman, as marriage and husbands come first. This situation is a foundation that serves the male-dominated system and has put women on the back burner through gender roles. Feminist writer and activist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie explains these social stereotypes that prepare women for marriage in her book as follows;

> We teach girls to shrink themselves, to make themselves smaller. We say to girls, you can have ambition, but not too much. You should aim to be successful, but not too successful. Otherwise, you would threaten the man. Because I am female, I am expected to aspire to marriage. I am expected to make my life choices always keeping in mind that marriage is the most important. Now marriage can be a source of joy and love and mutual support but why do we teach girls to aspire to marriage and we don't teach boys the same? … (Adichie 27).

Adichie criticizes norms and society's expectations surrounding marriage, particularly the discriminatory duties and demands placed on women in matrimonial relationships, even though she is not opposed to marriage itself. Her views on marriage are entwined with her support of feminism and the need for a change to more equal

partnerships. In order to attain gender equality in families and society at large, she argues that there has to be a cultural change toward inclusive and flexible notions of gender roles in marriage (TEDx Talks). A feminist critique of marriage has been conveyed that aims to overturn patriarchal systems and achieve a future in which gender roles in society, including marriage, are not determined by an individual's gender and are not used to restrict potential. In the following chapters, the terms feminism and marriage mentioned above will be examined in relation to the development and boundaries of feminist waves.

Social codes produced the illusion that marriage was a seemingly freeing act for women. However, in another saying, this means, under the title of forced marriage, getting rid of the pressure when a woman lived with her family before marriage. The marital relationship has evolved into a tool for improving women's psychological and social well-being, yet most feminist writers see the marriage institution as a situation in which a woman goes from one prison to another. Melissa Murray says that "sexual mores and extant gender norms dictated that a chaste woman would not surrender her virtue easily. Nevertheless, they also recognized the inherent weaknesses of the female sex, especially when pitted against the will and power of determined men" (21). In other words, although women's movements began and became more visible, it can be said that women's sexuality and desire were considered something dangerous as well as inferior and inappropriate behaviour, which means that a derogatory label towards women has always existed in society in the twentieth century. Kelly explains that although there were great developments for women in the twentieth century, these developments made inequalities more visible and as developments occurred, discrimination against women increased as is stated;

> More and more women, particularly married women, have been drawn into the workforce and that has both highlighted inequalities in the workplace and forced the pace of reform. Discrimination against women is still widespread, but it's now more widely reported, and cases are coming before the courts, and that represents progress (Kelly 267).

As women became more involved in social life or began to be involved, it is seen that the twentieth century still had the oppressive traces of the Victorian Era. The influence of social class on women's marriage practices was considerable and detrimental in the 20th century, as Victorian-era gender norms persisted. When a woman wants to be married, her social standing matters a lot. The financial constraints of their families and, therefore, the financial status of poor women prevented them from marrying men from better social classes or positions, and even if they married,

society would have disapproved of their union since it went against a fundamental tenet of Victorian social norms regarding matrimony. Murray also adds: “Although its positive attributes were acknowledged, marriage also was understood to include gendered obligations and responsibilities that deprived spouses of certain liberties and channeled them into a disciplined way of life” (6). The 20th century is considered a time that includes remnants of the Victorian era since women faced numerous challenges in the predominantly patriarchal Victorian culture. This situation, in both novels that will be the subject of this thesis, is about the unhappiness of the female characters in their marriages, and in that sense, the novels reflect that although female characters are educated and wealthy, their oppression in marriage cannot be prevented.

Social historians, theologians, legal historians, and scholars of literature have all examined marriage. Over time, the institution of marriage has undergone tremendous change, mirroring changes in social conventions, legal frameworks, economic systems, and cultural norms. Its development can be roughly divided into multiple stages, each impacted by the larger socioeconomic environment as well as shifting ideas about what it is to be a person and what love is (Brooke 7). At this point, in the historical development process of marriage, it is possible to say that marriage has been shaped according to class and economic differences, under the influence of social norms, according to the periods in which it existed. Marriage is an institution established in the Middle Ages and Renaissance periods where people come together for social and personal interests or just for procreation, a pragmatic deal generally away from love and passion. Although love is one of the first things that comes to mind today when marriage is mentioned, marriages have left love and passion relationships in the background in this historical process. In his book, Steven L. Nock explains marriage, as there is much more to a marriage than the two partners combined. It’s a connection shaped by convention, morality, and the law as well. Many relationships that bring two adults together offer fewer elements of personal affiliation than there are in marriage, as marriage is an institution that is ingrained in core social institutions like politics, economics, and education. The accepted bounds of behaviour that surround marriages and set them apart from all other types of relationships are known as the boundaries (Nock 11).

Then, it is necessary to ask where love is in this framework, the norms and rules of the period shape the marriage institution. If it is needed to have a look at the historical

evolution of marriage, the Christian Church started to have a big impact on European marriage customs during the Middle Ages, regulating legal requirements and ceremony formats. However, in the twelfth century, the papal court and the church courts alike had to confront the issue of the definition of marriage. As a result, the majority of prominent canonists agreed to use consensus as the foundation for marriage eligibility. Even though the Church preferred and encouraged more public, formal, and visible weddings, it felt obligated to acknowledge that a couple who had been engaged and had given their consent were considered free to cohabit. Matrimonial ties were essential for forming political coalitions and transferring property, particularly for the nobles. Even while the Church's authorities up until the eleventh century emphasized the value of consent, they were under no need to create an entirely precise definition of marriage that would apply in every situation. It would have been exceedingly dangerous to propose universal definitions of marriage since it was so much a matter of regional and personalized norms (Brooke 130). In other words, although marriage generally seems to be a situation in which the consent of the couple is obtained, it was mostly an agreement based on political agreements and, in the case of royals, to give a new heir to the throne. Therefore, giving birth to a child was considered a necessity for a marriage to be considered consummated. In his book, *The Medieval Idea of Marriage,* Brooke states that "It was a widely received opinion that marriage without consummation was incomplete, and the Church felt compelled to accept the view that when one or other partner was or appeared to be incapable of consummation, the marriage could be annulled" (131). It is possible to say that in medieval times, childbearing was important for the institution of marriage as it was seen as a value that completed marriage. Therefore, giving birth to children within marriage is already a duty that women had to fulfill. Duby declares that

> The area of male sexuality, and by that I mean lawful sexuality, was not at all limited to marriage. Accepted morality, the morality which each individual pretended to respect, did indeed require that the husband content himself with his wife but did not prevent him from having other women either before marriage, during what, in the twelfth century, was called 'youth', or after marriage, during his widowhood (Duby 9).

Many indications point to men's widespread and highly visible usage of prostitutes and mistresses, as well as their enjoyment of passionate encounters with servants and the systemic enhancement of masculine strength. As a husband, the man has no such duty or responsibility towards his wife other than providing for the household and meeting the needs of the woman and the child by contributing

economically. The same situation was never possible for women, and women who were unfaithful were represented as evil and sinful. “The natural depravity of women, those perverse creatures, would be liable, if there was not vigilance, to introduce into kinship with the heirs to the ancestral fortune intruders, born of another blood, whose seed had been secretly sown” (Duby 9). Not surprisingly, virginity was lauded in women, and a whole set of related regulations diligently tried to ensure it, while constancy was praised in wives. To add more, according to the established belief of the Church, the idea that the marriage with Joseph was sacred, although Virgin Mary’s virginity constituted an incomplete marriage, was also dominant. As Brooke says

> Yet it was the universal doctrine of the medieval Church that the Blessed Virgin Mary was always a virgin, that she had never consummated her marriage to Joseph; and it was widely held that the marriage of Joseph and Mary was perfect—the most perfect marriage of all and that it could not be incomplete. This opened a chasm in the opinions of churchmen on the married state. It was felt by many that virginity was better than marriage, and by some that it was specially virtuous to be a virgin within the married state (Brooke 131).

Virginity symbolizes purity and cleanliness as well as sinlessness. However, in the understanding of the Church, sexual intercourse between male and female partners was seen as a debt to each other, and it was common to think that having a child in this union only made the situation acceptable. “In the early and central Middle Ages, clerical moralists reckoned that sexual union nearly always had some element of sin in it, that it was only justified by the desire to have children, that it was only moral so long as there was no pleasure in it” (Brooke 132). It is possible to say that a gradual change in the atmosphere of the Middle Ages took place between the mid and late Middle Ages. The medieval Church was forced to accommodate all these different strains, but few theologians doubted the ultimate value of virginity. Marriage was increasingly considered a sacramental practice. Sexual union is widely recognized as an essential component of marriage by many theologians. To add more, the prospect of marriage is impacted by social, religious, and cultural beliefs as well as the established standards of masculinity and femininity. Therefore, recognizing these structural and cultural influences and the range of ways in which people respond to them has a significant place in academic research.

As it comes to the Renaissance period, Europe saw a significant cultural shift during the Renaissance. It typified and marked the rebirth of humanism, a movement that gave more weight to the potential and accomplishments of people. Significant

developments occurred in the fields of philosophy, science, literature, architecture, and art during this time (The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica). As Ferraro states; "Recent historiography has shown time and again that, in addition to higher authorities, villagers and neighbors in tight urban communities also sought control over the moral codes regulating marriage and sexuality" (7). Therefore, also in this period, social norms and culturally learned and established standards defined what marriage meant. During the courtship and bonding period, family and society played an important role in regulating sexual morality and reminding the groom and bride of their responsibilities, since these roles were certain responsibilities that had already been established as norms in society. They participated in ceremonies such as gift-giving, celebrations, ceremonies, and toasts that revived the symbolic connection between kinsfolk and property. With marriage, the properties owned by the parties are united. On the whole, all the expressions symbolize how important civil marriage is and how important it is for local communities, reflecting regional differences. According to Ferraro, these artifacts emphasized the duties of spouses while simultaneously celebrating the themes of love and family. Love marriage started to become glorified, but social and economic factors remained crucial. The idea of companionate marriage, which placed a strong emphasis on respect and affection for one another, began to catch on. These items belonged to well-known families in their own civilizations, whose marriages had deeper social and political significance. The owners of this lavish, material culture intended to keep their families' wealth and notoriety as long as possible. Rich family brides frequently brought money, products, and/or property to the marriage. However, even in their case, brides were expected to bring trousseaux of apparel, mattresses and bedding, linen, pots, and pans for more utilitarian, if not symbolic, purposes. The material world of common people was more limited (Ferraro 8). Ferraro also states that

> Originally, in Roman times, the purpose of the bride's dowry was to contribute to the costs of marriage, but it evolved in medieval times to become her legal share of her natal family's estate. The rules governing dotal wealth varied widely across Europe. Jurists, clerics, and secular magistrates regarded dowries as fundamental to the welfare of women, but laws varied from region to region on who held jurisdiction to administer the assets. Women, however, outside the marital bond, whether in informal partnerships or not, were subject to greater poverty and sexual exploitation, and the children born outside of wedlock were massively displaced (Ferraro 8).

In other words, succinct accounts of the dowry system's development from the Roman to the medieval eras emphasize the shifting goals and legal interpretations it underwent throughout European communities. When the dowry was first introduced in Roman

society, its primary function was to assist in defraying the costs of marriage. A more codified view of marriage and family inheritance emerged throughout the medieval era when the dowry began to symbolize the bride's legal claim to a portion of her family's assets. Local customs and laws frequently prevailed throughout this time in Europe, as evidenced by the variety of laws among regions, which highlights the absence of a cohesive legal system. On the other hand, beyond customary marital arrangements, the socio-economic effects of the dowry system on women and children are seen. It draws attention to the difficulties and societal stigmas that these groups experience when discussing women in casual unions or not in partnerships at all, as well as children born out of wedlock. A large impact on the welfare and social status of women and children may result from this feature of the dowry system, which reflects broader societal ideas toward union, legitimacy, and inheritance. Additionally, by using dowries as a prism through which to see questions of gender, the law, and social welfare, it alluded to the complexity of feudal social and legal arrangements. Consequently, the institution of marriage throughout the Renaissance was tense because of the meddling of both secular and ecclesiastical authority in personal matters and the opposition of young people to parent-arranged marriages. In arranged marriages, issues such as property, inheritance, or increasing social status were concerned with bilateral interests. That is why a lawful marriage was seen as the ideal condition, and it became crucial to determine the legal definition of a genuine union and the power that established it. Ferraro adds that "the French were the first to regularize the sacred marriage rite during the eleventh century. The English were also normally marrying in church by the late fifteenth century. But elsewhere there was no defined way to get married" (9). In this context, although contents such as traditions and customs, celebrations, and giving and receiving gifts have become more developed and love marriages have only just begun to develop, it is possible to say that the institution of marriage is, in general, devoid of emotion and based on agreements of interest of the parties. "Aristocratic girls, patrician women, and daughters born into the professional classes all tended to be married in their mid-/late teens (moving up to mid-/late 20s in the eighteenth century). As a result, they did not have much opportunity for amorous dalliance, as they were effectively promoted from childhood to adulthood with practically no intervening stages" (Ferraro 102). Therefore, among the duties and responsibilities given to women within marriage, which were extremely restrictive, were the duties of managing the house, doing household chores, taking care of the child, being

responsible for the child's upbringing, and at the same time satisfying her husband sexually.

Furthermore, within the scope of the 20th century, marriage relations have changed significantly as a result of the Industrial Revolution and the ensuing cultural developments. People's perspectives on marriage were impacted by economic independence, urbanization, and shifting gender roles, which led to many cultures viewing romantic love as the main factor in marriage. These developments were mirrored in and made easier by legal reforms in the 19th and 20th centuries, which gave women more rights in marriage and increased accessibility to divorce (Coleman 176). This situation reflects larger social, economic, and cultural changes in England. Marriage in England changed over the century from being primarily motivated by economic need to being driven more by personal choice and love, reflecting the general liberalization of British culture. As Coleman states that "men and women are more likely to marry within their own class than into any other" (212). Marriage institutions have begun to emerge where not only personal, wealth, property, or social mobility interests are brought together, but also these qualities are brought together by selection and personal will. In other words, people began to attach importance to more emotional relationships and began to be more selective in their marriages, both in terms of class and emotionally. Personal will starts to have much more meaning and so does the concept of love in marriages. Regarding the reflection of these visible changes on society and marriage institutions, Davidoff stated that

> Of course, most women were not quiescent angels in the house; they could be as aggressive, as manipulative, as clever, as any man. The qualities necessary to maintain a household with a very small, often irregular, income, such as that of the lower middle-class or respectable working-class housewife, already belie the Victorian stereotype (Davidoff 9).

To clarify, marriage was still seen traditionally, with a focus on its social and economic functions. Society in the 20th century began to reevaluate gender roles and interpersonal connections, which resulted in a stronger emphasis on companionate marriage and emotional fulfillment. Debates questioning the institution of marriage itself and its conventional meanings and social roles also took place at this time. During this period, developments and situations in the context of marriage were also reflected in English literature and in the novels that will be examined in this thesis, both Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

emphasize that women were oppressed in marriages, regardless of their wealth or social position in the 20th century.

This thesis will be divided into three chapters. The first chapter will focus on background information about the twentieth century and the impacts of the First World War on both English society and feminist thought. After examining the conditions of the twentieth century and the state of society emerging from the war, the aim and development of feminist theory will be discussed by mostly addressing the first and the second waves of feminism.

The second chapter will discuss Virginia Woolf's novel, *Mrs. Dalloway*. In this chapter, the role of social gatherings and marriage in class perpetuation relating to marriage and the way Woolf handles marriage institutions in her novel will be analysed in the light of some feminist theorists' perspectives, particularly the second wave of feminism. Some of the novel's scenes and events will be extensively addressed while concentrating on these key concepts.

The third chapter will start with the other novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover,* written by David Herbert Lawrence. Marriage and social expectations in society will be considered with the help of feminist theory by addressing mainly the perspectives of the second wave of feminist theorists and pointing out some specific dialogues and how Lawrence revealed the institution of marriage, considering the mentioned themes in his book.

Lastly, in the conclusion part, the results of the research will be recounted. The three chapters that are addressed will be concluded. Although the representations of marriage in the novels *Mrs. Dalloway* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* are portrayed as happy and fulfilling marriages in social life, when examined more profoundly in the context of marriage institutions, twentieth-century women in the novels experienced unhappy marriages regardless of their education and social status, which is a situation influenced by societal expectations and norms. In that sense, this state of marriage in the novels oppressed women, and novels reflect marriage as a form of oppression that could not be prevented.

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. A Brief Overview of the Impact of the First World War on Twentieth-Century and Feminist Thought

During the First World War, there were significant social and economic developments, especially in the areas of labour relations, trade unions, and the roles of various social classes. As Waites states, "between 1910 and 1920, English society changed from a complex hierarchy in which stratification by status overlay the basic three-tier class structure to a more simple form" (45). The war significantly impacted social cohesiveness, class consciousness, and the state's assimilation of labour movement leadership. It also covered the improved social function of working-class organizations and the importance of trade unions in maintaining peaceful labour relations during the war. It can be said that class lines became less evident throughout the war as people from all backgrounds collaborated and fought together. This started to disrupt the tight social structure and fostered a sense of camaraderie among the various classes. Demands for equal opportunity and social justice have grown as a result of the contributions made by all socioeconomic classes together. There is a considerable change in the 'class distinctions' that had graded Edwardian manual workers just as much as the middle class did. They became less visible, in fact, the basic classes became much more distinct (Waites 34). Unskilled workers benefited proportionally more from the war than skilled workers. Labour movement power and prestige were also transferred to labour organizations after the war, as low-paid clerical and distributive workers became increasingly unionist. These changes in the economy paved the way for people from the lower class to seek their rights and freedoms and to revolt for their rights. With these changes, serious steps were taken in society, such as "the abolition of slavery, the acceptance of democratic institutions and Western economic and social forms, and the application of the scientific method" (Mueller 28). During this time, women who did not have equal rights and freedoms with men and were prevented from working in equal work environments and for equal wages also took action in social life. Women's movements also started to make a noise and get results. According to P. Abrams, structural social inequalities have in themselves conditioned the importance of the participation of socially disadvantaged groups; The right level of participation was crucial "as the middle-class women's political movement succeeded in doing" (60). With men leading the way to war, women

became part of the workforce in previously unheard-of quantities. They entered fields like manufacturing, transportation, and even law enforcement that were previously thought to be inappropriate for women. As Mueller explains "political liberals and feminist leaders were accepting war opposition as part of their intellectual baggage, and many socialists were making it central to their ideology" (24). This change stimulated the women's suffrage movement, which resulted in women being granted the right to vote in 1918, and led to a reconsideration of women's qualifications. A key component of the feminist movement is the way that the First World War affected the thinking of British suffragists and feminists, causing them to reassess their social positions and methods for bringing about political and social change. As Vellacott states, "working women experiencing struggles with employers and fellow employees for their rights in the workplace came to see the vote as a tool they needed. As early as 1901-1902, women textile workers were presenting massive petitions for the vote to Parliament" (83). It is also important to highlight the contribution of the feminist movement that advocated for peace during the war. The feminist movement's evolution and growth were expedited by the war. According to Vellacott;

> The socialist component in the message certainly varied in its visibility, and was seldom identified as such by speakers. Again and again, however, radical change was demanded, not indeed in terms of class conflict, but in terms of a resharing of economic benefit and a redistribution of political power. Indeed, women and men with this vision were working for a change radical enough to have warranted the term revolution, while continuing to have faith that it could take place with minimal violence (Vellacott 95).

Women's resistance to war and efforts to promote peace constituted the core of the feminist movement throughout this period. Women's anti-war activism at this time encompassed efforts for social change and peace in addition to the fight for the right to vote. Consequently, the First World War had a wide-ranging and significant effect on the feminist movement in England. Therefore, it is possible to say that the outbreak of the war gave the pre-war movement—which battled for women's ability to vote and hold office—a new focus. "They believed women had special qualities - by nature or by nurture - to bring to the solution of national and international problems" (Vellacott 96). The war altered perceptions of the social and political roles of women. Accordingly, it enabled more serious steps to be taken. As mentioned before, the feminist mindset that supports peace has addressed more comprehensive social problems over time, such as the end of slavery, and thus created a core perception in society.

To sum up, there is a strong belief in the feminist pacifist movement, which is women have the capabilities to contribute to the resolution of national and international problems with their unique qualities. In their own endeavors, they had achieved the right to vote, and many of them had a strong political background, were politically skilled, and appreciated the significance of women's role in decision-making, especially, — on behalf of themselves and the society they belong to. It is also worth noting that they were also successful in improving the social conditions of women by having an initial voice for themselves. As a whole, the movement had a clear understanding of the need for social change and a coherent theoretical basis for its demands. Thus, the foundations of feminist theory were laid.

1.2. Feminist Theory

First of all, feminist theory has been a progressive shift toward a more comprehensive phenomenon. Fundamentally, the feminist theory asserts that women of different economic scales, ethnic origins, races, and countries have been systemically marginalized as a result of traditionalism and patriarchy. The diversity of women around the world is reflected in the breadth of ideas found in feminist thought. By proposing the replacement of the dominant patriarchal order with one that prioritizes equality, justice, and fairness, feminism challenges conventional thought and offers fresh perspectives on problems impacting humanity (Tong 5485). Feminist theory, which has its roots in dedication to gender equality and the overthrow of patriarchal structures, has developed over time by persistently questioning accepted wisdom and calling for the inclusion of underrepresented perspectives. The second wave of the feminist movement arose in the middle of the 20th century. It profoundly addressed issues related to women's responsibilities in marriage and the family, which this chapter will focus on in particular. This chapter aims to provide an overview of the diverse field of feminist theory, concentrating on the historical development referred to as feminist waves and insight into the transformative impact of feminist theory on societal perceptions and structures by tracing its historical roots, outlining key concepts, and it also highlights its relevance in understanding and addressing issues of gender, power, and marriage in the 20th-century society. The spread of feminism to a wider audience, with many different ways of thinking and approaches to feminism from the 1990s to the 2000s, heralded the third wave. Although second-wave feminism was more inclusive and expanded to a wider spectrum than the first-

wave and included women from different continents and ethnic backgrounds, it was actually inadequate in a sense because second-wave feminism "sought to address the oppression of (white) women in a patriarchal society; it called for the equal treatment of women and men often imbibing a gender separatist ethos" (Martin 41). African-American author Alice Walker, who has been regarded as one of the most influential authors of the third wave of feminism, believes that as feminism is perceived as a white and middle-class ideology, many women whose identities are not white and middle-class are not included in the definition of the term (404). Her main idea was to give voice to the issues that were not talked about enough in the second wave of feminism. In this sense, it is possible to say that "the third wave foregrounds personal narratives that illustrate an intersectional and multiperspectival version of feminism" (Snyder 175). To summarize, the feminist movement took on a more comprehensive and inclusive form with the third wave of feminism that emerged following the second wave.

The belief in the equal status of men and women in society, the economy, and politics is known as feminism. In order to understand feminist theory better and more clearly, it is useful to start by understanding British society and the place of women in society before the twentieth century. Feminism, which has its roots in the West, has expanded around the world and is embodied by several groups that strive to further the rights and interests of women. Traditionally, men were supposed to engage in public affairs, while women were expected to stay at home. They were much more often seen as breeding machines. As stated before, women were not allowed to study, possess property, or engage in public life throughout medieval Europe. It was absolutely a male-based society. Feminist theory is associated with empowering women against objectification, discrimination, and unfair gender roles that hinder them from leading independent lives. In the nineteenth century, there was discussion over women's subjugation. John Stuart Mill, a prominent proponent of individual liberty and human rights in that era, addressed the matter in his book titled *The Subjection of Women*. It seemed to him that women were legally subservient to men in society, and he thought this was wrong and inappropriate. According to Mill, there should be equality between the sexes in this situation, with neither having the benefit or dominance over one another. Mill describes the oppression of women in the following statement:

> The masters of women wanted more than simple obedience, and they turned the whole force of education to effect their purpose. All women are brought up

> from the very earliest years in the belief that their ideal of character is the very opposite to that of men; not self-will, and government by self-control, but submission, and yielding to the control of others (Mill 45).

It can be seen how deeply the male-dominated system has become embedded in society and to what extent it has been adopted by the women who are part of the society, and that the masses who do this draw a framework in which the male gender portrays themselves as dominant. Women have been forced to adopt stereotyped and suppressed values that are beyond their own free management or control, even while raising themselves, because of the patriarchic system that has been established in which men manage even the phenomenon of education, which is the foundation for being able to exist in social life outside the home. Women would be entirely in conflict with this male-dominated society that males had established if the education they got would amalgamate them with their own identities. So, this is precisely why the system meets men's interests in raising women within specific rules that serve men, without women's autonomy and keeping them unaware of being individuals. In this sense, it can be said that John Stuart Mill declares the aim of the phrase "the whole force of education", which starts even at an early age for women, will raise women under the circumstances of the system. They will later integrate into society by integrating with established gender roles, and thus transform into broader social structures, ensuring the continuity of norms that are difficult to break in society. As a result, gender norms are reinforced, which makes it difficult for women to assert themselves in a society that restricts their agency. Ultimately, it perpetuates a world where men hold all the power and influence. Sean Purchase explains this situation as follows:

> Men dominated every available public or social sphere. They were prominent in all areas associated with masculine areas of power and ambition: politics, government, the law, economics, industry, commerce, engineering, education, sport and the armed services (Purchase 59).

Because they had authority in numerous domains, men in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries felt greater authority than women. In the early nineteenth century, women's involvement in public life was restricted, and men preferred that women stay at home to raise their families. In order to be financially secure, women had to marry decent men. Women were highly appreciated in the early nineteenth century when it came to schooling. Women were thought to be better educated. However, this education was not the same as the education males received. Ladies were taught to sing and dance. Despite gaining invaluable knowledge and abilities, they were unable

to maintain their own finances. In short, when women married, all of their legal rights passed to their husbands, which resulted in a significant change in their situation. Marriage offered women many advantages, such as a sense of security and financial stability, even in spite of this loss of liberty. But legally speaking, wives were considered their husbands' property. Therefore, the understanding of education that is deemed appropriate for women and has been accepted in this way is an understanding that draws the necessary framework for marriage. Jane Austen, one of the important female writers of the nineteenth century, criticized this situation as follows in her novel *Pride and Prejudice*:

> A woman must have a thorough knowledge of music, singing, drawing, dancing, and the modern languages….; and besides all this, she must possess a certain something in her air and manner of walking, the tone of her voice, her address and expression (Austen 8).

In other words, women's education should not only be limited to activities such as singing, dancing, and drawing, but they should also be able to find themselves, have a say in other areas where they can express themselves, just like men, and take part in various segments of society. The boundaries in marriage should not be limited to these stages. Based on this, it can be said that feminist theory is based on this idea.

When it comes to the twentieth century, Virginia Woolf is a well-known modernist writer, essayist, critic, and feminist theorist of the 20th century. Woolf attempts to analyze, from a modernist viewpoint, the role that men and women have played in history and literature. In defending the ephemeral, flexible viewpoint and the attention to emotive and intimate details in her writings, Woolf demonstrates a unique awareness of feminist concerns related to the lives and works of well-known female writers. Virginia Woolf's essays are beyond her time and history because of her focus on women's status throughout history and how this has impeded women from realizing their dreams due to a persistent lack of intellectual and material chances in a world dominated by men. Virginia Woolf's most influential works are regarded as *A Room of One's Own* and *Three Guineas.* In her essay, *A Room of One's Own*, she asserts that "All I could do was to offer you an opinion upon one minor point— a woman must have money and a room of her own…" (Woolf 4). Famously, Woolf claims that a woman needs "a room of her own" and financial freedom in order to create fiction. This allegorically described "room" stands for both the actual space as well as the independence and self-reliance women need to follow their educational

pursuits unhindered by outside forces. Virginia Woolf, who argued that women could become more individualistic apart from singing and drawing so that they would not be deprived of intellectual knowledge and productivity, and that they should receive an education based on the power and freedom of self-expression, said the following about this situation:

> But for women, I thought, looking at the empty shelves, these difficulties were infinitely more formidable. In the first place, to have a room of her own, let alone a quiet room or a sound-proof room, was out of the question, unless her parents were exceptionally rich or very noble, even up to the beginning of the nineteenth century (A Room of One's Own 44).

Woolf talks about the structural obstacles that prevent women from gaining access to opportunities and environments that foster intellectual and creative development. It draws attention to the fact that historically, women frequently lacked the fundamental autonomy to create a quiet space for themselves which is a necessity for a concentrated workforce and introspection. These restrictions make it more difficult for women to write, acquire an education, or express themselves freely. Accordingly, Woolf highlights the more general consequences of these restrictions, implying that the lack of personal space not only limited women's potential but also upheld conventional roles that made them reliant on their husbands, fathers, or families. It captures the pervasiveness of gender-based discrimination, which posed significant barriers to women's advancement and independence. In her *Three Guineas*, when Woolf responds to the person she is addressing about the possibility of financing an association that encourages women to enter the profession, she also reveals that the exploitation of women's domestic labour has become systematic, even if they are educated, as follows:

> For if your wife were paid for her work, the work of bearing and bringing up children, a real wage, a money wage, so that it became an attractive profession instead of being as it is now an unpaid profession, an unpensioned profession, and therefore a precarious and dishonoured profession, your own slavery would be lightened (Woolf 102).

Virginia Woolf addresses the social and economic injustices that women experience, especially in relation to marriage and parenthood. Her argument is that women perform hard, unappreciated, and underappreciated labour at home when caring for the family, bearing, and raising children. Society establishes a system where these roles are undervalued, inadequate, and devoid of official recognition or security by failing to compensate women for this necessary labour. If this were to alter, it would

also benefit society more broadly by easing the "slavery" that women experience when they are monetarily dependent on their husbands. Ultimately, the situation is inextricably linked to gender dynamics and the corresponding cultural standards; as Virginia Woolf states: "You are feeling in your own persons what your mothers felt when they were shut out, when they were shut up, because they were women" (Three Guineas 94). Therefore, Woolf's idea of compensating women for household chores is a way to make the cyclical and constantly ignored domestic labour experienced by women more visible. This is especially true for women from low socioeconomic backgrounds who depend on traditional roles for survival. Greater gender equality will be promoted by recognizing and rewarding women for their household work. As a feminist theorist, Woolf challenges this traditional marriage model and argues that it supports the subordination of women by elevating men's labour in the public sphere above women's work at home. The idea that women contribute less to marriage is, as feminist theorists point out, supported by underpayment of domestic labour, leading to financial instability and loss of autonomy. "An odd confession from one of the class whose only profession for so many centuries had been marriage; but significant. Others wanted to travel..." (Three Guineas 125). For centuries, women were directed to marriage, and, as mentioned before, leaving one home and going to another home under the institution of marriage was seen as an endeavour or achievement for women, Woolf states, as a "profession". The following example is from "Professions for Women" by Virginia Woolf, in which she addresses how social norms and barriers prevent women from establishing careers in the workforce, and followingly, Woolf states that:

> I now record the one act for which I take some credit to myself, though the credit rightly belongs to some excellent ancestors of mine who left me a certain sum of money—shall we say five hundred pounds a year?—so that it was not necessary for me to depend solely on charm for my living. I turned upon her and caught her by the throat. I did my best to kill her (Woolf 237).

In her argument, Woolf emphasizes that women have been denied the financial means to dedicate themselves to employment, education, and sophisticated endeavors, historically and frequently. The metaphors that she uses, "caught her by the throat" and "did my best to kill her" convey the urgency of rejecting and subverting the patriarchal norm that women should be submissive, obedient, and selfless. Woolf wants to draw attention to the intensity and difficulty of breaking free from deeply rooted cultural patterns. "Woolf has fun recalling how she did kill the Angel in the

House, who represents the stereotype of the domestic and charming woman without a mind of her own" (Sánchez Cuervo 277). It can be said that the symbolic "killing" in this instance is Woolf's appeal to women to claim their autonomy, inventiveness, and career goals. The challenge many women have defining their identities and careers in a culture that frequently confines them to traditional roles is encapsulated in it. Woolf emphasizes the difficulty and obstacles women have in questioning these conventions through her use of violent imagery. She also highlights the fortitude and resolve required for women to establish their own selves and destinies. To add more, Woolf's concerns about breaking restrictive gender standards and expectations are figuratively explored in the quotation. In this sense, Woolf addresses the social expectations that women should be selfless, compassionate, and obedient. These expectations are symbolized by the "Angel in the House", a metaphor for the traditional roles that women are supposed to play. In her opening statement, Woolf expresses gratitude for her financial independence, which freed her from the need for conventional roles like marriage or charm to support her writing career. Woolf's financial independence allowed her to challenge and defy the societal conventions that confined women. In this context, "Killing the Angel in the House" is a call to the women to struggle that women must give for their own rights and freedoms. Woolf suggests that "influence of the kind that can be exerted by the daughters of educated men is very low in power, very slow in action, and very painful in use" (Three Guineas 170). One way to interpret the allegoric "killing" of the angel in the house is as a challenge to the male-dominated structures of authority upholding conventional gender norms. "In an effort to let us know what little power women possessed, the author introduces a parison" (Sánchez Cuervo 278). In other words, only if women "individually" have financial power, can they break this pressure placed on them without depending on anyone, not even their father. Woolf's act of protest, which can be referred to as a core theme in feminist theory, symbolizes a rejection of the social pressures that are intended to keep women in subservient roles. Feminist theory frequently questions these systems and looks for ways to undermine gender issues so that women have more equal access to opportunities to flourish.

Based on this, it can be concluded that feminist theory aims to find solutions to these patriarchal problems, and as explained before, the most basic way to provide solutions to these social problems is to provide equal educational and professional

opportunities for women. Women's autonomy is at the heart of feminist theory, and addressing the imbalances in power between men and women is one of the goals as well. Feminist theory is based on the assumption that women should be able to control their lives, careers, and bodies and exercise their agency. A feminist recurring main solution is the importance of the economic empowerment of women. Like Woolf's quotes, she emphasizes the importance of awareness so that women can subsidize themselves without resorting to charm or traditional methods to get what they want, which means just being a woman of herself, that is to say, without being the angel in the house.

1.2.1. The First Wave Feminism

The 1960s and 1970s saw the rise of the women's rights movement, a broad social movement with a strong American foundation that aimed to provide women more personal autonomy as well as equal rights and opportunities. The women's suffrage movement was crucial to the first wave of feminism that emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which concentrated on women's legal rights, particularly the ability to vote (Burkett). So, emerging in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the first wave of feminism in England was a crucial movement aimed at advancing women's rights, with a particular focus on legal equality, women's suffrage, and wider societal reforms. The women's movement referred to common agreements as the "first wave" of British feminism. Richard Evans says that "the term 'feminism' is defined in its usual meaning as 'the doctrine of equal rights for women, based on the theory of the equality of the sexes'" (Evans 39). It can also be said that "this definition was widely shared by scholars writing in the 1960s and 1970s, both immediately before and after the grass-roots explosion that was the Women's Liberation Movement, that 'feminism/feminist' and 'the women's movement' were interchangeable terms" (Calvini-Lefebvre 3). So, these terms mean and serve the purpose of securing equality with men, and most importantly, the right to vote had been the main focus of the women's movement.

"The First Wave of Feminism" was coined in March 1968 by Martha Weinman Lear in her article in The New York Times Magazine titled "The Second Feminist Wave: What Do These Women Want?". It is categorized as focusing on the fight for women's political power (Lear 2). Represented by liberal feminism, it primarily takes

place in the USA and the UK between the 1820s and the 1940s, since women were regarded as second-class citizens in societies dominated by men. Its main objectives are to secure voting rights and equal rights for women (Mohajan 9). This first wave of mobilization led to the mobilization of women around the idea of a "New Woman", which is a new definition of femininity that challenged the borderlines established by a society dominated by men as a norm of femininity. In its period of time the first wave, which was a component of a broader worldwide feminist movement, was distinguished by noteworthy individuals, noteworthy activism, and significant turning points. As Malinowska states, "the first wave represents the pioneering stage of feminist activism that spread in Europe and North America, Egypt, Iran, and India between the early 1800s and the first decades of the 20th century. Despite its international range, the first wave was most active in the United States and Western Europe as inspired by proto-feminist political writing of authors" (2). Among the most notable works in the first steps of feminist thought with original names, are *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*: *With Strictures on Political And Moral Subjects,* published in 1792 by Mary Wollstonecraft, and *The Subjection of Women,* published in 1869 by John Stuart Mill.

Wollstonecraft explains in her *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* that in this struggle for women's equal rights and law, the aim of women is not to have superior rights to men, but rather to have equal rights;

> To carry the remark still further, if fear in girls, instead of being cherished, perhaps, created, were treated in the same manner as cowardice in boys, we should quickly see women with more dignified aspects. It is true, they could not then with equal propriety be termed the sweet flowers that smile in the walk of man; but they would be more respectable members of society, and discharge the important duties of life by the light of their own reason. 'Educate women like men,' says Rousseau, 'and the more they resemble our sex the less power will they have over us.' This is the very point I aim at. I do not wish them to have power over men; but over themselves (69).

What is meant here is that Wollstonecraft emphasizes that what is required for women to have equal rights is that women should not be hindered or prevented from making decisions in their own lives with their own minds, ideas, and bodies. If it is needed to consider more her point of view, Wollstonecraft draws attention to the disparities in gender-based schooling by stating that girls' fear should be handled the same way as males' cowardice. The notion that girls are delicate or fragile is reinforced by the expectation that they keep within the boundaries of safety and propriety,

whereas guys are urged to face and overcome their concerns. This behaviour not only impedes their growth but also upholds a society that undervalues the potential of women. Instead of encouraging women to overcome every difficulty they face, they are taught to remain trapped in this problem and "fear". This situation pushes them to be the second class and oppressed gender of society. To add more, women's duties as "sweet flowers" who "smile in the walk of man" are discussed by Wollstonecraft, who criticizes the prevalent perception of women as ornaments and men's servants. In opposition to this ideal, she argues that fearless women would be more respectable and able to fulfil their obligations in a reasoned manner. Her more general appeal for equality via independence and education is consistent with this goal. Wollstonecraft expresses that in this struggle of women for their own individuality, they do not have a bother about presenting themselves as "sweet" or "flower" to men. With such words, men attribute less importance or less seriousness to these protests and struggles of women. In other words, what Wollstonecraft means is that women are not sweets or flowers; they are simply women, just like men are men. They are just women who stand for their natural rights as independent individual beings. When she responds to Rousseau's claim about women's education, she states that her wish is not for women to gain control over men, but to gain control over themselves. Instead of attempting to change the power dynamics between the sexes, Wollstonecraft wants to create an equitable environment where women have the freedom to choose for themselves what to do and how to live. As John Stuart Mill also states by referring to women, "they only demanded some limitation to the power of tyrannizing over them" (10). What women need in society is not to rule over men, but to ensure that men do not hinder their individuality in any aspect of society. Another important writer mentioned before, John Stuart Mill, who also fully supports Wollstonecraft's words and expressions, said in his book, *The Subjection of Women;*

> The principle that regulates the existing social relations between the two sexes—the legal subordination of one sex to the other—is wrong itself, and is now one of the chief obstacles to human improvement; and it ought to be replaced by a principle of perfect equality that doesn't allow any power or privilege on one side or disability on the other (Mill 3).

John Stuart Mill's work is a potent indictment of the social and legal structures that support inequality between men and women. Mill attacks the basis of centuries-old systems of patriarchy in society when he asserts that the "principle that regulates the existing social relations between the two sexes—the legal subordination of one sex

to the other—is wrong itself". In a quote from Mill's book, he describes the legal subordination of women to men as being intrinsically unjust and stresses the point that such arrangements are not merely a flaw in the social fabric, but are a fundamental transgression of human rights. In particular, he concerns himself with the legal frameworks that codify and enforce gender-based discrimination, while granting men privileges and power at the same time as imposing disadvantages on women, thus rendering women powerless in this regard. His interpretation is consistent with the fundamental ideas of feminist theory, which aims to eliminate oppressive institutions and install just structures in their stead. Additionally, Mill draws attention to the wider ramifications of gender inequality, arguing that women's subjugation not only affects women personally but also impedes the advancement of humanity as a whole. The fact that Mill uses the phrase "human improvement" suggests that he believes gender equality is essential to the advancement of society. He makes the implication that when half of the population is denied opportunities to reach their full potential, society as a whole loses because women's contributions, creativity, and abilities are lost. A concept of "perfect equality" that does away with advantages, power disparities, and gender-based limitations is Mill's answer to the issue. In his ideal world of complete equality, gender would not dictate a person's roles, rights, or social positions.

To summarize, first-wave feminism takes a critical view of women's place in society by considering fundamental women's rights. Likewise, Ania Malinowska emphasizes that the first wave is associated with social campaigns that conveyed discontent with women's restricted access to employment, education, property, procreation, marriage, and social agency (2). This means that the core of the first feminist wave emphasizes that women's discontent with their restricted positions and possibilities in society served as the movement's driving force. It illustrates the manner in which early feminists planned protests and social movements to challenge and alter the limiting standards that applied to women's work, education, ownership of property, marriage, childbearing, and social agency. According to Rory C. Dicker, it is an important era of history that made a significant social change and created an enlarged floor for equality for women in every field, such as the right to citizenship and vote, the right to education, the right to own property of the father, etc. It aims at social reformation from the patriarchy and liberation from the oppression of racial bias (67). That is to say, the late 19th and early 20th centuries saw the rise of the first wave of

feminism, which was a turning point in history that brought about substantial societal changes and laid the groundwork for gender equality more broadly. During this time, women were granted the ability to own property, increase access to education, and become citizens. It attempted to free women from repressive customs and constituted a challenge to deeply ingrained patriarchal norms. Following the postwar disarray and the liquefaction of societal roles to concentrate on women's domestic and professional environments, the second wave began as the first wave came to an end with the recognition of women's voting rights (Malinowska 3). Finally, it can be concluded that the widespread actions had a vital role in commencing the demolition of deeply ingrained patriarchal systems and promoting gender equality, so laying the groundwork for subsequent feminist movements that would expand upon these initial endeavours. The first wave established the foundation for continuing movements for justice and equality by encouraging social change and opposing the overwhelming influence of patriarchal traditions.

1.2.2. The Second Wave Feminism

The 1960s marked the emergence of a fresh period of movement, as the Women's Liberation Movement, originating in America, received strength in the UK. Women, driven by an aim for equality and justice, sought significant reforms in both law and its standards (Ottley et al. 286). Pioneering laws that fundamentally altered the terrain of women's rights were in the vanguard of this movement. The second wave, active from the early 1960s until the late 1980s, questioned women's sexuality and the elements of gender norms (Malinowska 3). So, women were directly impacted in the 1960s by developments in the West. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, although intended to provide equality in employment, schools, or public places on issues such as religion, race, color, and origin, did not provide coverage for discrimination against women based on their gender; this provision was not even mentioned (United States Congress). Numerous advocacy organizations and women appealed to the government to urge that the statute be expanded to include penalties for discrimination against women. One of the first important victories came into effect with the Abortion Law of 1967. With this law, ending unwanted pregnancies or those that threatened a woman's health would no longer be considered a crime (Ottley et al. 287-288). This was a significant step in recognizing women's independence over their bodies and reproductive rights. Malinowska also demonstrates that the second wave was

influenced by poststructuralism, deconstruction, and psychoanalysis. As such, it showed interest in the relationship between the structuring of womanhood (in social practice and media representation) and women's lived experiences (4). Therefore, feminism, on which the foundation was laid, spread to wider masses with the second-wave feminist movement and addressed problems facing women of different skin colours, ethnicities, and races in society. To offer additional clarification, feminism expanded to include women from a wider range of racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds throughout its latter phase. In the larger framework of social discrimination and oppression, the second-wave feminist movement raised awareness of the particular hardships and injustices faced by women of many skin tones, ethnicities, and races by elevating their voices. "The first wave of feminism is led by only white middle-class women of the West, but the second wave is propelled by both white and non-white women of the West as well as in developing countries" (Alhumaid 33). A more inclusive and integrative strategy for battling discrimination based on gender and promoting social change is reflected in the movement's growth, which was manifested in the expansion of feminist activity. Accordingly, Hasan explains that women got to know one another via varying political and social backgrounds, lives, and worldviews. Women were more likely to create policies that particularly forbade and suppressed sexuality and all matters about women. The women's composition, which included groups with varying perspectives, emphasized the "awareness-raising" scenario. Through this, women with varying perspectives may better understand who they are, and the effects that socially constructed gender norms have on people (19). Leidholdt and Raymond explain the women's issues that second-wave feminism addressed in society more clearly as it covers a wide range of topics, including equal access to political and economic positions, paid maternity leave, equal education, equal employment opportunities, paid maternity leave, birth control, and abortion rights, the construction of sufficient childcare facilities, and the safety of women and children. In addition, it addresses issues of sexism, formal legal disparities, sexual harassment and rape, marital rape, domestic violence, prostitution, pornography, and the commodification of women's bodies for sexual purposes. In addition, it seeks to amend divorce and custody rules and establish women's shelters and clinics for rape crises. Several initiatives are needed to eradicate gender disparity in society (127).

Simone de Beauvoir was a philosopher, writer, feminist, public intellectual, and activist who was a major figure. The ideas, discussions, and concepts that are currently associated with second-wave of feminism may be found in Simone de Beauvoir's book titled *The Second Sex: Woman as Other,* written in 1949. It might be argued that the basis of academic studies on feminism in the contemporary sense is found in Beauvoir's problematization of women and other related topics. In this sense, Beauvoir distinguished in her book between biological sex and gender and discussed the historical marginalization and relegation of women to subservient roles (Bergoffen and Burke). Toril Moi states that "Beauvoir's main thesis in this epochal work is simple: throughout history, women have been reduced to objects for men: 'woman' has been constructed as man's other, denied the right to her own subjectivity and to responsibility for her own actions. Or, in more existentialist terms: patriarchal ideology presents woman as immanence, man as transcendence" (Moi 90). Beauvoir has addressed the gender issues discussed by second-wave feminism in a remarkably comprehensive manner and from many aspects. As discussed before, although the substructures of first-wave feminism have been laid, women's and gender problems have not been fully resolved. Regarding this, at the beginning of her book, *The Second Sex,* Simone de Beauvoir initiates her discussion as follows:

> For a long time, I have hesitated to write a book on woman. The subject is irritating, especially to women; and it is not new. Enough ink has been spilled in quarrelling over feminism, and perhaps we should say no more about it. It is still talked about, however, for the voluminous nonsense uttered during the last century seems to have done little to illuminate the problem. After all, is there a problem? And if so, what is it? Are there women, really? Most assuredly the theory of the eternal feminine still has its adherents who will whisper in your ear - other erudite persons - sometimes the very same - say with a sigh: 'Woman is losing her way, woman is lost.' One wonders if women still exist, if they will always exist, whether or not it is desirable that they should, what place they occupy in this world, and what their place should be (Beauvoir 13).

Based on this, Beauvoir criticizes the fact that long-standing gender problems are still not solved. She finds the male-dominant system's comments about women insolent, "and yet we are told that femininity is in danger; we are exhorted to be women, remain women, become women" (Beauvoir 20). Labels and rules that men prescribe for women regarding how to embody and fulfil the concept of womanhood — 'whisper in your ear - other erudite persons - sometimes the very same - say with a sigh' — remain a pressing concern. So, she poses a fundamental question, 'What is a woman?'(Beauvoir 20). Pointing out the necessity of determining what 'woman' is in

an environment where the issue of femininity is discussed, Beauvoir asks the following famous question: “But first of all, what is a woman?” and then she adds, “woman is the uterus”, an answer that exemplifies how patriarchal thought reduces women to their biology (Beauvoir 25). In this context, it is necessary to return to the previous question. If the human female with a uterus constitutes half of the human species in number, can it be said that women are extinct? Beauvoir determines that not every human female is also a woman; she thus distinguishes the concepts of ‘biological sex’ and ‘gender’ on which many current theories, especially those produced during the second wave of feminism, are built. As Judith Butler states on this subject, “The distinction between biological sex and gender has been extremely important for the feminist struggle, which has long sought to refute the claim that anatomy is destiny” (35). Followingly, it is possible to say that the characteristics and the roles assigned to gender by society, which were previously defined as invariable and unchangeable, can no longer be accepted as such, and therefore, she opposes stereotyped structured norms. This structured approach is used to reinforce the ‘fate’ of women. Because this structure confines women to their biology and especially to the concept of ‘natural’ femininity produced by patriarchy. Alcoff emphasizes that “what Simone de Beauvoir said could not be missed, that everywhere we look there are two sexes, one of them subordinated to the other, was not seen” (282). Therefore, Simone de Beauvoir pointed out the pervasive existence of gender inequality, with one sex consistently subordinated to the other, a reality often overlooked by society. She highlighted the lack of consideration for the agency of oppressed individuals and the failure to address their voices and experiences. This oversight can be attributed to the predominant focus of phenomenology on shared human experiences, rather than on the unique perspectives of marginalized individuals. Phenomenology, particularly existential phenomenology, seeks to discern the underlying structures of human experience while balancing the universal and the particular, continuously evolving as it acknowledges the diversity of human existence (Alcoff 283). In consideration of Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* and her opinions, Alcoff draws attention to one important outcome of acknowledging the lived experience as embodied, and it reveals the inevitable impact of our physical presence on the viewpoints through which we interact with the outside world. It highlights the fact that our individual body placement not only establishes our physical location but also influences our perception of and interactions with our environment. This realization emphasizes the complex relationship that exists between

our subjective experiences and our physical existence, highlighting the significance of taking embodiment into account while trying to comprehend how people perceive and interact with the environment. To add more, understanding the lived subject as embodied has the unintentional but permanent effect of revealing that the many viewpoints we use to interact with the environment are not only a result of our physical presence "rather than there but also and necessarily a matter of how we are concretely bodied and positioned" (Alcoff 283). In connection with these, Nancy Rosenstock interprets the repercussions of *The Second Sex* in her own experiences "I read Simone de Beauvoir's book, *The Second Sex*, I now realize my problems are not individual, but they're because I'm a woman in a sexist society. I have to fight that society and its debasement of women" (28).

The issues of gender inequality mentioned above have been persisting within the institution of marriage and the home which means in the domestic life, as well as among the wider public or society. Within the institution of family, in other words, the institution of marriage, which constitutes society and is a smaller building block of society, women are oppressed and exposed to gender inequality because they are women, which makes them the secondary sex and the "other" - by men. Currently, before marriage, women's life goals are, metaphorically, slightly different from men's; goals defined for women but not decided by women. The binding role of marriage on women is not the same as on men.

On the one hand, Simone de Beauvoir takes this situation in hand, when a woman becomes a mother, she seems to have the same social standing as an adult male in the family's bosom. Later, the young man, who is yearning and loving, encounters the woman's resistance, her independence, which he desires and loves; in marriage, he respects the woman as a mother and wife, and in the tangible moments of couples' life, she is there in front of him as a free being (Beauvoir 24). Yet, Beauvoir emphasizes that this situation will not last long and that the husband will receive support from the male-dominated system and benefit from the current order in order to use it in a dispute. Accordingly, she states with the words:

> As, however, he observes some points of inferiority - the most important being unfitness for the professions - he attributes these to natural causes. When he is in a co-operative and benevolent relation with woman, his theme is the principle of abstract equality, and he does not base his attitude upon such inequality as may exist. But when he is in conflict with her, the situation is

> reversed: his theme will be the existing inequality, and he will even take it as justification for denying abstract equality (Beauvoir 25).

In accordance with this statement of Beauvoir, it can be stated that in the beginning, many men claim, seemingly and sincerely, that women are in pace with men and that they have nothing to complain about, but at the same time, they will assert that women will never be on par with men and that their expectations are unjustified. “The most sympathetic of men never fully comprehend woman’s concrete situation. And there is no reason to put much trust in the men when they rush to the defence of privileges whose full extent they can hardly measure” (Beauvoir 25). So, in actuality, it can be challenging for men to recognize the tremendous significance of societal injustices that, while seemingly trivial on the surface, have profound moral and intellectual impacts on women that seem to originate from their very nature.

While it is true that men need women, it is the men’s group that enables each member to find ‘self-fulfilment’ in their roles as husband and father. Women, as slaves or vassals, are integrated into families headed by fathers and brothers and have always been given in marriage by some men to other men (Beauvoir 415). Building upon this, Beauvoir declares that:

> In primitive societies the paternal clan, the gens, disposed of woman almost like a thing: she was included in deals agreed upon by two groups. The situation is not much modified when marriage assumes a contractual form in the course of its evolution;’ when dowered or having her share in inheritance, woman would seem to have civil standing as a person, but dowry and inheritance still enslave her to her family (Beauvoir 416).

As a result, marriage is an institution that restricts and oppresses women in this context. Moreover, as indicated by the feminist theorist and suffragist Elizabeth Cady Stanton, men have a variety of options when it comes to how they live their lives, while it is not the same for women since they are in “an institution in which women have no personal autonomy” (70). Stanton acknowledges that women are encouraged and educated to believe that marriage is the only way they can shape their lives. Private marital relationships, which Stanton depicts as relationships of power, dominance, and control, are a reflection of this legal or governmental tyranny. When two people are married, they legally become one, the unit is defined by the male in a marriage and there is a complete surrender of a woman’s self to the marriage institution (Stanton 71). In addition to this, Dicker summarizes the situation of women in marriage as follows:

> If you were a single woman, you had more legal rights than a married one, but society looked down on unattached women, scorning them as "spinsters." After your marriage, you would relinquish your virginity, formerly your most prized possession, and your body would no longer belong to you. You would be expected to respond to your husband's sexual desires; you were thought to have no sexual appetites of your own. Because reliable birth control did not exist, you would be pregnant often: The average woman in 1800 had around seven children. As a married woman, you would be expected to submit to your husband's rules, obeying his commands (Dicker 37).

It can be seen that women are indirectly or directly deprived of their personal autonomy within the institution of marriage. This situation continues not only at the social level, where women must adapt the laws or their husbands' requirements as behavioural, but also through their bodies. The second wave of feminism concerns the preciousness of the female body and the domination over the female body as a situation in which only women can have a say. Taking this into account, it is seen that women's sexuality is also one of the main problems that is subjugated to men. The visibility of women's sexuality in marriage starts to pale under the circumstances of male domination and is served only for the husband over time.

To recapitulate, "In addition to giving women a chance to discuss their experiences with abortion, women's liberation allowed women to talk about the way sexual violence altered their lives" (Dicker 96). In that sense, women's emancipation, or the second wave of feminism, had great success and advantages. The actions of the second wave supply women a forum to freely talk about the experiences they had, especially with abortion and sexual assault. This suggests that the second wave of feminism promoted a culture of empowerment and solidarity among women and addressed structural inequities. All things considered, it emphasizes the revolutionary influence of feminist activity in elevating gender equality and providing a voice to the experiences of women.

CHAPTER 2: A WOMAN'S ONE SINGLE DAY: *MRS. DALLOWAY* BY VIRGINIA WOOLF

A pioneer modernist feminist writer and critic, Virginia Woolf, also known as Adeline Virginia Stephen before her marriage to Leonard Woolf, is celebrated for her novels, essays, and autobiographical writings that have influenced feminist theory. Woolf explores women's inner lives, their quest for identification beyond conventional roles, and their fights for independence with a feminist perspective woven throughout. Using her narrative techniques to explore the consciousness of her female characters and expose the complexity of their lives, Woolf criticizes the patriarchal society that restricts women's prospects for self-expression and economic autonomy. Her works not only subverted the gender expectations of her time but also established the foundation for later feminist theory and writing, cementing her status as an ageless figure in feminist thinking (Reid). A new generation of authors emerged in the first ten years of the twentieth century, reacting against the past that they believed the previous generation to be representative of. Indeed, the First and Second World Wars, which broke out in 1914 and 1939, respectively, fell inside this time frame. It is true that not only Woolf but also many authors of that era were impacted by these conflicts. Woolf was a member of the Post-World War I generation because she was born and raised in the early 1900s. Woolf is a remarkable author who, given her background and her traumatic youth in the early 20th century, may have illuminated many of the issues women faced and challenged with (Sarıkaş 145). Woolf's writings gained broad recognition and controversy for promoting feminism, a facet of her literature that had previously gone overlooked, and she became a focal point of the feminist critical movements of the 1970s (Marcus 142). One of the most significant female writers of all times, Woolf, is celebrated for her literary and theoretical contributions. Laura Marcus asserts that there is a symbiotic link between Woolf and feminism and that the focus of Woolf's theoretical and fictional works is women, women's lives, and their histories (144). The purpose of Woolf is to evoke feelings rather than to recreate and record reality in her novels. Woolf was considered one of the most skilled writers, having mastered the technique of the stream of consciousness, which is one of the most challenging types of narrative to write effectively. She blends poetry and prose so masterfully that her works are both captivating and difficult to read, giving the reader the sense of reading prose flowing as a poem. However, although Woolf's fascinating

and skillful “tunnelling process” technique, in other words the “stream of consciousness” technique, reflects the stream of consciousness of the characters and gives the reader the opportunity to see events from a deeper perspective and from the minds of the characters, there have been points of criticism of Woolf’s writing style. For instance, when Peter Walsh sees Clarissa while she is preparing for her party and cannot get her out of his mind after that, Peter reproaches himself, “No, no, no! He was not in love with her anymore!” (Mrs. Dalloway 66). The sentences written in the past tense in the novel are actually representations of the characters’ thoughts in the present tense, but since the tense does not change structurally in the sentence, it can lead the reader into a kind of tense confusion and an incomprehensibility of the connection between past and present tense. Accordingly, as Makiko Minow-Pinkney states in her *Virginia Woolf and the Problem of the Subject: Feminine Writing in the Major Novels,* “The tense system of these scenes from the past is inconsistent. Since the characters’ present is given, in traditional narrative style, in the past tense, their past should presumably be in the pluperfect, but this is not the case” (56). This means that it becomes very difficult to distinguish between past and present, which creates confusion in the perception of time. Furthermore, Minow-Pinkney also adds that “Subjects of sentences are continually shifting, and writing is made porous by the tunneling process.” (56). The plot that the reader follows while the characters are in the stream of consciousness is interrupted by the speaker’s intervention, and it is criticized that catching up with the flow again creates a situation that is ambiguous for the reader to follow and understand. To give an example from the novel, the narrative that progresses in Clarissa’s stream of consciousness is suddenly interrupted: “What a lark! What a plunge! For so it had always seemed to her when...” (Mrs. Dalloway 5). Similarly, Erich Auerbach, in his noted discussion of *To the Lighthouse* in *Mimesis*, criticizes Woolf’s changing subjects. He asks of the intervening speaker, while the characters are in the stream of consciousness as “Who is speaking in this paragraph? Who is looking at Mrs. Ramsay here?” (531). In other words, these criticisms of Woolf maintain that in her writings, the “represented speech” creates this unidentified narrative voice by suspending the subject’s position between the author and the character. A certain indirectness and an intimate internalized tone are simultaneously produced by this ambiguous “between-ness,” as Minow-Pinkney states that “we are so near to yet somehow distant from the process of the character’s mind” (70). Despite these criticisms, Woolf has used the stream of consciousness technique fluently and

impressively, and her novels made significant cultural and literary contributions. From another perspective on Woolf's stream of consciousness narrative technique, aside from being one of the best novelists, critics, and short story writers of the twentieth century, Woolf was also one of the first to use the stream of consciousness as a literary device in a novel. Shukla observes that Woolf's "peculiarities as a fiction writer have tended to obscure her central strength: she is arguably the major lyrical novelist in the English language. Her novels are highly experimental: a narrative, frequently uneventful and commonplace, is refracted and sometimes almost dissolved – in the characters' receptive consciousness" (Shukla 51). Shukla also indicates that in Woolf's works, the combination of intense lyricism and stylistic expressions creates an environment that is luring in both auditory and visual senses (51). Throughout her life and literary career, Virginia Woolf has witnessed two world wars; however, she only experienced the first two years of World War II. For this reason, she experienced the loss of many of her family members. Thus, this situation understandably led her to position herself against the current circumstances of social order and led her to have a new perspective on the period she was in. For that reason, Woolf, who rebelled against the established order, committed suicide in 1941 due to the extreme stress, pressure, and mental illness she was dealing with. Virginia Woolf publicly and fearlessly criticized the patriarchal system of England, as well as the broader norms and attitudes that reigned the country at that time, in a number of her writings. Virginia Woolf was greatly influenced by the patriarchal order that women were treated as second-class citizens in society, which in turn influenced her writing style as well as the characters in *Mrs. Dalloway* as well. Therefore, Woolf's female characters deal with class issues, feeling as though they are trapped between the longings, needs, and desires of their inner selves and the pressures of society. Consequently, they cannot comply with the social and inner world—both their inner world and the exact wishes and obligations of their marriages.

Woolf's novel, *Mrs. Dalloway,* which is an influential work of feminist fiction, was published in 1925 and provides a thoughtful reflection on social and cultural norms and the fundamental effects of war on society and individuals. In her criticism of the inflexible social structures and customs of early 20th-century British society, Woolf exposes the artificiality of social connections within London's high society and the feeling of women about the necessity of these connections to have a

place in society like Mrs. Dalloway, the main character of the book, who feels this necessity. In her *A Writer's Diary: Being Extracts from the Diary of Virginia Woolf*, Virginia Woolf's intriguing declaration of her motivations for penning *Mrs. Dalloway* states, "I want to criticize the social system and to show it at work, at its most intense" (Woolf 5). That is to say that the role of parties and social gatherings, which are frequently and carefully organized by Clarissa Dalloway, is also directly linked to Clarissa's marriage. Therefore, before examining the concept of marriage, it is necessary to touch upon the importance of the sociopolitical situation in twentieth-century England. In this context, the novel takes place in a significant time period, as it is known that *Mrs. Dalloway* is set in the post-war years, on a day in June 1923. As Alex Zwerdling states in his article named "*Mrs. Dalloway* and the Social System," during these periods, the Labour Party began to have a voice, and the ground was prepared for a period of rise for the working class. That is to say, the Conservative-Liberal collaboration in British politics came to an end in the early 1920s, so the officially recognized government opposition emerged as the Labour Party (Zwerdling 70). Alex Zwerdling also asserts how the governing class affected society in England in the years following World War I. In this context, *Mrs. Dalloway* contains noteworthy references when evaluated in terms of the socio-political context of the period in which it was written. For instance, the first Labour Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, succeeded the Conservative Prime Minister who attended Clarissa's party at the end of the novel in January 1924. Considering that the novel, *Mrs. Dalloway*, was published in 1925, these significant occurrences would undoubtedly have been known to readers of the period. Zwerdling also highlights that *Mrs. Dalloway* shows the dominant position of the governmental class, and he also indicates how society's most disgruntled citizens are viewed as having unstable emotional show-offs (71). Another example of the period in which the novel was written is how the upper class had an oppressive attitude towards the lower-class people, in other words, the others, "who cannot learn to restrain their intense emotions" (Zwerdling 72). These "others" are people who could not adapt to the post-war 20th-century society and were left outside of this society. In this context, Septimus Warren Smith, Peter Walsh, and Miss Kilman, the novel's characters, represent another group that criticizes the order that society has adapted to and stands against the oppressive system of the upper class. Based on this, it is possible to say that in *Mrs. Dalloway*, with the influence of the period in which it was written, Woolf criticizes how society has degenerated in the

socio-political and cultural context, and this system that serves the elite class and is devoted to ignoring the flaws when opposed. To give an example from the novel, when Septimus tries to explain himself, he stammers "I.. I.." without an ending to his sentence because of the interruption by Dr. Bradshaw's warning, "Try to think as little about yourself as possible" (Mrs. Dalloway 92). This shows how there were status groups that served the authority of the period and, at the same time, were fed by it. According to Zwerdling, it demonstrates that "this repression of feeling is very much the product of upper-class training is suggested in *Mrs. Dalloway*" (72). On the other hand, other people with whom Clarissa is emotionally involved also attend these parties, such as Sally and Peter, and with their involvement in the party, it becomes clear how social class status changes and impacts the lives of individuals. Following that, Zwerdling emphasizes that Woolf is engrossed in the matter of how individuals are influenced or shaped by their social surroundings, "how class, wealth, and sex help to determine their fate," and how this social rank changes their path (Zwerdling 69). For instance, Clarissa describes her former romantic crush, Sally Seton, as someone who is self-assured, lives life to the fullest, and whose talent, beauty, and personality have always impressed her. To Clarissa, Sally is a unique and original person who has escaped all ordinariness and has a manner of herself. "Sally's power was amazing, her gift, her personality. There was her way with flowers, for instance" (Mrs. Dalloway 35). Before the party, Clarissa thinks about her old times with Sally. As Clarissa envisions, "But all that evening she could not take her eyes off Sally. It was an extraordinary beauty of the kind she most admired, dark, large-eyed, with that quality which, since she hadn't got it herself, she always envied—a sort of abandonment, as if she could say anything, do anything;" (Mrs. Dalloway 34). In their conversations about marriage with Sally, this free-spirited woman whom Clarissa greatly admired and was drawn to, they spoke of marriage as if marriage were a disaster and something that could set them apart, "a presentiment of something that was bound to park them they spoke of marriage always as a catastrophe which led to this chivalry this protective feeling which was much more on her side than Sally's" (Mrs. Dalloway 36). As described, Sally Saton, who never compromised her individuality, lived on her own, independently and uniquely, and her marriage to a rich man and her adaptation to life accordingly surprised both Clarissa Dalloway and Peter Walsh, who was Sally's close friend in the past, and who had returned from India. Mrs. Dalloway expresses her astonishment as she says, "It was Sally Seton—the last person

in the world one would have expected to marry a rich man and live in a large house near Manchester, the wild, the daring, the romantic Sally!" (Mrs. Dalloway 74). Years later, this once free-spirited woman, Sally Saton, now a woman who is married, has children, is a mother, and is in the wife position of a husband at Clarissa's party. It becomes clear through conversations between the old friends, Peter, Sally, and Clarissa, that this situation is still surprisingly unbelievable for Clarissa and Peter as the marriage borderlines capture her free spirit and attach her to the roles she should have as a woman. "… instead of which she had married, quite unexpectedly, a bald man with a large buttonhole who owned, it was said, cotton mills at Manchester. And she had five boys!" (Mrs. Dalloway 183). It is expressed that Sally's marriage, which she had already known as if Sally's husband and her position as a wife that she is in now are somehow unsuitable for Sally. It is also known that before her marriage "Sally used to be in rags and tatters. She had pawned her grandmother's ring which Marie Antoinette had given her great-grandfather to come to Bourton" (Mrs. Dalloway 189). From this point of view, it is possible to say that Sally Saton moved into a high-income class with the help of her marriage. "They have myriads of servants, miles of conservatories," Clarissa wrote; something like that. Sally owned it with a shout of laughter" (Mrs. Dalloway 188). While Peter and Sally are waiting for Clarissa at the evening meeting where these sweet meetings take place, Peter Walsh shares the same thoughts about Sally just like Clarissa. "After all these years he really could not call her "Lady Rosseter" (Mrs. Dalloway 187). As she is not Sally Saton anymore, she is Sally Rosseter. "I have five sons!" she told him" (Mrs. Dalloway 187). Sally brags about having children at every opportunity. The previously mentioned darest and autonomous Sally Saton has put aside her characteristics and adapted to the upper-class conditions she is in now. She shaped her entire life accordingly. "Lord, Lord, what a change had come over her! The softness of motherhood; its egotism too" (Mrs. Dalloway 188).

In connection with this situation, it is quite possible to say that the marriage institution in the work of *Mrs. Dalloway,* which is one of the subjects of this thesis, was evaluated as a solution for women to take their place in the aristocratic world and the upper classes of society as the best and most appropriate way to apply. This situation is the same for the main character of the novel, *Mrs. Dalloway*, who constantly questions her past and the decisions she made in marriage. The novel *Mrs.*

Dalloway examines society's expectations of women as mothers, wives, and spouses who fulfil their marital obligations rather than being independent individuals. It also examines their pursuit of individual identity and autonomy. For that reason, Mrs. Dalloway often finds herself alone in her inner world and questions her own life in the present and her ongoing marriage. The conflict that women experience within themselves will be discussed further in this thesis by directly referencing the work.

Building upon the previous example of Sally Saton, on the other hand, another example of the issue of class perpetuation and its power on individuals, Peter Walsh does not follow the norms of marriage and social class issues, so it is possible to say that he does not change much from the beginning to the end. Peter Walsh is considered to be unsuccessful, as someone who has just returned from India and is incapable of giving his life direction. The conversation with Richard Dalloway and Hugh Whitbread, whom Lady Bruton invited to talk about a project she had in mind, proceeds as follows;

> "Yes; Peter Walsh has come back," said Lady Bruton. it was vaguely flattering to them all. He had come back, battered, unsuccessful, to their secure shores. But to help him, they reflected, was impossible; there was some flaw in his character. Hugh Whitbread said one might of course mention his name to So-and-so. He wrinkled lugubriously, consequentially, at the thought of the letters he would write to the heads of Government offices about "my old friend, Peter Walsh," and so on. But it wouldn't lead to anything--not to anything permanent, because of his character" (Mrs. Dalloway 109).

It is revealed that individuals who do not belong to an aristocratic social class are viewed as inferior to society. Peter Walsh's old friends are sure that he is not suitable to have a place in Government positions. Although he does not care what their surroundings think about him, he remains in people's minds as a mischievous man who follows women as he pleases. "In trouble with some woman," said Lady Bruton. They had all guessed that that was at the bottom of it (Mrs. Dalloway 109). From his perspective, his attitude toward other people is no different as he thinks;

> "How delightful to see you!" said Clarissa. She said it to everyone. How delightful to see you! She was at her worst-- effusive insincere. It was a great mistake to have come. He should have stayed at home and read his book, thought Peter Walsh; should have gone to a music hall; he should have stayed at home, for he knew no one (Mrs. Dalloway 168).

Thus, while he's standing at the corner in Clarissa's meeting, he just cannot connect with the other people, who are aristocrats, politicians, or business owners. These are people who appeal to the upper segments of society, just like his old friend,

Richard Dalloway, and he finds all these ornaments, meetings, and wealth are useless, nonsense, and away from sincerity at a point. “Lord, lord, the snobbery of the English! Thought Peter Walsh, standing in the corner. How they loved dressing up in gold lace and doing homage!” (Mrs. Dalloway 173). He thinks that these meetings, which only appeal to the upper segment of society and the dialogues between the guests and also their attire, are for the purpose of showing off to each other. Therefore, the sharp hierarchy between the upper class and the lower class in British society, their disconnection from real life, and how isolated they live from each other without emotions are criticized. For the people attending the party, the primary concern is to come together with people who appeal to the upper class of society like themselves and try to show some kind of existence there to be seen. When parties are thrown, people’s unrealistic attitudes, masked smiling faces, and politeness are actually criticized.

At first sight of the book *Mrs. Dalloway*, it is seen that Clarissa Dalloway is the main character in the opening narrative. The novel begins with Clarissa Dalloway’s perspective and focal point, which is followed with greater diligence than that of any other characters. We are acquainted with Dalloway’s wandering thoughts and emotions while she is in preparation for the evening event she hosts that night. With its stream-of-consciousness narrative, the novel provides deep insight into post-World War I London, focusing particularly on a day in Clarissa Dalloway’s life. Clarissa Dalloway steps out into the London morning, enchanted by its perfection, as she thinks, “what a morning—fresh as if issued to children on a beach” (Mrs. Dalloway 5). Woolf commences *Mrs. Dalloway* with a celebration of the commonplace. Clarissa is enthralled with the vibrancy and grandeur of life. Thus, the story highlights the depth and intensity of everyday events, especially those that are frequently disregarded. In the unceasing stream of daily life, Woolf finds depth beyond measure as the daily flow of life continues. Although Mrs. Dalloway is gregarious, social, and aware of herself, she also cares what other people around her think about her. She frequently worries about the absolute meaning of life, including the illusive nature of happiness, which regularly preoccupies Dalloway’s thoughts. Given the intricacies of life, she questions if it is possible to have the pith and marrow of happiness. She finds both joy and fear in her life, which she reveals in her attempts to maintain the right equilibrium—a kind of composure between her need for solitude

and her necessity for communication with other people. In the novel, Mrs. Dalloway attempts to assess herself to her past by constantly juxtaposing the past and present, pondering over her influential memories. Throughout much of the novel, she fears aging as "she felt very young; at the same time unspeakably aged" (Mrs. Dalloway 10). Also, she thinks about death and loneliness; she feels "of being out, out, far out to sea and alone; she always had the feeling that it was very, very dangerous to live even one day" (Mrs. Dalloway 10). She provides activities to encourage her to live life, which is kind of life-affirming, such as organizing parties at her house or simply buying flowers and even sewing her favourite green dress to wear for the party. Woolf has provided a superb depiction of the surface psychology of well-meaning and sensitive individuals who effortlessly float on top of a societal structure intended to provide comfort and security. Many of these people undoubtedly exhibit the same type of daydreaming that characterizes Clarissa (Beach 612). Mrs. Dalloway occupies her day by recalling the watershed summer when she got a marriage proposal from Richard and married him instead of her friend, Peter Walsh, who was in love with Clarissa that summer and still feels a deep attraction for her. Although she is happy with Richard, she has hesitation whether she made the right decision or not. She still remembers every detail about Peter, as she expresses that "it was his sayings one remembered; his eyes, his pocket-knife, his smile, his grumpiness..." (Mrs. Dalloway 5). Likewise, she frequently thinks about her once-in-love and once admired everything about her now dear friend Sally Seton. The complex situation that Mrs. Dalloway experienced reveals the patriarchal nature of England at the time. On the other hand, the relationships between Clarissa and Richard serve as examples of how marriage is presented as a complex institution that offers both stability and constraint, representing the pressure on women in marriage institutions, which is the main concern of this chapter. The role of social gatherings in class perpetuation highlights this situation clearly in the twentieth-century novel *Mrs. Dalloway. Mrs. Dalloway* tells the story of Clarissa Dalloway on one single day of her life. The main female character of the book, Clarissa Dalloway is seen as a woman who is well-educated and well-suited to her society. She is married to Richard, who is a member of Parliament. A decent spouse who comes from a respectable higher class and has the presence of wealth are considered extremely valuable qualities and the cornerstones of a successful marriage in English society. She adored Peter, even though she was married to Richard. She does not share a common sense of romantic marriage matters filled with love and passion with

Richard, which means Clarissa, as a woman, cannot help but feel imprisoned and alone in this existence because Richard does not supply this sensual attraction as a husband to Clarissa. It is necessary to draw attention to the point that, especially in nineteenth-century fiction, one main way to resolve the conflict or problems between love and quest in stories about women is to have an ending where one aspect of the conflict is suppressed or set aside, either through death (Duplessis 323). Therefore, it is possible to declare that by presenting alternative choices to marriage and death, twentieth-century women writers are attempting to bring a new perspective to the contradiction between love and quest that is the crux of their cultural legacy. It is discussed how marriage can be limiting for women. They also explore how gender dynamics shape these choices and how women can find their own solutions except death (Duplessis 324). Regarding that, in the twentieth century, marriage has evolved as one of the preferred options to solve social problems instead of death. Nevertheless, although marriage seemed like a solution, it did not serve to prevent the oppression of women in marriage in terms of women's autonomy and selfhood. Clarissa's feeling of loneliness in her marriage is seen for the first time in the book; while Clarissa Dalloway is making all the home and food preparations for the evening party, she learns that Lady Bruton has a luncheon meeting. "Millicent Bruton, whose lunch parties were said to be extraordinarily amusing, hadn't asked her" (Mrs. Dalloway 32). The fact that Lady Bruton only invited Richard to this lunch and that Richard accepted this luncheon invitation and informed Clarissa with only a note made Clarissa feel worthless and lonely. "For the shock of Lady Bruton asking Richard to lunch without her made the moment in which she had stood shiver, as a plant on the river-bed feels the shock of a passing oar and shivers: so she rocked: so she shivered" (Mrs. Dalloway 32). Clarissa feels very upset that she was not deemed worthy of being invited as Richard Dalloway's wife, Clarissa Dalloway. Simone de Beauvoir explains men's individuality in marriage in her *The Second Sex*: "A man is socially an independent and complete individual; he is regarded first of all as a producer whose existence is justified by the work he does for the group: we have seen why it is that the reproductive and domestic role to which woman is confined has not guaranteed her an equal dignity" (416). Beauvoir argues that in the simplest terms possible, marriage is the 'fate' that society has historically chosen for women. Whether a celibate woman is dissatisfied, rebellious, or simply apathetic about marriage, she must be described and explained in terms of that institution, according to society. For both men and women, marriage has

always been a profoundly distinct experience. The two sides, men and women are in a common necessity but the requirement of the two sexes for one another has never resulted in a reciprocal relationship between; women, as it is seen that women have never formed a caste that engages in exchanges and interactions with the male caste on an equal basis. Men are viewed as socially complete and autonomous individuals who are first and foremost producers whose existence is validated by the job they accomplish for the community. We have seen why women's equality has yet to be secured, 'dignity' by the reproductive and domestic roles to which they are bound. Mrs. Dalloway often questions this lunch invitation and why she was not invited because such invitations are very important to Clarissa. In fact, Clarissa remembers other memories of Richard, who made her feel lonely and disinterested in Clarissa, as she remembers (once on Leith Hill, she remembered), and "Richard, Richard! She cried, as a sleeper in the night stars and stretches a hand in the dark for help. Lunching with Lady Bruton, it came back to her. He has left me; I'm alone for ever, she thought, folding her hands upon her knee" (Mrs. Dalloway 49).

Although Clarissa is accustomed to a cozy, secure, effortless, and comfortable lifestyle as a politician's wife, Richard, who is seemingly a reasonable and successful man and spouse, is generally invisible in the marriage.

Nevertheless, although Clarissa finds herself thinking about Peter Walsh and regrets not being able to be with Peter, it can actually be said that Peter has a very tactless side that always criticizes Clarissa;

> But Peter--however beautiful the day might be, and the trees and the grass, and the little girl in pink--Peter never saw a thing of all that. He would put on his spectacles, if she told him to; he would look. It was a state of the world that interested him; Wagner, Pope's poetry, people's characters eternally, and the defects of her own soul. How he scolded her! How they argued! (Mrs. Dalloway 13)

She appears to be a perfect hostess, wife, and mother and is regarded as a woman with many qualities. Peter Walsh calls her "the perfect hostess he called her (she had cried over it in her bedroom), she had the makings of the perfect hostess, he said" (Mrs. Dalloway 9). Clarissa felt threatened by the idea that her life was nothing more than a collection of home ideals. The confirmation of being everything that society wanted her to be in her life, in her marriage, and as a mother while simultaneously the fear of not being able to be nothing more than these explains Clarissa's search for her own self, her desire to break away from all these imposed

standards at some point, and, therefore, her desire to discover what her own self wanted by finding and extracting it in the flow of life. Even though Peter remains superficial next to Clarissa, there are some things she finds in Peter. It was like going on a kind of adventure, sharing the real excitement of life like the excitement felt when setting out on a new journey, and she thought that there were some things that only Peter could understand. With a momentary impulsive urge that Clarissa felt inside her and this new and unknown desire that seemed more complementary and satisfying, she ponders, even when Clarissa learned that Peter is in love with "a married woman, the wife of a Major in the Indian Army" (Mrs. Dalloway 47). It occurred to Clarissa;

> Take me with you, Clarissa thought impulsively, as if he were starting directly upon some great voyage; and then, next moment, it was as if the five acts of a play that had been very exciting and moving were now over and she had lived a lifetime in them and had runaway, had live with Peter, and it was now over (Mrs. Dalloway 49).

This bond and excitement between Clarissa and Peter, which continues to exist even after so many years, is also reciprocated by Peter;

> ... as if he had set light to a grey pellet on a plate and there had risen up a lovely tree in the brisk sea-salted air of their intimacy (for in some ways no one understood him, felt with him, as Clarissa did)--they are exquisite intimacy (Mrs. Dalloway 47).

In all this flow of emotions, Clarissa questions herself - past and present - for not marrying Peter when he was in love with her and for choosing Richard. As mentioned before, Peter has not settled his life and is known as unsuccessful, but Clarissa finds some common points in her own being that she associates with Peter's lifestyle, which is unusual and attracts her. Peter reflects the essence of life that she was looking for, in which she could not find this other part of herself in her marriage with Richard, the passion for life, and the spirit of a romantic relationship that Richard did not provide her as a husband. She finds herself in a state of constant questioning about her retroactive decision, and Clarissa Dalloway thinks as it follows about Peter Walsh;

> Now of course, thought Clarissa, he's enchanting! Perfectly enchanting! Now I remember how impossible it was ever to make up my mind--and why did I make up my mind--not to marry him? She wondered, that awful summer? (Mrs. Dalloway 43).

Nonetheless, it is known that Clarissa grew up in a traditionalist, aristocratic family devoted to English traditions. "Since her people were courtiers once in the time of the Georges; she, too…" (Mrs. Dalloway 7). Clarissa's father Justin Parry, a classic

example of the old guard, represents the traditional values of the English nobility in the early 20th century. In this case, Clarissa's preference for Richard in her choice of marriage can be interpreted as "it is the men's group that allows each of its members to find some fulfillment as husband and father; woman, as slave or vassal is integrated within families dominated by fathers and brothers, and she has always been given in marriage by certain males to other males" (Beauvoir 416). Justin Parry's personality, as a father is characterized by dominance, conservatism, and strict loyalty to familial status and social hierarchy. His judgment of Clarissa, whose free-spirited nature contrasts with his conventional beliefs, exemplifies this severe manner. Justin Parry dwells and cares about social status and family reputation. Peter found these English traditions insincere and pretentious, being too attached "had never got on well with old Parry, that querulous, weak-kneed old man" (Mrs. Dalloway 44). Therefore, Clarissa was expected to follow the social rules and English traditions, such as marrying someone of her own equal and continuing her family's class heritage. Therefore, Clarissa herself has adopted this situation.

> And behind it all was that network of visiting, leaving cards, being kind to people; running about with bunches of flowers, little presents; So-and-so was going to France--must have an air-cushion; a real drain on her straight; all that interminable traffic that woman of her sort keep up; but she did it genuinely, from a natural instinct (Mrs. Dalloway 79).

In other words, she likes to throw parties and enjoys crowds. Her servants love her, and they all work hard for the party that will take place in her house that evening. Clarissa is pleased with this. She likes the silverware and the pearly white tablecloths. As Simone de Beauvoir states, "her home is thus her earthly lot, the expression of her social value and her truest self. Because she does nothing, she eagerly seeks self-realization in what she has" (437). Clarissa enjoys these little things in the ordinary flow of life. However, despite her desire and efforts to preserve the appearance of being a good, social, and ideal wife of her house, she is internally wounded, and she finds pleasure in her family, her social life, her living circumstances, and being able to delight in the beauty of the city (Hjersing 6). "I love walking in London," said Mrs. Dalloway. "Really, it's better than walking in the country" (Mrs. Dalloway 7). So, it can be said that Mrs. Dalloway's preparation for the party is an attempt to enjoy her own life, apart from her husband Richard, and therefore her marriage, her environment, and the person she is now, more individually rather than dually. While Clarissa externally conforms to societal expectations of being a perfect hostess, she exists a

more profound, more potent force within herself that is overlooked by those around her. According to Virginia Woolf, even though marriage shares a common world, togetherness, and life, it should respect the personal space between spouses and allow a certain distance between them. A few years before she wed Leonard, Woolf wrote a letter to a friend, "I am going to found a colony where there shall be no marrying... no human element at all, except what comes through Art–nothing but ideal peace and endless meditation. This world of human beings grows too complicated" (quoted in Rosenfeld 18). According to Woolf's perspective, she criticizes the concept of marriage as it stifles women's individuality and inspiration as a social institution. It is clearly seen that as a feminist critic, Virginia Woolf reflects her thoughts and attitudes towards marriage institutions in Mrs. Dalloway's decision to marry Richard. Clarissa continues to question her marriage, but she wonders why she is not with Peter, whom she is so excited about. She chooses Richard to have her own personal space, and she explains as follows:

> So she would still find herself arguing in St. James's Park, still making out that she had been right--and she had too--not to marry him. For in marriage a little license, a little independence there must be between people living together day in day out in the same house; which Richard gave her, and she him (Where was he this morning for instance? Some committee, she never asked what) (Mrs. Dalloway 9).

Based on this, Woolf's husband, Leonard, has the power to supply security and stability and, at the same time, adequate space to Woolf, which is why Virginia marries him despite her belief that marriage oppresses women. Leonard was not Virginia's lover, yet it was Vita Sackville-West who inspired her to write *Orlando*. Leonard was the appropriate man to marry at the time, rather than a lover in a romantic relationship. "In Sackville-West's view, it is Virginia who gives Leonard peace and serenity" (DeSalvo 212). It can be said that in Virginia Woolf's marriage, her husband Leonard gave her the personal space and freedom, a measure of independence that she needed. In this regard, it can be seen in the novel that Clarissa thinks about Peter and his way of living a relationship by not offering enough space and how destructive a relationship like this can be, as follows:

> But with Peter everything had to be shared; everything gone into. And it was intolerable, and when it came to that scene in the little garden by the fountain, she had to break with him or they would have been destroyed, both of them ruined, she was convinced; though she had borne about with her for years like an arrow sticking in her heart the grief, the anguish; and then the horror of the moment when some one told her at a concert that he had married a woman met

> on the boat going to India! Never should she forget all that! (Mrs. Dalloway 10).

Peter's love offers Clarissa a relationship that lacks personal space and is insecure but is full of excitement and passion. "Mrs. Woolf's characters seldom seem to know what they want with any definiteness, nor want it with passion" (Beach 610). It can be said that although it satisfies Clarissa emotionally in a sense, such a marital relationship with Peter would deprive her of her own subjectivity, the parties, the organizations, the gatherings full of people, the silver spoons and forks on the table she enjoys, and her class stance. "The obvious thing to say of her was that she was worldly; cared too much for rank and society and getting on in the world—which was true in a sense; she had admitted it to him" (Mrs. Dalloway 78). Despite the fact that Clarissa sometimes wants to break away from these social pressure norms and the ideal woman image in society, she has also adopted this lifestyle and enjoys being busy with the little things that can make her happy in this structure with the norms of twentieth-century society. She has taken on this type of party preparations as her duty and has made it a job, kind of an endeavor. This struggle that women engage in to find space for themselves within marriage is discussed by Beauvoir as follows: "In domestic work, with or without the aid of servants, woman makes her home her own, finds social justification, and provides herself with an occupation, an activity, that deals usefully and satisfyingly with material objects - shining stoves, fresh, clean clothes, bright copper, polished furniture - but provides no escape from immanence and little affirmation of individuality" (437). While she addressed the responsibilities assigned to women, chiefly domestic labor and parenting, De Beauvoir unequivocally contended that these obligations rendered women fatigued, unsatisfied, and occasionally psychologically impaired. As a solution to fit in well with society, she lives "with that extraordinary gift, that woman's gift, of making a world of her own wherever she happened to be" (Mrs. Dalloway 78). This is the reason why she organizes her party so meticulously, and that is why "she made her drawing-room a sort of meeting-place; she had a genius for it" (Mrs. Dalloway 79). A secure foundation for navigating life is provided for Clarissa Dalloway by her marriage to Richard. In other words, Clarissa is inclined toward marrying Richard in order to maintain her class continuity and social comfort. On this matter, British suffragette Christabel Pankhurst stated in 1913 that "It should be noticed that the man's instinctive endeavour is to keep the woman in a state of economic dependence" (44). She added, "This desire

to keep women in economic subjection to themselves—to have women, as it were, at their mercy—is at the root of men's opposition to the industrial and professional employment of women" (Pankhurst 45). Richard's social status, career stability, and family obligations offer a solid foundation on which she may establish her life in this marriage. "They marry people of their own class rather than those they love, but there is little suggestion of the agony of unsatisfied love or the frightful ennui of a life of convenience" (Beach 610). Additionally, this union raises Clarissa's social standing, something she would not achieve through her union with Peter Walsh. Furthermore, considering Peter Walsh's prior reputation as an irresponsible, maverick, nonconformist, and cold peace of work person who is difficult to get along with, he also behaves impulsively in circumstances that could potentially influence his life, which makes him a difficult person to be approved of by English society. Clarissa criticizes Peter's behaviour as follows;

> What a waste! What a folly! All his life long, Peter had been fooled like that; first getting sent down from Oxford; next marrying the girl on the boat going out to India; now the wife of a Major in the Indian Army… (Mrs. Dalloway 48).

According to Clarissa, Peter's irresponsible and impulsive behaviour was nothing new. He had always been like this; it had been his way of life. His expulsion from Oxford was not the end; he continued to make a series of decisions leading to failures. As mentioned before, he was also a womanizer, seeking thrills and often getting carried away. Peter Walsh was not the kind of man with whom a woman could build a stable and respectable life in every aspect.

Ultimately, as a result, her marriage to Richard provides Clarissa with the continuation of a comfortable life and the sense of social standing that surrounds and fulfils her. "In all this, there was a great deal of Dalloway, of course; a great deal of the public-spirited, British Empire, tariff-reform, governing-class spirit, which had grown on her, as it tends to do" (Mrs. Dalloway 79). However, this fulfillment cannot prevent the oppression of Clarissa in her marriage, as follows;

> With twice his wits, she had to see things through his eyes--one of the tragedies of married life. With a mind of her own, she must always be quoting Richard—as if one couldn't know to a title what Richard thought by reading the *Morning Post* of a morning! These parties, for example, were all for him or for her idea of him (Mrs. Dalloway 79).

As it is understood, there is a situation that separates Clarissa from her own self at some point, in which she needs to follow the norms and expectations of her own society she lives in. “Half of the time she did things not simply, not for themselves; but to make people think this or that; perfect idiocy she knew” (Mrs. Dalloway 12). In this regard, Mrs. Dalloway’s situation and the experiences she has gone through can be discussed by Simone de Beauvoir’s expression “In woman, on the contrary, there is from the beginning a conflict between her autonomous existence and her objective self, her ‘being- the other’; she is taught that to please she must try to please, she must make herself object; she should therefore renounce her autonomy” (285). From a broader point of view, Mary Wollstonecraft reveals this situation in the following manner;

> In the middle rank of life, to continue the comparison, men, in their youth, are prepared for professions, and marriage is not considered as the grand feature in their lives; whilst women, on the contrary, have no other scheme to sharpen their faculties. It is not business, extensive plans, or any of the excursive flights of ambition, that engross their attention; no, their thoughts are not employed in rearing such noble structures. To rise in the world, and have the liberty of running from pleasure to pleasure, they must marry advantageously, and to this object their time is sacrificed, and their persons often legally prostituted (Wollstonecraft 66).

As it is understood that there is a discrepancy in the chances that men and women have, especially when it comes to advancing their careers and finding personal fulfilment. Wollstonecraft suggests that women are frequently restricted by the idea that marriage will be their major aim and method of social development, whereas men are motivated to look into other desires and professional goals. It challenges the expectation placed on women by society to put marriage before growing as individuals and aspirations, depicting marriage as a trade-off between time, freedom, and occasionally even esteem. According to Leidholdt and Raymond, although marriage is considered a safe haven for a woman by a patriarchal definition, there is a very parametric social order that will trigger security violations within domestic life. As stated below;

> We learn from it how institutions and laws, social and economic forces, traditions, and habits of mind converge to keep women in marriage and in a subordinate position within the family. We can name a long list of factors: inadequate job training for women, lack of access to jobs, lower wages paid to women, absence of child care, discriminatory promotion policies, discrimination in housing, sexual harassment, rape, and so on (Leidholdt and Raymond 77).

That is to say, Clarissa Dalloway thinks like Richard, sees like Richard, as the wife of Richard Dalloway, so she approaches life from Clarissa Dalloway's perspective since she is Mrs. Dalloway, not Clarissa she was before, "this being Mrs. Dalloway; not even Clarissa any more; this being Mrs. Richard Dalloway" (Mrs. Dalloway 12).

In conclusion, in the context of marriage, women frequently shoulder pressure, and it is seen that marriage only provides women economic security, stability, and space within the house, which is a structure that serves this purpose regardless of women's self-being and autonomy. The social and emotional pressure mentioned in marriage has not changed. As it is obviously seen in what has been explained so far, the situation experienced by Mrs. Dalloway is a stark example of all these. "But often now this body she wore, this body, with all its capacities, seemed nothing—nothing at all. She had the oddest sense of being herself invisible; unseen; unknown…" (Mrs. Dalloway 12). Regarding that, she continues her marriage to provide the ideal expectations that women have to deal with, such as ensuring the class continuity that they come from. Although Mrs. Dalloway meets what she needs to build a life, she cannot eliminate the emotional pressure she experiences in her marriage with Richard, which distances her from herself, her desires and passions in life, and her individuality in a sense. "The extrovert plunges into trivial activities that distract the mind. The introvert develops mystical illusions and evasion. The characters of Virginia Woolf are generally a combination of the two, but it is the mystical evasions of the introvert that she mainly features. Since they cannot live, her characters are forever striving to 'lose themselves in the process of living'" (Beach 610). In her efforts to establish her own individuality, Clarissa Dalloway attempts to integrate into the flow of life while trying to maintain her connections to society and her marriage. Feminists of the second wave advocated for women to give it up completely. Marriage is not the benevolent institution that many people believe it to be, despite the numerous safeguards and reforms that have been implemented in response to feminist initiatives (Probert and Thompson 24). Finally, Virginia Woolf compellingly summarizes the intricate dynamics of the marriage institution in her book, *The Voyage Out,* and it is written that "I worship you, but I loathe marriage, I hate its smugness, its safety, its compromise, and the thought of you interfering in my work, hindering me; what would you answer?" (Woolf 254). Woolf emphasizes that while marriage institutions provide a

safe and calm standard, it has a restrictive and oppressive structure even for women who grew up in families from the upper classes of society and are educated.

CHAPTER 3: BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES: *LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER* BY D. H. LAWRENCE

An English 20th-century writer, D.H. Lawrence was born in 1885 in Nottinghamshire, England, and died in 1930 in France. The author, by his full name, David Herbert Lawrence, is celebrated for his novels, short stories, poetry, and travel writing. Lawrence was the fourth child of the family. His father, a north Midlands coal miner, spoke dialects, drank heavily and was nearly illiterate. Lawrence's mother, originally from the south of England, was a well-educated, cultured, and religious woman. The year 1902 saw the beginning of Lawrence's passionate romance with Jessie Chambers, who was one of the Chambers family's daughters, the family friends of the Lawrences. In the following years, he received his teaching certificate after completing his studies at University College in Nottingham during the years 1906 and 1908. Another bout of pneumonia struck Lawrence during 1911–12. In later years, after a brief break from his prior romances, he fell in love with Frieda Weekley, the aristocratic German wife of a professor at Nottingham. First, the couple traveled to Germany and then to Italy, where Lawrence finished his novel, *Sons and Lovers*. Following the conclusion of Weekley's divorce in 1914, they tied the knot in England. The environment of Eastwood, particularly the contrast between the mining town and the untouched countryside, the way of life and culture of the miners, and the conflict that existed between Lawrence's parents, all became topics that appeared in his early short stories and novels. One of his most famous and sensational novels, *Lady Chatterley's Lover,* was first published in 1928 in Florence. The first publication of an expurgated edition of the book in England was in the year 1932. It was the subject of a historic obscenity prosecution that hinged primarily on the justification of the use in the novel of sexual phrases that were prohibited at the time, so the entire text was not published until the year 1960 in London (Black and Luebering). As mentioned in previous chapters, society in the 20th century suffered great mental devastation after World War I. Those who were lucky enough to return from the war were severely injured and sometimes paralysed, such as Lady Chatterley's husband, Clifford Chatterley, in the novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. This situation also affected the entire social life of the society. At the same time, with the effect of the growing and developing industrialization, society was isolated from nature, and the previously green lands were replaced by more gloomy and dark skies. As it is stated that

"Lawrence believes that industrialized western culture is dehumanizing because it emphasizes material attributes to the exclusion of natural or physical instincts" (Wang and Li 94). One of the greatest symbols of industrialization in England in the 1920s was coal mining. Considering the date the novel was written, 1928, the novel successfully reflected the problems experienced by the society in the socio-political and cultural context. In fact, in 1926, labour movements gained momentum, and the period in which class consciousness was strengthened had begun. As reflected in the novel, the author Lawrence addressed the gap between the working class and the aristocracy, that is, the upper class, by showing that Clifford and Mellors, the gamekeeper of the grove, belong to completely opposite classes. *Lady Chatterley's Lover* embodies the author's conviction that women must transcend the stifling constraints of 20th-century civilization and pursue their innate inclinations toward their individuality. The year the novel was written, 1928, is of crucial importance in the women's movement, so much so that it is the year that all women in Great Britain were granted the right to vote. With the Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Act, women gained the right to vote on an equal basis with men (UK Parliament). The female character in the novel, Lady Chatterley, provides a parallel reflection to the twentieth-century society in the context of the political success of the women's movement in 1928, when women became a little more liberated in British society, on the way to the emancipation of the main female character. As Janice H. Harris states in her *Lawrence and the Edwardian Feminists*, Lawrence has "the voice of proclaiming a woman's liberation through the recognition of her sexual self." (70). Although Lawrence has been criticized by some feminists for encouraging women to have control over their bodies and recognize their sexuality, he has also been criticized for using a masculine style of writing. Feminist writer Kate Millett criticizes Lawrence and his writing style for using a language that is too traditional and serves patriarchy, shaping the female body according to the male. In her *Sexual Politics,* she asserts that "The scenes of sexual intercourse in the novel are written according to the female is passive, male is active directions laid down by Sigmund Freud. The phallus is all; Connie is cunt, the thing acted upon, gratefully accepting each manifestation of the will of her master" (Millett 240). Accordingly, Millett criticizes Lawrence on the grounds that women are depicted in the novel as anchored in men rather than as a self and separate individual. Women are beings who cannot reach awareness on their own with an overly traditionalist approach, but can only reach awareness by being kissed

by their men. From this perspective, she argues and criticizes that Lawrence represents the female gender as passive and without will. To give an example of Millett's criticism from the novel, in a sexual intercourse scene between Constance Reid and Mellors, Connie describes what she sees with astonishment as "... the balls between his legs! What a mystery! What a strange heavy weight of mystery... " (Lawrence 330). Millett's criticism attacks at this point. Millett criticizes that the female genitalia is not described with such enthusiasm, instead is mentioned as unembellished and even described as "cunt" in one word, and followingly, in this context, she discusses that female sexuality is belittled. It can be said that while some feminist groups have criticized the author, other groups have also criticized him favorably. Considering the cultural and social conditions of the period in which the novel was written, it can be said that Lawrence's work encourages women to shape their lives according to their own will and follow their desires.

Lady Chatterley's Lover is set in the Midlands of England after the First World War. The novel is about Lady Chatterley and her marriage to her husband, Clifford Chatterley, who was paralyzed from the waist down after the war, during the time when England was trying to recover both mentally and physically. Clifford Chatterley inherits the Wragby Hall estate and is an intellectual aristocrat. They live in an area of England close to Tevershall, a region renowned for its coal mining history. The main female character of the novel, Constance Reid, also known as Connie, comes from an educated and classy family. As it is mentioned in the novel, "her father was the once well-known R.A., old Sir Malcolm Reid. Her mother had been one of the cultivated Fabians in the palmy, rather pre-Raphaelite days" (Lawrence 6). Growing up among artists, both in her family and in her social circle, Constance "had had an aesthetically unconventional upbringing" (Lawrence 6). In this respect, the main character of the novel is actually represented as a free woman who can express herself very well and participate in discussions with men in social and philosophical areas, as stated in the novel, Lawrence describes both Connie and her sister Hilda as "they were just as good as the men themselves" (6). When Connie and her sister Hilda were sent to Dresden during their student years to study art and music, they were two women who were able to experience living the way they wished. "Free! That was the great word. Free to do as they liked, and – above all – to say what they liked" (Lawrence 7). Constance Reid, one of the two educated and free-willed women who have managed to break away

from the social expectations imposed on women by society, living outside of social norms and impositions, marries Clifford because she finds his conversations intellectually fluent. However, despite Connie being a free-spirited, educated woman, she could not prevent her oppression in marriage. Lady Chatterley feels excluded, isolated, lonely, and distant in her marriage. Constance Reid and Clifford do not have sexual sharing that should be between partners in a marriage. In the novel, this situation is explained as "Of physical life they lived very little" (Lawrence 17). Additionally, they fail to establish satisfactory communication over time. "Connie felt that she herself didn't really, not really touch him; perhaps there was nothing to get at ultimately; just a negation of human contact" (Lawrence 17). Constance Reid could no longer give the expected excited reactions to the stories that Clifford, who only aimed for success and fame, the most important things in his life, told her all day long. According to Connie, "no warmth of feeling united it organically. The house seemed as dreary as a disused street" (Lawrence 18). This state of uncaring and unemotional marital alienation caught the attention of Connie's father, who said to Clifford; "I'm afraid it doesn't quite suit Connie to be a demi-vierge. She's getting thin... angular. It's not her style. She's not the pilchard sort of a little slip of a girl, she's a bonny Scotch trout" (Lawrence 19). As a woman, Connie, who had experimented with her sexuality during her student years and had autonomy in matters concerning her own body, is now stuck in her marriage without any affection and passionate communication, neither physically nor spiritually, nor verbally. Lady Chatterley, who did everything she could to provide for Clifford's needs and help him with his personal care both physically and emotionally, was increasingly ignored within her marriage, and this initially cheerful and joyful woman was gradually reduced to a servile position. Simone De Beauvoir stated in her *The Second Sex*, "...stripped of her practical importance and her mystical prestige, woman becomes no more than a servant" (113). Just as Beauvoir criticizes the given role for women, being confined to the role of servants in the house rather than meeting their individual needs while living for the domestic needs and their husbands' wishes, it is possible to see the same thing for the novel's main female character, Constance Reid. She is seen as a woman character who takes care of Clifford's care and is in the role of the lady of the house. Connie is aware of her loneliness and the feeling of being stuck within her marriage: "Out of her disconnection, a restlessness was taking possession of her like madness. It was just restlessness. She would rush off across the park, abandon Clifford, and lie prone in the

bracken. To get away from the house... she must get away from the house and everybody" (Lawrence 21). On the other hand, Lady's neglect by her husband had led her to consider the attentions of other men. Clifford frequently invited men to his home, a group of thinkers, writers, and intellectuals. One of these people was the playwright, Michaelis. His excitement and passion for Lady Chatterley awakened the feelings that Constance Reid had been estranged from and longed for, and led to a closer sexual intimacy. It is stated in the novel that "He roused in the woman a wild sort of compassion and yearning, and a wild, craving physical desire. The physical desire he did not satisfy in her; he was always come and finished so quickly, then shrinking down on her breast..." (Lawrence 30). It is possible to see that Lady Chatterley's sexuality is ignored, and as a result, her attempts to seek and find it do not satisfy her. Moreover, she is only becoming aware of her sexual desire a little, on the very edge, which she is forced to hide without revealing it, and she is forced to carry her female sexuality as a burden. As Hélène Cixous explains in "The Laugh of Medusa": "... as when we would masturbate in secret, not to go further, but to attenuate the tension a bit, just enough to take the edge off. And then, as soon as we come, we go and make ourselves feel guilty - so as to be forgiven; or to forget, to bury it until the next time" (877). Another example of Connie being disappointed and made to feel worthless by her husband is during Lady Chatterley's walk with her husband. Clifford encourages Connie to have a son with another man, willing to bring him up as his own, since Clifford wants to have children but cannot. " 'It would almost be a good thing if you had a child by another man', he said. 'If we brought it up at Wragby, it would belong to us and to the place. If we had the child to rear, it would be our own, and it would carry on. Don't you think it's worth considering?" (Lawrence 45). Clifford, by entirely disregarding his wife's feelings, pushed Connie towards others and even encouraged her to have a child, as if it did not have a meaning but was just a normal duty for Constance Chatterley, wanting her to think about it. On top of that, the fact that he had referred to their unborn child, whom he wanted to raise together with her wife, as "it" and continued to refer to "it" in that way, as if the child were an object or just a thing, had hurt Connie one more time. "Connie looked up at him at last. The child, her child, was just an 'it' to him. It… it… it!" (Lawrence 45). Since Clifford has no emotional bond with the child Connie will have, he reduces Connie's sexuality to a monotonous act with this proposal and offers a way for Connie to remain in the position of Lady of the house, thus ensuring that Clifford's social status and reputation

are not shaken in the eyes of the public considering that he is a wealthy aristocrat coming from upper-class. Lady Chatterley was left in such a situation within her marriage. Simone de Beauvoir explains the oppression of women, as mothers and wives under male domination within marriage and their being forced to exist within certain limits as follows: “She looks more like a servant in work and motherhood than an associate: objects, values, and human beings that she creates are not her own property but her family’s, that is, man’s, as he is the head” (Beauvoir 142). Beauvoir criticizes that the role of women in the house, attributed by men. The woman in the house, whom Beauvoir refers to as “she,” actually serves the household and the man of the house regardless of her wishes, individuality, and values. While all values, ideals, and standards within marriage should be shared and a common ground should be found, as Simone de Beauvoir says, all these values are determined by the dominant masculinity within marriage, by the male-dominated system. The woman’s body and right to speak are left out of decisions that serve a common ground that includes women, and even decisions and values that should belong to women. Consequently, she has become a servant within her home and marriage, rather than an individual who shares the marriage with the man. In other words, similarly, the child Lady Chatterley will bring into the world will serve the male head of the household, Clifford. Having a son serves to enhance his reputation, fame, and his position of dominance in the intellectual circle in Wragby. As Beauvoir criticizes the marginalization of the female body and its being seen only as a womb: “Woman? Very simple, say those who like simple answers: She is a womb, an ovary; she is a female: this word is enough to define her” (41). For the patriarchy that dominates women’s bodies, women and their bodies have become solely a means of reproduction, as they are tasked with bearing children, reproducing, and serving the household in this way. This situation distances the female gender from the concept of being accepted as an individual. As it is seen in the novel, as a female, Connie’s duty is to serve by bringing a child into the household, regardless of whom she made the child with, without feeling, just for the sake of the family and the family name. Clifford continues to selfishly offer ways to keep their marriage going with no regard for how unhappy Connie is becoming, how she is wasting away, and how she is nothing but skin and bones day by day in this unhappy marriage. Connie is now questioning her marriage and where her life is headed. She asks: “Was it actually her destiny to go on weaving herself into his life all the rest of her life? Nothing else?” (Lawrence 47). Clifford leaves Connie, his wife, out to dry in marriage just because

he does not want people to think that he is lacking masculinity and is sexually dysfunctional. Nevertheless, Connie asks questions, looking for something, some point, that Clifford might care about, or at least something that he cares about her: "'And, wouldn't you mind what man's child I had' she asked" (Lawrence 46). Connie is stuck under such complicated emotions in her marriage, and although she tries to find meaning, she does not think that such a thing is acceptable. As it is stated, "She was silent. Logic might be unanswerable because it was so absolutely wrong" (Lawrence 46). Connie is looking for more than that, as it is described that her marriage is exhausted and on the verge of collapse. Her marriage has become a habit of just two friends and has become a burden on her shoulders. As it follows:

> Poor Connie! As the years drew on it was the fear of nothingness in her life that affected her. Clifford's mental life and hers gradually began to feel like nothingness. Their marriage, their integrated life based on a habit of intimacy, that he talked about: there were days when it all became utterly blank and nothing. It was words, just so many words. The only reality was nothingness, and over it a hypocrisy of words (Lawrence 52).

Clifford is not interested in Connie; he only focuses on his own life and career, telling about what he wrote and striving for fame. He is so addicted to fame, as he is mentioned in the novel: "There was Clifford's success: the bitch-goddess!" (Lawrence 52). and throughout his career, he does not address or hear about Connie's needs and does not say a word about their marriage. Connie now clearly sees that she is not only alone in this marriage but also lonely. As radical feminist Sheila Cronan indicates in her article "Marriage," in which she criticizes the oppression of women in marriage, "I intend to show that marriage is a form of slavery" (216). To elucidate more, Cronan sees marriage as an extension of the male-dominated system that confines women to domestic roles and prevents them from thinking and taking action more individually and freely by removing them from the public sphere. She argues that marriage is not a relationship shared by two people but rather a structure that enslaves women within certain roles. Considering that, in her marriage, Connie is only there to assure Clifford, for Clifford's writings and career, to approve in his talkings in their intellectual visitors, as a wife she is there, as the lady of the house she is there, making his appearance confident for the outside of the house, a tool supplying the foundation for all he needs to be seen as powerful as the other men. And Constance Reid is nothing more than that. In this regard, Sheila Cronan explains the situation women face within their marriages as follows:

> When a man and a woman gaze into each other's eyes with what they think are love and devotion, they are not seeing the same thing…. For the woman, the first things she seeks are love, affection, sentiment. She has to feel loved and wanted. The second is security, then companionship, home and family, community acceptance, and sixth, sex (Cronan 214).

It is clear that Connie cannot establish an emotional and spiritual bond in her marriage besides a physical bond. She lacks all these emotional elements that would nourish her soul as a wife. According to Lady Chatterley, the marriage she is in and is expected to be in by Clifford is nothing more than a relationship that consumes her. This situation is pointed out in the novel, as follows;

> And she went through the days drearily. There was nothing now but this empty treadmill of what Clifford called the integrated life, the long living together of two people, who are in the habit of being in the same house with one another. Nothingness! To accept the great nothingness of life seemed to be the one end of living. All the many busy and important little things that make up the grand sum-total of nothingness! (Lawrence 57).

Connie finds no refuge in her marriage. She does not even want to go for walks with Clifford, and when she returns home from her solitary walks, she describes her home, Wragby, as follows;

> 'Home!'. .it was a warm word to use for that great, weary warren. But then it was a word that had had its day. It was somehow canceled. All the great words, it seemed to Connie, were canceled for her generation: love, joy, happiness, home, mother, father, husband, all these great, dynamic words were half dead now, and dying from day to day (Lawrence 64).

The word home is often described as a place where one feels happy and comfortable, where one can experience warmth and emotional well-being. However, in Connie's description of home, it is seen that what makes a home a home is disappearing in her life. She is actually longing for a home, including the affectionate warm elements, as she counts, such as love, joy, happiness, a sense of belonging, a loving place, and a husband. This loneliness that Constance Reid experienced in her marriage and her home leads her nowhere; conversely, it leads to a feeling of being stuck in this marriage institution. Simone de Beauvoir clarifies this situation in marriage as follows:

> The home no longer protects her from her empty freedom; she finds herself alone, abandoned, a subject, and she finds nothing to do with herself. Affections and habits can still be of great help, but not salvation (Beauvoir 587).

As Beauvoir says that the comfort zone in the home granted to women by the patriarchal system pushes them into an empty freedom, an undefined and uncertain

comfort. This freedom does not serve the path to women's freedom, therefore, the economic, social, and emotional pleasures provided to women by men are insufficient for women to live a free and solid life. This empty feeling of freedom and loneliness that serves no purpose destroys women in any case. Similarly, in the novel, Connie who is unhappy with being the lady of this house, which is a home where she cannot find the slightest affection, is inclined to accept this soul-destroying relationship with Clifford but finds all of this, even the effort to accept her marriage as it is, completely worthless and meaningless. It is criticized that "Even if woman accommodates herself more or less exactly to her passive role, she is still frustrated as an active individual" (Beauvoir 476). Compelling a woman to disregard her own interests and needs is a denial of her identity; however, she remains an unequivocally active individual being. Although Connie continues to help her husband, Clifford's increasingly erratic behavior and seizures lead to Connie's mental breakdown, and "it made Connie want to scream" (Lawrence 66). As describes in the novel, Connie is trapped in this cycle of her marriage to Clifford and feels obliged to keep up with this routine. More importantly, she tries to find excuses to ignore her own expectations and desires:

> She wanted nothing more than what she'd got; only she wanted to get ahead with what she'd got: Clifford, the stories, Wragby, the Lady-Chatterley business, money and fame, such as it was… she wanted to go ahead with it all. Love, sex, all that sort of stuff, just water-ices! Lick it up and forget it. If you don't hang on to it in your mind, it's nothing. Sex especially… nothing! Make up your mind to it, and you've solved the problem (Lawrence 66).

She tries to accept the meaningless situation of her marriage on her own. She trivializes her expectations from her marriage by simplifying them. In this respect, it is possible to argue that this monotonous cycle that women may encounter in marriage can make them feel quite disconnected from life itself. As Beauvoir explains that, "The drama of marriage is not that it does not guarantee the wife the promised happiness — there is no guarantee of happiness — it is that it mutilates her; it dooms her to repetition and routine" (Beauvoir 587). One of the biggest problems for women in marriage is not unhappiness, happiness is never guaranteed in every aspect of life. But being stuck in a routine is much worse and more restrictive than being unhappy. It is a cycle that robs women of their potential to reveal their originality. Marriage becomes an institution that confines women to a monotonous life. On the other hand, Connie, who feels stuck in her marriage, is now also depressed about her own body. Thinking that she has lost her feminine characteristics, Connie feels like an old, outdated, and lifeless

body because she is alienated in her marriage. Her husband's neglect and indifference lead her to this state. She thinks about herself and her body:

> Her body was going meaningless, going dull and opaque, so much insignificant substance. It made her feel immensely depressed and hopeless. What hope was there? She was old, old at twenty-seven, with no gleam and sparkle in the flesh. Old through neglect and denial, yes, denial. Fashionable women kept their bodies bright like delicate porcelain, by external attention (Lawrence 72).

It is obvious that Clifford's undeniable negligence causes Connie to become distant and alienated from her own body. She withers like a flower that does not feel wanted and is deprived of love and affection. While Connie fulfils certain responsibilities within the marriage, such as helping Clifford with all his personal needs, she is deprived of all other emotional cravings by her husband. Sheila Cronan points out the situation to which women are subjected and sidelined in the marriage as follows:

> Whereas the legal responsibilities of the wife include providing all necessary domestic services - that is, maintaining the home (cleaning, cooking, washing, purchasing food and other necessities, etc.), providing for her husband's personal needs and taking care of the children-the husband in return is obligated only to provide her with basic maintenance-that is, bed and board (Lawrence 217).

As can be seen in Lady Chatterley's way of life, all that is actually provided for the lady is nothing more than a basic shelter, such as a house and a room. However, just watering a flower is not enough to make it grow. Clifford's whole lifestyle has become her lifestyle, and not being able to find a space for herself in marriage leads her to collapse both physically and spiritually. In the novel, Connie's inability to receive the value and warmth she merits and the complaints of injustice and frustration that are pent up within her are described:

> She slipped into her nightdress, and went to bed, where she sobbed bitterly. And in her bitterness burned a cold indignation against Clifford, and his writings and his talk: against all the men of his sort who defrauded a woman even of her own body. Unjust! Unjust! The sense of deep physical injustice burned to her very soul (Lawrence 73).

Clifford's demeanor towards Connie is distant. Connie is with a nobleman who is close to her class and even higher. The one admirable aspect of their marriage is the concord derived from their shared social status. Connie perceives this as contrived and disconnected from reality. Clifford refrains from exhibiting any intimacy towards her, as in his intellectual paradigm, such behavior is signified as vulgarity to him. Relating to this, Connie perceives Clifford's intelligence as vacuous and farcical. Clifford

disregards Connie with all his selfishness and arrogance. He perceives her only as another nurse who serves to perform all of his needs while reciprocating with no semblance of affection towards his wife, Connie. At this juncture, Connie cannot find any significance in their shared social position inside the marriage, in which she is deemed unworthy. Connie's feelings and thoughts are revealed as follows:

> A sense of rebellion smouldered in Connie. What was the good of it all? What was the good of her sacrifice, her devoting her life to Clifford? What was she serving, after all? A cold spirit of vanity, that had no warm human contacts, and that was as corrupt as any low-born Jew, in craving for prostitution to the bitch-goddess, Success. Even Clifford's cool and contactless assurance that he belonged to the ruling class didn't prevent his tongue lolling out of his mouth, as he panted after the bitch goddess (Lawrence 74).

Clifford is only concerned with himself; his attitude reflects a preoccupation with writing, thinking, and boasting to his social circle as he endeavors to attain fame by whatever means necessary. Connie's role in this context pertains to the repetitive nature of Clifford's actions. "Men don't think, high and low alike, they take what a woman does for them for granted" (Lawrence 84). As a wife, she struggles to define her role in marriage, as Clifford excludes her from every aspect of his life except being served for his clothing, showering, etc. That is to say, "... she is condemned to domestic labor, which locks her into repetition and immanence; day after day it repeats itself in identical form from century to century; it produces nothing new. Man's case is radically different" (Beauvoir 98). In relation to Clifford Chatterley's life as a man, Clifford's only business and immersion is himself; his own success, his own fame, his own world of thought—everything he cares about is himself, except his wife, Lady Chatterley. "The days seemed to grind by, with curious painfulness, yet nothing happened. Only she was getting thinner" (Lawrence 78). Lady Chatterley is internally distressed; the marriage is getting insufferable.

Eventually, Mrs. Bolton, instead of Connie, is hired to serve Clifford. Connie can breathe a little. "Now she had more time to herself she could softly play the piano, up in her room, and sing..." (Lawrence 86). She is happy to have time for herself. "She was so glad to be alone, not always to have to talk to him" (Lawrence 86). She feels lucky to be able to be alone. "For years she had loved it, until she had enough, and then suddenly it was too much" (Lawrence 86). She is trying to return to herself, eager to listen to her own soul. She is trying to regain her individuality, which she has tried to separate from Clifford. "It was as if thousands and thousands of little roots and

threads of consciousness in him and her had grown together into a tangled mass, till they could crowd no more, and the plant was dying. Now quietly, subtly, she was unraveling the tangle of his consciousness and hers, breaking the threads gently, one by one, with patience and impatience to get clear." (Lawrence 86). Clifford, who imprisons Connie in a cycle that concerns only him and belongs only to him, drains Connie by disregarding her individuality. Now, a woman appears who is trying to revive in a space that belongs to her. Feminist critic Virginia Woolf, in her work *A Room of One's Own*, says that women need to have a space, a room to know themselves, to ensure their individuality and subjectivity; only by doing so will they be able to establish a connection with reality and the actual world. "... if we escape a little from the common sitting-room and see human beings not always in their relation to each other but in relation to reality; and the sky, too, and the trees or whatever it may be in them-selves... then the opportunity will come..." (A Room of One's Own 95). In this regard, Connie was able to get out of Clifford's sitting room. As she questions her feelings for Clifford, comparing the past and the present;

> Connie was surprised at her own feeling of aversion from Clifford. What is more, she felt she had always really disliked him. Not hate: there was no passion in it. But a profound physical dislike. Almost, it seemed to her, she had married him because she disliked him, in a secret, physical sort of way. But of course, she had married him really because in a mental way he attracted her and excited her. He had seemed, in some way, her master, beyond her. Now the mental excitement had worn itself out and collapsed, and she was aware only of the physical aversion. It rose up in her from her depths: and she realized how it had been eating her life away (Lawrence 100).

Connie's marginalization in marriage reveals the pressures of patriarchal society on women's emotional and physical desires and even mentality. It is obvious that Connie Reid, who constantly acts with a mental bond in her marriage and continues her relationship with Clifford in this way, is exhausted. From a feminist perspective, it is possible to say that Lady Chatterley's marriage exhausts and enslaves her both emotionally and physically. So much so that Connie's emotional burden has become a weight that can be felt physically for her, considering that she is very dissatisfied with her body because of the feeling of absence of interest, love, and affection in her marriage. Connie's solitude and her constant walks bother Clifford. Although Connie is aware of how she feels trapped in her marriage to Clifford, she remains a constrained individual. As it is indicated in the novel;

> She was not even free, for Clifford must have her there. He seemed to have a nervous terror that she should leave him. The curious pulpy part of him, the

> emotional and humanly-individual part, depended on her with terror, like a child, almost like an idiot. She must be there, there at Wragby, a Lady Chatterley, his wife. Otherwise he would be lost like an idiot on a moor (Lawrence 114).

Clifford wants her at home, just like before, to take care of him, to listen, and to play cards in the evenings, but still without the slightest affection for Connie. Women are deemed acceptable in marriage provided they perform their duties effectively, exhibit compatibility, and yield to their partners. The anticipated responsibilities allocated to women are to serve as the homemakers and the spouses of their husbands. In her *You Can Touch Me*, Christine Billson assess the issue as "I am admired because I do things well. I cook, sew, knit, talk, work and make love very well. So I am a valuable item. Without me he would suffer. With him I am alone" (9). Connie is just a tool for Clifford to renew his self-confidence, to have a lady in his house as a man, a lady who can listen to him continuously and without questioning, to approve of him. Rather than what the two people share, there is only what Clifford shares in their conversations, which consumes Constance Reid in the marriage. Within this framework, male domination that confines women within marriage can be addressed as "The male finds more and more ways to use the forces of which he is master; the female feels her subjugation more and more; the conflict between her own interests and those of the generating forces that inhabit her exasperates her" (Beauvoir 60). Connie also refers to Clifford as "master," a being she calls superior rather than equal to herself. Her realization that she is in a marriage where she is subservient and oppressed conflicts with her own existence and the awakening of her inner self. In this way, she experiences an awareness of her position in the institution of marriage.

On the other hand, Connie frequently meets Oliver Mellors, the gamekeeper of the Wragby estate, a working-class man who has previously served in the army. They develop a sense of physical attraction and a sexual relationship, as well as an emotional outburst. It is seen that Connie and Mellors share a similar understanding of life in terms of the reality of the world. Mellors considers Connie as, "she wasn't all tough rubber-goods and platinum, like the modern girl. And they would do her in! As sure as life, they would do her in, as they do in all naturally tender life. Tender!" (Lawrence 124). In other words, he perceives Connie as authentic and natural as himself, distinctly removed from the superficiality of the upper class. He portrays their society as an "insentient iron world and Mammon of mechanized greed" (Lawrence 124). The

shared characteristic between him and Connie in this artificial realm is a delicate tenderness, which embodies the essence of Connie's yearning. Connie discovers the affection and love she has perpetually desired, which Clifford withheld from her, in Mellors. As a man, Oliver Mellors nurtures her soul, respects her, and makes her feel wanted and loved. He is described by Connie as "he was a passionate man, wholesome and passionate" (Lawrence 126). Nevertheless, the distance that Clifford had created between Connie and her own body was so great that when she was having sentimental and physical intimacy with Mellors, "She did not understand the beauty he found in her, through touch upon her living secret body, almost the ecstasy of beauty. For passion alone is awake to it. And when passion is dead, or absent, then the magnificent throb of beauty is incomprehensible and even a little despicable; warm, live beauty of contact, so much deeper than the beauty of vision" (Lawrence 130). She questions these unfamiliar feelings, the gentle nature of the emotional flow that she feels along with physical attention, as well as her newfound familiarity with these emotions. "And he bent over her and kissed her, and she felt, so he must kiss her for ever" (Lawrence 140). Consequently, Lady Chatterley contemplates the prospect of motherhood. The soft, sweet sensations touching her skin, and more significantly, her heart, have heightened her awareness. As it is expressed in the novel;

> She realized the immense difference between having a child to oneself and having a child to a man whom one's bowels yearned towards. The former seemed in a sense ordinary: but to have a child to a man whom one adored in one's bowels and one's womb, it made her feel she was very different from her old self and as if she was sinking deep, deep to the centre of all womanhood and the sleep of creation (Lawrence 141).

She aspires to bring a child into the world, a child she can raise with Mellors, in a safe place where she will be truly cared for and loved, as opposed to serving for Clifford's reputation and his household. Followingly, as Beauvoir indicates that "The woman who feels affection for her husband will often tailor her feelings to his: she will welcome pregnancy and motherhood with joy or misery depending on whether he is proud or put upon" (611). Beauvoir criticizes the situation where women experience even their feelings as "other" as a result of social imposition. Even when women show their love and affection, instead of living and feeling their own experience, so to speak, instead of being a subject, their feelings are shaped like a mirror based on the approval or rejection of men. This situation prevents women from realizing their own existence. The criticized situation is not women or marriage, but rather the social norms and

gender roles that keep this order in charge and train women to adapt to this order permanently. On the other hand, Beauvoir asserts that a woman who declines motherhood within marriage is exposed to guilt, as this role is perceived as a fundamental obligation imposed by patriarchal authority. However, motherhood should be a decision made consciously only by the woman herself, considering her own soul and body. In this regard, Simone de Beauvoir remarks on D.H. Lawrence's representations of women and femininity, the representation of female characters, as follows: "Lawrence was far from disparaging motherhood: on the contrary; he rejoices in being flesh, he accepts his birth, he cherishes his mother; mothers appear in his work as magnificent examples of real femininity..." (276). Regarding to this, Connie discovers the emotions she had been seeking and senses a sense of belonging beside Mellors. She manages to set aside the identity imposed on her by society and Clifford, as the lady of the house, the woman she was expected to be rather than the woman she truly is. It seems that Constance Reid chooses her desire and femininity purposely. Considering a conversation she had with Clifford; "'That's thrust upon me. I don't really want it,' she blurted out" (Lawrence 188). She is not keen on living the high life of a lady; she wants to live for herself, seeking to embrace her own existence, and she wants to live her own life rather than conforming to societal expectations of femininity. She has savored the sweet taste of her own individuality, her expectations. "She lay and wondered at the wonder of life, and of being" (Lawrence 184). Hence, she reveals her own self, her femininity, and the essence that nourished her soul. It is as if she had been reborn, radiating with newfound brilliance. It is depicted in the novel that "… she would never tell him how beautiful. It made her want to cling fast to him, to hold him, for there was a warm, half-sleepy remoteness in his beauty that made her want to cry out and clutch him, to have him" (Lawrence 184). She has moved beyond the constraints set by her marriage and the expectations of who she should be, embracing instead her own body and her individuality.

Eventually, Connie makes her decision. Clifford has become increasingly intolerable and irritable, displaying rudeness towards the servants in his vicinity. Connie does not even want to hate him; she seeks to eliminate any kind of emotional connection with him. She seeks to banish Clifford entirely from her life and establish a nurturing, warm home with Mellors. "'Now I've hated him, I shall never be able to go on living with him,' came the thought into her mind" (Lawrence 200). Regardless

of class differences, Constance Reid, despite coming from the Scottish upper class, introduces Oliver Mellors, a working-class man, to her family. In London, Mellors and Connie have a meeting. It is deemed inappropriate for a lady to associate with a gamekeeper. Connie's sister, Hilda, has accepted the situation despite feeling discomfort and shame. "She also simply could not stand the thought of a public scandal about her sister and a gamekeeper. Too, too humiliating!" (Lawrence 296). However, it is more than that. Although Connie seems to have found freedom by leaving her husband, her liberation is overshadowed by Clifford. It is stated that Clifford will not accept her leaving right away. "Perhaps she could get divorced from Clifford. But how? If Mellors were named, then there was an end to his divorce. How loathsome! Couldn't one go right away, to the far ends of the earth, and be free from it all?" (Lawrence 294). As an example of a male-dominated society, Connie's divorce request on her own has little to no merit. When women marry, they become members of their husbands' households. This violates their freedom and individuality. Furthermore, her child's father, Oliver Mellors, belongs to the working class. As a result, even divorce issues in marriage impose significant restrictions on women. Pertaining to this matter, Beauvoir criticizes the patriarchy created by the male-dominated system that subjugates women and restricts their right to divorce as follows: "Divorce is, of course, forbidden; and woman is confined to the home. Women belong to the family and not to politics, and nature made them for housework and not for public service" (159). In other words, Constance Reid was nurtured in an affluent and sophisticated family; she is a free-spirited and educated woman. Nevertheless, despite her financial and self-autonomy, she is exposed to the oppression in her marriage. At the same time, she is a lady. However, she is the lady of Clifford Chatterley. She is the lady of Wragby estate, which belongs to Clifford. Silvia Federici argues in her work *Caliban and the Witch* that restricting divorce, and even criminalizing it in more primitive times, is one of patriarchy's oppressive methods of keeping women's freedom, body, and labor under control (111-116). In this respect, Connie turns back to Wragby to ask for Clifford's approval for a divorce in order to have a legitimate marriage to Oliver Mellors, the man she is in love with. The dialogue between Clifford Chatterley and Constance Reid proceeds as follows:

> 'I shall never divorce you,' he said, as if a nail had been driven in.
> 'But why? Because I want you to?'
> 'Because I follow my own inclination, and I'm not inclined to' (Lawrence 312).

Despite Connie's attempts and her assertion that she will have a child with Mellors, Clifford imposes sanctions on her and strictly refuses to accept the divorce. He inhibits Connie from progressing in her life, pursuing her desired lifestyle, and achieving the marriage she aspires to have. Clifford restricts her autonomy by denying her the ability to make independent choices about her life and marriage. Following this, he compels her to remain in this marriage.

In conclusion, as described at the beginning of the chapter, it is noted that Constance Reid was brought up in an environment that encouraged self-expression, embraced modern ideologies, and fostered intellectual development, diverging from the conventional expectations of women during her time. Despite her deliberate decision to marry Clifford, she subsequently experiences suppression and confinement within the marriage. Lady Chatterley's marriage to Clifford, as the Lady of Wragby, affords Connie class equality, economic stability, and sustained social status. Nevertheless, it deprives Connie of both emotional and physical contact, resulting in her being disregarded. The persistent neglect of Constance Reid's emotional needs by her husband, Clifford, results in her alienation and estrangement from both her identity and her surroundings. The social roles and responsibilities assigned to Connie alienate her from her sense of self and life. This unreturned labour and attention in marriage make her an employee rather than a wife who fulfils the wishes and needs of her husband, Clifford. In the process of awakening and reclaiming her individuality, she finds herself distancing from her physical self-satisfaction. Despite her eventual liberation from the routine and patriarchal constraints of her marriage to Clifford, she remains unable to completely reclaim her autonomy. Clifford, as the head of the household, restricts her autonomy through the institution of marriage by not confirming her request to divorce, thereby constraining Connie's freedom of choice. The oppressive and restrictive situations experienced by the main female character of the novel, Constance Reid, in her marriage have been demonstrated by the approaches of many feminist writers and theorists, who claim that marriage as an institution has often been used as a tool of the male-dominated patriarchal system to restrict and control women. As a female character, Constance Reid, despite being educated and coming from the upper class, was unable to escape oppression in her marriage.

CONCLUSION

Feminist theory criticizes the fact that women are constantly oppressed, discriminated, and marginalized as a second-class gender in different areas of society, primarily in social, economic, and cultural contexts, and focuses on analyzing the situation from a feminist perspective so that genders can exist on a more equal footing. The first official meeting under the name of the women's liberation movement was held by the suffragettes in 1850, which is considered as the beginning of the first wave feminism. Women have struggled to obtain their rights in economic, social, and legal matters, as well as the right to vote, within a more equal opportunity framework. This struggle, which continued between 1960 and 1980, managed to become more visible and took a strong stance against the patriarchal system. As the struggle becomes more visible, second wave feminists focus on issues such as female sexuality, marriage, domesticity, and family, as well as basic rights and freedoms. They challenge the rules and limitations set by male domination for women. Third-wave feminism is a resistance against stereotypical definitions of women, offering stronger and harsher responses than the second wave in order to ensure women's control over their own gender and sexuality. This thesis examines the institution of marriage and its oppression and restrictions on women in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* through the lens of feminist theory.

Considering the year and period in which both novels were written, the novels are accomplished reflections of 20th-century British society from both a sociopolitical and cultural perspective. In this sense, the novels demonstrate how post-WWI society was in crisis and how difficult it was to adapt to the changing world from different perspectives. Change not only occurs on the basis of class differences, but also people became distant from nature under the influence of industrialization, and in time, people became mechanized. The sound of the modern world that comes with technological developments appears in *Mrs. Dalloway* as the sound of vehicles, crowded London streets, and an urbanized, chaotic city. It reveals how the characters' streams of consciousness develop in a crowded and noisy atmosphere, how they are alienated from society, and in this context, the loneliness of the characters flowing in the rush time. This situation has also made the flow of social life rough. Individuals who are stuck between whether to be included in the changing society or criticized and stand against it, and gain acceptance from society or let it destroy them, are visible. In the

novel *Mrs. Dalloway*, the main female character, Clarissa Dalloway, grapples with intricate emotions regarding her marriage. While experiencing an ideal life, she concurrently seeks her true identity. She continues her marriage in order to fulfil the ideal expectations that women are required to deal with, such as ensuring the continuity of the social class from which they originate. She has shaped her own life by the expectations of the bourgeois segment of the society she has emerged from, and by complying with the rules of the class she belongs to. She has to meet the expectations, be a good hostess, and above all, be Mrs. Dalloway instead of Clarissa. She cannot eliminate the emotional pressure that she experiences in her marriage with Richard, which distances her from herself, her desires and passions in life, and her individuality, in a sense. Despite the fact that Mrs. Dalloway is able to meet what she needs to build a life, she lives her life according to her husband, Richard Dalloway's, order. Clarissa, who constantly distracts herself by organizing parties, is actually seeking a place for herself within her marriage. Mrs. Dalloway perpetually interrogates her own thoughts. Reflecting on her relationship with Peter Walsh, who embodies vitality, she acknowledges his oppressive nature and his tendency to encroach upon her personal space. Conversely, she persists in her existence as the spouse of Richard Dalloway. Clarissa is compelled into solitude within her marriage due to Richard's pragmatic demeanour, which is detached from the vitality of existence. Even though she seems happy to organize all these parties, she is constantly dragged into a situation that is suffocating for her by the expectations of society. Clarissa, who experiences a moment at her party with the news of Septimus' death, finds herself with familiar feelings and at the same time, a kind of strange feeling. She thinks that Septimus has somehow escaped from this artificial society. She is aware of the fact that she has become artificial and alienated in this society, and the cycle she cannot break in both her marriage and society. This may be a feeling of escape, she has never been able to experience and longs for. Woolf reveals how marriage and the comforts it provides are presented to women in the patriarchal order. Although there are feminist sparks that are about to burn in her characters from time to time, women are trapped in the home and behind walls, under the pressure of urbanized society, as the "perfect hostess" or the mother of five boys. To sum up, either way, Clarissa Dalloway cannot find a way out to be released from all kinds of oppression and remains trapped in her marriage.

In *Lady Chatterley's Lover* by D.H. Lawrence, the restrictive and oppressive nature of marriage on women does not change; Lady Chatterley, as the main female character of the novel, serves her husband Clifford's endless wants and needs. Clifford cares about no one and nothing but his own fame and success. Connie's days are spent in Clifford's routine of life, far removed from love and any emotional connection, where her desires and needs are never acknowledged, unheard, unseen, and completely ignored. From one perspective, one of the reasons behind Clifford's indifference and lack of interest towards his wife Constance is his traumatic disability. This disability, namely Clifford Chatterley's paralysis from the waist down, means that as the head of the house and the lord of the house is disabled in a male-dominated society, rather than an individual disability, but rather a disability of his masculine power. This situation desensitizes him emotionally. As such, Clifford is a member of the aristocratic class and tries to work towards mechanization and industrialization by using this upper-class identity. However, Clifford's efforts take him to a more distant corner emotionally and spiritually. This mechanization situation also begins to increasingly artificialize his relationships with nature and people, as it does with his wife Constance. This situation pushes him to continue his existence for artificial purposes, distant from emotion and isolated. This situation also provides an opportunity for Constance to explore her body and desires in the patriarchal era in which she lives and to reveal her true identity as a woman by breaking away from the roles that society has imposed on her. Although Connie, who could not find the values she deserved in her marriage and was neglected, seemed to be liberated by her awakening to the life and individuality she longed for when she met the gamekeeper, Mellors, however, she could not purify herself and escape from the conservative roots of patriarchy, which uses marriage as a tool, on women. When Constance, as a woman, wants to direct her own life and, most importantly, express it, she finds the chains of marriage that society offers to women as a gift, as a comfort. Even though women have taken control of their own identity and subjectivity, they are not allowed to live with it. The struggle they face to find their identity as women gives way to the struggle to live with those identities. Therefore, she is oppressed and forced to stay in a marriage that she does not want to be in. So much so that Clifford categorically rejects Constance's request for a divorce. In order to prevent Constance from legally starting a new family, he condemns her to stay in the marriage to him. In this way, Constance cannot officially make any changes in her life and has no choice but to wait for Clifford to change his mind. In this context,

the institution of marriage attributes many roles to women socially and culturally, and it has also been used as an apparatus that directs women to domestic life and restricts their individuality and originality as beings who serve their husbands and family. Throughout history, marriage has served traditional and patriarchal relationships and perspectives under the control of male-dominated societies. Although marriage is an institution that two people should share, it has generally served to exploit women's rights, bodies, and labour. The roots of patriarchy, which are difficult to shake, lie at the core of the issue of the oppression of women in marriage. The feminist perspective is a direct criticism of these roots and the oppression of women's identity. Simone de Beauvoir addresses the devastating effect of this convoluted structure of marriage on women as follows: "How many wives swallowed up in marriage have been, in Stendhal's words, 'lost to humanity'! It is said that marriage diminishes man: it is often true; but it almost always destroys woman" (586). From this standpoint, it can be said that women who cannot define and express themselves with their emotional, social, and inner world are swallowed in their marriages under the circumstances of patriarchal norms and structure. Although the main female characters in the two novels have the power to speak up for themselves, they cannot get rid of the feeling of being trapped in their marriages because of the structured traditional system.

Another point to be taken into consideration is that the novels were written by one female and one male author. In this context, it is possible to see differences in the expression of female sexuality and the depiction of marriage. In the novel *Mrs. Dalloway*, it is known that Clarissa had some kind of attraction towards Sally before her marriage. When this situation is considered in terms of female sexuality, Clarissa questions whether this attraction to Sally is love or not. It is stated in the novel as follows: "Take Sally Seton; her relationship in the old days with Sally Seton. Hadn't that, after all, been love?" (34). The kiss that Sally Seton gave to Clarissa can be seen as a stance against the heteronormative traditionalism. As stated in the *Mrs. Dalloway* chapter of the thesis before, Sally Seton is described with a personality that can be considered as unique, original, and wild, outside the norms of society. Elizabeth A. Meese explains that female sexuality has a stance against the patriarchal system in her *Crossing the Double-Cross: The Practice of Feminist Criticism* as follows: "Women often play out resistance to (masculine) authority in sexual terms: as the appropriated objects of men, we seek to disturb the system of patriarchal control through acts of

sexual defiance" (117). At this point, it is possible to say that the attraction Clarissa experiences is not about Sally's beauty or charm but Sally's extremity and courage to challenge the impositions of society. With the intensity of this rebellion, Sally kisses Clarissa. In other words, "Sally's kiss destabilizes the triangular romantic plot between Clarissa, Richard Dalloway, and Peter Walsh, the traditional construction of masculine desire, and introduces a subversive form of female desire into the novel" (Harrison 297). To summarize, Virginia Woolf describes female sexuality in *Mrs. Dalloway* as a more indirect, repressed, and internal experience. As a female writer, Woolf approaches female sexuality as a rebellion and opposition within the heteronormative boundaries accepted in society, rather than open sexuality. This attitude, considering the fact that female sexuality is still a subject of debate today, provides a realistic perspective while revealing the domination that society establishes over female sexuality. On the other hand, in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, the main female character, Constance Reid, has a sexual awakening, and her sexual scenes with the gamekeeper, Oliver Mellors, are depicted in a more explicit and detailed way. As previously stated, although D. H. Lawrence has been criticized by some feminists, he has also received positive criticism because he has made female sexuality more visible in a sense. Constance Reid has pursued her desires and passions with her discovery of her sexuality. Blanchard expresses Lawrence's open treatment of sexuality as follows: "*Lady Chatterley's Lover* is a study of the tension between the two ideas, between the need to rescue sexuality from secrecy, to bring it into discourse, and the simultaneous recognition that the re-creation of sexuality in language must always, at the same time, resist language" (33). In this context, it is possible to say that Lawrence clearly reflects sexuality in writing and reveals rather than conceals it. In the novel, Constance Reid's examination of her own body is described in some detail as follows: "Her breasts for rather small and dropping pear-shaped. But they were unripe, a little bitters... she looked in the other mirrors reflection and her back, her waist, her loins she was getting tinner but to her it was not becoming and the longish slope of her haunches and her buttocks had lost its gleam and its sense of richness" (72). In this regard, it can be said that Lawrence's way of describing the female body, like female sexuality, is far from being hesitant; he describes it directly and straightforwardly. To summarize, D. H. Lawrence depicts female sexuality not as something to be ashamed of or hidden, but as a very natural, life-affirming, transformative experience. In this context, he expresses women's sexuality not only as an important element in discovering their

desires but also in discovering their selves. Moreover, the two authors' approaches to marriage differ both in their narrative style and in the conveyance of emotions. Virginia Woolf presents marriage as a more internal experience in *Mrs. Dalloway*. She shapes the characters' resentments, internal conflicts, and the feeling of loneliness experienced in marriage with the stream of consciousness technique. In this context, it is possible to say that she presents the emotional constriction experienced by Clarissa Dalloway and how marriage can create a void in a woman's inner world more deeply and intensely with the stream of consciousness technique. On the other hand, D. H. Lawrence presents marriage as an emotional satisfaction, together with physical awakening, in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. He directly describes female sexuality as a very natural element intertwined with emotional satisfaction and as the underlying bond of marriage. Therefore, images of nature and physical desires are narrated together and are in the foreground. Although the plot is not given in depth in the characters' stream of consciousness, unlike Woolf, the events are presented to the reader clearly and directly through the way the characters express themselves. Constance Reid's feeling of emotional constriction and depression in her marriage is revealed through the detailed descriptions of her physical collapse. All in all, although marriage is reflected in different ways by two different authors in both novels, the main female characters of the novels are neglected in their marriages and remain within the boundaries of the responsibilities and rules determined by patriarchal order.

As a result, the main female characters of the two novels, Clarissa Dalloway and Constance Reid, are made to feel lonely and neglected in their marriages despite their social and economic status. It is clearly observed in both characters that the emotional, spiritual, and physical restrictions they experience in their marriages are unrelated to their social status. The upper social class they belonged could not prevent the oppressive attitude of marriage towards women.

To conclude, women have been trapped emotionally in neglectful marriages that they neither want nor deserve by the patriarchal system and norms attributed to women. I hope that this thesis, which examines the oppressive and restrictive attitude of the institution of marriage towards women, will contribute to future literary studies in the light of feminist theory.

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TURNITIN REPORT

Aleyna Nur ÇANKIR 22316812001

ORİJİNALLİK RAPORU

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BENZERLİK ENDEKSİ	İNTERNET KAYNAKLARI	YAYINLAR	ÖĞRENCİ ÖDEVLERİ

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Publications:
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