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# The Notion of Time in Virginia Woolf's "*Orlando*"

**Presented by :**

**OTMANE CHERIF Bakhta**

**Board of Examiners:**

**Chairperson :** Dr. OUALI Farida

**Supervisor :** Mrs. HEIRECH Faiza

**Examiner :** Mrs. BENDOUKHA F.

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## **Abstract**

This research paper aims at studying one of the most prominent literary texts as a modernist product. Significantly, this study attempts to analyse the novel of "*Orlando*" by the British writer, Virginia Woolf . The study focuses on the notion of time in the novel and how it is represented by the author . It also explores the stream of consciousness as a narrative technique that expresses the essence of peculiar aspects of such prominent modernist writer. This dissertation is divided into three chapters. The starting part covers the tendency of modernism in British literature. The middle part introduces the writer, Virginia Woolf, and shows her contributions in universalizing that tendency of literature. As for the last part, it is devoted to the investigation of the way time is represented in the novel "*Orlando*".

**Keywords:** Virginia Woolf, modernism, *Orlando*, time, stream of consciousness .

## **Dedication**

To my dear parents,  
may Allah give them long life.

To my brothers, my sisters and all my family,  
may Allah protect them.

To all my teachers, and my faithful friends  
who supported me along my studies.

A special dedication to my brother's wife, Leslie Sandra Jennings,  
who devoted her time to help me in my study for five years.

To the great writer, Virginia Woolf, I dedicate this work.

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## General Introduction

From the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and throughout the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the modernist literature had recorded the social and historical ramifications in the time of new concepts, ideologies, policies, technologies, mass warfare ...etc. Considering the literature from the Victorian era to the age of the new tendency of modernism, there were many great writers and novelists who lived and witnessed that crucial transition period. Among them, there was a well-remembered female writer whose writings were of a great contribution to literature.

Virginia Woolf, the English novelist, is the core theme of this study. The personal fascination with her works led to conducting this study. That fascination is traced back to the lectures of literature in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year licence by the instructor Mrs. Heirech. Particularly, studying Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* (1927) had been a motivator for further studies on Woolf's works. As a Master student of British Literature, moreover, the personal interest in Woolf's fiction and life story became more genuine. In line with this, the choice of the present paper's topic is consequently made along this background of interest.

This research work aims at studying the notion of time in Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* (1928). Also, it explores the themes of the novel and the fictional style of the writer. The main question of this paper is: how is the notion of time represented in Woolf's *Orlando*? In addition, there are two sub-questions that the study attempts to answer through relating the analysis of the novel to the life story of its writer. The first is: in what instances Woolf's special use of time is apparent through *Orlando*? The second is: Is the fictional representation of such notion is really a failure, namely in *Orlando*?

In this respect, the study attempts to confirm the proposed hypothesis. It is hypothesized that Virginia Woolf used the time notion peculiarly in *Orlando*, and that, to a considerable extent, is a prominent narrative feature. Although literary critics highlight that the talented Woolf was motivated and influenced by reality, personal experiences and the environment, some of her fictional techniques and notions have been the subjects of many studies for their unfamiliarity in literature. However, such unfamiliar features as respecting the regularity of time could embody the significance of those literary works.

The present paper is divided into three chapters. The first chapter consists of two parts. Its first part is an introduction to modernism as a literary movement. Also, it concentrates on modernism as a cultural movement in literature and its features such as the modernist experiments and the stream of consciousness. However, it is difficult to deal with modernism broadly. Significantly, modernist writers wanted to do things differently. It is, also, necessary to talk about their opposition to the realists of the Victorian era.

The next part of the first chapter focuses on a very important part of Woolf's life, that is "the Bloomsbury Group" : a collection of writers, artists, and intellectuals who came together during the period of 1905-06 at the home of Virginia Woolf and her sister Vanessa Bell, in Bloomsbury, in central London. Their discussions were about philosophy, politics and other controversial topics. Among the members of this interesting group were many famous people like Thoby ,Virginia's brother, friends from Cambridge and friends of their friends. At that time they wanted to break many taboos.

The second chapter is devoted to the biography of Virginia Woolf . Indeed, before exploring the features of her work, it is better to reveal some important facts about her life that was very complicated and interesting. It also deals with her major literary works. It ends

with showing Woolf's special and modernist perception of time in her fiction. That is a linking idea to the target studied notion in *Orlando*.

The last chapter is concerned with the novel, *Orlando* (1928). It starts with the plot of the novel that contains four sections and begins with the diary series entries about the novel. Then, it explores the concept of time through showing the devices that Woolf used to express and mark time. The last part of this chapter analyzes Woolf's usage of the stream of consciousness. Finally, there is some space to deal with women's time where the aspects of their main roles in life –that is to be domestic- are extracted from the novel.



# **Chapter One:**

## Modernism in Literature

## **Introduction**

The present chapter focuses on the movement of Modernism and its writers. In addition, it sheds light on that period. Other than that, a part of this chapter is devoted to introducing the Bloomsbury Group that included painters, artists and writers. This chapter tries to introduce a significant member in that group.

### **1.1 Modernism**

The Modernist movement can not be dated precisely. It emerged from other movements and inspired by other artists who were not measured Modernists, but they used some of the techniques which became characteristic of the Modernist authors.

In the books determined on the Modernism, there is no agreement. This movement defined as against the previous era. It was an anti Victorian movement. The authors tried to show the difficult or controversial aspects of Victorian realism for them. They protested against its morality and imperialism and against colonies all over the world which were led by the white men who considered themselves superior, and also against the patriarchal attitude to life. Many women, and even some men, felt that women were not inferior to men and they could act on their own and be equal partners.

It is widely to mention some of the most thinkers who influenced the writers, philosophers and artists at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century. Some of them are mentioned in the novels and other pieces of art. Some of them just inspired the authors. Among them were Charles Darwin, Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche and Sigmund Freud.

Furthermore, there is a movement which influenced the Modernism was the Aesthetic Movement. It was a different movement from the 1860s to 1890s, and it defined also as the modernism movement, that was against the Victorian beliefs that art should be moral. The authors emphasized the form of the work and their slogan was "the art for art's sake."

Among the famous protagonists of the Aesthetic movement were Walter Pater, Algernon Swinburne, and Oscar Wilde, who was the most dramatist in that time.

In other word, Oscar Wilde, was put into the Aesthetic Movement, he was very close in his thinking to the Modernism also. He was well aware to change the society, and he considered how it would influence it and the lives of people and the literature. Even, Wilde did not consider himself to be the part of Victorian society, and he tried to keep himself from it as much as possible.

The difference between the Victorian and the modern outlook maybe illustrated by the comment of one great novelist on another; Virginia Woolf, writing a warm review George Elliot:

A scrap of her talk preserved. We ought to respect our influence, she said. We know by our own experience how very much others affect our lives, and we must remember that we in turn must have the same effect on others. Jealously treasured, committed to memory, one can imagine recalling the scene, repeating the words, thirty years later and suddenly, for the first time, bursting into laughter. (Jane Stevenson, 133).

The movement was not onlyt influential in the literature, it also affected many other domains such as ;painting, philosophy and other aspects of life. In the milieu of English speaking countries, it had its highlight between 1910 and 1925.

The term modernism itself is a relatively recent one: it came into use in the late 1920 and early 1930 to describe experiments in art, sculpture, architecture and music. (Approaching modernism, 09)

It is known that literature had to correct itself in everyday and present life which was fast developing. Modernism is a movement of the first half of the twentieth century, a period which was full of changes, new discoveries and social reforms.

Many people started to move from the country to the cities where more quarters for the poor grew, and inhabitants lived in terrible conditions. These conditions produced new topics to tackle for literature and art generally.

Time was one of the most important categories for the modernist writers. For them time divided up the day and each day was the same as every other, except for Sundays when time came to decline before organizing again on Monday.

It is true to some extent what made the modernism known and that it was modernism absolutely was the repetition, as an important feature of modern life. It was closely connected to the everyday reality of many people. If we consider, for example, that many people in the cities at the beginning of the 20th century worked in factories where they typically did the same thing every day, every hour, then this perception is correct. On the other hand, some of the modernists used the category of time rather teasingly.

Virginia Woolf was considered a master of this game. She experimented with the time perception often. Her mock biography *Orlando* is a great example. Orlando lives his/her life more than three centuries and at the end of the book, the main character is still a woman in her thirties. It involves another time experiment, Woolf is comparing a human life to a day.

This movement was not consistent, some of the authors we today call modernists might not have agreed with this categorization of themselves. But at that time, there were differences among the writers, sometimes even hostility.

One of Woolf's first fiction, the short story, *Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown*, where she divided the authors of her period into two groups. One group was called the Edwardians and included, according to Woolf, Arnold Bennett, Herbert George Wells and John Galsworthy. And the other group was called the Georgians, then she put there Edward Morgan Forster, David Herbert Lawrence, Lytton Strachey, James Joyce, Thomas Stearns Eliot and herself.

To compare the Victorian writers, it is necessary to classify them, when most of the authors came from the higher classes and were full time writers, the writers at the beginning of the 20th century came more often from the middle class. They had to earn enough money for their living, at least at the beginning of their career, until their work was so successful that they could leave their occupation and only occupied in writing. But not all of them were so lucky to make enough money with their writing and they had to work, usually as teachers, reviewers or booksellers. Some of them also found a rich patron who believed in their abilities and financed their life.

Victorian England, and certainly Victorian Literature, were both less static, and less stable, than many people now suppose. It was a time of violent social change and questioning, which saw the creation of the modern industrial and political world, and fully new sense of the rights. In other words, the nineteenth century witnessed the beginning of the fight for equal rights, abortion, and campaigns to improve the social and legal position of women. Obviously, by the end of the nineteenth century, women achieved to obtain their rights, they could work for a university degree beside their male colleagues, and competing

them in the same examinations. Women mark access to learning from the Eight century to the Ninetenth century. Finally, the result of this is that Twentieth century women write more like twentieth century men than like earlier women.

However, it said that the traditional forms of literature which are used so far are not fitting and appropriate for the world of the twentieth century, so it was necessary to develop and try new techniques. Moreover, humans compared with the machines, so they should be as productive as machines, and they should abolish anything is important.

The modernist novels in Britain emerged also from the other novels written on the continent. It is interesting that each author inspired British novelists, such as; Franz Kafka. Another famous writer whose work was modernist in some of its features was French novelist Gustav Flaubert and his novel *Madame Bovary*. He did not use the stream of consciousness but it was modernist in the theme of the novel and concerned the physical appearance, and also, it notable the new, scientific attitude rather than religious attitude.

The modernist literature was focused often on certain topics which were typical of the writers. They were interested in the primal nations and their way of life. The reason was that Britain and other countries as well, still had its colonies. For instance, in India some of the people started to realize that the native Indians were not inferior and they had their way of life which was equal to the British way of life and it could not be judged as something ancient and savage. They started to emerge such opinions that we (the Western civilization) can't consider ourselves as the higher civilization, as the superior rulers, that we are equal to other ways of life.

There is other characteristic theme which was the relationship between intellect and instinct, it was little bit associated to the native nations. The writers were questioning the fast touching technologicaly, whether it was beneficial or whether it was useless or even

harmful to the society. The new and suitable technique emerged for the depiction of the changes and advance was a stream of consciousness:

The term 'stream of consciousness' was first used by William James in his *Principles of Psychology* (1890) where it describes the unbroken flow of perceptions, thoughts and feelings in the waking mind... (The Modern Movement, 10)

But this technique also emerged from something which was used in the past by many authors and it was the free flowing speech. The technique was used, for example, by Jane Austen and also by Charles Dickens. The difference was that in the modernist novels the technique was usually used for the main protagonists but in the previous works it was the technique for not so important characters.

The first writer who really used the stream of consciousness technique, even though she called it the interior monologue technique, was Dorothy Richardson in her novel *Pointed Roots* which was published in 1915.

In addition, this technique was used very often by Virginia Woolf in her novels to keep the thoughts of the characters flowing, and to invade the mind.

Another feature of the Modernism was that the artists tried to discover and depict life, real life without any embellishing. They wanted to show every aspect of life as it was, and what happens everyday.

Writers explored the relation of the present to the past, they examined the difference between subjective and objective time and their work often contained brief manifestations of an order that highlighted ordinary existence.

The experiments with time were favourite Woolf's experiments, she played with the concept of time in many of her novels. For example, in her dog biography, *Flush*, she describes how the time is depicted by the dog of Elizabeth Browning. Another important novel, which is *The Waves*, it is about not only the selves, but with time, she wanted to say that in the human life is described by the symbol of a single day. We are born in the early morning, we live during the day and we die at night. This is shown through inspired between each part period of the characters' lives. Undeniably, the mock biography, *Orlando*, explores the subjective depiction of time when the main protagonist Orlando lives through several centuries and he/she is still in middle age at the end of the novel.

Short stories were also very popular and many novelists wrote short stories too, not only relied on novels. For example Virginia Woolf, David Herbert Lawrence and James Joyce were well known for it.

Many writers were only their aim to make much profit as possible and the publishers did not want to take the risk of publishing unknown and rather experimental writers. It resulted in the establishment, and their main focus was not only the profit itself but also to give the chance for the new authors and to themselves.

A different way to publish experimental works was to publish it as a series in magazines. If it was successful in the magazine and found its readers, then there was a chance that it would be published by the famous publishing houses. Some of the now very significant novels or poems were first published in the magazines. As example, *The Waste Land* by Thomas Stearns Eliot, and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* by James Joyce were published in the *Egoist* and *Ulysses* and *Finnegan's Wake* by the same author were published in the *Little Review*.



## 1.2. The Bloomsbury Group

The Bloomsbury group had no formal belief, or doctrine, but it educated a clearly coherent values which were; liberal pacifism, feminism, and antiimperialism in politics, agnosticism in religion. It constituted a centre of civilized rebellion against the moral code of Victorianism, because society was rigid, especially in its toleration of sexual actions and in its support of the unpopular pacifist position in the Great War.

It could not be called an organization, or a movement, simply, it was a group of friends. All the centre of the Bloomsbury group were the two daughters of the famous Victorian writer and critic Sir Leslie Stephen, the novelist Virginia Woolf and her sister the artist Vanessa Bell. Around the two sisters gathered a group of largely Cambridge educated men, who included the artist Duncan Grant, the economist John Maynard Keynes, and Bertrand Russell. The younger members were Leonard Woolf, the essayist Lytton Strachey or John Maynard Keynes.

The Bloomsbury group was not an organized group. It began to form gradually and informally after the death of Leslie Stephen in 1904. They were the intellectual aristocracy, often spending weekends at Garsington Manor, a country house near Oxford owned by Lady Ottoline Morrell, they drank, smoked, and discussed many things.

This group of intellectual friends shocked many contemporaries by their belief in sexual freedom, equality and lack of formality.

In autumn 1906, Virginia and Adrian Stephen began to bring the Thursday evenings back to life. From that time, it is possible to call it more confidently the Bloomsbury Group. Virginia Woolf herself used the term Bloomsbury group by 1914 in a letter. It included mainly the Stephens and Thoby's friends from Cambridge: Virginia Woolf (1882-1941),

Vanessa Bell (1879-1961), Clive Bell (1881-1964), John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946), Edward Morgan Forster (1879-1970) and Roger Fry (1866-1934). Also Adrian and Karin Stephen, Lytton Strachey, Duncan Grant, Saxon Sydney-Turner, Desmond and Molly MacCarthy, later even Angelica and Quentin Bell and David Garnett. Although the group itself did not issue any programme, the values are summarized in the essay of the writer Edward Morgan Forster *What I Believe* from 1939.

The central meeting place changed figures of the Bloomsbury group. At the beginning, it was at Gordon Square. After Vanessa and Clive's marriage, it was at Fitzroy Square where Virginia and Adrian lived and later, it was at Brunswick Square.

Because of the controversy the Group brought into the society, it had many opponents for instance, Rupert Brooke and David Herbert Lawrence. But even the members did not always agree with each other, and Virginia Woolf, herself, had sometimes strongly ambivalent feelings about the Group.

The Bloomsbury Group was well known because of their artistic work, they produced different kinds of publications, art works, exhibitions, interior decorations, et cetera.

But it was not only famous due to these things but also due to scandalous lives of their members.

One of the reasons the members of the Bloomsbury group had decided to disgrace the Royal Navy was that they all were dedicated pacifists. They did not understand and did not approve of any war, and because of this attitude, they were often attacked during the First World War as being selfish.

Most of their views and opinions were so innovative and controversial, that they could not be shared by majority.

Our life or age is about memoir, and silly, no one attempted to write some facts or such really words about the Memoir Club before now. This club has many positive things in 1920 which are to promote the writing of autobiography. Among them Virginia and Leonard Woolf, Vanessa and Clive Bell, E.M. Forster, Duncan Grant, Roger Fry and John Maynard Keynes.

The club has also many rules, and derived from the elite debating society and many of the Bloomsbury men had joined at Cambridge. The people divided into two groups: opponents and proponents, the equal openness: No one has the right to be shocked or hurt by what is said. No one of the memoirists expected agreement or what today we'd call "support". Their job was to entertain.

It wasn't just a subject of natural features. The war revolved the recent past into another country. Take Virginia Woolf's "Old Bloomsbury", which she presented to the Memoir Club in 1928. It wasn't just the naked painted walls in its place of picky wallpaper, that jolted everyone's memories. In the past, these things really had made the world something different.

Without the Memoir Club, Woolf might never have surprised the full of activity of *Night and Day* (1919) to find her way into *Jacob's Room* (1922), which is set in the Edwardian period and deals with the next war. Arresting still is the case of Forster.

At first an anxious and unsure member of the club, Forster took to memoir writing with different passion. With his novel about homosexual love, Forster relished the honesty that the club demanded. The details that he furnished about his affair with an Indian barber.

Without this new "bite and hardness" to Forster's treatment of sexual matters, his next novel – *A Passage to India* – could well have ended up over-romantic thing.

The Bloomsbury group was criticized by group of conformity because of their class origins, elitism, satire, atheism, pacifism, modernist fiction, and sexual actions.

Bloomsburies were extremely open to one another. Most of their views and opinions were so innovative and controversial, that they could not be shared by majority. This mutual understanding drew them even closer together. Finally, hostility to Bloomsbury and what it was perceived to present has continued to this day, but there can be no denying its importance in the cultural history of the time.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter introduced the modernism as a literary movement. It explored many characteristics of the modernist writings. Woolf, as a significant modernist writer, is the concern of this study. To link what is mentioned in this chapter to the main aim of the study, Woolf's biography and perceptions will be the concern of the following chapter.

# **Chapter Two:**

## Virginia Woolf

(1882 - 1941)

## Introduction

The present chapter introduces the modernist writer, Woolf. Before dealing with the target topic of the study, it is necessary to talk about the biography of the novelist. This chapter, in addition, lists the major works of Woolf. Further, it ends with how Woolf perceived time throughout her life and narratives.

### 2.1 Virginia Woolf's Biography and Major Works

Virginia Woolf is considered a master of literature and the best known English woman writer of the 20th century, also a female member of the Bloomsbury group of writers and painters. But she was not only a writer, also a literary critic, a biographer and a feminist. In spite of the fact that her life was very difficult and sorrowful, she was a very strong and clever woman who endured everything. It was not enough because she suffered from a mental illness and psychological illnesses, and tried to commit suicide several times. Finally, she drowned herself in the river Ouse in 1941. She used some of her experiences from her life, her friends, and in her fiction. For example; *The Voyage Out* is of Virginia's painful adolescence, and *Night and Day* is of her sister's character, her family, past, and her decision to get married.

On the same hand, for instance, her novel *Orlando* which is the topic of this dissertation is also called a love letter to her close friend Vita Sackville-West to whom the book is dedicated.

Virginia Alexandra Stephen was born on 26th January 1882 at No 22 Hyde Park Gate in London. The house was full of many people, there were her parents, her halfbrothers and a halfsister. All children in the family were clever members, between 1891 and 1895, Virginia wrote and issued her own newspaper called *The Hyde Park Gate News*.

Leslie Stephen read often to his children aloud. Later, the boys went to the university and both Vanessa and Virginia were taught by their father and his books.

The relationship between Virginia and her parents was not always simple, Leslie was a complicated man who cares about money, and Julia her role was to comfort and help her husband. She was also busy of the household. When she died in May 1895, it was a great tragedy for the family. And Leslie was not able to take care of the household and comfort his children. Stella ran the household and comforted Leslie and took care of the younger children with the help of her brother George Duckworth. Thirteen year old. Virginia was shocked and astounded by her mother's death and after had her first mental breakdown, this was the beginning of her serious psychological problems.

This was not the end of all difficulties. Stella Duckworth was now running the household, her marriage in 1897. Then, Vanessa, as the oldest child, had to take care of her father, and the whole household.

Since Vanessa and Virginia did not have a female companion in the society, George Duckworth took this responsibility and tried to introduce both of them to the right people. Neither of them really appreciated his effort because they considered the society snobbish, and Vanessa was against George's attempts. Virginia liked it at the beginning but later she realized that she did not belong to this society and refused to visit parties with George.

The Duckworth brothers were not only Virginia's half brothers but they also may have influenced her later sexual life and they abused her. At that time, she did not know what her half brothers did to her because she had nobody to tell her or explain to her.

In 1902 a doctor discovered that Leslie had cancer and Leslie would die finally. After a long and painful struggle, he finally died in February 1904. It was another major event and as a result, the children escaped from the house because of all this painful events

and to travel to another place. They went to Italy and then back to England via France. In Paris. At the same time, Virginia's first severe mental breakdowns began and she distorted and her only help were her friend Violet Dickinson and her sister Vanessa. Violet took her to her house, but Virginia tried to commit suicide there for the first time . she threw herself from a window. Fortunately, it was not high enough.

Virginia was s getting better from her mental breakdown at Violet's place and later at her aunt's place. After Woolf's recover, she joined her family there also. This was the place where Thoby Stephen organized his Thursday Evenings which is an occasion that group a group of friends met on Thursday evening and discussed their issues , it later became what is now called the Bloomsbury group.

Virginia had known Leonard Woolf a long time before she married him. He was one of Thoby's friends from Cambridge, and they first met on 17th November 1904. Then, she did not see him until his returned to England in 1911.

In 1905, Virginia started to write reviews for the Times Literary addition. She also wrote reviews for some other newspapers; Academy and Literature. Woolf was a very active reviewer. She took the opportunity seriously, and it was a good way to have some extra money. She wrote more than 200 reviews and essays between 1904 and 1918, and by the time of her death, there were about 550 journalistic articles and reviews. Later she began to teach at Morley in the institute for working men and women.

Vanessa and Clive have hot married and they were happy together but the situation changed when Vanessa delivered a son Julian in 1908. Clive and Virginia were used to receiving much attention and they were close to each other. Vanessa was fully to care of her baby and did not have time to satisfy their need of attention. That resulted between



Clive and Virginia flirtation. When Vanessa discovered that, she was really disappointed by the behaviour of her husband and her sister.

When Virginia grew older, she realized that she should married,there were some husbands around her, mainly the members of the Bloomsbury group. Particularly, Lytton Strachey became her close friend, and in February 1909 he proposed marriage to her. At first, she accepted his offer but later she changed her mind and refused the marriage during their second meeting. But, she still wanted to find a husband.

At the beginning of 1910 Virginia had another attack of her illness,she had strong headaches,that she could not sleep and rejected food. Her family was worried about her physical health and state of mind and she spent couple of weeks in a nursing house. Her doctors recommended that she should spend more time in the country and avoid to work by hard and busy life. Finally, shelived in a house in the village of Firle.

Leonard Woolf was friend of Thoby from Cambridge. After his studies, he left for India as a colonial officer and returned in June 1911 for a years of leave. At the beginning of July, he went to visit his friends and had dinner with Vanessa and Clive Bell and Virginia.

Step by step, Virginia and Leonard were spending more and more time together, and he fell in love with her. after his proposal in January 1912, Virginia suffered another attack of her illness and had to go back to the nursing house. He did not get directly answer to his proposal. Virginia wanted to get to know him better and spend some more time together. She was well aware of her mental state so she did not reject him but also she did not agree to marry him. Later Leonard decided to quit from his post in India and stayed in England to marry Virginia.They got married on 10th August 1912.

When Virginia got married her husband Leonard, became the one who took care of her mental illness and tried to protect her. Pregnancy could be dangerous for Virginia as it could cause another attack of the illness. They consulted doctors about their opinions, but they finally decided not to become parents.

Virginia's journey as a novelist began in March 1913 when Leonard Woolf delivered her first novel, *The Voyage Out*, to the publishing house which was owned by Gerald Duckworth. It is clear that Woolf's first novel *The Voyage Out* 1915, was in some ways a cathartic piece of writing, confronting in a highly form, the fear of male sexuality which was the main problem that she suffered from in her childhood. This novel contains themes of sexual politics, loneliness, the analysis of relationship between older and younger people of the same sex, and especially it's about social observation. In addition, this novel also shows characteristics of Woolf and her style in telling a story through minute and sharply observed physical details which express a character or state of mind. To illustrate; the protagonist Rachel the heroine describes her aunts with the words:

They are small, rather Two months later, it was accepted to be published and it finally came out in March 1915. She was not able to enjoy her accomplishment because she was ill again at that time pale women; she began, very clean. We live in Richmond. They have an old dog, too, who will only eat the narrow out of bones... they are always going to church. They tidy drawers a good deal. (*The Voyage Out*, 11)

The whole time the Woolfs were arguing over living in London, Virginia did not want to live in Richmond. She desired to live in London with its busy and noisy streets but Leonard argued that for her mental state it was better to stay in quiet Richmond. Finally, it was more convenient for both of them to move back to London.

In December 1925, Virginia's close relationship with Vita Sackville West began. She was also a writer, and at that time more successful than Virginia. Vita was a Member of Parliament. She was a big source of inspiration for Virginia.

Virginia dedicated to Vita her fake biography Orlando which is an illustrated book with photographs. The photographs of Orlando as a young man are pictures of Sackville relations. Orlando as a woman is Vita and the Russian princess Sasha, is the picture of Woolf's niece Angelica Bell.

Virginia was often ill and depressed at the beginning of the war, and in January 1941, she became ill again. But, with the everyday presence of the war, she thought that she might go mad again, and this time she would not be recovered. She did not want to go through that torture.

Finally, on the 28th March 1941, she wrote loving letters to Leonard and Vanessa, went to the banks of the river Ouse, put stones in her pockets, and drowned herself in the river. Her body was discovered on the 18th April near Asheham, and Leonard buried her ashes in the garden under the elms named Leonard and Virginia.

Five times in her life (four of them between the ages of thirteen and thirtythree) she suffered from major illnesses and in almost all of these attacks she attempted to kill herself.

Virginia started writing essays and books reviews, after that she began writing novels, she was writing in a professional way in nineteenth century with journalistic pieces about Haworth, the house of Brontë's family. Her first novel was *The Voyage Out* was first published in 1915 by her half brother's imprint, Gerald Duckworth company, this novel was originally entitled *Melamborsia*. In addition *Nights and Days* which her next novel in 1919, it is a conventional novel, its events happened during the best time of the upper middle lives and loves, and mostly with happy ending.

Nights and days followed by *Jacobs Rooms* 1922, which is a memorial to Thoby, Virginia's brother. His personality highlighted by a series of allusions to his room, his lovers and his coming and going to London. The death of Jacobs in the war represented Thoby's death of typhoid fever during a trip to Greece. By this novel, Virginia Woolf goes far of the realistic tradition and she was recognized as a modernist writer and this is evident in her most famous works. Another her famous work was *Mrs. Dalloway* in 1925, this novel focused on the efforts of Clarissa Dalloway a middle-aged married woman, who organized a party in her house. It is mainly about Virginia Woolf's experience of mental illness and women's concerns as women and social individuals.

*To the Lighthouse* 1927 was a novel about the Ramsay's family expectation to visit The Lighthouse, set on two days and ten years distant. Nothing happened actually, thus everything takes place in the mind of characters, it is considered Woolf's autobiographical novel.

Furthermore, *Orlando* 1928 is one of Virginia Woolf's greatest novels. It is a biography of a young nobleman, who lives for three centuries, without aging more than thirty years old, but he does suddenly turn into woman. The book is in part, a portrait of Woolf's lover Vita Sackville-West. Also, *A Room of One's Own* 1929 is a novel which Woolf analyzes the figures of women where she considers the broader issue of the ideological oppression to women. It is said that this novel is her most enduring contribution to change the ways in which we live and think today.

*The Waves* 1931 is a spiritual and profoundly thinking work that pushed Woolf's concept of the novel's form to its limit, where she presented a group of six friends by whom she explores the sense of individuality, of self and of community. The novel shapes a combination between prose and poetry, as Woolf herself considered it as a playpoem.

Flush 1933 is a part of fiction, however it is a play of the cocker spaniel owned by the Victorian poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning. The book is written from the trouble's point of view. In the play, Flush is on stage for much of the time. In fact the play was a way that Virginia used to escape from her own human existence.

The years 1937 is a novel about Victorian family which the characters were challenging life with died wife and mother from the beginning of the novel, and then as the years move on the children see liberation from the rigidities of their formal way they have raised.

Finally, her last work *Between the Acts* in 1941, is a story of a village pageant that portrays the history of England, in which scenes of great beauty are combined with brief pictures of selfishness, and the horror of war. This book is considered the most lyrical one of all her works, not only in feeling but also in style.

With this collection of works she reached the height of Modern English Literature.

## 2.2 Virginia Woolf's Perception of Time

Virginia Woolf was a very clever woman and all her novels are fiction. Her novels are experiments, each of them is an experiment of a different kind, for example; *Orlando* is one of her most experimental novels she plays with time, gender, and also the genre of biography.

Furthermore, readers see some difficulties to understand Virginia Woolf because of her style. At that time of Modernism movement, writers became more interested in fictionality, and showing the reader how their reactions were manipulating, then they woke up of their audience, as they have contemporary painters. Thus readers approaching novels

of Virginia Woolf in the expectation, or hope, plot, character or structure of narration were developed.

Virginia Woolf's perception of time was very special and modernist. She was influenced by some of the philosophers, particularly French philosopher Henry Bergson who was very popular at that time. Woolf wanted to change the traditional perception of time and be free in writing, and she was really successful.

Virginia used some specific ways of passing time in her fiction. She wrote on the 23rd November 1926 what she was thinking of *Mrs Dalloway*:

"... and time shall be utterly obliterated; future shall somehow blossom out of the past. One incident - say the fall of a flower - might contain it. My theory being that the actual event practically does not exist - nor time either." (Virginia Woolf Portrait, Viviane Forrester, p 47)

For Virginia Woolf, the past and present flow together and are one. A character may change by contact with the past as well as by contact with the present. *Orlando*, for example, symbolizes the continuous imposing of the past onto the present. She created one person, Orlando, who lived through Restoration, and Victorian age.

This perception of time is different from the traditional one and the modern for the writers. The traditional method of conducting time sequence in literature followed by centuries of writers before Virginia Woolf.

According to the conventional view of time, the past, present and future exist in an unending chain. Because the present moment, "Now" is moving steadily forward and reveals what once was the future. Therefore, fiction expresses this orderly progression of time. In the traditional novel, the structure is based on the chronological example of series of events.

The images that express the traditional view of time are those which involve moving water, such as rivers and streams. Moving water suggests a steady, regular and inevitable passing of hours, days, and years.

Virginia Woolf was the product of the twentieth century society of such time oriented literature. Woolf said that it was necessary for the modern fiction writer to strike out on his own. Also, she states the aims of modern fiction writers. She asserted that writers do not come to write better and all they can be said to do this is to keep moving.

Virginia Woolf saw time as highly personal, subjective, and variable. In contrast to time measured by the clock, which is the concern of traditionalists. She was against clock time's and imposed upon human beings, for them, time based on observations of physical science is not natural.

Virginia Woolf's interest was to express time as a flux, only in her later novels she did try to find something permanent with the flux. It is the repetition of these permanent moments that lends form to her more advanced time novels.

In Virginia Woolf's with time lies a key not only to her mysticism, but also to her literary technique. The life of the mind which psychological time exists is free moving, it is resistant to conscious. In spite of this fact, Woolf tried to control by using time itself fictional time (synonymous with chronological and external time) as one of her major devices.

For example, as one of her characters recalls moments from the past and loses himself in thoughts of that moment, a clock strikes (fictional time) and brings him back, to the present (chronological time). Her wish to convey consciousness and eliminate fictional

action, as the psychological duration of the characters expands. Virginia Woolf sometimes attempted to give the illusion of all the life in one day ("*Mrs. Dalloway*") or of all life in a moment.

When first reading Virginia Woolf's autobiographical memoirs in *Moments of Being*, it is struck by her reflections on memories. In a description of her childhood so poetic that it could be distinguished from a passage in any of her novels, Woolf writes:

A great hall i could liken it to ;with windows letting in strange lights ; and murmurs and spaces of deep silence. But somehow into that picture must be brought, too, the sense of movement and change. Nothing remained stable long. One must get the feeling of everything approaching and then disappearing, getting large, getting small, passing at different rates of speed past the little creature Virginia herself. One must get the feeling that made her press on, the little creature driven on as she was by growth of her legs and arms, driven without being able to stop it, or to change it, driven as a plant is driven up out of the earth, up until the stalk grows, the leaf grows, buds swell. That is what is indescribable, that is that makes all images too static, for no sooner has one said this was so, than it was past and altered. immense must be the force of life which turns a baby, who can just distinguish a great blot of blue and purple on a black background, into the child who thirteen years later can feel all that felt on May 5th 1895 now almost exactly to a day, forty four years ago when my mother died. (Woolf .V ,92)



Time plays a crucial meaning in modernist representations. The novelist's concern with time is a natural branch of the modern subject, a conscious awareness of unity of events that give meaning to the pattern of experience.

Virginia Woolf is concerned with two experiments one with the characters of the novel and the other one with time. She does not trace the stream of consciousness as an end in itself, moreover, she suggests the difference between clock time and time as it is recorded in the human mind. She creates her novels as poetic opening out of the narrative and a new voyage into consciousness. The outlines of the world in her novels are not fixed.

Fiction is like a spider's web, attached ever so slightly perhaps, but still attached to life at all four corners. Often the attachment is scarcely perceptible. (Virginia Woolf's quote).

## Conclusion

This part of the research shed light on Woolf's life. Knowing about the author helps to know about her/his narratives. For that, what has been mentioned in both chapter one and two is the base for the last chapter. The choice of the study is an interesting novel, *Orlando*, that Woolf wrote in a significant way. A major feature in this novel is the focus of the following chapter.

# **Chapter Three:**

The Notion of Time

in “*Orlando*”

## Introduction

This chapter deals with the major themes in Woolf's *Orlando*. Particularly, it focuses on the notion of time. First, the novel plot is explored, and the references of time in the incidents are discussed. Further, the chapter tackles the stream of consciousness as a significant feature in the novel, then it ends with showing the status of women at the time of the narrative.

### 3.1 The plot

The story is about the boy Orlando who was born in the sixteenth century and he belonged to aristocracy, and to an old and respectable family. He wanted to be a poet and he wrote a poem called *Aethelbert, A Tragedy in Five Acts*. After writing the poem, he went for a walk and in the evening the Queen of England came. He watched her from a hill and ran home to get ready and get dressed for such an important visitor. Then, he rushed to meet Queen Elizabeth who was very fond of him.

After Two years, he received an invitation to visit her at Whitehall. He travelled there and the Queen searched his appearance closely, and then she gave him her ring and named him her Treasurer Steward. He was also her companion for next years, she helped him from troubles and took care of him.

The Queen was in love with Orlando and tried to make his life easier and more comfortable so she helped him in his career, gave him money and property. She wanted Orlando only for herself, and she was very jealous when she saw him kissing another girl.

Orlando was very successful with women. He engaged three times. As a poet, he also celebrated women in his sonnets. First, he was married to Clorinda. She was a gentle

lady, very religious and sympathetic to poor people and she tried to change Orlando's behaviour. However, she died soon after their marriage.

Then, he engaged to Favilla, a daughter of a poor gentleman, but he broke their engagement when he discovered that she was very cruel to animals.

Orlando was a very attractive man he soon engaged again. This time, it was to Euphrosyne, a lady from a very old and respectable family. Then, the Great Frost changed everything. At that time England was severe, but in London the King turned it to his advantage. One day in the evening, Orlando noticed a person coming from the Muscovite Embassy and the character attracted his attention. He did not know whether it was a man or a woman because of sex disguising clothes. Soon he discovered that it was a woman, and he was really attracted to her. At the same time, Euphrosyne was still his fiancée. The name of the strange woman was Princess Marousha Stanilovska Dagmar Natasha Iliana Romanovitch.

Orlando and the Princess acquainted by accident because they were seated opposite each other at the table. They both enjoyed the evening. They could talk freely since no one else spoke French well to understand them. They soon spent more and more time together, and since everybody knew that Orlando engaged to Euphrosyne, his behaviour caused a big scandal in the Court.

He fell in love with her deeply and they enjoyed the moments together. They often went to skate on the frozen Thames. Orlando wanted to give up all his business in England and leave with the Russian princess Sasha. They agreed that they will run away together.

One night that was completely dark, he used their signal for escape. They arranged a meeting at midnight near Blackfriars. He was there long before midnight and even long

after, but Sasha did not show up. That night the frozen river began to melt and the Thames got its freedom again. Orlando could see the Muscovite ship on the river heading towards the sea.

Orlando had to leave the Court because of the scandal with Sasha and Euphrosyne and began to live alone in the country. In his mansion, he fell into a trance for 7 days, and when he woke up again, he was a little bit different person. Suddenly, he was interested very much in death and he began to visit the tomb of his ancestors often and thought about death. He was always very keen on books. But after the trance, he became even more obsessed with reading, and he also had a strong urge to write his own great book. He had always a desire to write a book and by the time he was 25, he had written about 47 plays poems and novels.

As he was not distracted by people, Orlando thought about life, death, friendship and love. Suddenly he felt strong desire to create something which would make him live again. So, Orlando decided to organize parties with his neighbours, but he kept his distance from the poets and unknown women.

Under the reign of Charles I, Orlando worked as an Ambassador. He did not have any friends or acquaintances. He worked so hard that he did not have time for making any relations. After two years of his dedicated work, he was promoted by King Charles who rewarded him with the title of Duke.

Orlando slept, and his secretaries examined the papers on his table. They found poetry, state papers and papers about the management of his property in England. Also, they discovered that he was not sleeping but he was in a trance.

When Orlando woke up and stretched from his long sleep, he was naked and he saw that he became a woman. So, Orlando at the age of thirty became a female. She dressed

Turkish clothes which do not differentiate the sexes from each other. Next, she had to think about her position because she could not be the Ambassador any longer. She behaved very reasonably. But she was able to think and look through the papers on her table, feed her dog, and choose some jewellery. And in a while a Gipsy was waiting her in the courtyard.

But The only problem was that she was thinking too different from them. She admired Nature. On the next morning she found her a girl . Orlando had very mixed feelings as the merchant ship was approaching London. She was thinking of the things she experienced there as a man, a great success at the court, and his passionate love for Sasha.

London changed a lot there was the Great Fire in London, the Monument to the Great Fire. Because she is a woman, Orlando had troubles in getting her property. When she was absent, there were three suits against her , no one in England was sure what happened to Orlando. Some thought that she was dead, some thought that she was a woman and could not own any property and others believed that she married a Gipsy dancer and had sons with her.

Orlando now lived under the reign of Queen Anne. She attended many parties. In the beginning, she loved the life of society, but later she was disappointed and angry with the people there. she missed to be a man, and the freedom of her previous sex and she disguised herself as a man and enjoyed the free life again.

In this period of Orlando's life, she enjoyed changing her sex. Once she was a woman, then she was a man and even people around her were confused because sometimes she pretended that she is her own cousin and published poetry under his name.

The Nineteenth century introduced dramatic changes in England. When Orlando saw a wedding ring on the hand of her servant she began to think about marriage.

She was discovered by Marmaduk Bonthrop Shelmerdine. He took care about her and few minutes after their meeting, they got engaged. Shelmerdine was a sailor.

Orlando again shifted time, and now King Edward was on the throne. The world had changed a lot. The climate was different again. The book ends in Woolf's present moment in October 1928 when Orlando is 36 years old and after such a long life is very tired and indifferent to everything.

### **3.2 Time in *Orlando***

Firstly, time perception is one of the motifs of the novel. From the birth of the boy Orlando in the 16th century, and then we are leaving her in her thirties in the first half of the 20th century.

We know that the time can be really fast if we have fun and happy, but, the time can pass very slowly, when we need to do something boring. Virginia also experienced this, and she noted it a couple of times in her diaries, and she wanted to put this knowledge in her writing.

In this novel, she depicts that time is passing. Though she says in one passage that it is possible to express passing time very simply and briefly, she describes it very impressively and beautifully for us on almost half a page in the book:

Here he came then, day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year. He saw the beech trees turn golden and the young ferns unfurl; he saw the moon sickle and then circular; he saw – but probably the reader can imagine the passage which should follow and how every tree and plant in the neighbourhood is described first green, then golden; how moons rise and suns set; how spring follows winter and autumn summer; how night succeeds day and day night; how there is

first a storm and then fine weather; how things remain much as they are for two or three hundred years or so, except for a little dust and a few cobwebs which one old woman can sweep up in half an hour; a conclusion which, one cannot help feeling, might have been reached more quickly by the statement that “Time passed” (here the exact amount could be indicated in brackets) and nothing whatever happened. (Woolf. V,59) .

She describes it also not only as the end of one era, but at every end there is a kind of new start, a new chance.

She heard the far-away cry of the night watchman ,Just twelve o’clock on a frosty morning”. No sooner had the words left his lips than the first stroke of midnight sounded. Orlando then for the first time noticed a small cloud gathered behind the dome of St. Paul’s. As the strokes sounded, the cloud increased, and she saw it darken and spread with extraordinary speed. At the same time a light breeze rose and by the time the sixth stroke of midnight had struck the whole of the eastern sky was covered with an irregular moving darkness, though the sky to the west and north stayed clear as ever. Then the cloud spread north. Height upon height above the city was engulfed by it. Only Mayfair, with all its lights shining, burnt more brilliantly than ever by contrast. With the eighth stroke, some hurrying tatters of cloud sprawled over Piccadilly. They seemed to mass themselves and to advance with extraordinary rapidity towards the west end. As the ninth, tenth, and eleventh strokes struck, a huge blackness sprawled over the whole of London. With the twelfth stroke of midnight, the darkness was complete. A turbulent welter of cloud covered the city. All was darkness; all was doubt; all was confusion. The



Eighteenth century was over; the Nineteenth century had begun.”(Woolf, V., 144-145).

The narrator knows that the length of life can possibly be measured very precisely, it begins with birth and ends with death. But what is between these two points can be very different for every person. It depends on each of us how many things we do during our life time. Orlando does not seem to catch time, to notice the passing time until he/she is in the thirties. And he/she feels that the time flew over him/her before he/she could look around and he/she feels uneasy about that:

Time has passed over me, she thought, trying to collect herself; “this is the oncome of middle age. How strange it is!( Woolf. V, 199) She probably wanted to shock the reader, and to make the perception clearer and more precise.

### **3.3 The Stream of Consciousness in *Orlando***

The stream of consciousness is a narrative technique which has been developed by so many writers, essayist, and novelists, but the most well known is that Virginia Woolf is considered as the forerunner of this style of writing and that what was affirmed by Maria T(2005) when she said that influenced by the works of French writer Marcel Proust and Irish writer James Joyce, among others, Woolf strove to create a literary form that would convey inner life. To this end, she elaborated a technique known as Stream of Consciousness.

The technique of stream of consciousness is one of the famous techniques of the Modernist movement. Virginia Woolf used it playfully, and we can find the examples in

her mock biography *Orlando* as well. She used it to express Orlando's feelings and moods in his/her inner dialogues.

The stream of consciousness expresses the opinions, observations, or doubts of the biographer. The biographer is a narrator and sometimes asks himself or herself if whether it is possible to write and retell the life of someone else when there is some document missing and we have never been in the mind of the given person.

But if sleep it was, of what nature, we can scarcely refrain from asking, are such sleeps as these? Are they remedial measures - trances in which the most galling memories, events that seem likely to cripple life for ever, are brushed with a dark wing which rubs their harshness off and gilds them, even the ugliest and basest, with a lustre, and incandescence? Has the finger of death to be laid on the tumult of life from time to time lest it rend us asunder? Are we so made that we have to take death in small doses daily or we could not go on with the business of living? And then what strange powers are these that penetrate our most secret ways and change our most treasured possessions without our willing it? Had Orlando, worn out by the extremity of his suffering, died for a week, and then come to life again? And if so, of what nature is death and of what nature is life? Having waited well over half an hour for an answer to these questions, and none coming, let us get on with the story. (Woolf. V, 40).

Orlando needs to deal with her new duties and accept her inferior status as compared to her previous status as a man and as an Ambassador:

And that's the last oath I shall ever be able to swear,'she thought;'once I set foot on English soil. And I shall never be able to crack a man over the head, or tell

him he lies in his teeth, or draw my sword and run him through the body, or sit among my peers, or wear a coronet, or walk in procession, or sentence a man to death, or lead an army, or prance down Whitehall on a charger, or wear seventy-two different medals on my breast. All I can do, once I set foot on English soil, is to pour out tea and ask my lords how they like it. D'you take sugar? D'you take cream?( Woolf,.V, 100)

The technique of stream of consciousness is a perfect method to show the inner feelings of the characters. Otherwise, it is very difficult to say exactly what the protagonists are feeling or what they are thinking about at the given moment.

Virginia Woolf was a very important novelist by her fictional writing mode, she was considered as the innovator in English language, and with the new style of writing “stream of consciousness” in all her novels Language, style, and the form were developed from one time to another in the modern English literature as Virginia Woolf was one of the chief of literary modernism.

Finally, this fear by Woolf from death pushed her to be more qualified in her writing. She used much more her consciousness in her novels that helped her to develop the stream of consciousness.

So, Virginia Woolf was known by a particular style of writing within her works specially the stream of consciousness narrative technique.

### 3.4 Women's Time

The Victorian Era was the great age of change that makes England reach its highest development as a world power. Victorian literary men and women produced a large legacy of works consisting of novels, short stories and poems were published.

In the age of Victorian Women have one main role in life which is to marry and take care of her husbands, and raise their children, they were domestic women. But, Before marriage they have to learn housewife skills as weaving, cooking, washing and cleaning, whereas if they were from wealthy families, they are not obliged to learn all of these tasks, because their maids will take care of the household duties.

Also, women were not allowed to be educated or gain knowledge outside of the home because it was man's world or a patriarchal society.

Because of the injustice to women, this leads to huge debate about women's role in society, known as "The Woman Question". That time women were not able to vote or to have political office, whereas at the end of Queen Victoria's reign, women were capable to have degrees at universities.

But many of working class women were labored at factory jobs under difficult conditions, and many were driven into prostitution.

Also, the death of Queen Victoria permitted the citizens to change their way of life. Society based on the ownership of land, however by the end of the Victorian Age it turns into an urbanism economical society. Some writers such as Thomas Babington Macaulay accepted the movement as a good change for England's progress, while others like Matthew Arnold has considered it as departing away from the traditional rhythms of life.

Modernism was mainly discussed about the issues of class, gender, and sense of time; however gender issues have been always a great topic and a major focus in society and also in literature. By the way, the enormous changes that occurred in the century gave women the chance to work outside the house.

Nevertheless a lot of number of women go out to defy their traditional place in the western society, for them it was really high time for changing the situation, thus until 1882 woman could not own a property, and until 1918 no woman could vote. The years between 1880 and 1920 were key years for women movement against the current thoughts .

Virginia Woolf had never attended school and never went to the university ,she was different. However she was lucky that she had have parents like her own, who have money and sense enough to educate their daughters and encourage them to read, write and paint, but she had never experienced intellectual and social friendship like her brothers.

### **Conclusion**

This section at hands is the last chapter that has mainly dealt with the notion of time in Woolf's *Orlando*. It is necessary to mention that there are many other major themes in the narrative that need to be highlighted in other studies. Woolf's fiction, generally, is a good field where all who are interested in literary analyses.

## **General Conclusion**

Virginia Woolf was one of the most significant modernist writers. She wrote only how she really felt. She wanted to invent something new not only to surprise readers, she knew that some of her novels will be difficult to read but she did not care. She invented new techniques and styles just for the fun of it and for her pleasure. She was very happy when she was successful, and other people appreciated her work too.

Virginia Woolf portrayed heroines in some of her novels. That reflects the heroine writer as well as the great person in real life. It is quite difficult to imagine Woolf's real life. It was so complicated and full of problems and very sad moments. She, also, had a hard life in the family, particularly after the death of her mother, half sister, father and brother. Woolf, also, suffered from a mental illness. She was sexually abused by her half brothers. That can affect any normal person. Yet, she was very sensitive despite the depression and losses she lived.

Although, Woolf used new significant techniques in her narratives, for instance the stream of consciousness, she knew well that it is hard to be understood by readers. Moreover, Woolf relied much on her husband Leonard's opinion, then the opinions of her close friends whom she respected also very much. After finishing every book she promised herself that she will not torment herself by reading the reviews in the newspapers, but still she read them and sometimes it was very hurtful for her.

As a writer, Woolf experimented very much. Almost all of her writings included in some way or another an experiment of some kind. It is very difficult to exclude the author's personal experience from their work. For Woolf, she often used her experience and pictured her friends and acquaintances in her works.

The biography of *Orlando* included many different things. Not only time is something shifting, but also the sex of the main protagonist is not a permanent and stable. Orlando was born in the 16th century and in the first half of the 20th century he/she was still in his/her thirties. He was born as a man a little boy and lived that way for several decades. He experienced many events when he was a little boy, his family was visited by the Queen and later he was even invited to the Court to be the Queen's companion.

After an affair with Sasha, he left to the country. Then he met a woman and was afraid to fall in love with her, so he asked the Queen to send him away from the British Isles. That is how he became the Ambassador Extraordinary in Turkey. Suddenly, when he woke up from the trance he was a woman and she joined with Gipsy tribe. When Orlando realized that she cannot accept such way of life, she left and boarded on a merchant ship heading towards England. After her return, she got married and gave birth to a baby.

The time is important for the plot. The first thing we noticed is that Woolf's perception of time is highly subjective in the biography of *Orlando*. There are specific hints of historical events, the Queen, the King, and the throne. In each chapter of the book, it is clear in which period we are. But what if there is no straight points? Would we think that Orlando has lived for three centuries?

I do not think so. Because time is really a subjective category. Some people lived their lives and enjoyed every moment, then at the end they did so many things, such as participating in so many events and took advantages of every opportunity. It seems that they lived more than one life. On the contrary, for some people who lived their lives without any interest or without children, they focused only on themselves but did not participate in anything. It seems that they did not live at all or their lives can appear very short.

So, Woolf also knew that time had been passing fast and with its speed many big changes were brought. She saw very well how society had changed and what was possible for her had not been possible for her mother fifty years ago. She attempted to capture also this progress in her work. At the beginning, Orlando used only horses and ships if he wanted to go somewhere but when the book ends with the streets that were full of cars, and she was mesmerized, and a bit scared, by these changes.

The clock ticking was described as something unfavourable, perhaps even hostile. Yet, Woolf described very nicely the time passing in nature. As it is clear from the previous lines, the depiction and concept of time in the novel is different. And it is only logical because this novel deals with a different story, and different age. *In Orlando*, time is not a category which we should take for granted, it must be thought of carefully because time is not always an objective category.



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