

T.C.
İSTANBUL YENİ YÜZYIL UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE DEPARTMENT
ANGLO-AMERICAN LITERATURE AND CREATIVE WRITING
PROGRAMME



**FRAGMENTATION AND EPHEMERALITY: THE OUTCOMES OF
THE FIRST WORLD WAR THROUGH THE PERSPECTIVE OF A
MODERNIST LITERARY VIEW IN *MRS. DALLOWAY* AND *TO THE
LIGHTHOUSE***

M.A. THESIS

ALSAJJAD SHAMMARI

20131308016

İSTANBUL, JUNE 2023

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T.C.
İSTANBUL YENİ YÜZYIL UNIVERSİTESİ
ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ
TEZ ONAY BELGESİ

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Anabilim Dalı Anglo Amerikan Edebiyatı ve Yaratıcı Yazarlık Bilim Dalı **20131308016** numaralı yüksek lisans öğrencisi **ALSAJJADSHAMMARI**’ın “**FRAGMENTATION AND EPHEMERALITY: THE OUTCOMES OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR THROUGH THE PERSPECTIVE OF A MODERNIST LITERARY VIEW IN MRS. DALLOWAY AND TO THE LIGHTHOUSE**” adlı tez çalışması, Enstitümüz Yönetim Kurulunun 13/09/2019 tarih ve 2019/13 sayılı kararıyla oluşturulan jüri tarafından oy birliği / oy çokluğu ile Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

Tez Savunma Tarihi: 23/06/2023

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ETHICAL STATEMENT

I prepared my project following the thesis writing rules of the Institute of Social Sciences at İstanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University, and I hereby declare the following:

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- I have submitted all information, documents, evaluations, and results under the requirements of scientific ethics and moral rules,
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- I have not made any changes to the data used,
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21/8/ 2023

ALSAJJAD SHAMMARI

PREFACE

I would like to thank my professors for their invaluable mentoring, guidance, and support. They have played a crucial role in defining my academic foundation and preparing me for future challenges.

I would also like to express my appreciation to everyone who has assisted me along the road. My colleagues, friends, and family who have supported me, and given me invaluable advice and direction. Their encouragement and support have been an integral part of my journey, and I am appreciative for their consistent presence in my life. I want to thank my mom and dad too without their prayers, I would not have reached what I am now, and thanks are also extended to my beloved and future wife.

ISTANBUL, 2023

ALSAJJAD SHAMMARI

ÖZET

PARÇALANMA VE GEÇİCİLİK: MRS. DALLOWAY VE DENİZ FENERİ'NDE MODERNİST BİR EDEBİ BAKIŞ AÇISI İLE BİRİNCİ DÜNYA SAVAŞI'NIN SONUÇLARI

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Bu çalışma, modernist eleştirmenlerin Virginia Woolf'un *Deniz Feneri* ve *Bayan Dalloway* adlı klasikleşmiş romanlarını nasıl yorumladıklarını inceleyecektir. Bu çalışma, Woolf'un bu yapıtlarındaki anlatı stratejilerini, bilinç akışı tarzını ve zaman ve mekan tasvirlerini inceleyerek modernist edebiyat üzerindeki devrimci etkisini irdeleyecektir. Woolf'un *Deniz Feneri*, insan deneyiminin uyumsuzluğunu ve öznelliğini yansıtmak için parçalanmış bir anlatı yapısına sahiptir. Bakış açılarını değiştirmek ve farklı zamanlarda farklı karakterlere odaklanarak, tipik anlatı yapısını alt üst ediyor ve hikayenin görelî doğasına dikkat çekiyor. Woolf'un modernist tarzı, karakterlerinin zamanla ve geçen yıllarda nasıl oynadıklarıyla daha da vurgulanıyor.

Dahası, tipki Woolf'un *Deniz Feneri* ve *Bayan Dalloway* eserlerinde karakterlerinin içsel düşüncelerini ve duygularını keşfetmek için bilinç akışı stilini kullanması gibi, Anlatı, şimdiki zaman ile bireylerin hatırları arasında ustaca akıyor ve birini diğerinden ayırmayı zorlaştırmıyor. Woolf, bu yöntemi karakterlerinin ruh hallerini derinlemesine araştırmak ve insan zihninin karmaşıklığına ve çelişkilerine ışık tutmak için kullanır. Bu nedenle, Virginia Woolf'un bu iki romanı, modernist yazının temel kavramlarını temsil edecek şekilde bu özette örneklenmiştir. Bu romanlar, deneysel anlatım teknikleri, zaman ve mekan tasvirleri ve insan bilincinin incelenmesi yoluyla sundukları benzersiz ve derin modernist okuma deneyimi nedeniyle okuyucuları büyülemeye devam ediyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: modernizm, bilinç akışı, Mrs.Dalloway, Deniz Fenerine, savaş.

ABSTRACT

FRAGMENTATION AND EPHEMERALITY: THE OUTCOMES OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR THROUGH THE PERSPECTIVE OF A MODERNIST LITERARY VIEW IN *MRS. DALLOWAY* AND *TO THE LIGHTHOUSE*

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This study explores how modernist critics have interpreted Virginia Woolf's classic novels *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway*. Additionally, this study scrutinizes Woolf's revolutionary impact on modernist literature by dissecting her narrative strategies, stream-of-consciousness style, and depiction of time and place in these works. To reflect the discord and subjectivity inherent in the human experience, this study reveals how *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway* feature a fractured narrative structure. In addition, this research focuses specifically on Woolf's narrative talent through a modernist perspective to reveal how she subverts the typical narrative structure and draws attention to the relative nature of truth and memory, switching viewpoints and focusing on different characters at different times. Woolf's modernist style is further emphasized by her characters' manipulation of time and its passage. Furthermore, this research identifies one of the hallmarks of modernism that is imbedded in Woolf's works, and especially in *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*, which is the use of stream of consciousness.

The narrative flows deftly between the present and the past recollections of characters, making it difficult to discern one from the other. Woolf uses this method to delve deep into her characters' psyches and shed light on the complexities and contradictions of the human mind. Hence, the novels *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway* are exemplified in this research as representative of the key concepts of modernist writing. These novels continue to captivate readers because of the unique and deep modernist reading experience they provide through their experimental storytelling techniques, their depictions of time and space, and their examination of human consciousness.

Keywords: modernism, stream of consciousness, Mrs.Dalloway, To the Lighthouse, war .



	Page No.
TEZ ONAY BELGESİ.....	I
ETHICAL STATEMENT	II
PREFACE.....	III
ÖZET.....	IV
ABSTRACT.....	V
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	VII
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1. MODERNISM AS LITERARY THEORY	9
1.1. Key Concepts Central to Modernism	10
1.2. The Hallmarks of Modernism	16
1.3. Modernism and its Influence on the Culture.....	22
2. MRS. DALLOWAY AND MODERNISM	28
2.1. <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> as a Classic Example of Modernism	30
2.2. <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> and the Sense of Change and Disillusionment.....	40
3. TO THE LIGHTHOUSE AND MODERNISM.....	46
3.1. A Modernist Reading of <i>To the Lighthouse</i>	47
3.2. Fragmentation in <i>To the Lighthouse</i>	53
3.3. The Consequences of War in <i>To the Lighthouse</i>	57
3.4. <i>To the Lighthouse</i> and the Sense of Change and Disillusionment.	59
CONCLUSION.....	62
BIBLIOGRAPHY	69

INTRODUCTION

The novels *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, written by Virginia Woolf, are both modernist works that explore themes of disintegration and transience. These ideas are derived from the author's investigation of the early 20th-century human condition and the difficulties of adapting to a world in constant motion. Woolf's dismantling of conventional narrative frameworks and her presentation of subjective, piecemeal reality is evident in these literary works. As Little explains, "Woolf's fiction [is] of many experimental discourses and voices" (Little, 1996, p. 27). Virginia Woolf's writing explores several experimental discourses and voices. She was a notable modernist whose works typically challenged narrative conventions and explored the human mind. Perspective changes, stream-of-consciousness writing, and different narrators are all hallmarks of both works' narrative styles. Both novels focus on the transience of life. Woolf examines how fleeting life is and how quickly time passes. The characters in both stories struggle with the transience of existence and their individual experiences. There is a sense of loss and the inevitable nature of change that frequently coexists with moments of beauty, joy, and connection. The novels *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway* are best understood through a modernist lens, which reveals how the author subverts conventional narrative structures, uses stream of consciousness, and investigates the complexities of time and space to redefine the limits of literary representation and capture the subjective nature of human experience.

Moreover, the late 19th and early 20th centuries saw the emergence of the literary and artistic movement known as modernism. "As an art movement, modernism refers to literature and fine art from the second half of the nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century" (Ataria et al., 2016, p. 4). The movement was a reaction to the quick social changes brought about by industrialization, urbanization, and turbulent early 20th-century events such as World War I. As Klages asserts, "Modernism, as you probably know, is the movement in visual arts, music, literature, and drama which rejected the old nineteenth-century standards of how art should be made and consumed, and what it should mean" (2017, p. 154). Modernist literature is distinguished by an intentional departure from established forms and conventions, as well as through experimentation with fresh narrative motifs, themes, and writing

styles. Modernism questioned the accepted standards and expectations of writing as a literary theory. It eschewed the chronological, sequential storytelling of realism and attempted to represent the disjointed, disorderly aspect of contemporary existence. “According to Mrs. Woolf, it is not enough to capture the complex atmosphere of ‘doubt and conflict’ that surrounds the modern world” (Goldman, 2015, p. 64).

Modernist literature and art emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It broke with conventions in literature, art, architecture, music, and more. Modernism was a response to romanticism and sought to question its ideals, although particular works were not required to follow neoclassical principles. As Rainey claims, “Modernism, it was held, was a reaction against romanticism, and individual works by other authors were cajoled to conform to some vague standard of neoclassicism” (2005, p. xxvi). Romanticism, which ruled the arts in the 18th and 19th centuries, celebrated love, imagination, and individuality. Subjectivity, nature, and the sublime dominated. However, as the 19th century progressed, many writers and artists began to criticize romanticism’s tenderness and escapism and considered it out of touch with the rapidly changing reality. Modernism emerged from these limits, valuing experimentation over conformity. It promoted exploration, innovation, and individualism. Modernist painters shared problems but had different styles and visions. Diversity, contradiction, and rejection of an aesthetic or philosophy characterized the movement. “The origins and ethos of modernism that swept through the arts at the end of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries might be said to have been a reaction against the conservative values of romanticism and realism” (Nicholson, 2014, p. 158).

Many early 20th-century modernist writers were disillusioned with the established canon and looked for fresh approaches to tell their stories. As Gale states, “[m]any modernist writers, feeling that they could no longer express themselves in old forms, responded with experimental techniques that borrowed from a variety of other movements” (2016, p. 27). They felt the traditional methods failed to do justice to the dynamic nature of the modern world and the complexities of the human mind. Therefore, these authors resorted to innovative strategies that drew from contemporary art and thought. As a result, many modernist authors looked for new ways to express themselves outside of the canon. They employed experimental

methods that drew inspiration from several contemporaneous aesthetic and intellectual currents.

Cubist and Surrealist concepts, as well as methods like stream-of-consciousness writing and narrative fragmentation, they sought to convey the multifaceted aspect of the human experience, the subjective character of awareness, and the ever-evolving nature of the world around them. These authors transformed the literary landscape by opening themselves up to new ideas and perspectives, setting the stage for future experimentation and creativity. (Genter, 2011)

Furthermore, Mrs. Ramsay, the protagonist of *To the Lighthouse*, is a living embodiment of this transience. Even after her death, the other characters continue to think about her and how she changed them. The story beautifully illustrates the transient nature of human interactions and the challenge of catching and holding onto moments of shared understanding and compassion: “Woolf’s famous Modernist novel *To the Lighthouse* foreshadows the scenario of an artist working in a pastoral setting framed by the awareness of a distant war” (Hopton, 2011, p. 156). This novel is a landmark work of Modernist literature that delves deeply into questions of perspective, chronology, and creativity. The midsection acts as a transition between the introduction and the conclusion of the work’s three-part structure. Woolf’s capacity to penetrate her characters’ minds and her unique storytelling technique are both on display in this novel.

Also consider the following: “Virginia Woolf published her famous modernist novel *Mrs. Dalloway* in 1925” (Barstad et al., 2019, p. 225), and *Mrs. Dalloway* is now widely regarded as a seminal work of modernist literature. Clarissa Dalloway, the protagonist of *Mrs. Dalloway*, walks the busy streets of London while reflecting on the fleeting nature of time and her own life. The bells of Big Ben are a continual reminder that time moves forward, regardless of our efforts to stop it. Woolf examines the conflict between a lasting impression and the inevitable passage of time: “The achievement of *Mrs. Dalloway* granted her the authority to speak from a modernist perspective” (Harrison & Peterson, 1997, p. 95). Clarissa Dalloway, the novel’s heroine, gains the credibility she needs to convey a modernist viewpoint. She

is in a position of authority because of her life experiences, the novel's examination of consciousness and the mind, and the novel's critique of the limitations of cultural traditions. Overall, both of these novels deal with themes of disintegration and transience, providing a nuanced depiction of the intricacies of the human experience in a world that is always shifting. These books represent major contributions to modernist literature because of Woolf's creative narrative techniques and incisive investigation of complex issues.

Reading works of modernism is essential to fully grasp and enjoy two of Virginia Woolf's most well-known novels, *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway*. Krauth offers a similar perspective, adding "Virginia Woolf is recognized for experiments in language and narrative which influenced the development of writing in the early 20th century" (2016, p. 150). These novels epitomize the modernist literary movement that arose at the turn of the twentieth century in reaction to the accelerating pace of social, cultural, and intellectual change. The goal of modernist authors was to test new forms of storytelling, probe the depths of the human psyche, and disrupt the status quo. Woolf uses several modernist methods, such as fragmentation and shifting viewpoints, in both *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, which demand from readers fresh approaches to the material. As Goldman argues, "As part of her experimental fictional narrative strategy, Woolf uses shifting narrative personae to present her argument" (2006, p. 97). These methods center on individuals' subjective experience of time and awareness and include such devices as stream-of-consciousness narration, shifting viewpoints, and broken narratives. Explains Penda, "Woolf and Joyce are much more experimental as they use the stream of consciousness narrative technique" (Penda, 2017, p. 20). As such, the reader is transported inside characters' minds, feeling and seeing things as the characters do. This method represents modernism's preoccupation with the disjointed and convoluted nature of the human mind.

The social and political climate of the early twentieth century prompted the emergence of modernist literature. Virginia Woolf's novels, including *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, are often cited as examples of classic modernist literature. Examining the narrative structure, the stream-of-consciousness approach, and the themes of time, perception, and identity, this literature study seeks to

investigate the modernist features of these two works. The study reviews academic papers and critical assessments to provide readers with a fuller picture of the modernist interpretation of *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway*.

When it comes to tale structure, modernist works like *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway* present alternatives to the conventionally unfolding plot. Woolf uses a disjointed narrative style in *To the Lighthouse*, which jumps about in time and space. Smith (1998) argues that this discontinuous form is reflective of the widespread dissatisfaction with modernism that followed World War I. Similarly, *Mrs. Dalloway* simultaneously conveys the thoughts and perceptions of numerous characters through the use of a stream-of-consciousness approach. Katz, (1995) posits that Modernist experiments in narrative form often take as their goal the reshaping of narrative to a newly-envisioned subjectivity.

Woolf's use of the stream-of-consciousness style in both books gives readers access to the protagonists' inner worlds and captures the nuances of their thoughts and feelings. Through the use of stream-of-consciousness writing, *To the Lighthouse* is better able to examine the ephemeral nature of time and the shifting views of its protagonists. The fragmented aspect of reality is a fundamental components of modernism, and Woolf's depiction of the inner workings of the characters' thoughts allows readers to interact with this theme. Similarly, the characters' subjective experiences and the interconnectivity of their ideas are conveyed in *Mrs. Dalloway* through the use of stream of consciousness. Woolf uses this method to question the limits of traditional storytelling and delve into the nuances of the human mind, as identified by Brown (2018).

Time, perception, and self-identity all play significant roles in both novels, reflecting common modernist concerns. Woolf examines the ephemeral and relative character of time in *To the Lighthouse*. Davies (2022) argues that the characters' fluid conceptions of time mirror postwar reality and that generation's sense of despair. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf explores how people create their identities, as well as how their views of the world are shaped by their experiences. The idea of a united and stable self is important to modernist writing, and the protagonists' disjointed ideas and fluctuating views undermine this idea (Taylor, 1992).

In this study, the literature review reveals that both *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway* include modernist tendencies. The modernist reading of these novels is exemplified in this study by the works' disjointed narrative structure, stream-of-consciousness method, and examination of topics such as time, perception, and identity. Woolf's novels have become important additions to the modernist literary canon because they break with conventions surrounding narrative and explore the complexity of the human mind.

Modernist interpretations of *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway* may be lacking in several areas of study, including the examination of gender and sexuality. While these topics are to some extent discussed in both novels, there is a need for greater investigation into how Virginia Woolf's modernist tactics and narrative structures affect the portrayal of gender and sexuality. Woolf's portrayal of the Ramsay family in *To the Lighthouse*, for instance, questions accepted gender roles and norms. Mrs. Ramsay is a stereotypically kind and selfless mother figure, whereas Mr. Ramsay is the wise and powerful head of the household. The work, however, also delves into the minds of its characters, revealing the stresses and disappointments they face because of their gender roles. An interesting line of inquiry may be to examine how Woolf's experimental storytelling techniques, such as stream of consciousness, fragmentation, and shifting viewpoints, affect the novel's portrayal of gender and sexuality.

Woolf does something similar in *Mrs. Dalloway*, presenting a story told from several perspectives and exploring the minds and lives of a wide range of individuals. This kind of storytelling allows for a sophisticated examination of gender and sexuality, especially as it pertains to Clarissa Dalloway's character. Consider how Woolf's modernist approaches shed light on Clarissa's emotional battles with society standards and her repressed impulses. The study sheds light on how other characters, such as Septimus Warren Smith, who has issues with his sexuality and mental health, are portrayed by Woolf from the perspective of modernism. The probable lack of studies analyzing how the novels deal with time and temporality is another area of inquiry. Disrupting the flow of time and investigating its uneven progression are common themes in modernist literature. Incorporating the characters' subjective impressions of time, *To the Lighthouse* and

Mrs. Dalloway both use nonlinear narrative frameworks. New information about Woolf's books and their larger relationship with modernist aesthetics might be uncovered by studying how Woolf's modernist approaches represent time as it relates to memory, perception, and consciousness.

The importance of this study lies in the fact that Woolf's works employ many narrators, another hallmark of modernist literature. When reading *To the Lighthouse*, for example, readers may get a comprehensive look at events and relationships since the narrative moves between the opinions and viewpoints of several individuals. This perspective questions the existence of universal truth and emphasizes how each person's experiences are unique. Woolf's use of fragmented narratives is also crucial to her modernist perspective. The novels typically do not have a consistent narrative arc but, rather, portray a collection of related episodes. As such, the fragmentary and chaotic character of contemporary life and the human mind is reflected in this structure.

The significance of this study is the provision of a modernist reading of both *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway* and the investigation of individual perspectives on time and awareness. Woolf challenges static conceptions of time in favor of a more malleable and individual experience. She stresses the role that certain experiences, memories, and emotions have in molding a character's view of the passage of time. Readers may gain a deeper understanding of Woolf's profound psychological insights and unique narrative approaches by interacting with these modernist tactics. Reading these books through a modernist lens enables us to better comprehend the novel's central themes and issues because we are immersed in the characters' complicated inner lives, and we question the reliability of more conventional narrative forms.

This study will put forth several questions to provide a coherent and comprehensive analysis of these two literary works. First: How does Virginia Woolf's use of the stream-of-consciousness technique in *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway* contribute to the portrayal of characters' inner thoughts and perceptions? Second: In what ways do *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway* explore the theme of fragmentation within the modernist literary tradition? And third: How does Virginia

Woolf illustrate the consequences of war in these two novels? All of these questions are answered in vivid detail and are extensively elaborated to provide a detailed analysis of the novels *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway*.



1. MODERNISM AS LITERARY THEORY

The period of modernism in literature spans from the early 1900s to the early 1940s. In general, modernist writers resented the straightforward narratives and formulaic poetry of the previous century. Yet, many of them merely shared portions of tales, similar to the manner in which society was following World War I. Free poetry and references to a wide range of international and cultural themes were common in the works of numerous modernist poets. Several of them even adopted a ‘stream-of-consciousness’ approach or many points of view in their works. These variations in writing style provide additional evidence about how the dispersed nature of society during this period impacted literary production:

Although the concept ‘modernism’ may seem intolerably vague, it has come to serve a crucial function in criticism and literary history, as well as in theoretical debates about literature. There is little doubt that of all the concepts used in discussing and mapping twentieth-century Western literature, modernism has become the most important, either as used by itself or as a part of the kindred concept “postmodernism.” (Eysteinsson, 2018. p. 1)

The statement above highlights the significance of the concept of ‘modernism’ in the study of twentieth-century Western literature. The author acknowledges that the term might seem vague and broad at first glance, but it has played an important role in critical analysis and literary history. Eysteinsson goes on to emphasize that the concept of modernism has been extensively used in theoretical debates about literature. This indicates that modernism is not merely a historical movement, but also serves as a critical lens through which literary works can be analyzed and interpreted. The phrase “mapping twentieth-century Western literature” (Mejias-Lopez, 2010, p. 1) suggests that modernism has been employed as a tool to organize and classify literary works according to their shared characteristics and themes. This helps scholars and readers to understand the literary trends and developments of the twentieth century.

During World War I (1914-1918), many people's ideas about what constitutes progress were shattered, leading to a disjointed and disorganized outlook. According to the ideals surrounding the concept of enlightenment, the introduction of advanced technology was expected to usher in an era of progress for humanity. Improvements in society and the standard of living were expected to result from technological progress. As Sandhu (2021) argues, "Technological advancements are contributing to improvements in both business and society ... technologies to effectively and efficiently provide solutions for society to create better living standards" (p. 130). Nevertheless, this potential was unrealized because of World War I, since technological progress only sped up the slaughter of millions. As a result of the war, many people were disillusioned with society and developed a deep pessimism about human nature as a whole (Dunn, 2010).

1.1. Key Concepts Central to Modernism

Modernism is famous for numerous literary ideas and techniques that are still relevant in modern society. Additionally, modernist writers were pioneers in this field and were able to create numerous revolutionary ideas in the literary context. This study provides an extensive elaboration of the most pivotal literary concepts of modernism. The emergence of modernism ushered in revolutionary changes to the ways in which literature and philosophy were expressed and explored. Modernism, which emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, posed a challenge to established standards by attempting novel forms, splintered storylines, and first-person points of view. Not only did it have an impact on literature, but also on the visual arts, music, and architecture. Many philosophical investigations – including those into existentialist problems, the nature of reality, and the bounds of human perception – were made possible by this revolutionary shift. Along the way, this research reveals some of the most important literary and philosophical terms to stem from the modernist age, illuminating how the movement reshaped our views of art, culture, and the human condition.

Abstraction: Modernist painters frequently employed abstraction to reduce the observable world to its component parts, highlighting structure and surface rather than realism (Panovic & Cameron, 2014).

Existentialism: Existentialism is a school of thought that places primary emphasis on the autonomy of the individual in determining his or her values and goals. It played a significant role in the emergence of modernism.

Experimentation: Modernist musicians and authors were famous for taking risks with their work. They made an effort to test the limits of what was thought to be beautiful or acceptable by challenging conventional shapes and structures. Because contemporary life is so fractured, modernists frequently employed broken or disconnected shapes. The literary, artistic, and musical worlds all made use of this method.

Individualism: Modernists disregarded established social standards and instead valued independence and originality.

Isolation: The social and political changes of the time inspired many modernists to depict individuals as feeling and being alone. Modernists eschewed canonical forms and established norms in favor of more experimental, risk-taking works. Modernists rejected the concept of looking to the past for advice or inspiration.

Stream of consciousness: The term *stream of consciousness* refers to a literary style in which the author records the unbroken train of consciousness of a character.

Subjectivism: Modernists placed greater emphasis on one's own personal, subjective experience over external, objective reality. Literature, painting, and music all made use of this technique.

When traditional forms of expression failed to adequately reflect the difficulties faced by contemporary society, many writers and artists turned to less established forms of communication. Almost every facet of human civilization can be traced back to the modernist movement, which was marked by deep shifts in how people viewed the world. The literary styles of the time, such as stream of consciousness, denial of narrative coherence, and nonlinear chronology, attest to a growing tendency toward an inward focus in narrators' perspectives. The creative movement known as modernism emerged during a time of great social upheaval caused by the advent of industry, modernization, and the First World War. The

Enlightenment was also known as the “*Age of Reason* Period of European intellectual development during the late 17th and 18th centuries dominated by the idea that social and scientific progress would be based on the systematic and rational analysis of facts” (Ransome, 2010, p. 429).

The fundamental narrative of modernism is that something unusual occurred in the arts at the turn of the twentieth century. This new art form was chaotic and fragmented, and its meaning was allusive and oblique. It was frequently difficult to comprehend due to its fragmented, allusive, and oblique nature (Winkiel, 2017, p. 2). The writer describes in these lines the basic story of modernism in the arts, which is characterized by its chaotic and fragmented form and its indirect and allusive meaning. Modernist art emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century, and it was often difficult to understand because of its very nature. Modernist art was a departure from traditional forms of art that were more straightforward in their presentation and meaning. The use of fragmentation and allusion in modernist art may have been a response to the increasing complexity of modern life and the need for new forms of expression. They encapsulate the basic story of modernism in the arts, emphasizing the chaotic and fragmented nature of modernist art and its indirect and allusive meaning.

Notwithstanding this, the urbanization and industrialization created by the Industrial Revolution significantly contributed to the widening gap between the rich and the poor. As Hwang argues, “the term ‘working class’ emerged around the height of the industrial revolution ... foul and fragrant, rich and the poor, contributed significantly to the widening of this socio-economic divide” (2016. P. 27). Several modernist writers, including Franz Kafka and T. S. Eliot, explored the disillusionment and loss that people felt because of these occurrences and their effects on society. As more and more people have moved to urban areas, cities have surpassed rural areas as the most influential context in which to study and understand humanity. For this reason, many modernist novels feature a metropolis as a hero of sorts. The massive cultural shifts called into question everything that had previously been proven beyond a shadow of a doubt. The world was no longer solid and unchanging. Instead, it proved to be elusive, since its validity hinged on the reader’s point of view and degree of subjectivity. The need for new models to depict

ambiguity gave rise to modernism, which is characterized by formal experimentation, various perspectives, an emphasis on the interior, and a lack of linear time progression (Ayers et al., 2013).

As Maher asserts, “modernist experimentation here was more than just a form. It was also a content. Beyond denaturalizing the every day – society as is – this intervention would reenergize modern art” (2020, p. 14). In this statement, the author is discussing the impact of modernist experimentation on art during a particular period of time. The experimentation in modernist art was not simply a matter of changing the form of art (such as moving away from traditional representational styles), but also involved changing the content or subject matter of art. This experimentation was significant because it went beyond simply challenging the traditional norms of art, but also sought to challenge the way in which society as a whole was understood and represented in art. This involved denaturalizing every day, or showing the ordinary and mundane aspects of life in a new and unexpected way. According to Maher, this intervention in art had a significant impact on the development of modern art. By breaking with tradition and challenging the established norms of art, modernist artists were able to reenergize the field and create new possibilities for artistic expression. In summary, experimentation in modernist art was not only a matter of form, but also involved significant changes to the content and subject matter of art, which had a profound impact on the development of modern art (Mahert, 2020). Supporters of the modernist movement in literature did away with conventional storytelling conventions and experimented with new forms of writing. Modernists broke away from conventional narrative techniques and formulaic verse to write short, fragmentary pieces that reflected the state of society following major changes. Poets who wrote in free verse did so because they rejected the constraints of meter and rhyme found in more conventional poetry. As Haralson asserts, “Free verse is poetry that is structured in ways other than traditional forms of meter, line, rhyme, and stanza. A poet writing free verse may devise any sort of structuring system” (2014, p. 224).

Additionally, as Kalaidjian argues, “Modernism as a movement attempts to capture and reproduce ‘the frenzy of the visible’ in multiple, conflicting perspectives” (2005, p. 187). He is referring to the artistic movement of modernism

and its aim to capture and represent the complexity of the world in which we live. From its early days, modernism has been defined by the continual balancing of competing ideas. As a reaction to the rapidly shifting social, cultural, and technical backdrop of the time, this artistic and intellectual movement developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In literature, art, architecture, music, and philosophy, modernists attempted to challenge the established forms and viewpoints of their predecessors by embracing innovation and questioning old conventions. As Rabaté asserts, “From its earliest beginnings, modernism always sought to negotiate between a variety of conflicting impulses” (2013, p. 27). Even as it sought to break away from established practices, the modernist movement’s central competing impetus was the struggle between the old and the new. Modernists’ desire to experiment with new methods, styles, and themes led them to want to break away from the confines of old forms. However, they also understood the value of paying respect to the traditions of the past. “As a consequence, there has been a continuing conflict between the desire to pioneer new territory and the need to acknowledge the artistic heritage from which one draws inspiration” (Josipovici, 2010).

With that being said, the narrative style known as stream of consciousness is “now widely used in modern fiction as a narrative method to reveal the character’s unspoken thoughts and feelings without having recourse to dialogue or description” (Verdonk, 2002, p. 51). The language is less sequential and more associative, with numerous jumps in logic, run-on sentences, and few periods. It is like having a conversation in one’s own head. “Interior monologue is a narrative technique that exhibits the thoughts, feelings, and associations passing through a character’s mind” (Al-Hajaj, 2008, p. 48) by combining elements of third-person narration with those more common in first-person narration in a storytelling technique known as ‘free indirect speech’ or ‘free indirect style.’ It is “a way of narrating characters’ thoughts or utterances that combines some of the features of modernism” (Harrison, 2014, p. 129). In a way, modernist works turned inward, into the subjective experiences of their protagonists. Nevertheless, doing so only serves to further confuse both the external world and the internal world.

Additionally, Weller argues that “within the context of aesthetic modernism, the term nihilism has been used by both supporters of modernist art, including some

of the artists themselves, and critics of aesthetic modernism” (2010, p. 8). This implies that advocates and detractors of modernist art have both used the term ‘nihilism’ within the context of the aesthetic modernism paradigm. As Froese argues, “A few people even come to embrace a bleak worldview that is less a psychological disorder than a philosophical position: nihilism. Nihilism is the belief that life has no purpose” (2016, p. 42). The phrase has been applied to the artistic movement known as modernism to define its rejection of conventional forms and its embrace of individuality, experimentation, and self-expression. Some proponents of modernist art have turned to nihilism to free themselves from the confines of canonical art and produce something unique.

Nihilism has been utilized by advocates and detractors of aesthetic modernism alike, which is indicative of the nuanced and frequently controversial nature of this creative trend. The intellectual movement known as modernism owes much to nihilism (Froese, 2016). Since it promotes the rejection of moral and religious principles that were seen to be the only way to advance society at the time, as Goldingay points out, “nihilism is the belief that life has no meaning, purpose, or value and that (for instance) there is no objective truth or objective right and wrong” (2021, p. 65). The philosophical position of nihilism holds that human life has no ultimate significance or value of its own. It implies there is no such thing as absolute truth or right and wrong. Nihilism questions the existence of any ultimate meaning or purpose in the cosmos, posing a challenge to conventional moral, theological, and philosophical systems.

The absurdist school of dramatists, influenced by philosophers such as Albert Camus and Jean-Paul Sartre, explores the concept of the absurdity of human existence. Markedly, “the absurdist school dramatists believe that our existence is absurd because we are born without asking and we are going to die without seeking death” (Pawar, 2018, p. 3). The idea that humans are born without asking suggests that their birth is completely accidental. Human beings have no say in where they are born, who their parents are, or what kind of culture they are brought up in. This inability to make a decision is central to the absurdity of the situation. It implies that humans are thrust into a world they did not choose, which may cause feelings of disorientation and loneliness (Langford, 2012.) “The modernist, absurdist

playwrights were very interested in language and its experimental uses in their works" (DiGaetan, 1991, p. 269). As a result, modernism as a literary movement is characterized by a deep emphasis on the concept of absurdity. As a movement, modernism was defined by its openness to experimentation and fragmentation, its emphasis on the individual experience and subjectivity, and its rejection of old values and conventions.

1.2. The Hallmarks of Modernism

New forms of writing were explored by modernist authors, including stream-of-consciousness writing, fragmented narratives, and nonlinear storytelling. As Berthoud asserts, "Modernist literature experiments with form – using stream of consciousness and fragmented narratives – and critiquing its host culture's traditional values, sometimes through a first-person narrator" (2020, p. 28). As a whole, modernism was distinguished by its embrace of experimentation, complexity, and ambiguity in place of more conventional forms and subjects. Its impact may be traced in subsequent literary and creative revolutions, and it persists to this day.

Modernism is characterized by its rejection of traditional forms of representation, as well as its emphasis on experimentation and creation. As Dawson claims, "Modernist literature is characterized by a rejection of prior modes such as realism and naturalism, and by various forms of aesthetic experimentation and innovation" (2012, p. 186). The break from the more realistic and objective depiction of reality found in earlier literary genres is a defining aspect of modernist literature. Many modernist authors felt that literature should not merely reflect life or use tried-and-true narrative devices. Instead, they strove to represent the subjective and fragmented quality of human cognition, which they saw as a reflection of contemporary life.

Nevertheless, modernism is distinguished by its centrality to the individual and the inner workings of the mind. Works like James Joyce's *Ulysses*, in which the main character's ideas and experiences are examined at length, and Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, in which the characters' thoughts and feelings are the primary focus of the story, are examples of this emphasis on the individual. These two books are great instances of literature that focus on the protagonists' own experiences. This

introspection is linked to modernism's preoccupation with the dissolution of established social orders and the resulting alienation and loneliness felt by many individuals.

The literary world was profoundly influenced by the modernist movement. According to Perry, "Their experimentations produced a great cultural revolution called modernism that still profoundly influences the arts. In some ways, modernism was a continuation of the romantic movement, which had dominated European culture" (2015, p. 393). The modernist writers ushered in a new age of literary experimentation and creativity that cleared the way for postmodernism and other literary movements to flourish. This was a departure from the typical menas of portrayal and opened up fresh paths for exploring the complexities of the human condition. At the same time, modernism exposed the isolation and loneliness that have come to characterize modern society, reflecting the anxieties and doubts of its day. A central tenet of the literary ideology known as modernism is the rejection of canonical forms in favor of openness to innovation and experimentation. It is characterized by a rejection of established authority and an interest in the past, as well as an emphasis on the person and his or her inner workings. As Barringer argues, "The modernist canon can be measured by its longevity, and of international consequence was a significant move in the early 1980s, having a profound impact in the literature" (2017, p. 16). The movement opened the door to novel forms of expression and provided a unique lens through which to examine the complexities of the modern world.

The views of Sigmund Freud had a major effect on modernism, especially in the creative and cultural spheres. Freud's theories, particularly those concerning the unconscious, dreams, and the Oedipus complex, had a significant impact on the writings of a large number of modernist authors. A profound connection with Freudian concepts can also be seen, for instance, in Joyce's *Ulysses* and Woolf's stream-of-consciousness tales. These authors depicted the complexity of human cognition and experience via the use of internal monologues, narrative fragments, and explorations of the subconscious.

New creative and literary currents found fertile ground in Freud's beliefs

surrounding the subconscious mind, human behavior, and sexuality. Freud's idea of the unconscious mind was a major step forward for modernism, and "Freud's work had a profound influence upon the literature and art of the modernist period" (Bradshaw & Dettmar, 2008, p. 143). As a result, this concept of stream of consciousness became an important one in modernist literature and art, prompting many creators to delve into the subconscious. As Pearce asserts, "A method of writing which was developed with Freud's theory of the unconscious became known as stream of consciousness. James Joyce and Virginia Woolf are examples of 20th century writers who combined "stream of consciousness" into their writings" (2011, p. 4).

The visual arts were also significantly impacted by Freud's beliefs about the human mind. The early twentieth-century surrealist movement was greatly inspired by Freudian ideas such as dream analysis and the irrationality of the human mind. Artists including Salvador Dali, Max Ernst, and Joan Miro intentionally created works that were unsettling and counterintuitive to popular beliefs. Freud's views had a wider impact on modernist society beyond the arts, however. His insights into human nature and sexuality shook up the status quo of gender norms and made space for fresh perspectives on individuality and self-expression. Ultimately, "Freud's psychoanalytic theory contributed to modernism with its focus on everyday life instead of supernatural forces and things beyond human control" (Coremag, 2022), encouraging creatives to investigate alternative perspectives on the human psyche and the world.

A frequent component of works written in the stream of consciousness style is interior monologue, which allows the author to provide the reader with a view inside the thoughts and feelings of a character. Free association, in which one thought or image leads to a sequence of others with no obvious beginning or finish, can also be integrated. This method allows for the creation of a more complex chain of thoughts or images. Through the use of the literary technique known as stream of consciousness, "modernist authors tried to reconsider the traditional rules of tale structure and linear chronological order" (Humphrey, 1962). They desired to create a reading experience that was more akin to the sensation of having one's mind wander aimlessly through a labyrinth of thoughts and feelings.

A major theme in modern literature is alienation. As Kot asserts, “‘Alienation’ (or simply ‘loneliness’) is one of the major themes of modernist literature” (1999, p. 5). It has its roots in the impact modernist writers had on the public’s perception of the effects of World War I on its participants in terms of emotional distancing. As Singh argues, “After the First and Second World War, the theme of exile and alienation has become prominent in world literature” (2016, p. 115). The idea of alienation is fundamental to modernism because it reflects how many individuals felt disconnected and out of place in the rapidly shifting social, economic, and cultural milieu of the early twentieth century.

Furthermore, individuals in the early twentieth century fought to find purpose and connection in a world that was constantly changing, and this struggle is reflected in modernism’s central theme of alienation. For example, in the well-known poem *The Wasteland* by T.S. Eliot, the speaker narrates a lonely landscape while seeking to reassemble the ruins into some form of a meaningful whole. The narrative styles used by modernist authors are further evidence of their need for solitude. Novels written by William Faulkner, for instance, make use of several components to convey, depending on the subject matter, that reality is shattered and fragmented. The characters do not interact with one another since they all exist in their parallel universes.

The demands on the reader’s cogency were undoubtedly heightened by the modernists’ use of the fragment, stream of consciousness, and intertextual allusions. The modernist literary movement, which evolved in reaction to shifting social, political, and cultural conditions, relied heavily on these strategies. “The Modernists’ practice of using the fragment, stream of consciousness, and intertextual references raised the demands on the cogency of the read” (Johansson, 1997, p. 150). The writings of many modernist authors read like they were pieced together from a variety of different sources. This disjointedness both mirrored and posed a challenge to the accepted narrative patterns of the time. Therefore, it was up to the reader to find meaning by filling in the blanks and drawing links between the disparate elements of the text.

According to modernists, the stream-of-consciousness method is a huge divergence from more conventional story structures. Its goal is to record the unfiltered stream of consciousness, including all of the thoughts, feelings, and sensations that occur during any given moment. The stream-of-consciousness format reveals the disjointed, illogical character of human thought as opposed to its more conventional, linear form. When seen from this angle, stream-of-consciousness writing becomes an effective method for depicting the nuances of the human experience, peeling back the curtain on the mind's inner workings to reveal the entire spectrum of its chaotic, associative, and unexpected beauty. It rejects the idea of an unchanging, objective reality in favor of subjectivity, introspection, and the fluidity of experience. Modernist authors like Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, and William Faulkner used the stream-of-consciousness style to explore their characters' inner lives and break free from the confines of traditional storytelling. They were attempting to capture the ephemeral thoughts, memories, and experiences that make up our consciousness. Interior monologue, in which the author gives the reader a glimpse inside the mind of a character, is a common component of the stream-of-consciousness style. Free association, in which one idea or picture leads to a series of others, with no clear beginning or end, can also be incorporated.

Another important theme of contemporary literature is consumerism. As a symbol of the globalization of capitalism that took place in the twentieth century, the excesses of consumer culture are frequently depicted in literary works. The protagonist may use shopping as an escape from death, and such novels may feature other individuals who share this addiction. There is an implication in *White Noise* (DeLillo, 2009, p. 27) that contemporary capitalist societies try – but fail – to ignore the issue of human mortality by making connections between consumer culture and entertainment.

One of the key contributions to the creation of the literary modernist movement was the enormous sociological and cultural upheavals that happened in Europe and North America in the later part of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. Notably, “Modernism refers to the predominant cultural style of the period from the 1890s to the outbreak of the Second World War. Modernism was part of the great upheavals in political, sociological, [and] scientific [disciplines] of

the time” (Dunne et al., 2021, p. 205). These societal upheavals were primarily driven by the rapid pace of industrialization and urbanization and the rise of the consumer culture. As a result of people’s movements to metropolitan regions and increasing connectedness, they were exposed to new ideas, cultures, and perspectives, which put their long-held beliefs and values to the test. Changes in society and culture were important impetuses for the modernist movement. As Luntley asserts, “In art, the modernist movement was a reaction against the ahistorical pursuit of reason and science. Nevertheless, it was a movement that saw the purpose of art as being to investigate and make apparent the underlying reality of human[s]” (2002, p. 13). Modernist writers wanted to break with tradition and embrace a new, unpredictable world.

The artistic and philosophical movement known as modernism was marked by a clear rejection of old society and its insular groups. The resistance came from a place of wanting to test the status quo, question norms, and welcome development and improvement. In summary, the modernist movement was an attempt to free ideas and expression from the confines of the past. “Modernism is characterized by an opposition both to traditional society with its isolated communities” (Einstadter & Henry, 2006, p. 284), rejecting the conservative values, habits, and beliefs that were entrenched in established societies, which was a central tenet of modernist hostility to conventional society. Strict moral rules, hierarchical social structures, and inflexible norms were common in traditional societies, all of which stifled individuality and innovation. These were the same institutions and dogmas the modernists set out to destroy. They took pride in their independence and actively sought out novel experiences.

Another reason for modernism’s growth as an aesthetic movement was the emergence of new scientific and philosophical ideas that challenged conventional understandings of truth and reality. For instance, traditional faith in an unchanging reality was eroded with the advent of Darwinian evolution and the idea of relativity, “[a]s more recent studies seem to confirm, the modernist authors had already encountered new philosophical theories, new scientific explorations and new technological developments that helped augment their experience” (Eysteinsson et al., 2007, p. 436).

1.3. Modernism and its Influence on the Culture

The modernist literary movement may be seen as a reaction against the prevailing realism and naturalism of the nineteenth-century literary scene. “Modernism has often been understood as a reaction against Realism, and in particular, to the commercialization of Realism as it became the dominant style of popular and genre fiction in the late Victorian era” (Latham & Rogers, 2016, p. 27). Realism sought to depict the world as it truly was, whereas naturalism focused on the predetermined forces that shape human behaviors. Literary modernism, on the other hand, rejected the idea of a unified, objective universe in favor of a fragmented, subjective viewpoint. Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, modernism developed in response to the realist movement. With an emphasis on everyday experiences and common people, “realism aimed at a lifelike portrayal of the daily activities of ordinary people” (Duiker & Spielvogel, 2019, p. 27). However, as society and technology evolved, conventional depictions of reality came under scrutiny by artists and authors.

Literature, art, architecture, and philosophy were all influenced by the modernist movement. Although many modernists stressed the presence of reality outside of human interpretation, some had different takes on what this meant. The modernist movement included many different schools of thought and methods, and this must be taken into account. “Modernists take as their fundamental premise the idea that truth exists independent of human interpretation” (Ching et al., 2007, p. 9). In other words, many modernists disagreed with the idea that there is one absolute truth which applies to all situations. Instead, they held the view that truth depended on the observer and was thus open to variations. The rising skepticism of old institutions, including organized religion and established social hierarchies, contributed to this denial of ultimate truth. The modernists’ goal was to shake things up by promoting the idea of human freedom and the pursuit of truth.

The modernist writers’ opposition to the idea of an objective reality led them to explore the subjectivity of human experience. In the words of McKeon, “[whether] modernism’s organization makes for an adequate image of objective reality will depend on the writer’s attitude toward reality as a whole” (2000, p. 227). Modernists

aimed to capture the complexities and disparate nature of modern existence, which is characterized by rapid change, ambiguity, and bewilderment. “With respect to the Modernists’ experimentation with language, too much attention has been paid by critics to the stream-of-consciousness technique, which apparently represents a conspicuous departure from conventional types of writing” (Chang, 1993, p. 63). To achieve this goal, modernist authors experimented with new forms and techniques, such as stream-of-consciousness narration, nonlinear narrative frameworks, and multiple narrators.

Another feature that sets modernist literature apart from earlier literary trends is its rejection of traditional story structures and plot devices. As Wagner argues, “They reject the traditional techniques of the novel (narrator, plot, time sequence) and create a new technique” (2021, p. 593). Instead of following a typical cause-and-effect chain, modernist writers dabbled in nonlinear structures, fragmented storylines, and many points of view to debunk the notion of a cause-and-effect story. This exemplified the disjointed and disturbing reality of contemporary life, which is defined by the breakdown of traditional institutions and once-held beliefs. Several works of modernist literature are notable for their departure from conventional storytelling techniques. As Howe argues, “To reflect the fragmented aspect of modern life, modernist authors discarded traditional tale frameworks” (1968, p. 27). Complexity and ambiguity were frequently achieved via the employment of modernist literary methods.

The modernist aesthetic movement is marked by a rejection of the traditional, romantic, and naturalist schools of art. They reject many of the conventions that have come to be expected in literary works. “Modernists reject all previous approaches to art – classicist, Romanticist, and Naturalist alike. The features required by traditional literature...” (Peikoff, 2012, p. 27). The modernist movement rejected such established norms, and modernists sought new ways to express themselves creatively. Different points of view were employed, and issues of alienation, disappointment, and the decline of traditional values were probed. In a nutshell, modernists disregarded the tenets of classical, romantic, and naturalist literature. As a result of their efforts to challenge convention and explore novel methods of expression, early twentieth-century literature was completely reconceptualized.

Yet, modernism has also been criticized for being too difficult or obscure for the average person to appreciate, as well as having an elitist bias. It has been said that many readers will find modernist writing difficult to understand because of its focus on style rather than substance. Regardless of the criticisms, the modernist literary movement remains important and influential. In the words of Galens, “Regardless of whether their influence was good or bad they succeeded admirably in doing one thing. They established literary criticism as an independent form of literature” (2000, p. 280). The modernist literary movement continues to be significant, despite its detractors. Writers of the modernist movement strove to innovate and challenge established norms in the literary canon. They dealt with issues including the decline of conventional values, the difficulty of contemporary communication, and the unpredictability of today’s environment. The growing sense of ambiguity in modern writing is not coincidental, and “modern literature was deeply affected by the growing uncertainty about meaning, and this forced writers to question their existence” (Gillies, 1996, p. 40). Because of this doubt, several authors reexamined and questioned their long-held assumptions and perspectives.

Throughout history, literature has frequently functioned as a mirror of the civilization that created it. Various causes in the contemporary period have led to a feeling of unease and a questioning of long-held principles. Rapid technological development, the altering of social and political landscapes, and the disintegration of established meaning and belief systems all play a role. This increasing ambiguity has had a significant effect on writers in the literary world. They are forced to confront the larger issues of life, including why they are here and who they are. People can no longer rely or agree upon the old certainties and moral frameworks that served as anchors in the past. Since meaning and reality are becoming increasingly elusive and subjective, writers are left with a conundrum: how to represent these notions in their writings? Because of this test, authors have begun to explore new forms and ideas.

In light of the ambiguity, contemporary authors have experimented with many forms of storytelling to probe the depths of the human condition. To depict the subjective and schizophrenic character of reality and truth, authors may, for instance, experiment with fragmented narratives, nonlinear frameworks, and unreliable narrators. Additionally, nihilism, absurdity, alienation, and the quest for meaning in a

chaotic and uncertain reality are frequently recurring themes and subject matter in contemporary writing. Writers have explored the inner workings of the human mind, exploring the worries, concerns, and uncertainties that come with living in an uncertain world. Writers have been able to deal with the ambiguity of meaning and, in turn, force readers to examine their own viewpoints and interpretations by questioning their preconceived notions and ideas. Thus, contemporary literature serves as a forum for the investigation of conflicting world views and the analysis of the modern human predicament. In conclusion, the modern world's increasing perplexity surrounding meaning has had a significant effect on literary arts. Writers have been forced to examine their own assumptions, which has spawned an increase in existentialist and meaning-seeking themes and inspired the exploration of new methods of narrative (Bürger, 1984). The ambiguities and complexity of the human experience are reflected in contemporary literature, prompting readers to examine their own assumptions.

Furthermore, a feeling of disillusionment and alienation is sometimes cited as a defining trait of modernism. As Utell suggests, modernist writers have “the tendency to focus on interiority, a pervasive sense of alienation and disillusionment, the exploration of individual anxiety in an increasingly fragmented and mechanized society” (2021, p. 27). The two World Wars shattered the belief that development, rationality, and civilization were still feasible. According to modernists, the world is in crisis, and traditional values and beliefs cannot keep up with the problems of the twenty-first century. As a result, people struggled to make sense of a world that often seemed chaotic and random, which exacerbated their feelings of isolation and disorientation. “[The] modernist movement started the era of disillusionment with conventional expectations” (Kuksa & Childs, 2014, p. 52), and as a result, the rejection of conventional art practices in modernism was a defining characteristic. The modernist movement was an attempt to free art from the restraints of tradition and give it a voice in the contemporary era. Therefore, novel approaches and methods emerged in the fields of writing, painting, and music. Meanwhile, modernists were extremely pessimistic about the future. They believed that traditional values and beliefs were obsolete due to the destruction of World War I and the growth of industrialization and mass culture. This disenchantment prompted

an emphasis on the unique and personal, rather than on universal, moral principles.

Indeed, in attempting to forge something new, modernist artists and authors often dismantled established norms and conventions, a trait known as fragmentation. As Sacido argues, “The modernist stories deal with the fragmentation of individual experience and the imagination of others” (2012, p. 95). In their quest to convey the complexity and turmoil of contemporary reality, modernist painters and authors relied heavily on fragmentation as a means of breaking away from old approaches to representation. To reflect the fragmented and nonlinear quality of modern experience, modernist authors sought new ways to tell stories rather than sticking to tried-and-true formulas. Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, two prominent modernist artists, similarly rejected realism in favor of fragmented shapes that highlighted the variety of human experience. Joyce’s *Ulysses* is often cited as an exemplary work of fragmentation in modernist literature. As Broderick (2018) argues, “Joyce is considered a great writer for many reasons but arguably his most important contribution to modern literature is his development of the narrative mode known as stream of consciousness” (p. 146). Rather than following a chronological plot, this work is particularly renowned for its use of the literary device known as stream of consciousness, which allows readers to experience the characters’ inner thoughts and feelings in a disorganized manner.

Yet, not everyone appreciated modernists’ emphasis on fragmentation as a central tactic. In the eyes of many conservatives, cultural fragmentation represented a rejection of established norms and values. The modernists of the early twentieth century, on the other hand, saw disintegration as an integral part of the creative and cultural revolution taking place at the time. In conclusion, modernism and fragmentation are inextricably linked, with fragmentation serving as a central tactic of modernist artists and authors, who aspired to abandon established canons of representation in favor of novel approaches to capturing the complexity and chaos of contemporary reality. The point is highlighted in the following line: “Fragmentation is a marker of modernism” (Raghinaru et al., 2015, p. 6). Despite the backlash it received at the time, fragmentation has become an iconic trait of modernist art and literature, and it continues to have a profound impact on today’s creative community.

The artistic, literary, and cultural worlds were profoundly affected by the modernist cultural movement. Cubism, surrealism, and abstract expressionism are just a few examples of the many art movements that emerged as a result of modernism's encouragement of artistic experimentation. Its exploration of new avenues of expression expanded the bounds of established creative genres. Modernism's rejection of canonical structures and the associated subject matter was a key tenet of the movement. This defiance of custom altered cultural norms and posed a threat to the status quo, resulting in fresh perspectives on issues of gender, race, and individuality. Intellectually engaging with society and culture was a hallmark of the modernist movement. The philosophical, scientific, and political underpinnings of contemporary art and literature are no secret. Modernism emphasized the individual experience, delving into ideas of isolation, dislocation, and existentialism. This focus on the uniqueness of each person's experience is a key factor in the development of current concepts of self-expression and identity. By questioning established norms and introducing novel avenues for creative and critical expression. "Modernist artists and writers abandoned conventional literary and artistic models and experimented with new modes of expression. They liberated the imagination from the restrictions of conventional forms and enabled their audience to do the same" (Perry et al., 2016, p. 672).

To summarize, modernism was a cultural, intellectual, and artistic movement developed in the early twentieth century in reaction to the social, political, and economic changes wrought by industrialization, urbanization, and the two World Wars. As Walz argues, "Modernism can be understood, then, as an early twentieth-century cultural movement that strove to achieve a new consciousness about the experiences of people" (2013, p. 8). This reaction took place at the beginning of the twentieth century in response to sweeping social, political, and economic shifts. Disillusionment with the past and a desire to try new things characterized this movement, as did a focus on creation and experimentation. All of these traits are what set apart the postmodern era. Music, literature, and art were all profoundly impacted by the modernist movement, and its influence may be seen in today's popular culture.

2. MRS. DALLOWAY AND MODERNISM

In the early twentieth century, modernism rebelled against the prevailing Victorian, romantic, and realist styles, propelling the movement deeper into the realm of the unconscious mind and the surreal, thanks to the groundbreaking contributions of psychologist Sigmund Freud. Henry Louis Bergson, another major thinker of the 1920s, believed that the basis for knowing reality was not logical science but, rather, intuition and direct experience. As Gay asserts, “Modern writers find that they begin to work at a moment when the culture is marked by a prevalent style of perception and feeling; and their modernity consists in a revolt against this prevalent style” (1998, p. 294). As the globe teetered on the brink of World War I, many individuals found themselves disillusioned with the established norms they had become accustomed to. As Ross argues, “Modernity consists in a revolt against the prevalent style, an unyielding rage against the official order” (2009, p. 199).

Wolff defines modernism in her book, *AngloModern: Painting and Modernity in Britain and the United States*, as “an art of a rapidly modernizing world, a world of rapid industrial development, advanced technology, urbanization, secularization and mass forms of social life” (2018, p. 11). Rapid industrialization, sophisticated technology, urbanization, secularization, and mass forms of social life are all reflected in the art of a quickly modernizing society. The transition between the modern and postmodern periods has had a significant effect on creative expression, ushering in novel aesthetics and theoretical approaches.

Art’s reaction to the evolving industrial world is a key component here. Artists began depicting industrial and urban settings, reflecting the wonder and disorientation people felt in these new, unfamiliar places. Bold colors, geometric forms, and active compositions were frequently used in these creative investigations of industrialization, all of which reflected the vitality and progress of the contemporary world. Technological advancements, especially in the fields of communication and transportation, also had an impact on the artwork of the time. Photographic, cinematic, and subsequently digital media presented exciting new opportunities for artists. These platforms encouraged novel ways of depicting and experimenting with content, expanding the limitations of conventional art making.

This dramatic transformation in social awareness and world view is reflected in works of art created in a world where old certainties have vanished and the Victorian optimism surrounding the forward development of humankind has dissipated. Based on this review, it appears that there has been a break with conventional wisdom, which has prompted doubt, disillusionment, and a reappraisal of reality itself. Furthermore, “the art of a world which many traditional certainties had departed, and a certain sort of Victorian confidence not only in the onward progress of mankind but in the very solidity and visibility of reality itself has evaporated” (Wolff, 2018, p. 11). In such a society, artists would likely explore ideas of disintegration, ambiguity, and the need to confront the status quo in their work. In an increasingly complicated and uncertain environment, artists were free to examine such themes as the subjectivity of reality, the relativity of truth, and the existential crises experienced by people.

Since the veracity and transparency of reality were being questioned, a possible creative solution was to move away from representational art. To capture the ineffable and illusive qualities of the human experience, artists often resort to abstract shapes, symbolism, and surrealism. Disorientation and the viewer’s own sense of reality are two things that can be elicited by such artistic practices. Furthermore, a more critical and introspective attitude toward art may signify a lack of faith in the development of humanity. Themes including alienation, solitude, the collapse of social systems, and the loss of purpose are examples of social, political, and existential concerns that artists may choose to explore. Anxieties and doubts of the time might be reflected in their artwork. This indicates that modernism emphasizes the unconscious rather than the outward, visible self and suggests a break from tradition by depicting characters as thinking beings.

To define modernism as a literary movement is problematic, as Deborah Parsons adds, “Because modernism connotes a cultural sensibility rather than a particular period in time and it is not simply interchangeable with strictly historical references such as the early twentieth century” (Parsons, 2014, p. 11). It can be argued that modernism is not limited to a particular time period but, rather, represents a more generalized ideology. This recognizes that modernism may present itself in a variety of eras and forms of art. As a cultural sensibility, modernism

developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in reaction to the unprecedented rate of change ushered in by the rise of industry, urbanization, and technical innovation. Literature, art, architecture, music, and design were only a few of the areas in which established standards and practices were questioned. Artists and intellectuals of the modernist movement aimed to free themselves from tradition by embracing risk-taking, originality, and a focus on the future.

2.1. *Mrs. Dalloway* as a Classic Example of Modernism

Mrs. Dalloway is a novel of the modern era that shares many characteristics with other works of modernism. Published in 1924, this novel tells the story of one day in the life of its protagonist, Clarissa Dalloway, on a June day in post-World War I England. It was adapted from two short stories, “*Mrs. Dalloway in Bond Street*” and the unfinished “*The Prime Minister*.”

As Bloom asserts, “Early in the novel *Mrs. Dalloway*, Clarissa Dalloway has a private searching moment when she examines her image in the mirror. There she sees a face distinctively” (1990, p. 86). This well-defined likeness reflects a constant and consistent sense of identity, the person she may summon whenever she requires a reliable public mask. Her public persona masks ‘incompatible’ parts of her character that might be distorted into contrasting reflections. All of the other characters only see one of her contrasting traits, so they assume that is who she really is.

Woolf meticulously documents the inner monologues of Clarissa Dalloway and the other characters as they prepare for a party that evening:

The mind receives a myriad impressions – trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpest of steel. From all sides they come, an incessant shower of innumerable atoms, and as they fall, as they shape themselves into the life of Monday or Tuesday, the accent falls differently from of old ... Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged, life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end. (Randall, 2007, p.157)

This quote is an examination of how the mind takes in information and how changeable life is. It emphasizes the dynamic character of our perception and cognition and the unceasing flow of inputs that shape our experiences. The allusion to life as a glowing halo emphasizes a comprehensive and interdependent world view.

The narrator's perspective in *Mrs. Dalloway* mirrors the period in which the novel is set:

Mrs. Dalloway offers a scathing indictment of the British class system and a strong critique of the patriarchy. The work's social satire takes much of its force from ironic patterns of mythic reference that allow the fusion of dramatic models from Greek tragedy and from the Christian liturgy. Woolf envisions an allegorical struggle between good and evil – between Clarissa Dalloway's comic celebration of life and the tragic death-dealing forces that drive Septimus Smith to suicide. (Marcus, 1981, p. 125)

In his book, *Virginia Woolf: Feminism, Creativity, and the Unconscious*, Maze sheds light on Woolf's works:

There are mysterious pages that cannot be explained rationally by anything else in the text, and about which Orthodox literary criticism can say nothing informative. The limitation derives from the currently fashionable principle forbidding interpretation of anything in the text by reference to anything not in it. Such passages can be illuminated by reference to the author's life history and unconscious mental life, insofar as that can be inferred from other, independent, evidence. (1997, p. IX)

The dreamy, disjointed quality of the narrative usually results from the fact that it is a reflection of the thoughts of one of the characters. There is no narrator to keep the plot on track, and the narration sounds remarkably like the internal dialogue of a single mind working through a problem. Even though the narrative features two major events (Septimus's suicide and Peter Walsh's homecoming) and there is no true plot, the events can be classified as mundane or average.

Mrs. Dalloway is enmeshed in a world determined by money and class and must struggle for a self-definition that in part accepts and in part defies those determinants. From Moll [in *Moll Flanders* by Daniel Defoe] to *Mrs. Dalloway*, then, we can trace the career of the mercantile world view; what we see is the bourgeois mind encountering its own fatal limitations. For Moll, an early version of the bourgeois mind's confidence in itself, the world seems limitless and open to conquest; she exults in her freedom and power. (Bloom, 1990, p. 126)

Woolf's characters are not sketched from the outside as they are in other books. Instead, they emerge as fully realized, dynamic people. All of the characters' inner thoughts are conveyed in *Mrs. Dalloway* with the same vividness that characterizes all of Woolf's previous modernist works. Another hallmark of modernist writing is the use of alternating points of view to show the world and its inhabitants. In the end, the reader reconstructs the complete image of these individuals, becoming an active participant in the presentation rather than a passive observer. Woolf's presentation shifts between third-person omniscient description, indirect internal monologue, and soliloquy, blurring the line between direct and indirect speech.

As a response to the significant problems and changes that a quickly modernizing world brought about, modernism in art evolved. It represents the effects of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century industrialization, cutting-edge technology, urbanization, secularism, and the advent of mass social life. The enormous changes brought on by a rapidly modernizing society gave rise to modernism in art. Modernism is "an art of a rapidly modernizing world, a world of rapid industrial development, advanced technology, urbanization, secularization and mass forms of social life" (Bradbury & Farlane, 1976, p. 57). The effects of industrialization, cutting-edge technology, urbanization, secularization, and widespread social life are reflected in modern art and literature. Innovation, experimentation, and the investigation of novel themes, approaches, and mediums were encouraged by modernist painters. Their artwork aimed to portray the spirit of the contemporary day, including its intricacies, difficulties, and the individual's role within it.

However, modernism can also be described as a literary movement or philosophy. Modernism was characterized by its skepticism of conventional ideas and principles. Traditional beliefs, which had their roots in social, moral, and theological systems, were being questioned more and more by cutting-edge research, evolving social mores, and exposure to many cultures as a result of globalization. The development of technologies like photography, cinema, and telecommunications highlighted the arbitrary nature of perception and representation, further undermining the faith in the stability and authenticity of reality. In this setting, modernist painters aimed to eschew historical norms and investigate fresh avenues for creative expression. They welcomed innovation, experimentation, and the study of the unconscious mind, emotions, and subjective experiences. A fragmented, disconnected perspective of reality, marked by confusion, unpredictability, and a sense of alienation was frequently represented in the works of modernist artists.

Mrs. Dalloway is Woolf's attempt to take the stream-of-consciousness style to its most sophisticated and artistic extreme by depicting life through the eyes of a third-person omniscient narrator who is both all-seeing and all-knowing. Woolf's works have a distinct narrative style that places an emphasis on the value of in-the-moment observation:

The world of Virginia Woolf's novels is comprised of brief moments of perception experienced by the various characters. They are brought together in space and time by their shared experiences and by memory and conscious analysis, respectively. The result is a depiction of multiple identities existing simultaneously. (Doko et al., 2019, p. 1610)

Woolf's writings capture the subjective experiences of her characters rather than following a standard sequential narrative structure by focusing on their inner thoughts and perceptions. The worlds of her stories are constructed from these discrete glimpses of reality.

The style of presentation deviates from the norm and cannot be summed up in a few words. For example, to learn about Clarissa's time at home with Peter Walsh in her early adolescence, the reader must follow her thoughts of that era:

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 for years like an arrow sticking to her heart the grief, the anguish: and then the horror of the moment when someone told her at a concert that he had married a woman met on the boat going to India! (Woolf, 2003, p. 10)

This quote displays features of stream of consciousness. The narrator's inner mental processes are reflected in the narrative's free-flowing, unrestrained depiction of her thoughts and feelings. This method facilitates an in-depth examination of the inner workings of the protagonist's mind and other characters' personal experiences. The disorganized and personal character of the narrator's feelings and thoughts are reflected in the passage's fragmentary and confusing words. This splintering adds nuance and complexity to the story since it reflects the disorganized and uncertain characteristics of the human mind. The narrator's loss and betrayal have left them with a heavy heart, as if an arrow is stuck in their chest. Peter's secret marriage to another lady only adds to the shock and hurt feelings that have already been aroused. The disillusionment and sense of disconnection felt in a world that is always shifting is typically portrayed via modernist literature's focus on themes of loss and betrayal. Modernist literary devices, such as stream of consciousness and fragmentation, are all fully displayed in this excerpt. It delves into the narrator's inner turmoil and emotional challenges, focusing on issues of uniqueness, social restrictions, grief, and betrayal.

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, the character Peter Walsh has conflicting feelings and ideas after meeting a woman named Clarissa Dalloway. Peter Walsh's speech upon his return to see Clarissa after a few years reveals the issue:

And how are you?" said Peter Walsh, positively trembling; taking both her hands; kissing both her hands. She's grown older, he thought sitting down. I shan't tell her anything about it, he thought, for she's grown older. She is

looking at me, he thought, a sudden embarrassment coming over him, though he had kissed her hands. (Woolf, 2003, p. 46)

In this quote, applying a modernist perspective, the stream-of-consciousness narrative style is a hallmark of modernist writing. This strategy is reflected in the chapter when Peter Walsh's inner thoughts and perceptions are explored. The reader is allowed unfettered access to his consciousness, experiencing his thoughts and feelings as they happen.

Furthermore, nonlinear storytelling and narrative fragmentation are common features of modernist literature and are vividly portrayed in *Mrs. Dalloway*. The disconnected and broken form of Peter Walsh's ideas in this passage mirror the nonlinear nature of the human mind. This disjointedness is exemplified by the sudden transition from his thoughts about Clarissa's aging to his choice to withhold information from her. Time and mortality are common topics in modernist literature, as is the transience of human existence. Peter's reflections on time and the changes it brings are reflected in his ideas about Clarissa's maturation. This passage exemplifies many of the hallmarks of modernism, including stream of consciousness, fragmentation, and the exploration of themes like time and mortality, while also highlighting the physical act of kissing her hands and his awareness of her aging. Woolf uses these methods to present a detailed portrait of Peter Walsh's inner thoughts and feelings, drawing the reader into an exploration of the nuances of the human experience.

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, not only does the reader learn more about Clarissa, but they also learn more about her family. They all interact with Mrs. Dalloway in some capacity during the day. Either she has them in mind or they have her in mind, or they just happen to cross paths in London:

But Miss Kilman did not hate Mrs. Dalloway. Turning her large gooseberry-coloured eyes upon Clarissa, observing her small pink face, her delicate body, her air of freshness and fashion, Miss Kilman felt, Fool! Simpleton! You who have known neither sorrow nor pleasure; who have trifled your life away!

And there rose in her an overmastering desire to overcome her; to unmask her. (Woolf, 2003, p. 140)

Miss Kilman's thoughts about Mrs. Dalloway are discussed in the assigned section of Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*. In this story, Miss Kilman's viewpoint can be read as a representation of a modernist perspective. The analysis has to be broken down. Miss Kilman evaluates Mrs. Dalloway based on her observations. She is aware of her appearance and expresses pride in her petite pink face, frail frame, and trendy demeanor. This seems to imply that Miss Kilman disapproves of Mrs. Dalloway because she represents a rich, shallow lifestyle.

In addition, Miss Kilman's initial feelings toward Mrs. Dalloway take the form of exasperation and scorn. Mrs. Dalloway is called a 'Fool!' and a 'Simpleton!' by this character. Miss Kilman's scathing statements demonstrate that she thinks Mrs. Dalloway has wasted her life by being insensitive to the joys and sorrows of others. As Miss Kilman continues to observe Mrs. Dalloway, she develops a strong desire to triumph over her. By expressing this wish, Miss Kilman seems to be hinting at her intention to expose or question the superficiality and stupidity she sees in Mrs. Dalloway's life. Miss Kilman's stated goal of unmasking Mrs. Dalloway hints at her wish to expose Mrs. Dalloway's actual character, perhaps by showing how shallow and one-dimensional she is. This longing is illustrative of the modernist outlook, which sought to undermine established norms of behavior and appearance. The paragraph is illustrative of the modernist contrast between Miss Kilman's analytical and introspective viewpoint and Mrs. Dalloway's wealthy and yet superficial manner of life. This conflict stems from modernists' discontent with and search for significance outside the accepted standards of their day.

The author engages in introspection, follows a stream of consciousness, and investigates the reader's own subjective experiences. These are key aspects of modernist writing. The style of stream-of-consciousness writing, which is sometimes connected with modernist literature, is reflected in Peter Walsh's use of repetition, rhythmic dialogue, and internal monologue. The modernist interest in individual

experiences and subjective perceptions is reflected in the movement's emphasis on personal introspection, as well as its concentration on sensory sensations.

In addition, the mention of parties and Peter's ideas about them might be understood as modernist worries over the superficiality of social gatherings. Modernist writers frequently criticized conventional social structures and rituals, calling into question the worth of these practices while also investigating the alienation and separation that may result from participating in them. In a nutshell, this paragraph from *Mrs. Dalloway* offers an example of several different literary strategies and topics. The introspective and reflective atmosphere is helped along by elements such as repetition and rhythm, as well as images of the senses. When the passage is examined through the lens of modernism as a theoretical framework, it can be found that it coincides with some of the movement's defining qualities, such as stream of consciousness and the investigation of individual experiences and societal criticisms.

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, when one hears a clock strike a specific hour, there is another aspect that implies the author's presence. At this point, the author will go from one persona to another, either spatially or temporally:

The clock began striking. The young man had killed himself; but she did not pity him; with the clock striking the hour, one, two, three, she did not pity him, with all this going on. There! the old lady had put out her light! the whole house was dark now with this going on, she repeated, and the words came to her, Fear no more the heat of the sun. She must go back to them. But what an extraordinary night! (Woolf, 2003, p. 207)

This paragraph has many of the hallmarks of modernism. The character's ideas run unimpeded, capturing their instantaneous observations and musings, a hallmark of the stream-of-consciousness writing style. Some phrases, such 'she did not pity him' and 'with this going on,' are repeated many times to emphasize the repetitious and splintered character of modernist thought.

The modernist preoccupation with individual experience and the investigation of consciousness is reflected in the novel's central character's acute awareness of her surroundings. The allusion to Shakespeare's sonnet provides a richer, more nuanced reading of the character's ideas by establishing a connection to a larger cultural and literary canon. In general, this quote exemplifies the modernist preoccupation with self-reflection, individuality of perception, and the investigation of existential issues. The reader is invited to explore the character's inner thoughts and the nuances of the human experience through the lens of this unusual night, with its heightened awareness and the juxtaposition of life and death.

Another distinguishing feature of Woolf's works is the author's frequent use of metaphors and other figures of speech. The landscape is an example of the kind of description that stands outside the narrative and serves to slow the action down. The environment itself is unique in that it may be transferred from one novel to another or even from one author to another without affecting the story's progression:

Signs were interchanged, when, as if to fulfil some scheme arranged already, now a summit dwindled, now a whole block of pyramidal size which had kept its station inalterably advanced into the midst or gravely led the procession to fresh anchorage. Fixed though they seemed at their posts, at rest in perfect unanimity, nothing could be fresher, freer, more sensitive superficially than the snow-white or gold-kindled surface. (Woolf, 2003, p. 155)

The initial sentence, 'Signs were interchanged,' evokes a state of bewilderment and uncertainty. It suggests a change in the conventional interpretation of symbols and signs. This idea fits well with the modernist push to question established forms of expression and representation. With the addition of 'as if to fulfil some scheme arranged already,' an air of deliberate planning and forethought is established. It signifies a lack of agency or control over the alterations taking place in the signals, and hints that there is a hidden purpose or plan governing these changes. This concept is consistent with the modernist outlook on a world in which meaning is fluid and contingent upon circumstances outside one's control.

Additionally, in *Mrs. Dalloway*, the subsequent depiction of a diminishing peak and an ascending or leading pyramid-shaped block suggests movement in both space and time. A feeling of instability and changeability is evoked by the juxtaposition of images depicting something waning in importance as another rises to take its place. This depiction exemplifies the modernist preoccupation with showing the world as something in constant motion, which calls into question established concepts of chronology, geography, and social order. As the contradictory phrase “Fixed though they seemed at their posts, at rest in perfect unanimity” (Woolf, 2003, p. 155) indicates, a seemingly unsolvable dilemma has arisen. There is a sense of instability and possible disturbance despite the apparent stability and harmony. This contradiction is indicative of the modernist preoccupation with the instability of existing order and the possibility of its dissolution or radical alteration.

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, the importance of sensory perception and individual experience of the world is highlighted by the description of the snow-white or gold-kindled surface as fresh, free, and sensitive. The focus on superficial characteristics indicates a disinterest in diving into the deeper meanings or symbols in favor of examining immediate sensory experiences. This emphasis on the sensual and the transient conveys the modernist preoccupation with the transitory and illusive character of existence and reality. The passage as a whole embodies the modernist perspective by demonstrating a reality that is fractured and fluid, by investigating the ambiguities and uncertainties of perception, and by questioning established conventions of depiction. It perfectly encapsulates the early twentieth-century modernist world view, which employed unusual literary approaches to portray the world as it was.

One of the most cutting-edge works of modernist literature, *Mrs. Dalloway* is a triumph of stream-of-consciousness writing that also places a premium on the individuality of its characters. Woolf’s characters serve as wonderful examples of the modernist ideal of presenting complex human beings rather than flat stereotypes, as seen in more conventional novels. All of the characters’ inner thoughts are conveyed in *Mrs. Dalloway* with the same vividness that characterizes all of Woolf’s earlier modernist works. Another hallmark of modernist writing is the use of shifting

narrative perspectives to shed light on central characters in *Mrs. Dalloway*. Rather than being a passive observer, the reader actively participates in this dynamic presentation by reconstructing the ultimate multi-dimensional images of these characters.

There is also a lack of clarity between overt and covert statements in *Mrs. Dalloway*. It is easy to get lost in the pages, but in the interim, who would not enjoy reading a story that is a little bit out of the ordinary? Woolf went through a tough period and turned to writing as a means of escaping reality; perhaps *Mrs. Dalloway* serves the same purpose for readers. In addition to the link already described, readers may identify with the book on a deeper level by relating to a character, a slice of life, the city of London, an emotion, or a sensation. All of this adds to the novel's appeal. The novel concisely demonstrates that there is no such thing as a unified, knowable human mind. Moreover, individuals are not static, unchanging things that can be grasped by an outsider, and therefore, the chasm between one's own subjective experience and objective reality appears insurmountable. Despite having been published almost a century ago and the fact that the world is constantly changing, the novel manages to remain relevant and current because of the fact that what Virginia Woolf said in 1925 is still true today.

2.2. *Mrs. Dalloway* and the Sense of Change and Disillusionment

The modernist spirit in *Mrs. Dalloway* is best exemplified by the overarching themes of transition and disillusionment in the novel. *Mrs. Dalloway* is dominated by a sense of disappointment in the modernist enterprise, which promises change and development but ultimately brings about ruin. Thus, it may be necessary to grasp the developmental stages of modernity in order to comprehend the experience of disappointment. As Berman argues, "people are just beginning to experience modern life; they hardly know what has hit them. They grope, desperately but half blindly, for an adequate vocabulary; they have little or no sense of a modern public or community within which their trials and hopes can be shared" (1988, pp. 16-17). A conscious effort to alter the status quo distinguishes the French Revolution as the second stage of the modernity project, distinct from the first. This stage is

characterized by a revolutionary and rebellious inclination toward change. As a result of this change, the current public system arises, allowing us to draw parallels between the past and the present. Both the traditional and the cutting-edge can be compared to one another. According to Berman (1988), the twentieth century is generally considered the culmination of the modernization process. This disillusionment with the contemporary world and the modernist agenda is largely attributable to the Great War. It is common knowledge that revolutionary change brings about conflicts between different cultures and civilizations, as well as new forms of evil and destructive technology. As a result of placing their faith in the empty promises of contemporary life, people today are increasingly cynical. This leads to a general awakening from the state of denial and a sense of disenchantment throughout society.

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf gives one of the novel's key characters, Clarissa Dalloway, a voice. Based on Woolf's characterization, it is clear that Clarissa Dalloway, a middle-aged lady in her fifties, is always weighing the pros and cons of her situation and questioning the significance of the decisions she makes. Clarissa's life is shown in detail, from her youth through her marriage, giving the reader a sense of her evolution as a person and inviting them to critically evaluate her ideas. At the outset of the novel, Woolf offers a depiction of Clarissa from the viewpoint of Scrope Purvis, a neighbor of the Dalloways:

She stiffened a little on the kerb, waiting for Durtnall's van to pass. A charming woman, Scrope Purvis thought her (knowing her as one does know people who live next door to one in Westminster); a touch of the bird about her, of the jay, blue-green, light, vivacious, though she was over fifty, and grown very white since her illness. (Woolf, 2003, p. 3)

Clarissa Dalloway's exterior hints at her harsh and anxious personality. As the story develops, readers find that Clarissa's lifelong experiences of transformation and disappointment are responsible for her characterization. It is clear from the very beginning of the work why Woolf uses words like 'stiffen' and 'stern' and 'upright' to describe Clarissa, who is a bundle of contradictions. She has got a little bit of the

bird about her, a dash of vivacity and beauty, but she is also a staunch, righteous lady. The disillusionment she feels in her life may be the source of the shift or irritation illustrated by the contrasts associated with her.

According to Michael H. Whitworth, “The body, to use an image which Woolf favored, is a hard shell covering a vulnerable, soft interior” (Whitworth, 2009, p. 126). As Whitworth further underscores, “[t]he distinction she draws between her private and public selves develops her earlier reflections about being both ‘Clarissa’ and ‘Mrs. Richard Dalloway’; the idea of composing the disparate elements of the self into a unity is an artistic question” (Whitworth 2009, p. 125). There are tensions between her true nature and the character she presents to the world in order to gain social acceptance. So, in her disappointment, Clarissa fuses together different components of her identity. The protagonist does not reveal her tender heart until she overcomes the socially constructed mask that is her physique.

Woolf implies throughout the novel that Clarissa is rarely able to step back and view her life with objectivity. Helen Southworth explains this phenomenon in *Women and Interruption in Between the Acts*:

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Clarissa stands unseen at a window on the staircase observing her elderly neighbor moving from room to room. From this (liminal) standpoint, Clarissa temporally foregoes her centrality to the major narrative and instead takes on a role peripheral to that of another. From this insecure site or intersection (neither upstairs nor downstairs, inside nor outside) she is able to contemplate her own world and that of the other, and to gain an understanding of the relationship between the two. (Southworth, 2007, p. 50)

The concept of ‘one room’ guides Clarissa’s decisions and actions. When viewed through a new lens, her perspective on her own life may shift. Her behaviors and judgments may seem reasonable from one vantage point, but they might be shown to be irrational from another. Clarissa realizes that her life’s definition is not set in stone, and that there may be other options. In other words, her disappointment in prospective solutions reflects a recognition of the plurality of viewpoints that

characterize relativism. Clarissa's mental disarray may be resolved if she rejects human constructivism and welcomes the inevitable transformation and disappointment that come with its eradication.

Septimus Warren Smith, the second main figure in *Mrs. Dalloway*, embodies the Great War's gloom and transformation. Septimus is an adolescent soldier in the Great War. He suffers from practically everything owing to his dread of feeling nothing after his wartime trauma. He marries Lucrezia, a nice Italian girl he meets at the end of the Great War in Italy, and they start a life together in London. However, watching his friend Evans die and other deadly events derails his sanity, and Septimus complains about not feeling anything anymore:

Septimus Warren Smith, aged about thirty, pale-faced, beak-nosed, wearing brown shoes and a shabby overcoat, with hazel eyes which had that look of apprehension in them which make complete strangers apprehensive too. The world has raised its whip; where will it descend? Everything had come to a standstill. The throb of the motor engines sounded like a pulse irregularly drumming through an entire body. The sun became extraordinarily hot because the motor car had stopped outside Mulberry's shop window; old ladies on the top of omnibuses spread their black parasols; here a green, here a red parasol opened with a little pop. (Woolf, 2003, pp. 11-12)

Woolf chronicles the slow emergence of a traumatic environment in the years following World War I. As Woolf continues her gradual introduction of Clarissa to Septimus, the effects of the Great War and modernity, the quest for the meaning of one's self, and the analysis of the substance of the world take on a darker tone. Change and disillusionment have an effect, as seen by Septimus Smith. Septimus worries that he has lost the ability to feel, yet his introspective inquiries suggest otherwise.

By using Septimus Warren Smith, Woolf represents the modernist mindset's ingrained pessimism, in opposition to institutional entities that remember mistrust. His current state of disarray may be traced back to his experiences in World War I. Septimus's psyche is shattered by the realization that the Great War failed to achieve

its intended aim of delivering justice and peace to humanity. Lucrezia, his wife, tries to help Septimus throughout the narrative, but she doesn't really understand him.

'Look, look, Septimus!' she cried. For Dr Holmes had told her to make her husband (who had nothing whatever seriously the matter with him but was a little out of sorts) take an interest in things outside himself. For she could stand it no longer. Dr Holmes might say there was nothing the matter. Far rather would she that he were dead! She could not sit beside him when he stared so and did not see her and make everything terrible; sky and tree, children playing, dragging carts, blowing whistles, falling down; all were terrible. (Woolf, 2003, pp. 16-17)

Woolf emphasizes the inadequacy of understanding the significance of one's own mental health. In this regard, the conventional approach is represented by Lucrezia and Dr. Holmes. Their created reality is grounded on a material plane, in outward appearances, as narrated by Woolf. Because she has trouble processing bipartite judgments, Lucrezia has a hard time classifying Septimus' state. Because she cannot help but regard Septimus as a heroic soldier, Lucrezia is unable to accept him as 'himself,' Septimus. Within a modernist framework, Lucrezia's critical assessment of Septimus is illusory since she is so reliant on Dr. Holmes and her limited comprehension of Septimus.

By using Septimus, Woolf draws attention to the contentious problems with contemporary philosophy. His internal debates shed light on a problem of global significance:

He, Septimus, was alone, called forth in advance of the mass of men to hear the truth, to learn the meaning, which now at last, after the toils of civilization – Greeks, Romans, Shakespeare, Darwin, and now himself – was given whole to ... 'To whom?' he asked aloud. 'To the Prime Minister,' the voices which rustled above his head replied. (Woolf, 2003, p. 51)

Septimus struggles with his masculine identity because he has no one in his life who can relate to him. People around him think he is crazy, and they discount the impact

of his combat trauma. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Septimus is given a voice by Woolf, indicating his position as a victim. Septimus believes that the Cabinet and the Prime Minister need to appreciate the significance of nature and love after the devastation caused by the Great War and other events deemed politically significant. It turns out that political debates over the conflict and proposed solutions amount to little more than smoke and mirrors. The post-World War I shift not only exposes the disappointment brought on by misdirected attention but also provides clues as to where and how civilization might be investigated.

The erroneous principles of the modernity project have devastated the world in which Septimus was raised. He has a message to send but cannot share it with anyone because he is not the crazy one. Septimus has only himself for company, and he is all he needs. Taking his life is a metaphor for spreading the word. Septimus, a soldier and victim of modernity's grim end, avoids contact with the outside world to prevent further mental decay.

To conclude, *Mrs. Dalloway* is written as a day in the life of a typical housewife. However, as a modernist novel, it also addresses the disillusionment of contemporary readers. Disillusionment is discussed throughout the novel, and vagueness and incompleteness are ideas that contribute to this debate since they evoke fluidity and relativity rather than conventional rigidity and certainty. Woolf's rejection of the modernity project to impose a single reality on the world is indicative of her disappointment with positivist universalism. Woolf takes a novel approach to illuminate this disillusionment by depicting a scene in the lives of two seemingly average people, a homemaker and a former soldier, both of whom are torn between the ideals of modernity and the reality of their own lives.

3. TO THE LIGHTHOUSE AND MODERNISM

The novel *To the Lighthouse* by Virginia Woolf is discussed in this chapter, along with its place in modernism. Many critics and scholars consider *To the Lighthouse* by Woolf to be a seminal work of modernist literature. The novel, released in 1927, is well-known for its groundbreaking storytelling approach and in-depth examination of the human condition. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there was a literary and artistic movement known as modernism. “Modernism was more characterized by fragmentation and a questioning of what might previously prevail in academia” (Gale & Deeney, 2012, p. XIX). It was distinguished by its drastic departure from conventional forms and norms, as well as its emphasis on experimentation, fragmentation, and the primacy of the individual experience. The goal of modernist writers was to convey the fractured state of mind and the ambiguities of the modern environment.

Woolf made substantial contributions to modernism as a writer. She was, without a doubt, an extremely important figure in literary modernism. Woolf is largely considered to be one of the most influential authors of the twentieth century. As previously addressed, her novels are notable for their use of stream-of-consciousness writing, character introspection, and unique narrative approaches. The depiction of human cognition and the intricacies of human relationships were of great fascination to Woolf. Her prose often took the form of stream-of-consciousness narration, in which the story is told in a way that closely mirrors the characters’ actual thoughts and feelings. As Petry claims, “Virginia Woolf uses the stream of consciousness narration which [is] unlike traditional linear narration” (2001, p. 1). By employing this strategy, Woolf was able to examine the inner workings of her characters’ minds and the subjective sensations they experienced.

The novel *To the Lighthouse* also has many of the traits that define modernist writing. Its stream-of-consciousness style of storytelling and focus on the individual’s experience are in keeping with modernist ideals. As Barrish asserts, “Stream-of-consciousness style attempts to give readers access to a more primal and immediate level of individual experience” (2011, p. 197). Woolf’s novel presents an innovative approach to depicting the intricacies of modern life and the human mind.

The prominence of the novel in the modernist canon may be attributable to the novel's creative narrative methods and its examination of issues relevant to modernist concerns. The novel's creative merits and its role in the evolution of modernist literature are still being researched and lauded today. *To the Lighthouse* is an important piece of modernist literature because it exemplifies Woolf's experimental storytelling technique and her investigation of the individual experience. The original topics and methods found in the novel have ensured its position in the modernist canon and continue to pique the interest of readers and critics.

3.1. A Modernist Reading of *To the Lighthouse*

To the Lighthouse examines the challenges that come with living in the modern world. It is a manifestation of how the external environment influences our awareness. In her analysis of interpersonal connections, Woolf embodies many of the distinguishing characteristics of the modernist literary movement, including the stream-of-consciousness writing style, multiple storylines, symbolism, allusions, the societal upheaval caused by war, and personal issues, among many others. The story exposes the emotional complexity of a woman who serves as a bridge between various members of her own family and other individuals.

The entire work is written in a way that is described as a stream of consciousness. Stream of consciousness is a method for researching the unconscious processes underlying interpersonal interactions, and it is also a tool that can be employed to experiment with language. Woolf explores topics that extend beyond the tumultuous relationship between Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay and their mundane lives. While Mr. Ramsay, a man of reason and philosophy, has difficulty expressing his emotions and seems emotionally detached from his children, Mrs. Ramsay takes care of the family and any guests who may be present. This technique helps in acquiring an understanding of the inner workings of the human mind, as well as the emotional responses of individuals to a variety of circumstances. As Harley argues, "Stream of consciousness refers to the flow of thoughts, feelings, [and] ideas of the characters" (2021, p. 132). The characters' thoughts and emotions flow in their own unique way throughout the narrative, representing the internal states of mind that

they have experienced, as well as their anxieties, which likely stem from a young age.

In the novel *To the Lighthouse*, Woolf makes heavy use of stream of consciousness as a literary device. Woolf's characters frequently share their ideas, views, and experiences with the reader in an unfiltered and uninterrupted manner, which eliminates the need for any kind of filter or pause in the action. As explained by Bosseaux, “[i]n the mind of an individual at a given moment his stream of consciousness is a mixture of all the levels of awareness, an unending flow of sensations, thoughts, associations, memories, reflections” (2007, p. 101). Woolf deftly shifts between several points of view, providing the reader with the opportunity to experience the world from the perspectives of a variety of different people. For instance, the novel's prologue takes place within Mrs. Ramsay's head, recording her fleeting thoughts on the dinner table arrangement and the people she observes. Through the use of stream of consciousness, the characters are allowed to reflect inward and reveal the most personal thoughts and emotions they are experiencing. During a stream-of-consciousness narration, thoughts and impressions are often conveyed to the reader in a disconnected and nonlinear way. The characters' thoughts will likely jump around from subject to subject in an associative manner as they go about their day. This strategy is reflective of the unpredictable and ever-changing nature of the human mind.

Furthermore, the lines in the novel *To the Lighthouse* by Woolf, “‘Yes, of course, if it’s fine tomorrow,’ said Mrs Ramsay. ‘But you’ll have to be up with the lark,’ she added” (Woolf, 1999, p. 3), are widely regarded as a seminal example of literary modernism. In this excerpt, Mrs. Ramsay suggests that the characters do something the next day if the weather is nice in response to a request or suggestion made by another character. Consider this citation within the framework of modernism. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, modernism arose as a literary and creative movement in response to the rapidly evolving social, cultural, and technical conditions of the time. It was an attempt to find new methods to depict the world, the human mind, and the human experience by moving away from canonical forms. Storytelling, continuity, stream of consciousness, and unusual vocabulary were all tools of the modernist writer's trade. Some aspects of the

paragraph cited above are consistent with modernist ideals. To begin, the choppy conversational exchanges are typical of modernist depictions of disjointed feelings and thoughts. Woolf's prose frequently explores mental processes, capturing characters' transient, fragmentary thoughts and feelings. One of the hallmarks of modernist writing is its emphasis on the ephemeral; the line 'if it's fine tomorrow' evokes this feeling well. Many modernist authors actively sought out ambiguity and cast doubt on long-held assumptions of absolute truth. It is clear from Mrs. Ramsay's reply that the weather is just one of many external elements that might throw a wrench into plans and activities.

The line 'up with the lark' is yet another example of a phrase that emphasizes an early morning rise. It represents a break with old ideas surrounding time and routine since modernist authors frequently did their best to question long-held assumptions and standards. Being 'up with the lark' denotes independence from conventional norms and an acceptance of a more personal, flexible view of time. This little excerpt displays several defining characteristics of modernist writing. It exemplifies a break from traditional understandings of time and routine through its disjointed narrative structure, an air of unpredictability, and an emphasis on chance. These features further the modernist aesthetic and its investigation of the nuances of human awareness and individual experience.

What is more, the lines in *To the Lighthouse*, "‘Hated that. Hated her. Hated him,’ Lily thought, for some reason (she could not explain why), intensely, passionately, without seeing any of them" (Woolf, 1999, p. 27), exemplify the stream-of-consciousness style of writing typical of modernist works. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a new literary and creative movement called modernism evolved, marked by a break from conventional forms and an emphasis on protagonists' internal monologues and first-person perspectives. This paragraph is written in a stream-of-consciousness style, which is reflected in the disconnected and jumbled presentation of Lily's ideas. The term 'hated' is used many times to illustrate how strongly Lily feels about the people she cites. The inexplicability of Lily's emotions contributes to the ambiguity and complexity characteristic of many modernist works.

Moreover, Lily's thoughts are entirely internal, and the fact that she can see any of them 'without seeing any of them' emphasizes her disconnection from the outside world and her singular focus on her feelings. Modernist literature is characterized by its distancing from objective truth and its prioritization of individual experience; its authors aimed to probe the depths of the human psyche and test the limits of traditional storytelling. By displaying a fragmented and intimate style that seeks to represent the character's inner thoughts and subjective feelings, this novel exhibits the modernist's approach to depictions of the complexity of human cognition and emotions.

Fragmentation is also regarded as one of the hallmarks of modernism, as revealed in the lines, "So she took her purse and fumbled in it, and took out a pencil, and scribbled O thin men of Haddo, O men with your poems!" (Woolf, 1999, p. 12). This statement exemplifies the thought process of the character since it is how the protagonist, Mrs. Ramsay, reacts to a fleeting notion by writing it down in her pocketbook in the form of a line of poetry. Individualism and the splintering of society, including the fragmented situation of the modern world, are often reflected in the literature of the modernist period, which commonly depicts identities and narratives that have been shattered. It is feasible to take as fact that Mrs. Ramsay wakes up and thinks about her husband as an expression of her autonomous agency as she simultaneously engages in self-examination and strives to comprehend her role in her marriage. This interpretation is plausible because the woman is engaging in self-examination and is also seeking to understand her place in her marriage.

Another example is vividly portrayed by Woolf in *To the Lighthouse*: "So she got up after a time and walked to and fro, tried to think how she could make her husband happy" (Woolf, 1999, p. 12). The fact that a character's actions and ideas from the past appear to be mirrored in the remark provides evidence that the character is in a reflective frame of mind. To look at it from the perspective of modernism, we may consider some of the literary movement's distinguishing characteristics and concerns. This line illustrates the thought process and inner dialogue of the character while adhering to the modernist aesthetic, which aims to convey the flow of thoughts and perceptions as they simultaneously occur in the character's mind.

In addition, the fragmented structure of the sentence, with its short phrases and lack of linking words, is evocative of the movement in modernist writing toward a nonlinear and nonchronological narrative. This can be seen in the fractured shape of the sentence. The focus that is placed throughout the novel on the protagonist's internal thoughts and emotions is one way to illustrate the importance of the individual's experience, often known as subjectivity, in modernist writing. The limits of objective reality and the scope of one's awareness were two of the most common questions modernist writers set out to answer.

Consequently, the modernist genre places a traditional emphasis on the mind and the processes that occur inside it, and the protagonist's introspection and study into the cause of her husband's happiness are both examples of this emphasis. Even though these emotions are not explicitly expressed, alienation and disappointment are common emotions experienced by characters in modernist literature. The author's or artist's sense of separation from traditional standards and societal mores, as well as their sense of disappointment in such values and mores, is a key theme in modernist literature. Introspection, fragmentation, stream of consciousness, and psychological depth are all hallmarks of modernist literature, and they are all present in this particular novel in their purest forms. This reflects one of the more common modernist concerns, which is to investigate the inner workings of the human mind as well as the complexities of interpersonal relationships:

What is the meaning of life? That was all – a simple question; one that tended to close in on one with years. The great revelation had never come. The great revelation perhaps never did come. Instead, there were little daily miracles, illuminations, matches struck unexpectedly in the dark; here was one. (Woolf, 1999, p. 120)

The modernist aesthetic and intellectual movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries finds resonance with these ideas. The modernist movement was marked by a rejection of canonical forms and an attempt to reflect the multifaceted complexity of the human experience. It accepted the notion that significance may be gleaned from one's everyday experiences. The meaning of life, from this perspective, is not a universal truth to be uncovered, but, rather, an individual experience. This

implies that one might discover meaning and purpose in life by paying attention to the little, unexpected moments of beauty and insight, which is strikingly flourished by Woolf in *To the Lighthouse*:

For now, she need not think about anybody. She could be herself, by herself. And that was what now she often felt the need of – to think; well not even to think. To be silent; to be alone. All the being and the doing, expansive, glittering, vocal, evaporated; and one shrunk, with a sense of solemnity, to being oneself, a wedge-shaped core of darkness, something invisible to others. (Woolf, 1999, p. 45)

The longing for isolation and introspection, two key themes in modernist writing, are captured in the thoughts and feelings of the protagonist. The first words of the phrase, 'For now she need not think about anybody,' relate to a brief break from the obligations and expectations of society. The character can focus on herself because she is no longer forced to consider other people. Self-focus is heavily emphasized in modernism, which commonly examines human awareness and subjective experiences. The novel goes on to express the character's desire to be alone and to be herself. Modernism's emphasis on self-reflection and self-discovery may be seen in this demand for solitude and introspection. To be herself without masks, the main character seeks a vacation from her constant engagement with the outside world.

In addition, the phrases 'being silent' and 'not even to think' suggest a desire for a distraction-free, calm life, apart from the noise and chaos of everyday life. This is compatible with modernist writers' exploration of the inner self and the search for importance outside of society's superficialities. The word 'evaporated' refers to the removal of unnecessary components and a return to the more basic aspects of life. It describes the 'being and the doing, expansive, glittering, vocal,' characterized as having 'evaporated.' The character feels a seriousness in this contemplative mood that stresses the severity and significance of understanding one's own identity. This quote is a superb illustration of the themes of solitude, reflection, and the search for authenticity that are prevalent in modernist literature. The investigation of the compulsion to retreat from social expectations and engage in introspection brings to light the complexity of individual identity and the inner workings of the human

mind.

3.2. Fragmentation in *To the Lighthouse*

In *To the Lighthouse*, the term fragmentation refers to the disintegration or splintering apart of various encounters, opinions, and memories. By revealing the interior thoughts and points of view of numerous people, Woolf exposes the shattered psyche of those individuals while illuminating the subjective side of reality: “Woolf’s concerns about managing fragmentation without falling into conventional or simplistic notions of unity” (de Gay, 2006, p. 201). One of Woolf’s primary preoccupations was the depiction of the fragmented nature of consciousness. In her novel *To the Lighthouse*, for instance, Woolf used the stream-of-consciousness technique to delve inside her protagonists’ minds and capture the ebb and flow of their thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Woolf captures the richness and complexity of these experiences without trying to stuff them into an orderly and cohesive form, instead depicting their fragmented state of mind.

One technique Woolf utilizes to depict disintegration is the stream-of-consciousness story. The story often enters the characters’ minds, providing a steady stream of emotions, memories, and thoughts. This stream-of-consciousness approach frequently lacks a sequential or coherent structure, reflecting the fragmented nature of human thinking. Another compelling aspect of the novel is the fragmentation of time. Woolf employs a nonlinear narrative by flitting between several periods and points of view without jarring changes: “Modernist narrative innovators such as Virginia Woolf and James Joyce have chosen for their complex and contradictory timeframes, their experimentation with nonlinear narrative form” (Gorman, & Eaglestone, 2019, p. 27). This nonsequential narrative structure reflects the fact that our memories and thoughts frequently lack a clear sequence and instead persist as disjointed fragments of the past.

Consequently, the employment of several narrators by Woolf intensifies the sense of fragmentation. Each character expresses a distinct point of view, which may differ or clash with those of others. The reader is exposed to a patchwork of varied experiences and points of view as a result of the multiplicity of voices, which adds to the narrative’s disjointed nature. Characters often have fragmented and

unacknowledged ideas and desires, making it difficult for them to completely understand and relate to one another. The disorientation and anguish of modern existence are often reflected in the fragmented writing of today's authors: "Some modern authors use fragmentation as reflective of the confusion and pain of modern life" (Johnson & Pugh, 2013, p. 57). This strategy includes slicing stories, characters, or topics into unrelated chunks to reflect the disjointed quality of modern life. Authors use fragmentation to reflect the complexity of contemporary life and to induce feelings of bewilderment and alienation.

The emphasis on the characters' inner lives and perspectives, as captured in the aforementioned statement, is a defining feature of modernist literature. One of the novel's main characters, Mrs. Ramsay, is shown here as having inner peace and contentment. These statements allude to an inward sense of satisfaction that Mrs. Ramsay appears to create. The line, "In short, Mrs. Ramsay seemed to bring upon her own head some beam of satisfaction, of agreement, of rest" (Woolf, 1999, p. 190), illustrates how subjective and shattered readers perceptions are. It implies that people have distinct ways of perceiving reality, and that these methods are often disjointed and fractured.

Furthermore, the depiction fits nicely with modernism's emphasis on demonstrating the multifaceted and subjective nature of the human experience. Modernist literature generally focuses on the inner lives of its characters rather than merely depicting their interactions with the world around them. Insight into Mrs. Ramsay's mind and her capacity for inner peace is hinted at in this line. The usage of 'seemed' emphasizes just how fleeting these feelings of contentment, agreement, and rest are. To highlight the limitations of language and the difficulties of fully conveying the richness of the human experience, modernist writers frequently welcomed ambiguity and doubt. Mrs. Ramsay's level of happiness may be transitory and difficult to pin down, as shown by the statement. The phrase's analysis within the framework of modernism exemplifies the movement's concern with the examination of the inner life and the complexities of the human mind.

What is more, fragmentation plays a major role in revealing the fragmented state of the characters and their mental state at a given time: "Nothing is simply one

thing" (Woolf, 1999, p. 5). In the context of modernism and dissolution, the quote serves as a lyrical illustration of the movement's basic tenets and aesthetic leanings. The social, political, and technological changes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries prompted the modernist movement. The performing arts, visual arts, musical composition, and architectural design were all a part of it. One of the distinguishing features of modernism was its rejection of traditional, linear narratives and predefined interpretations. As Ambanasom argues, "Modernist writers reject traditional values and assumptions" (2009, p. 167). Contemporary artists sought to challenge the viewer's preconceived notions of reality by including a plethora of perspectives in their works. They believed there was no easy way to categorize or explain the world.

In addition, the adage 'Nothing is simply one thing' suggests that there is more than meets the eye, and that it is impossible to reduce the complexity of reality to a simple formula. Modernist artists investigated the idea via experiments with abstract painting, non-narrative storytelling, stream-of-consciousness writing, and dissonant musical compositions. The fragmentation, multiplicity of meanings, and rejection of dogmatic interpretations espoused by the dictum 'Nothing is simply one thing' are all hallmarks of the modernist era. It captures the spirit of a cultural shift that sought to challenge received knowledge and delve into the complexities of the human experience.

But what after all is one night? A short space, especially when the darkness dims so soon, and so soon a bird sings, a cock crows, or a faint green quickens, like a turning leaf, in the hollow of the wave. (Woolf, 1999, p. 5)

These lines have a disjointed structure, with several seemingly unrelated sentences and imagery. The disjointedness is reminiscent of the modernist method of depicting the subjective and disjointed character of human awareness. Disjointed perceptions, where transient events and experiences are captured, are conveyed through the sudden shifts from one concept or picture to the next. The text reflects how we see time, and how quickly it passes. Subjective temporality and the ephemeral nature of human memory were common themes in the works of modernist authors. The question 'But what after all is one night?' suggests dissatisfaction with traditional

concepts of time and a desire to explore new temporal views by calling into question the relevance of a single night in the framework of existence. From a modernist point of view, the paragraph captures the intricacies and the transience of human life through its emphasis on subjective experience, the study of time and memory, and the use of fragmented imagery and metaphor.

Furthermore, a universal and unchanging view of reality is rejected within the modernist framework: “So that was the Lighthouse, was it? No, the other was also the Lighthouse. For nothing was simply one thing” (Woolf, 1999, p. 216). Multiple points of view, splintered stories, and individual experiences were common themes in the works of modernist intellectuals, artists, and authors. The denial of a single, definitive interpretation is mirrored in the statement’s claim that ‘nothing was simply one thing.’ The sentence doubles down on this concept by referring to ‘the Lighthouse’ twice. The phrase is consistent with modernist ideas of ambiguity and plurality, since it suggests that there are several ways of understanding what ‘the Lighthouse’ signifies. It implies that the meaning of the Lighthouse, both as a physical structure and as a metaphor, might vary depending on who is interpreting it.

Consequently, this openness to many readings and shifting interpretations is a hallmark of modernist literature and art. Readers and viewers of modernist works are typically prompted to think critically about the material at hand, challenging them to explore new perspectives and examine long-accepted dogma. The phrase as a whole illustrates the modernist world view, which prefers various interpretations and a more nuanced view of reality over a single, definitive position. It accepts the notion that there is no one correct interpretation of everything, and that meaning is fluid and ever-changing.

A break from conventional, sequential storytelling is a major aspect of modernist writing, and this is explored through fragmented encounters. The author uses a sequence of strikingly concise images to convey the fleeting nature of a single night. By emphasizing how quickly time passes, and implying disillusionment or discontent with its transience, the phrase ‘so soon’ is repeated several times. The coming of dawn is implied by the rapid fading of night, the sound of a bird singing, and the crowing of a cock, signaling the end of night. These natural occurrences underscore

the temporary nature of night by serving as time markers. A delicate, temporary shift in nature is shown as “a faint green quickens, like a turning leaf, in the hollow of the wave,” further stressing the ephemeral character of the event. The figurative language and openness of the images in this piece are hallmarks of modernist writing. The question “But what, after all, is one night?” suggests some sort of introspection on the value of a single night. It prompts deep reflection on the transience of life and the essence of time. The emphasis on transitory sensations and fragmentary imagery and the reflection on existential concerns are all hallmarks of modernist sensibility, which this paragraph exhibits. As is typical of most modernist writing, it prompts contemplation on life’s fleeting nature and the inevitable march of time.

3.3. The Consequences of War in *To the Lighthouse*

Although there are no actual battle scenes or themes in the novel *To the Lighthouse*, it does explore the effects of World War I on the public’s psyche and the political climate of the early twentieth century: “*To the Lighthouse* was first published in 1927 by Hogarth Press and was Woolf’s best-selling work to date. It is considered a masterpiece of modernist literature and remains a hugely respected work” (Woolf, 2017, p. 2). Set before, during, and after World War I, this novel is a character-driven drama that delves deep into the protagonists’ inner lives and complex psyches. The novel may be divided into three sections. Themes such as patience, the consequences of the war, fragmentation, and tranquility are explored. The lighthouse itself becomes a metaphor for guidance and illumination. Woolf digs into how the war changed society, how painful the losses were, and how vital the community was in the aftermath. *To the Lighthouse* is a complex and reflective novel that examines the effects of war on both individuals and society, depicting the fragility and power of the human spirit in the face of great change.

The portion of *To the Lighthouse* titled ‘Time Passes’ is situated far from the first and last sections of the novel. As Coudert asserts, “[t]he middle section of *To the Lighthouse*, Time Passes, contains a veiled reference to the first World War” (1996, p. 3). The 10 years that pass between the Ramsay family’s trips to the lighthouse are bridged by this interlude. Time’s unrelenting passage and the catastrophic effects it

has on the physical and mental landscape highlight this segment. Midway through the novel, Woolf makes a passing allusion to World War I, which adds depth to her analysis of the human condition and the passage of time. By highlighting themes of transience and the substantial effect of external events on individual lives, Woolf lends the novel a sense of historical and social awareness.

Finding meaning in a chaotic and fragmented world, with an emphasis on one's personal experience, was an existential concern for many modernist thinkers: "What is the meaning of life? That was all – a simple question; one that tended to close in on one with years, the great revelation had never come. The great revelation perhaps never did come" (Woolf, 1999, p. 120). Again, these lines fit within this existentialist world view, since they also stress the pointlessness of trying to define the meaning of life. The world depicted by modernists sometimes seemed fragmented and alienating because of its focus on isolation from the self, other people, and larger systems. The quotation's lack of a 'great revelation' hints at a lack of clarity or unity regarding the purpose of life, suggesting that this fragmented feature of existence is to blame.

Also, in general, modernists viewed conventional wisdom and customs with skepticism and disappointment. According to this interpretation, the quote's pessimism surrounding the arrival of a 'great revelation' suggests that traditional sources of spirituality and meaning cannot provide sufficient answers.

Typical of the modernist bent toward introspection, the quote centers on the perspective of the reader and the search for meaning. Given its rejection of eternal truths and fixed meanings, modernism fostered uncertainty and ambiguity. The modernist tendency to embrace the unknown and the notion that the meaning of life may be complex or subjective is reflected in the quote's opacity and the thought that the 'great revelation' may never occur. It captures the feeling of searching for solutions to the meaning of life yet coming up empty-handed.

The modernist aesthetic frequently depicts the disjointed character of the human experience, which is significant in the lines "For there are moments when one can neither think nor feel. And if one can neither think nor feel, she thought, where is one?" (Woolf, 1999, p. 225). The incapacity to think or feel is a symptom of modern

life's disjointed and isolating nature. According to this reading, the sentence alludes to the alienation and existential crises that certain people in modern society may feel. Modernist literature, particularly stream-of-consciousness writing, delves into the minds of its protagonists and antagonists. A character's short lapse or suspension of conscious thinking, in which the character's stream of awareness temporarily ceases to flow, may be represented by the idea that one can neither think nor feel. Because of this, the story may become confusing or unclear.

3.4. *To the Lighthouse* and the Sense of Change and Disillusionment

Woolf paints a picture of change and disappointment through characters' lives in the novel. The summer residents of Skye, the Ramsay family, go through many changes as the years pass. Mrs. Ramsay, the matriarch of the household, represents the stereotypically strong and nurturing female role model. The family dynamic is thrown off kilter, and everyone is filled with disillusionment and uncertainty after her untimely demise. "Woolf employed the stream-of-consciousness technique in her novels" (Harris, 1991, p. 155). In other words, Woolf's use of the stream-of-consciousness writing style adds depth to the exploration of transformation and disillusionment in the novel. The fragmentary and subjective presentation of the character's thoughts and perceptions reflects the fluid and ever-changing nature of the characters' experiences. Woolf can get to the heart of her characters and their ideas and feelings in this manner, depicting their evolving world views and the confusing consequences of time and disappointment. In *To the Lighthouse*, Woolf delves into the nuances of the human condition, including the inevitability of growth and development, as well as the crushing weight of disappointment. The ups and downs the characters go through mirror the human condition as a whole, illuminating the perilous nature of human connections, the inevitable march of time, and the difficulty of achieving lasting happiness in a world that is always shifting.

In addition, there was widespread disappointment with traditional doctrines and epic stories during the modernist era. The modernists' rejection of a single, all-encompassing revelation that would bring ultimate meaning or truth is central to their philosophical stance. They aimed to depict the complexities, ambiguities, and precariousness of life by emphasizing its fragmented aspects: "The great revelation

had never come. The great revelation perhaps never did come. Instead there were little daily miracles, illuminations, matches struck unexpectedly in the dark" (Woolf, 2007, p. 361). Again, according to this interpretation, the lack of a 'great revelation' indicates skepticism about the existence of a final, comprehensive truth. Instead, we are encouraged to pay attention to the occasional flashes of insight and understanding that come unpredictably in our daily lives. The 'little daily miracles' imply that wisdom and purpose may be gleaned from the commonplace.

Furthermore, the flashes of insight are not to be anticipated or planned for, and the metaphor of 'matches struck unexpectedly in the dark' emphasizes this point. They occur unexpectedly, like fleeting moments of insight or illumination. This viewpoint coincides with the modernist view that truth and meaning are frequently elusive, incomplete, and individual. Overall, the lines emphasizes the avoidance of overarching stories in favor of a focus on the mundane and fleeting. It is reflective of the modernist outlook, which places value on uncertainty and the ambiguity of life. It alludes to the disappointment of hoping for radical transformation but only seeing modest improvement.

One of modernism's distinguishing characteristics was its denial of universal truth. Modernists, on the other hand, frequently welcomed subjectivity, relativism, and competing viewpoints. The line in the novel, "For nothing was simply one thing. The other Lighthouse was true too" (Woolf, 1999, p. 216), is a statement often used to describe the central tenet of modernism. By implying 'the other Lighthouse was true too,' the author alludes to a stance typical of the movement, which rejects the idea that there is one single, unchanging truth. Modernism, as a cultural, artistic, and literary movement, attempted to challenge canonical modes of expression in favor of more experimental approaches. This sentiment is reflected in the line 'nothing was simply one thing.' It implies that reality is multifaceted, malleable, and subjective.

Moreover, the phrase 'The other Lighthouse' suggests there is more than one story being told. It is important to note that the quote does not negate the truth of 'The other Lighthouse,' but instead emphasizes the possibility of several meanings. Furthermore, modernism was distinguished by an interest in the psyche and the investigation of the first-person perspective. The emphasis on alternative realities is

consistent with this tenet of modernism, which holds that one's understanding of the truth may vary from person to person. The line exemplifies the modernist attitude toward uncertainty, the multiplicity of interpretation, and the complexity of the human experience. It highlights the modernist movement's key ideas of relativity and the investigation of individual experience:

It was a splendid mind. For if thought is like the keyboard of a piano, divided into so many notes, or like the alphabet is ranged in twenty-six letters all in order, then his splendid mind had no sort of difficulty in running over those letters one by one, firmly and accurately, until it had reached, say, the letter Q. He reached Q. Very few people in the whole of England ever reach Q. (Woolf, 2007, p. 278)

The lines imply that the person being referred to has an exceptionally sharp intellect. The analogy to a musical keyboard with its notes or the alphabet with its letters suggests that the person's mind absorbs information in a straightforward, methodical fashion. The remark indicates that the person's intelligence is far superior to that of the average English citizen because he or she has reached the letter 'Q,' which is portrayed as a great achievement.

To conclude, Woolf explores a variety of modernist techniques and issues in *To the Lighthouse*, and she also experiments with and explores some modernist literary devices. An emphasis on the individual experience and the interior lives of characters is one of the defining characteristics of the modernist movement in literary history. Woolf utilizes a form of storytelling called stream of consciousness to transport the reader deep inside the thoughts of her characters, where the reader may sense the disconnected and nonlinear mental processes the characters are going through. Woolf exploits a wide variety of narrative techniques and inquiries into various subjective experiences in order to investigate the complexity and fluidity of the human mind. The experimental use of language, imagery, and symbolism that is so prevalent in *To the Lighthouse* is a characteristic of modernist writing. In a nutshell, *To the Lighthouse* by Virginia Woolf is a seminal work of modernist literature that dives profoundly into the human condition within the context of a world that is in a state of constant change.

CONCLUSION

Literary modernism developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a critical response to the rapidly evolving cultural, technical, and social context of the time. Focusing on exploration, invention, and individualism, it deliberately rejects conventional forms and norms. The goal of modernist authors was to portray the modern world in all its disjointed, complicated, and often chaotic glory. In place of conventional literature's linear plots, black-and-white morality, and consistent characters, postmodern writers celebrated ambiguity, uncertainty, and subjective experiences. The rapid industrialization and urbanization of the time, as well as the devastation of World War I, contributed to the disappointment and fear modernism portrayed. Fragmentation, nonlinear storytelling, and varying points of view are common in modernist writings, which subvert canonical narrative conventions. They are symbolic of the splintered and chaotic aspects of contemporary existence.

In addition, stream of consciousness is a literary method used by modernist authors to reveal the subjective experiences of their protagonists. This style conveys a character's thoughts in a seamless stream, without the use of typical paragraph breaks or punctuation. Modernist literature is known for its use of experimental language and forms. Novel storytelling approaches were explored, including shifting perspectives, unreliable narrators, and the use of different media formats. To express different meanings, modernist writers experimented with language, grammar, and typography. A focus on characters' subjective experiences and the significance of individual awareness was a major theme in modernist writing. The focus was squarely on the thoughts and feelings of the characters and the worlds they inhabited.

Modernist authors frequently questioned and rejected established norms in society, morality, and art. They challenged accepted views and critiqued longstanding institutions. Authors like James Joyce and Virginia Woolf are a part of the modernist canon. In their own unique way, all of the modernist authors helped to shape the modernist canon.

Virginia Woolf is commonly considered to be among the most influential modernist authors of the twentieth century. Through her experimental narrative strategies, investigations of consciousness, and feminist viewpoints, she significantly

impacted the growth of modernist literature. Woolf defied established literary norms and dove deep into her characters' inner lives, reflecting the concerns and themes of the modernist movement. Woolf's stream-of-consciousness storytelling style is one of the hallmarks of her modernist works.

Consequently, her works, such as *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, capture characters' streams of consciousness in a way that reflects the complexities and contradictions of the human experience. Woolf's goal in revealing her characters' thoughts was to demonstrate the malleability and individuality of human perception. Woolf's methods of storytelling pushed against the norms of conventional fiction by focusing on the investigation of characters' interior lives and the relativity of objective truth. Woolf's groundbreaking narrative techniques, examination of the mind, and feminist outlook define her modernist writings. Her creative and introspective writing style helped establish her as a significant figure in the history of modernist literature.

Both *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway* deal with themes of fragmentation and ephemerality, although they were created for very different audiences. In her novel *To the Lighthouse*, Woolf investigates the fragmented nature of human experience and consciousness. The story gives the impression that total cohesion and mutual understanding are impossible to achieve, and that the human experience is characterized by division and an inability to entirely close the gaps that exist between individuals.

On the other hand, in *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf investigates the ideas of disintegration and transience by using the characters' thoughts. The narrative is delivered from the perspectives of several different people, providing the audience the opportunity to understand their thought processes. The disjointed manner in which the narrative is told is a reflection of how difficult it is to establish stable identities and long-lasting friendships. Because of the manner in which the past haunts them, the characters in *Mrs. Dalloway* live their lives in isolation and loneliness. The main character, Clarissa Dalloway, occasionally catches fleeting glimpses of connection and intimacy with other individuals, but they are typically overshadowed by other concerns and issues. The narrative vividly illustrates the

ephemeral quality of human feelings, as well as the difficulties inherent in having open and honest conversations with, and understanding, one another.

The theme of fleeting existence is driven home even further by the investigation of the passage of time in the novel. The events of the story take place over the course of a single day, and much like in real life, the viewpoints and experiences of the characters are always shifting and developing. The narrative alludes to the fact that life is made up of ephemeral moments, and that it is difficult to achieve genuine unity and comprehension in the face of the inherent variety and unpredictability that life entails. In both *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf addresses themes of disintegration and impermanence, demonstrating the disjointedness of human perception and the ephemerality of life. She takes a profound dive into these subjects, presenting fresh questions about identity, time, and connection through imaginative narrative techniques and complex characters employed in her work.

What is more, the stream-of-consciousness style utilized by Woolf in her novels *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway* is a major factor in capturing the characters' internal monologues and insights. By using this method of storytelling, Woolf allows the reader into the minds of her characters and gives them a glimpse into the infinite variations of the human condition. The purpose of the stream-of-consciousness approach, often called an inner monologue, is to portray the unrestrained and unbroken flow of a character's thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Woolf's works do not adhere to a conventional story arc because she places the reader directly inside her characters' heads, capturing their disjointed and illogical ways of thinking. Another important result of using this method is the opportunity to explore the minds of the protagonists. Woolf delves into the characters' inner monologues to expose their hidden motivations, anxieties, and struggles. By looking within, readers may better understand the nuances of human psychology and the richness of their own experiences.

In addition, in *To the Lighthouse*, Woolf uses the stream-of-consciousness method to provide a penetrating look into the psyches of the Ramsay family. The narrative effortlessly switches between several characters' points of view, letting

readers in on their inner lives as they unfold. Mrs. Ramsay's mind, for instance, jumps between ideas about her surroundings and those concerning her relationships, regrets, and the passage of time. This method enhances the story's realism and closeness, making it easier for readers to connect with and comprehend the story's protagonists and antagonists.

Furthermore, Woolf uses the stream-of-consciousness style in *Mrs. Dalloway* to shed light on the psyche of the novel's protagonist, Clarissa Dalloway, and numerous other characters. Their shifting mental and emotional states during the course of a single day in London are well captured in this story. Woolf takes the reader deep inside her characters' minds to expose their fears, longings, memories, and inner conflicts. The fluidity and complexity of human cognition are reflected in her use of the stream-of-consciousness style to describe her characters' inner lives.

Additionally, the stream-of-consciousness style used in both works questions conventional ideas of chronology and story progression. Woolf rejects the strictures of a chronological framework in favor of one that is more fluid and subjective. The thoughts and recollections of the characters are woven together to create a tapestry of events that extends beyond time and space. This circuitous method is reflective of how our thoughts function, where previously stored information might abruptly resurface to color our current understanding. Woolf achieves a more realistic and engaging portrayal of her characters' lives by interweaving many timelines.

Consequently, both *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway* benefit greatly from Woolf's use of the stream-of-consciousness approach, which allows the reader to gain insights into the thoughts of the protagonists. Woolf employs this kind of storytelling to place the reader in the minds of the characters and feel the ebb and flow of their awareness. She uses this method to investigate the hopes, anxieties, and struggles of her characters while throwing off the reader's expectations of how the story should progress. Novels written in a stream-of-consciousness style provide readers with a deep and moving insight into the minds of the protagonists and other characters.

Both *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, two of the canonical masterpieces of modernist literature, explore the issue of fragmentation in different

ways. These books depict the disjointed character of early twentieth-century human experience, awareness, and society through the use of cutting-edge storytelling methods and points of view. Both books heavily employ the stream-of-consciousness writing style, which attempts to mimic the way a character's ideas and impressions flow through their head. By using this method of storytelling, Woolf can convey the disconnected and nonlinear character of the human mind, where thoughts, memories, and experiences often coexist. The storylines in the novels jump about swiftly from one character's point of view to another, highlighting individual characters' unique and, at times, contradictory perspectives.

Woolf also explores the concept that reality is subjective and fractured in her novel *The Waves*. In this novel, every protagonist has a distinct point of view because of the variety of life events they've experienced. Woolf stresses the subjective nature of reality by demonstrating how her characters' perspectives and experiences vary. The narrative's general disjointedness is exacerbated by the characters' subjective realities. Woolf gives numerous points of view on the same events or circumstances in her novels. The stories are told through a variety of characters' perspectives to emphasize their unique perspectives and experiences. This method not only illustrates how disjointed our thoughts are, but also how there is no such thing as absolute truth. It's a further demonstration of how the nature of reality is subjective and open to interpretation.

Nonlinear and splintered timelines characterize the passage of time in these books. Woolf breaks up the typical chronological order of a tale with flashbacks, recollections, and time jumps. The characters' shattered memories and the interconnectivity of different points in time are reflected in the weaving together of past and present events. This representation of time is similar to how our memories work in a fragmented manner and add to the overall feeling of dislocation.

Within the modernist framework, Woolf also investigates the topic of societal disintegration. Both novels reflect the isolation and discrimination that were common in the early twentieth century. Isolation and lack of communication among characters contribute to the overall feeling of social discord and breakdown. The novels stress the splintering effect of societal norms, such as class disparities and gender roles, on

individuals' lives. In a nutshell, the modernist literary traditions of fragmentation are explored in both *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway* through the employment of diverse narrative strategies. Woolf's depiction of early twentieth-century human experience, awareness, and society as complicated and fractured through her use of stream of consciousness, subjective reality, various viewpoints, fragmented time, and societal fragmentation is spot-on.

In addition, *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*, while written to depict very different points in time, both include echoes of the aftereffects of war. War has far-reaching consequences, and while *Mrs. Dalloway* specifically explores the impacts of World War I, *To the Lighthouse* does the same for both wars. Both works exemplify Woolf's modernist perspective by examining the psychological and spiritual consequences of war rather than the physical consequences. In her novel *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf examines how the events of World War I affected her characters and their relationships. Most of the characters in the novel, not just Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Warren Smith, suffer from the mental scars of war. Septimus, a war veteran with shell shock, personifies the terrible mental toll of war. His confused mind stands in stark contrast to the upper-class primness that Clarissa embodies. Woolf explores postwar isolation, social isolation, and the need for society.

On the other hand, *To the Lighthouse* provides a bird's-eye view of the repercussions of war, including both World Wars, in its scope. The struggle completely upends and permanently alters the heroes' lives. The Ramsays' sense of loss and sadness at seeing Mr. Ramsay go to war is emblematic of the profound changes and disruptions wrought by the war. The bleakness of war provides a stark contrast to the themes of transience, uncertainty, and vulnerability in the novel.

Woolf uses innovative narrative techniques in both works to convey the complexity and discordance of her characters' minds. Using techniques such as stream-of-consciousness narrative, interior monologues, and many points of view, the novel vividly depicts the mental toll of war and the characters' difficult searches for purpose and community in a profoundly transformed world. Overall, in *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*, Woolf depicts the fragmentation and dislocation

suffered by people and society as a whole as a result of war by focusing on the psychological and emotional implications. By delving into issues of trauma, grief, isolation, and the pursuit of meaning, Woolf offers a comprehensive understanding of the far-reaching effects of war on the human psyche.

Moreover, the modernist literary and artistic movement emerged in the early twentieth century as a means of coping with the rapid social, cultural, and political developments that after the conclusion of World War I and the growth of the industrial economy. It was an effort to try out new ways of expressing thoughts and break away from the established rules of literary expression of the time. In *To the Lighthouse*, various modernist techniques are utilized. These techniques include the employment of a stream-of-consciousness style of narration, the absence of a sequential storyline, and the author's subjective interpretation of events. The novel is divided into three sections, and each section focuses on a different group of people and their own unique experiences. By employing a variety of perspectives, Woolf examines topics such as memory, loss, the passage of time, and the complexities of human relationships.

In the same way, *Mrs. Dalloway* illustrates Woolf's knowledge of modernist tropes. The narrative takes place in London in the years after World War I and focuses on the thoughts and emotions of the main characters as they go through a single day. The narrative is delivered from a variety of perspectives, including those of Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Warren Smith, a war veteran suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. Through the overlapping narratives of her characters, Woolf examines a variety of themes and ideas, including self-awareness, shifting cultural conventions, the impact of war on civilians, and the passage of time.

To conclude, the modernist focus on the subjective, the psychological, and the multifarious character of the human mind and consciousness is reflected in both of these novels, which are emblematic of that emphasis. Both novels use narrative frameworks that are not linear and place a strong emphasis on character introspection. Together with Woolf's lyrical style and deep psychological portrayals, these aspects contribute to the novels *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway* as among the most significant books written during the modernist era.

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