



MRS. DALLOWAY : A GYNOCRITICAL STUDY

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Virginia Woolf is a modern novelist, par excellence. She expresses profound and mature vision of Life in her novels and other writings. Her novels - *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, *Jacob's Room*. *The Waves*, *The Voyage Out* are in-depth expression of the complexity of life. The complexity of her vision owes to her probing and exploration of the psyche, the inner world of characters. In fact, Virginia Woolf is, primarily, concerned with the realism of spirit and unbroken flow of consciousness which is timeless and immortal.

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Going through Woolf's emphatic argument and discussion of Women's situation, characters and independence, she emerges as a powerful feminist. Like Helen Cixous, Elaine Showalter, and other feminists, Woolf powerfully pleads for the restoration of basic/ god-given freedom and independence to woman in both literary and cultural aspects. She went to the extent of stressing that woman wants a room of her own. Economic independence and a separate space are crucial to the woman. It reminds us of Showalter's advocacy of exclusive independence of women in her famous essay "Feminist Criticism in Wilderness." She regrets, like Simone de Beauvoir, that the male-dominated society has been cruel and callous to women life Fascists. To prevent all this, Woolf suggested a set of revision and reform of social and academic system based on humanistic ethic. Furthermore, she pleaded for the establishment of an "Outsiders' society to ensure separate and undisturbed self-reliant lives to women. This will encourage, Woolf holds, the development of a woman's ethic which is holistic, anti-war, anti-fascist and life-affirming. This ethic can finally pave the way for the dawn of a new society based on new public morality. The present paper is a humble attempt to approach Virginia Woolf's masterpiece from gynocritical perspective.

In the present paper, an attempt has been made to establish with suitable/ relevant textual instances/ illustration a sui generis gynocritical realism in the two major novels of Virginia Woolf. In both the novels *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To The Lighthouse* the themes which Woolf deals with are psychological realism. It is a realism which defies any kind of temporal and spatial justification. That is why Mrs. Woolf outrightly condemns the novelists like – Wells, Bennett and Gals worthy by calling them "Materialists" as their novels are preoccupied with material temporal and spatial realism.

Hence like William James, Henry James, Dostoevsky, Bergson and Dorothy Richardson Virginia Woolf envisages an unconventional, complex realism which flows out of character's mind on the pages like a stream of consciousness. Her novels are conceived in epiphany to use James Joyce's term to experience and present eternity and mystery of moment all its variety and complexity. Peter Walsh's likening of Mrs. Dalloway to river of life in the end of