

Notion of Reality in Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* (1927)

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Abstract

This study examines Virginia Woolf's masterpiece *To the Lighthouse* (1927) from the perspective of her unique vision of reality. Reality, for Virginia Woolf, is composed of multiplicity, of 'the incessant shower of the atoms' that makes up a multifaceted phenomenon. This vision of reality has been applied to the issue of how this reality is reflected in spatial terms. Virginia Woolf tries to find reality in a paradoxical way that the underlying principle in chaos is order. Human life does not move on a plain and linear way. Its very basis is formed on the combination of past, present and future. In this study the researcher has tried to prove that Virginia Woolf's concept of reality arises out of her private experience that defies any empirical analysis. She does not follow any particular theory but rather assimilates all. Approach to the subject is character-centred rather than author-centred. Apart from introduction and literature review, the topic is subdivided into four chapters. In each chapter excerpts from the novel as well as Virginia Woolf's writings have been included to clarify her notion of reality and the key concept of the 'moments of being'. This thesis is cyclic as it begins and ends with Woolf's unique vision of reality and how it is visualized in the novel. Conclusions drawn from the study are that *To the Lighthouse* (1927) reflects Virginia Woolf's representation of reality, not only from the traditional notion but from other contemporary modern novels. It is this inquiry into the nature of reality which makes an original contribution to the body of literature which places her among modern writers and philosophers.

1. Introduction

The *Notion of Reality* features prominently in twentieth century literature. The conventional idea of writing tended to portray things as they are. Similarly, within the human consciousness, reality is relative. Every individual is wrapped in a mask and can never be summed up neatly. The name of a person has no meaning, for people are much more complex than they appear to be. Language is merely a signifier; 'cotton wool' and raw material that can be spun into the yarn of one's desire. The potential weave of the yarn is up to the requirements and limitations of each person at the receiving end of that language. Modern writers, like Virginia Woolf, look at the external shapes of objects as distorted reality. Her contemporaries such as D.H. Lawrence used impressionistic technique for projecting human reality. Lawrence does not directly express the action but rather gives the impression of it with all its essence. He maintains a balance between clock time and psychological time. Likewise, James Joyce communicates impression by exhausting language, through various uses. Poets of the period such as Dylan Thomas experimented with the overuse of language and made attempts to drug the intellect with an onslaught of words.

Virginia Woolf is decidedly a precursor to what was later expanded by early and late twentieth-century writers. 'Jacques Lacan, Julia Kristeva, Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes' (Culler, 28), all presented the complex mechanism of human personality in theoretical frameworks while Woolf demonstrated the same mechanism in her art with no prior knowledge of the theories.

In Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* (1927) one finds the first stirrings of what was to be a primary issue of twentieth century fiction writing. Virginia Woolf uses a mechanism through which she peeps deep down into the recesses of mind where character is shown within the range of 'real,' 'imaginary,' and 'symbolic' (Sheridan, 328). Language is a key to understand the psyche of a character and Woolf applied her own uncertainty principle to convey the interconnectedness among that which cannot be properly encompassed by language; the act of locating meaning in words kills the vitality and 'motion of language' (Zucker, 147). Language remains the only medium which helps in projecting inner feelings to the objective world around. It fails to convey the essence of human desire because it is a symbol: a substitute for the original. There is then always discrepancy between what one says and what one feels; language originates in absence and it is used for things unseen.

Virginia Woolf's concern is not the mere narration of shapes of concrete objects; rather she aims at conveying abstract feelings through language. She portrays the non rational part of the 'mental activity seen especially in dreams' (McLaurin, 30). Woolf takes to streams of consciousness as a technique for expressing the inner mechanism of the flow of ideas and emotions within the human mind. Her means of variation from mind to mind are often similar as from thought to thought, and so a reader gets the notion "that he remains, somehow, within the same mind or facet of it" (Richter, 52). The inner reality where this stream of ideas originates does not move on just one plane of thought but rather various strands are simultaneously at work within the framework of action. The split between exterior and interior, or soul and body, is not an attempt to make distinction but rather to find the solvent which will melt and make them one. The solvent which functions in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) is a kind of love that opens vistas for free communication among the individuals. With the help of a loving spirit the characters are able to share their internal worlds with one another. The whole of the novel suggests that behind the surface of civilizations runs a current of emotions, which unites humanity. To understand this current, reason must be subordinated to feelings to lose 'awareness of the self' (Marsh, 188).

Virginia Woolf conveys the feelings of characters through a non-traditional medium of language; a stream of consciousness. This narrative scale gives more freedom to the writer for expressing a unique mechanism of ideas and emotions as they happen in the mind. Action is taken to mind time, where past and present in this way are linked together in the reader's mind to reveal the 'fundamental process of consciousness' (McLaurin, 98-104). Action moves back and forth from present to past and from past to future (and vice versa). The multiplicity of events in the character's mind is given coherence and is wreathed in a common thread by expanding the movement of duration. This moment of duration has the unifying power and holds the dispersed moments in coherence in the shape of an individual mind. The inner reality, where this stream of ideas originate, does not work just on one thought but rather various strands are at work; though a person apparently seems to be busy in one action.

In her innovative narrative scale Virginia Woolf tries to catch the discrepancy that exists between mind-time and clock-time. In *To the Lighthouse* (1927) the representation of exterior time is very limited while the whole of the novel takes place in the interior regions of mind. Action at certain moments in clock-time is caught and then is expanded to the mind of the character to explore invisible facets of consciousness. The variability of the consciousness associates to wave particle duality in which apparently solid entities become fluid. The scene in which Mrs. Ramsay measures the stocking is limited only to a minute or so at the exterior level. This insignificant event serves as a base to explore the deepest regions of her mind. It is because the duration is presented ‘both in terms of the flow of time and the flow of mind’ (Schier, 5).

Virginia Woolf experiments with the narrative technique to project the reality of human consciousness of the world around but she achieves so at the expense of over-estimating the effectiveness of language; such perceptions of things around us ‘vary from person to person’ (Kolak, 383-4). She exposes characters from within their own consciousness and other people’s minds (Perkin-Gounelas, 5). An angular view is taken and character is examined from different aspects. Looking at life as a linear scale shows that it moves smoothly but while judging its inner jumbled mechanism reveals that it is fluid, volatile, ephemeral; something intangible and the nature of spirit’s existence is dependent on its unfixed shifting from moment to moment; a ceaseless mixing of external and internal moments of being. These moments of being fall on the mind with irregularity. From every side they approach, like continuous spray of innumerable atoms. Language is a mediator between outer-and-inner-selves. It is the tool that records the ebb and flow of falling atoms (Roe, 151). Likewise, consciousness is the sensory wakefulness of the present moment, in a world where time is infinitely dividable into a sequence of isolated segments. It is the complex compound of memory and perception where divisibility of clock-time is hampered by the separation of past and present. In *To the Lighthouse* (1927) the narrative slides between people’s minds within the confines of non-moving chronological time; an event is captioned and described within a zone of ‘clock time’ then taken into ‘mind time’ (Roe, 136,153) where it is liberated from the limits of time and space. This affords better opportunity for the writer to reveal the psyche of the character.

In the same way, *To the Lighthouse* (1927) is an attempt to reconcile the inner and outer notions of reality. The structure of the novel reveals the idea of reduction and expansion of time. The book is divided into three sections. Part one, *the Window* and part three *the Lighthouse* cover three quarters of the text but the time span is shown to be seven hours each. Part two, *Time Passes* covers one quarter of the total length of the text but the time is stretched out to a decade. Time contracts and expands both in the first part and the second part while in the middle section time accelerates. An important event like Ramsay’s death is mentioned in a casual way as if it has no significance in the drama of existence. This implies that life is independent of the ordinary passage of day or night. Destinies are shaped by God’s decree and sometimes our own actions take us to doom or zenith; but life goes on with the same pace irrespective of whether someone is dead or ‘alive’ (Zucker, 149).

To the Lighthouse (1927) is an attempt to explore that part of psyche where streams of thought originate in raw shapes. An individual is tormented because of the discrepancy that exists between a

character's physical self and psychological self. Inner voices are unstable and dynamic, seeming to be in the possession of the body and ripple freely from all the grounding in the substantial world. Life, itself, is a parade of apparitions, and deity knows why it is so that we hug them so keenly, and notice them leave with such agony, being apparitions (Roe, 45). In *To the Lighthouse* (1927) the moment from diachronic representation leaps up to a synchronic moment where the specific moments of being are recorded. External events play important role; these are symbolically united with each other and it becomes quite difficult to separate them as subject and object. This fusion enables the reader to discover the thoughts and responses of character concerning truth. Similarly, sea is also a powerful symbol and its recurrent imagery serves as a poetic force in mobilizing the central characters of the novel by expressing the multifaceted reality of existence (Modern Fiction, 28).

In the same way, characters in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) are uncertain and therefore fail to arrive at a definite notion of reality about themselves and the world around. It further strengthens the belief that reality is not what it appears to be. It reveals a world beyond sensory perception. Likewise, characters in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) responds to reality in two ways; cognitive and intuitive. The first refers to the reality of day and clock-time ruled by stability and the latter to the night of intuition and psychological time, representing fluidity. In the day, the reality is observably factual while during the night, it is wrapped in darkness. Here our vision fails to see things that we see during day time. This painful but astonishingly beautiful clash between the realities often provides a moment of understanding to different characters in the story. Virginia Woolf refers to these realities as *moments of being*. During a "moment of being" (Bourner, 39) things come together. Clock-time and psychological time are intersected to allow a vision of the pattern which underlies the flux of everyday life.

The notion of reality propounded upon by Virginia Woolf in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) is wholesome. When things separate, the feeling of uncertainty intervenes and prevails. The external shape of objects is related to objective reality. This research aims to investigate the tools through which the authoress endeavors to grasp the feelings of human beings through objective realities and how they are looked at by individuals. The writer presents the idea that human personality does not exist independently of its past and therefore past is vitally linked to the present. Virginia Woolf wants human personality to be thoroughly structured. Every present event possesses a strong link to the events which have happened in the past and there exists a logical sequence among them. Events chained in a diverse web, when viewed in coherence, present a real 'picture of an organism' (McIlaurin, 10). Thus, character's alternating feelings of atomization and volatility reveal the extraordinary dilemma of a quantum cosmos in which the body is in fact a transformation of particles and waves. The action from the exterior (Mrs. Ramsay's holds a stocking against James' leg) is taken to the interior of the mind. Clock-time moves according to its own scale but time appear to cease inside Mrs. Ramsay's mind though, her thoughts appear to be fragmented leaping from one topic to another but the coherence has been given by the spontaneous linking of past, present and future. An example of this can be viewed through Lily Briscoe, the artist, in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) who carries her past that obstructs her efforts of painting. Lily grapples with her past continuously and subsequently reaches the moment of clarity required to finish her painting. The painting represents the idea of duration as an element of

mental states which continuously pass through the state of 'dynamic flux' (Schier, 4). The energy of mind, like the flow of photons when they collide with electrons in the atomic shell, releases energy while staying in the same atomic net. Similarly, when external events fall upon mind-like photons on electrons in an atom, it stimulates the inner storehouse of energy within the mind and the hub of uncontrollable energy releases itself.

In the same way, Lily Briscoe sits on a lawn and tries to find out how a person decides about the feelings of liking or disliking others. Lily is so immersed that her thoughts appeared to her dancing like a group of gnats, each detached, but stunningly restricted within a hidden flexible web. Lily's thoughts gain momentum and explode from the degree of their own intense mental energy. Her thoughts which had twisted faster and faster blown up of its own power; she felt unconstrained; a bullet went off and there drew closer from its trash, terrified, chaotic, a group of starlings (Zucker, 151). This suggests that the energy of mind has been transformed into sensorial phenomena and has openly challenged the social construct of reality with the possibility that 'thought' has the potential of affecting the objective world. It is Lily's thinking-self that perceives, modifies and recreates the outside solid objective world. Lily seems to emphasize the fact that culture always widens the gap between inner and outer selves. Social taboos are barriers that hamper individual's psychic growth. Character's inner moment is a movement to arrive at the moment of being. Through this movement, Lily Briscoe also establishes a vital link with her true being. Similarly, Mr. Ramsay in spite of all his philosophical worth fails to find solace and harmony. He is bent upon achieving immortal fame while at the same time he is blind to the fact that human civilization is always subject to the process of evolution. What is accepted today will be rejected tomorrow and so on. Mr. Ramsay considers his mind as one of genius which can change the whole gamut of human knowledge. But unfortunately his mind does nothing to change his lot.

Likewise, there is a communication gap between Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay. Silent interaction constantly goes on between the two, but when they convey intensity of feelings they linguistically fall short to transform the same from imaginary into symbolic. Characters remain symbolic manifestations when they are overwhelmed by the futility of life. This emptiness of life is represented in the *Time Passes* of the novel, where massive destruction of the First World War has rendered life meaningless, with the implication that human life when devoid of feelings is not worth living. *To the Lighthouse* (1927) is more realistic as compared to Woolf's other novels. Unlike those novels where the interaction is suggested this novel brings before the reader the two dominant characters and their relation to each other for observation. Virginia Woolf does not have to invent sights and sounds to join the two disjointed worlds. Transition between the thoughts of different individuals or groups in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) is to be searched and is not coincidental. It is because the characters interact and are universally accepted for what they represent. In the novel as a whole Virginia Woolf abandons the unity of time but preserves the unity of place. The action takes place in a much smaller area inside or near Ramsay's summer home.

In *To the Lighthouse* (1927), Virginia Woolf gives the impression of tumult and 'pattern', or 'chaos' and 'shape' (Mulas, 172). She makes the moment permanent and life looks to be on standstill by

dragging it off from the limits of time and space. To suggest the impression of life, Virginia Woolf, records her characters' stream of consciousness. Though she carefully selects the details she preserves the apparently aimless pattern of Mrs. Ramsay's thought and her contradictory judgments. Each character is seen in different ways at different moments and, as in life, the resulting contradictions are not resolved. In the same way, the jumbled and fleeting quality of life is sealed. Virginia Woolf regarded *To the Lighthouse* (1927) as the end towards which she had been moving in *Jacob's Room* and *Mrs. Dalloway*. Presence of an artist in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) is not an ingredient present in *Mrs. Dalloway*. In both her novels Virginia Woolf shows her concern for a notion of reality but in later work she also shows her relationship to aesthetics. This makes *To the Lighthouse* (1927) a rich novel in substance than Woolf's previous works. It is a great technical achievement since the writer succeeds in making it both more symbolic and more realistic. The party, a symbol of unity, plays an important role in *Mrs. Dalloway* as do the dinner party, island, lighthouse, window and painting in *To the Lighthouse* (1927). Moreover, the symbolic use of land, sea, present in *Mrs. Dalloway*, becomes even more dominant in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) for the novel takes place by and on the sea (Mulas, 168).

To the Lighthouse (1927) possesses philosophical uniqueness as it represents associative and connotative segregation not of words but of events themselves. She created characters who imitate selective process through which they are able to recollect themselves and the world around. An event caught on diachronic sequence brings to the mind of the character various events where the mind keeps ponder on. The focused event takes associative role and thus present results in past and future. The mind of the character goes deep into a kind of spiritual ecstasy where an attempt is made to arrive at the totality of existence. *To the Lighthouse* (1927) gives a detailed picture of her notion of reality: a notion based on her diffused mode of perception than it is to any kind of philosophy. Perception is of two kinds i.e. intellectual and intuitive. There is always fluid relationship between the mask and our true self. In one the mental life is contracted to the minimum to focus on situations of immediate importance while in the other, as in reverie, it is diffused. Every character has a dual existence and this duality in existence makes them complex. Physical reality is the surface part of the life. The visible world provides a source of stability and indifference to character's sensibilities. Inner self is fluid, always struggling for creating harmony with external world through a constant mobility of character. Therefore, reality is in regular condition of change and its visible firmness is simply a fantasy fashioned by words (Roe 153,160).

Similarly, reality can be felt through intuition which is the sudden and complete understanding of a being through a 'moment of a being'. During these moments the character is able to find 'the thing beneath the semblance of the thing' (Bourner, 3). Mrs. Ramsay represents and reflects this specific permanent sense of reality that exists behind the moving and changing flow of life. In *To the Lighthouse* (1927) this shape of reality has been associated with the feminine pole of reality because the moment of being receives the spark of wholeness and tries to hold them as woman holds the amount of masculine energy during sexual intercourse. Both of them experiences sporadic "waves like expansion into the continuum of space-time [and], their "disembodied moods" begin to seem closer to reality than their day-to-day experiences of separateness" (Ettinger 7). Such a moment of experience is still but contains a unity and a wholeness which is self.

The other pole of reality is the representation of factual or cognitive reality. Mr. Ramsay is superficial in his approach because he sees the appearance of things and is unable to understand the pattern that lies behind the objects. Mr. Ramsay is devoid of sympathy which is the basic ingredient of intuition and Mrs. Ramsay is conscious to this fact that her husband is deficient in this basic element. She acknowledges the greatness of Mr. Ramsay as a great metaphysician but also stresses the importance of "sympathy" to make sure that he also breathed in the centre of life (Amjad 126). But this is not going to happen because Mr. Ramsay is all the time preoccupied with objective reality; both these poles of reality are necessary ingredients of life. The journey to the lighthouse is a moment that makes Mr. Ramsay and James conscious of the lack that exists in their personalities. This trip enables them to integrate both aspects of reality into their personalities. It is on this trip that Mr. Ramsay is able to gather his scattered thoughts together and sum up the 'meaning of life himself' (Bourner 52).

To the Lighthouse (1927) presents the human search for knowledge with all its complexities and many fold perspectives. The limitation of human mind is that it forwards tentative solutions whose connotations can merely be seized in the perspective of the knowledge of both inner and outer worlds. There is possibility to acquire information of a single object about an additional thing or concerning several people by functioning tolerantly to beat humiliation, nervousness, and the yearning for authority (Nussbaum 750). Through this process they can allow one or the other thing about themselves.

The purpose of this research is to project Virginia Woolf's notion of reality as reflected in *To the Lighthouse* (1927). In chapter two of this research various articles regarding reality in Virginia Woolf's fiction have been studied. After analyzing these articles the researcher concluded that these articles have limited Virginia Woolf's notion of reality either, to the subjective analysis of the characters or to the masculine and feminine aspects of reality. The need to initiate another inquiry was felt, in order to project her notion of reality as reflected in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) and represented by Lily Briscoe, the three parts of the novel, Mr. Ramsay and Mrs. Ramsay. Reality is relative; a compound of different strands that form a complete human being. Characters, in *To the Lighthouse* (1927), struggle to find out meaning in life. Life for them is a continuous struggle where each moment brings some new insight; but this insight may not be universal in nature. They develop an individual perception of reality. A conflict persists in the mind of the characters between endurance and permanence or immortality and mortality.

Research Question:

How *To the Lighthouse* (1927) reflects two contradictory approaches to reality? And how the fusion of these two approaches makes *To the Lighthouse* (1927) a journey towards self-realization?

Objectives:

This research focuses on the following objectives:

- A) To analyze Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay from the perspective of cognitive and intuitive approaches to reality and how they have been demonstrated in *To the Lighthouse* (1927).
- B) To explain the difference between cognitive and intuitive approach and how they help in arriving at the notion of reality.
- C) To compare and contrast the three sections of the novel and how they contribute to arrive at this unique vision of reality in *To the Lighthouse* (1927).
- D) To investigate Virginia Woolf's notion of reality as demonstrated in *To the Lighthouse* (1927).

Significance of the study:

To The Lighthouse (1927) is part of the syllabus taught in the universities of Pakistan. It is a novel with many perspectives; every fresh reading of the novel enables the reader to have a new insight into the life. The researcher hopes that not only teachers but also students of English literature will find this thesis helpful in applying an up-to- date approach to literature.

Research Methodology:

This research is based on the textual analysis of the novel *To the Lighthouse* (1927). It explores two fundamental approaches towards reality; cognitive and intuitive.

The first chapter introduces the thesis topic and highlights the significance of the topic. It also describes Virginia Woolf's contribution to the art of novel.

The second chapter is based on literature review. It covers various commentaries put forward by different critics. The discussion is centered on the text from books, internet and research articles.

The third chapter examines Lily Briscoe as imbalance combination of subjective and objective reality. Wholeness is achieved if both are given due weight in human life. Both are necessary part of human personality. The absence of one is the death of another.

The fourth chapter focuses on the three parts of *To the Lighthouse* (1927): *the Window*, *Time Passes* and *the Lighthouse*. This chapter will also examine what they stand for and how they contribute in arriving at the wholesome reality of human personality.

The fifth chapter traces Mr. Ramsay as representative of objective or phenomenal reality and his

attitude towards life. He judges life from linear scale where reality is regarded as what is seen through physical eye?

The sixth chapter throws light on the subjective reality as represented by Mrs. Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) and how its uniqueness is necessary for the continuation of literary life in the text. She dies soon but her influence is felt to the end of the novel.

Chapter seven presents the conclusion. The discussion in the preceding chapters reaches a logical conclusion, resolving the issue questioned in the thesis statement.

2. Literature Review

For this research various books and articles written on Virginia Woolf were analysed with special reference to her notion of reality as projected in her *To the Lighthouse* (1927). Different websites were also visited to enhance understanding of the topic for this thesis. At the outset it is safe to say that Virginia Woolf posthumously emerged as a great writer of the twentieth century. Critics agree that she seized every opportunity to convey various aspects of reality in her *To the Lighthouse* (1927). The prevailing tradition of prose writing at that time was realism and writers of the period projected the solid objective world. H.G. Wells, John Galsworthy and Arnold Bennet were remarkable exponents of this trend. They painted life as they saw it and called it realism. Later on this came to be viewed as imitation of exterior events instead of works of imagination. The novelists were reformists and moralistic in tone and in execution but away from aestheticism. They stressed the external, physical and sociological aspect of reality and therefore the reader felt an utter dissatisfaction.

E.M. Forster, D.H. Lawrence, Dorothy Richardson and James Joyce tried to make their way towards new definitions of reality and questioned the reliability of conventions of the past. In Virginia Woolf's writings came up the first stirrings of what was to become a primary twentieth century issue. For Woolf reality is relative, not fixed, varies from person to person and a multifaceted phenomena.

The concept of reality as handled by Virginia Woolf has been discussed and evaluated by various writers. This research refers to some of the remarkable researches carried out in the past and an attempt is made to explore the unique vision of reality projected by Virginia Woolf in *To the Lighthouse* (1927).

Brian Phillips on *Reality and Virginia Woolf* opines that her works contain description of physical reality and for this reason alone her characters are true to life. Sometimes characters express consciousness and have nothing to do with the physical world. An example is Mrs. Ramsay and the reader does not see anyone like her; she appears to be the most real when she measures the partly knitted stockings against James' little legs. This description of physical details reveals a character as an individual and places us in the world. The writer further says that there is an enormous incongruity in Virginia Woolf's technique of depiction. She draws the interior life of a character by revealing that every occurrence is subjectively shaped and that each entity is watched in a different way by everyone

who observes; even if a writer lays claim to objective knowledge of the mechanism of other people's minds. The question of possibility of being able to escape her own personality from the thoughts of the characters when she permeates into their consciousness is raised here. The contradiction can be answered by pointing out that Woolf's characters are not real people but creations of subjective consciousness. Her characters constantly try to look into each other the way we observe each other in real life. They always try to go away from their own intellect in order to identify reality in relation to one another as well as the world around.

Brains Phillip loses sight of the fact that knowledge about the objective world can be gained through senses, reason and intuition. Sense is for organisms, reason is for abstract thinking and intuition is for unification and wholeness. Every individual passes through these three stages in order to arrive at the notion of reality; the writer decreases the view of reality. Reality, cannot be grasped in one go, nor is it the product of subjective consciousness alone. Therefore Woolf's characters cannot be termed as the product of her subjective consciousness. They cannot be simply termed as Virginia Woolf's mouth pieces. If thoroughly studied the reader does not find, in her characters, any clue, explicit or implicit, about the whims and desires of the author.

In his paper, *Stream of Consciousness and Reality in the Works of Virginia Woolf*, Esther Cores Bilbao asserts that *To the Lighthouse* (1927) poses a quest for control and conception of some coherence where nature seems hostile. Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay represent a generation which has gone astray in their spiritual belief but they must give meaning to the absurdity of life. The very thought of eight children growing up to face injustice and hostility in the world frightens Mrs. Ramsay where the ultimate reality appears to her devoid of meaning. Mr. Ramsay, too, has deep sense of transitory nature of life. Both Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay have the same apprehension but the outcome of their anxiety is quite different for each of them. *To the Lighthouse's* (1927) response to realism comes about through intellect and through instincts. Mr. Ramsay's approach is rational towards the meaning of life and that of Mrs. Ramsay is intuitive. She looks for the meaning of life beyond the visible surface. She is more considerate and responsive to the feelings of others and any breach for her is 'an outrage of human decency' (Bilbao 32).

For Mr. Ramsay nothing exists beyond the world of facts. This approach makes him oblivious of the feelings of others. He insists on the logical interpretation of facts which in fact makes him move away from the meaning of life; he inadequately responds to reality. A person who is proud, selfish, and insensible cannot go beyond the 'surface of things' (Bilbao 36).

Esther Cores Bilbao fails to see that ultimate reality is not devoid of meaning; rather it is contained and denotes wholeness. Everything in this universe is interlinked in a complicated and diverse web. In order to understand this web an individual must pass through a mystic phase of experience that will plunge him into an ocean of pure time and will purge him from the corruption of false personas. If an individual cannot peep deep down beyond that which physically exists. He, miserably, fails to discover the unifying link. To arrive at the reality of things one should entertain a metaphysical and intuitive approach. Bilbao's vision of reality is superficial and limited. Discovering

inner core of reality does not mean to take hold of the unseen world. The unseen world is not fixed and solid like the summer house of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay. It is fluid, volatile and mysterious like sea. To come to the sea shore is just an effort to know that something else exists beyond our solid ground. As the ocean consumes the soil we put our feet on similarly our days are numbered with every passing moment. Death of the body is the birth of spiritual life through which we move from solid to fluid in the volatile world.

Ian Ettinger in his article, *Relativity and Quantum Theory in Virginia Woolf's The Waves* maintains that the human mind has a deep link with reality. The mind receives a countless thoughts with sharpness of steel. In this sense the Edwardian novelists present the distorted vision of reality because they portray a severely limited view of the world. *To the Lighthouse* (1927) appears to draw heavily on modern philosophy of Henry Bergson who presented his theory of time prior to Einstein's theory of relativity. Bergson presented his philosophy on theoretical models while Virginia Woolf practically demonstrated the idea of serial time and pure time in her novels. *To the Lighthouse* (1927) never incorporates any particular theory but rather assimilates various artifacts into achieving and portraying a unique vision of reality. It challenges the notion that 'we cannot go outside our consciousness' (Ettinger, 3). It is true that Virginia Woolf does not incorporate any particular theory and no direct inference can be traced in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) of Bergson's influence.

Ettinger does not seem to focus on the simultaneous existence of mind and body; these are separate entities and have different requirements. Body is dependent on serial time and ultimately decays in the shape of death, but serial time has no bearing upon spirit. Spirit is free from the limits of time and space. Body grows and decays with the passage of time but spirit stays the same forever; it has no beginning and no end. It seems to be part of the bigger self. Virginia Woolf did not write *To the Lighthouse* (1927) with the purpose of expressing any particular philosophy rather it is purely an aesthetic and artistic creation in which the authoress tried to convey the drama of existence. It would be unjust to limit Virginia Woolf to a certain kind of philosophy or influence.

In her paper *The Thing beneath the Semblance of the Thing* (1985), Paula Bournier opines that in *To the Lighthouse* (1927), there are two aspects of reality; the external reality to which we are accustomed and the inner mystical reality which is discovered through life-long experience. She also associates both levels with masculine and feminine poles of reality. The Masculine pole of reality includes all the recorded history and the stories told. The Feminine pole of reality includes the unconscious and non-rational part of the knowledge. In her novels Virginia Woolf projects masculine reality through serial time as vertical continuum and feminine reality through horizontal continuum. Clock- time progresses at its usual pace but when the action moves to mind then it is filled with more experience and gets wider and wider 'more all-encompassing more able to partake' like Mrs. Ramsay's boeuf en daube, of eternity;

Nothing need be said; nothing could be said. There it was, all round them. It partook she felt, carefully helping Mr. Bankes to a specially tender piece, of eternity;there is coherence in things, a stability; something, she meant, is immune from change and shines out...in the face of the flowing, the fleeting,

the spectral, like a ruby; ... of such moments, she thought, the thing is made that endures (TTL, 158).

Mrs. Ramsay can see the permanence and coherence which shapes the pattern that lies at the back of life. Virginia Woolf associates this permanent shape of reality with feminine pole of reality because it receives all the things as a woman receives a man during sexual intercourse. She does not hold any superiority of female sex rather she wants to emphasize the fact that masculine and feminine poles of reality are the necessary ingredients of life without which one cannot glimpse reality in its totality (Bourner, 54).

Paula Bourner's argument intensifies the importance of the moment of perception. She only classifies reality into masculine and feminine poles. The question arises as to how these aspects of reality can be reached. Mr. Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) tries his hard to know the mechanism that interlink all the objects of universe but bitterly fails because he wants to have rational explanation for all the phenomena. Paula Bourner fails to convey the fact that reality is something to be grasped from multiple perspectives. It is not possible for an individual to grasp reality, whether nominal or phenomenal in its totality. The expression and comprehension of total reality is beyond human capabilities to grasp. Mrs. Ramsay is more intuitive, but apart from the moments of being which she experiences, she cannot go skin deep in the perception of total reality.

Ann Kathleen Kraetzig in her MA thesis, *Anti-authoritarian Representation of Reality within two of Virginia Woolf's Novels* says that, in *To the Lighthouse* (1927), Virginia Woolf focuses on the mind and the multiplicity of the characters. She uses poetry in order to catch the essence of reality and to evade what is superfluous. Poetry is also used to express the intensity of emotions when other modes of expression fail to express such intensity. She divides Virginia Woolf's concept of reality into three levels;

1. Ascription of reality within the thoughts and sensations of mind,
2. Her own view point about the expression of the subjective nature of reality,
3. Her life long quest to catch something for her novels which she is not sure to name: 'life or spirit, truth or reality' (Kraetzig 7).

In *To the Lighthouse* (1927), Virginia Woolf endeavours to catch the very essence of reality within the ideas and emotions of the character's mind. She concentrates on inner world, ignores the outer happenings, and follows unstructured thoughts as they occur in the mind because she thinks that 'submerged truth sometimes comes to the top' (Kraetzig 8). Subjective reality is more complex because a single character has many fold perspectives and selves. Woolf tries to represent reality from the multiple perspectives of minds or voices within a single character. This perspective presents a variety of versions of the same happenings and hence contradictory perceptions of reality are created.

Ann Kathleen Kraetzig prefers inner notions of reality at the expense of the outer ones. Reality is not something to be created in the minds of the characters. It is something gradually evolved, individually experienced and collectively felt. Multiple perspectives of minds or voices are open to give the distorted view of reality as the power of comprehension varies from individual to individual. The attitude and approach of one person may be different than the other. A colour-blind person may not be able to differentiate colours like other human beings. What he observes is correct according to his own sense perception. Similarly every individual comprehends the outer world according to his own text of experience and sense of perception.

According to John Mepham, Virginia Woolf's works are innovative in form because they spring from her attempt to portray different aspects of reality. Woolf wants to bring hidden and ignored things into light and not to make formal structure as an end in itself. For her vision always 'overrides design' (Mepham 92). These innovations allow her to get access to the hidden and unexplored complexities of the character's personality. She wants to write about the 'selves' which an individual changes like a protective envelope to prevent 'traumatic exposure' (Mepham, 96).

John Mepham is ambiguous in his portrayal of various aspects of reality by Virginia Woolf. He merely focuses on the internal hidden undiscovered motives of the character which to me is the distortion of reality. Single individuals have to wear different masks or personas to cater for the needs of the roles being performed in society. To portray the hidden motives of character does not mean to bring to the light the inner notion of character's reality.

Sherry James in her essay on *To the Lighthouse: An Introduction* maintains that, nothing remains fixed; everything undergoes a change. Post-impressionist painters attempted to depict not the ordinary shapes but the formation of solid realism. These artists do not copy appearance but produce a form. Similarly they do not replicate solid physical reality but strive to discover its equal. Reality is much a matter and state of mind. The mental world is much more extensive in action than exterior action. Sherry James tries to reveal the 'flickering of that inner most flame which flashes its message through the brain' (James, 7). Behind a simple action of the character there lies a deep and complex flow of thoughts that seem to float without a controlling link. One notion releases itself into a sequence of other ideas. Action at the physical level may be limited to a few seconds but at the mental level there is much more activity.

Sherry James focuses on the conventional idea of writing that tended to portray things as they are. The external shape of the objects is related to objective reality while Virginia Woolf tries to grasp the inner feelings of human beings through objective realities, how they are individually visualized and how they contribute in arriving at the notion of reality. The single state of mind has no value unless it is linked and connected with other states. These states when brought together can give us information to form an idea about character's personality.

Erich Auerbach in his seminal work, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (1945) analyzes the representation of reality in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) by taking excerpt from chapter five of part one: *the Window*. He asserts that modern authors like Virginia Woolf found it difficult to present exterior reality because of the complexity of the age and multiplying societies. She marginalized the ingredients of factual reality and focused on representing inner reality. Inner reality is more real because it is extremely personal and made up of universally shared life experiences common to all human beings. She uses short sentences for portraying outer reality while longer for expressing mental experiences. According to him, external events are secondary to personal considerations and inner streams of thoughts of a character. Outer events serve as a stimulus to inner process. Things are not seen directly but through reflections linked with present happenings that release them. Thus the very concept of reality is altered and the exterior occurrence serves as context for a more real reality to unfold itself.

The prime motif in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) is to present life as ongoing process. Characters are continuously endeavouring to provide significance and coherence to their lives, to their environment, and the world they live in. The characters struggle to search the meaning of life. For this purpose characters in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) exhibit leaning to limit reality to personal analysis. It also reflects movement towards tragic vision in which the entity glimpsed is a vanishing point of the perceiving subject like the propensity of an occurrence that remove the structure over which the strength of personality 'depends' (Levy, para 5).

One cannot agree with Erich Aurbach regarding his assertion that Virginia Woolf failed to represent the exterior world because of its complexity. She deviated from the conventional representation of the character where the writers only revealed the outer skin and clothes of the character. Such a presentation missed the essence of reality.

Nicholas Marsh in his book *Virginia Woolf, the novels* says that time dilation is important factor in formulating and expressing exterior and interior notion of reality. Exterior description is made within the confines of serial time. Action is transformed into the mind then the occurrences are liberated from the limits of time and space. Time gets slower while the process of narrating gets faster. Exterior and interior observer will measure different times. Virginia Woolf stresses interior elements of the character at the expense of serial representation. Her characters confront chaos which they are unable to rationally explain. Lily Briscoe in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) tries her best to find some mechanism in order to understand this mysterious world but she fails because she wants to catch reality experienced at 'imaginary' level (Marsh, 204).

Nicholas Marsh forgets the fact that life never follows any rational explanation. Serial time has its own mechanism to follow; it has nothing to do with psychological time. Human mind does not follow any logical sequence. Thoughts and ideas sprout in and out without any conscious control. Both outer and inner time follows different methods—the one moves in a logical way while the other has nothing to do with logic. Virginia Woolf in her art of narration assumes the role of omniscient narrator

and records feelings in the mind of the character at imaginary level as it happens.

William Troy asserts that Virginia Woolf, whether influenced directly or indirectly, imitates in her works the whole theory of metaphysics. She derives fundamental view of reality from rejection of natural formula and surrenders to the world of flux and individual intuition. Deeper reason for this attraction lies in her sensibility and subjective mode. Mrs. Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) relieves herself from the responsibilities of physical living through solitude by divorcing herself from factual reality:

To be silent; to be alone. All the being and the doing, expensive glittering, vocal, evaporated; and one shrunk, with a sense of solemnity, to being oneself, a wedge-shaped core of darkness... when life sinks down for a moment, that range of experiences seemed limitless.... Losing personality, one lost the fret, the hurry, the stir; and there rose to her lips always some exclamation of triumph over life when things came together in this peace, this rest, this eternity.... (Sprague, 28).

When the apparent smoothness of life permeates through something beyond, the range of experience transcends to the infinite boundaries. But experience in this sense is totally different from the experience which is ordinarily understood by passing through a certain phase of physical action.

William Troy only stresses the importance of the moment of being in which one feels a link with all the objects of nature. This is not a complete picture rather a partial one. This is the temporary understanding that ignites the organism to feel intensely and acutely. But when it comes out of this trance it feels nothing of the temporary ignition. The problem with such type of unification is that it is beyond the language's capacity to grasp. It is felt only at individual level and cannot be shared at objective level.

Francesco Mulas in his article *Virginia Woolf's to the Lighthouse: a Work in Progress from Vision to Reality* writes that Virginia Woolf has two contradictory approaches to reality. The one he terms as masculine approach while the other as feminine approach. Mr. Ramsay embodies the former approach while Mrs. Ramsay the later.

Francesco Mulas limits Virginia Woolf's vision of reality to feminine and masculine approaches which in my opinion is not true projection of Virginia Woolf's ideals. She does not make any division between feminine and masculine approach for arriving at the notion of reality. Both are necessary ingredients of reality. Cognition helps intuition to arrive at the individual and generalized notion of reality.

According to Walter Allen, Virginia Woolf seems to be imposing the significance of flux in her works. Her characters are always ready to grasp the transience of the transcending moment. They are in search for the pattern in the flux in order to find meaning of the pattern beneath the semblance of the things (Allen, 347).

Walter Allen does not explicitly define the pattern in the flux that gives meaning to life. Transience of the transcending moment is temporary attempt on part of the characters to achieve unification but in this attempt they bitterly fail. Flux is important aspect of life. Life is cyclic and is constantly changing. Characters are constantly busy in order to create meaning in life and this struggle never ends.

Virginia Woolf experiments and develops a new form and technique of writing in order to explore and convey the inner and ‘un-circumscribed nature of identity and reality’ (Gunes, 175). Her idea of reality is based on her private experience rather than the influence of any conscious scientific or philosophic theory. She captures the flux of time ‘particularly the recentness of our consciousness yet also the blurring of distinction in memory between past and present: language is discreet whereas memory is continuous; language uses one tense at a time, whereas memory can blend two’ (Robert Giddings et al 16).

The inner reality does not move on straight plane of thought; various strands are simultaneously at work within the framework of an action. Human consciousness is fluid and always in state of mutability. Language is the only source through which it expresses itself. Language serves as a symbol having no fixed meaning. Language moves in a straight direction as compared to the fluidity of mind.

Likewise, Virginia Woolf catches an event within the clock time and takes it to the mind time where time is dilated, collapsed into one all-encompassing present and the action gets greater momentum in its force while the clock-time bears no impact in the interior regions. The writer assumes omniscient role and records the shower of falling atoms within human consciousness. This multiple perspective affords better opportunity for the writer to lay bare the inner mind from various viewpoints. The physicality of things is doubtful; the more real it seems to be the more elusive it is. Human knowledge has greater autonomy than animal knowledge in relation to the force of desire. Human desire in reality is beyond the capacity of language to grasp. Virginia Woolf seems to be showing the element of desire within the range of imaginary and symbolic levels. She exposes characters from within and other people’s consciousness. The narrative slides between people’s mind within the confines of non-moving chronological time.

In light of the aforementioned literature review, a lot has been said and written entailing the notion of reality visualized by Virginia Woolf in *To the Lighthouse* (1927). This thesis is an analysis of the notion from a number of perspectives and a summary of conclusory comments.

3. Lily Briscoe: Fusion of subjective and objective reality

Lily Briscoe is diligent, methodical and focused artist who visits summer house for making definite progress in her art of painting. She has sacrificed sex, marriage and children for the sake of art in order to capture a vision that ‘holds life and reality together’ (Mephram, 113). Her painting covers the whole span of the novel, beginning in *the Window* and ending in *the Lighthouse*. She is interested in painting Mrs. Ramsay’s portrait but she wants this portrait to be different and unique. Lily

constantly measures her own sense of meaning and purpose against that which she sees in Mrs. Ramsay. Lily tries to transfix a visual reality which she observes in the island. She faces difficulty in transmitting subjective reality into objective reality. Mrs. Ramsay becomes the object of her desire in arriving at the inner and outer notions of reality. Reality, for Lily Briscoe, is elusive, and perpetually changes. Hence, the possibility of achieving union with Mrs. Ramsay becomes equivalent with her 'quest for ever elusive signified' (Mikko, 238) that constantly changes its shape. Painting for Lily is a semiotic way of achieving her desire of unifying subjective and objective reality in the struggle of life. Lily's painting is like a compelling yearning and is expressed as "this other thing, this truth, this reality, which suddenly laid hands on her, emerged stark at the back of appearances and caught her attention"(Ibid 238). She is in search of something which she considers as truth. She inscribes her canvas but is unable to form a coherent shape. She must wait for eleven years to return to the island and to cover the objective distance to accurately represent her figures and to arrive at her vision.

In addition, Lily Briscoe, also shares the unflinching fortitude of the philosopher; his endless quest for arriving at the reality of things. Her quality can be compared with Mr. Ramsay when he compares knowledge with the key board of piano. He makes heroic struggle to fit life into the limited region of philosophy. On the other hand Lily Briscoe knows that her quest, the fusion of inner and outer notions of reality, is endless. The sea of life is vast and immeasurable. Her painting is the symbolic substitute for the fluidity of waves. It makes Lily lose the awareness of the solid reality around and it is here that her creative process starts. This trance brings ideas in her mind like a fountain spurting; the entire humanity seemed to have melted into a pond of thought. She is battling with herself and is torn within. Unlike Mr. Ramsay, who always tries to find some support to stand on, Lily constantly mobilizes her efforts and "step[s] off her strip of board into the waters of annihilation" (Marsh, 159). Lily describes her painting as moving out and out until absolutely alone on a narrow plank over the sea water. Slowly and gradually she discovers the truth about life.

Lily Briscoe endeavours to transfix reality into her painting. Reality of life can be seen through intuition. It can neither be terminated by death nor can be confined by external events. Lily's quest is not after the acquisition of knowledge but union that she desired and needed. She longed for the intimate contact with the outer in order to create internal harmony which defied any expression through language (Amjad, 127). She fails because she does not realize the fact that life is fluid, volatile, and sequential. The job of an artist is to paint with the help of colours. She always tries to get beyond herself. Lily is unable to paint as she cannot project her feeling in true sense. She cannot give form to her feelings because she paints an abstract painting in which things of universal respect are reflected through 'triangular purple shape' (Ettinger, 10).

Likewise, Lily Briscoe needs to establish harmony between outer and inner notions of reality as was established by Mrs. Ramsay. She suffers from aloofness and pessimistic attitude due to incoherence of facts which she wants to harmonize through shapes, colours, and shadows. Her attitude to life is not open and receptive. Her approach to reality is artificial, barren, and detached. Her failure to uncover the sense of life is metaphorically equable to the fact that her pictures are artistically worthless having no depth. She wants to capture reality through colours which is not possible. The first

direct entrance the reader gets to the mind of Lily Briscoe is in page twenty nine where she perceives the presence of someone coming when she is thoroughly busy in painting. She forms a clear idea of the painting. Everything is elegant and semi-transparent:

Then beneath the colour there was a shape. She could she see it so clearly, so commandingly, when she looked: it was when she took her brush in hand that the whole thing changed. It was in that moment's flight between the picture and her canvas that the demons set on her who often brought her to the verge of tears and made this passage from conception to work as dreadful as any down a dark passage for a child. Such she often felt herself—struggling against terrific odds to maintain her courage; to say: "But this is what I see; this is what I see," and so to clasp some miserable remnant of her vision to her breast, which a thousand forces did their best to pluck from her (TTL, 32).

Lily's picture represents the androgynous work of art where symmetry is created between Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay, symbols of evanescent and permanent aspects of the reality of human personality. She closely observes Mrs. Ramsay when she creates warmth in the discussion during dinner party by bringing William Bankes' interest in the discussion. She learns that sympathy is the important element in creating the sociability among other characters. Mrs. Ramsay is versatile character. She offers sympathy to William Bankes without knowing whether she will be able to get the same from him. This situation is described by Lily as "stepping into no-man's land where to follow people is impossible and yet there going inflects such a chill on those who watch them that they always try at least to follow them with their eyes as one follows the fading ship" (TTL, 127). The eyes that follow the fading ship imply the meticulous observation on part of the observer. Here it refers to the artifice of Mrs. Ramsay when she by dint of her flexibility brings the interest of other characters.

In her painting, Lily Briscoe is not only concerned with likeness but with the relation of shapes, of lights and of darkness. These formal relations represent the essence or symbolic value abstracted from the subject matter. In *To the Lighthouse* (1927) the particular and general are inter dependent. Individual identity is a continuous process not a fixed point. Meaning and subjectivity are created by social practice. Her painting represents several things throughout the novel. It is associated with her sense of failure, her hatred for marriage and confused longing for Mrs. Ramsay. She is not a conventional artist who imitates and paints what is seen by physical eye.

For Lily truth and reality are not only in appearances but also at the back of things. She cannot complete her painting because of the shock which she received from the visible world. The intensity of such emotions is so deep and complex that simple colours cannot render it from subjective to objective realm in its pure form. She studies the appearances and then goes beneath it to impersonal and abstract. She stretches out the interior of the mind to put forth an idea coming through the action from the "visible world" (Schier, 3). Her awareness that artist's vision is the synthesis of the ordinary and the extraordinary unites on a theoretical level the perception of reality enacted by Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay. It is very difficult for her to synthesize what she feels and to transfix the same with the help of symbols. She wants her painting to exactly replicate what she feels. That is why; when Mr. Bankes observes her picture she is shocked because she does not want anyone to have glimpse of her interior reality.

Her painting does not contain any picture. It indicates a triangular purple shape because she made no attempt at likeness. What is lacking is the need to create balance between light and shadow. She wants to symbolize what she feels for Mrs. Ramsay. Even at this moment without a brush in her hand, she herself is not sure as to what she wants to transfix. Mr. Bankes remarks that ‘women can’t paint’ is based on the superficiality of things. He is unable to appreciate her picture because he believes that the painting should represent the exterior reality. Lily’s painting has a relationship of shapes, of visible and invisible which he has never observed before. Human beings do not easily reveal themselves. Feeling of love cannot clutch its object. It is like a love of mathematician expressed through mathematical symbols and like the love of poets expressed through phrases. The phenomenal objects are the gateways for perceiving reality; for reality is both the solid and the “intangible” (Roe, 62).

Moreover, Lily Briscoe is suspicious about her accomplishments as an artist to fuse the subjective and objective aspects of reality. She regards life as something hostile and “ancient enemy of hers” (TTL, 180). Her act of creation has been expressed in the language of strife and contradiction. This strife is evident in her approach towards life which is narrow. She is not accommodative because she does not express feelings of compassion when Mr. Ramsay demands sympathy from her. She regards the concept of marriage as restriction on personal freedom. She forgets that marriage is bringing together of two individuals on equal terms in which both the partners have to respect each other’s individuality. Although she admires Mrs. Ramsay very much but she is foil to her. Mrs. Ramsay tries to contemplate the flow of life while Lily Briscoe reacts to situation. Similarly, she wants mystic union with Mrs. Ramsay which is not possible. For having this union, her body is the hurdle as it is the social product. In order to understand the reality of life she must come out of her persona and personal egotism. When Lily Briscoe sheds her false selves then she will be able to have glimpse of the mystic union: a moment of being. Lily wants an instant flow of wisdom and knowledge to make her aware of the mechanism of life. She tries to be in close contact with Mrs. Ramsay with the hope that something will happen to her for she (Mrs. Ramsay) is the storehouse of knowledge and wisdom. She wants to know something about the inner world of the people. She sits close to Mrs. Ramsay and wants to get into the interior regions of her mind and body in order to feel the sacred private part which if revealed can teach her everything. But unfortunately such sacred notions are not public and are not openly offered. Hence, she tries her best to find ways and means in order to read the sacred chambers of her mind. Art evades her, yet she longs for it. In the same way, Lily Briscoe through complex image of hives indicates the profound human desire to get awareness about the interior regions of other individuals. It is an admitted fact that this awareness is unachievable. Like hives, human beings are not completely inaccessible. Their charms tempt us and we hover round them only listening to the sound and furies that come from their internal life. Lily Briscoe is unable to decode these sounds into messages and will never be able to know what she feels and thinks. Then, Lily imagines Mr. Bankes and Mr. Ramsay;

Standing now, apparently transfixed, by the pear tree, impression poured on her of these two men, and to follow her thought was like a following a voice which speaks too quickly to be taken down by one’s pencil and the voice was her own voice saying without prompting undeniable, everlasting, contradictory things so that even the fissures and humps on the bark of the pear tree were irrevocably fixed there for eternity (TTL, 40).

Furthermore, Lily is confused because she is unable to know the mechanism through which human beings can be summed up. She cannot even follow her own thoughts, not to speak of the entrance to the quick complex internal world that stays alive within each individual. There are three devices that help in arriving at the notion of the reality. These are; time, complexity and language. But these are imperfect instruments and cannot measure the speed, rhythm and eruption of the internal lava that exists inside every bee (human beings) and hive (humanity). Language cannot express the reality in its pure form nor this serial time that moves on a straight forward linear direction (Nussbaum, 734, 5). Lily wants body to body proximity with Mrs. Ramsay. What she desired is not knowledge but unity that is not literally possible. She desires to put the same feeling into painting. It is difficult rather impossible to transfix exactly what is felt. Lily's painting is different from ordinary painting in the sense that she wants to convey inner feeling through colours and shapes. It is really a tough job for her to transfer subjective into objective. She meditates to use;

What device for becoming, like waters poured into one jar, inextricably the same, one with the object one adored? Could the body achieve, or the mind, subtly mingling in the intricate passages of the brain? Or the heart? Could loving, as people called it, make her and Mrs. Ramsay one? for it was not knowledge but unity that she desired, not inscriptions on tablets, nothing that could be written in any language known to men, but intimacy itself, which is knowledge, she had thought, leaning her head on Mrs. Ramsay's knee (TTL, 79).

The narrative shifts from inner perception to outer description as social construct of reality prohibits both in language and in practice, unification of Lily Briscoe with Mrs. Ramsay. Lily wants to get entrance into the chamber of Mrs. Ramsay's mind. Through this entrance Lily will be able to see some inscription which cannot be seen by others. But analysing or watching is not a close access rather it replaces the subjective with the objective. It does not yield the grasp of other person. Lily's goal of entrance to the holy "tablets" (Makella, 237) is inaccessible. It is also ethically challenging. A kind of law of the father prevents her from attaining these sacred inscriptions. Her desire to become one with object of adoration is what Lacan terms as desire for pre-linguistic imaginary order to become one with the mother which Lily terms as not anything that could be put in any verbal communication celebrated by "men" (Makella, 237). In such immoral unification Mrs. Ramsay will have to surrender her privacy before Lily's curious gaze. Here it is noteworthy that for Mrs. Ramsay privacy is the central constituent of her selfhood and she is not going to accept Lily's demand. Lily at this point also conceals her thoughts from Mrs. Ramsay, even though she wants infusion into her being. But this infusion does not occur. She realizes that to have the knowledge and harmony of the feelings and thoughts of others do not mean that they are like us. The moment Lily Briscoe considers herself close to Mrs. Ramsay the farther her inner world goes from her grasp. Lily realizes the fact that human beings are not super humans they are finite both in mind and body, partial and incomplete and always separate from others (Nussbaum, 742). Exterior reality serves as a stabilizing source. When the intensity of Lily's emotions decreases then the 'sun seems to give less heat' (TTL, 33). But strolling with William Bankes brings back the animating force in her. Floating water provides a sort of physical relief to their bodies. Instead of Mrs. Ramsay, Lily can have a stable relationship with William Bankes. By coming together they will be able to complete natural process of unification and procreation.

Moreover, Lily tries to portray, not the surface of the things, but the vast mysterious underworld which connects it with the surface. She seems to have lost awareness of the self. She attempts to articulate a vision of reality beyond words and seeks to achieve in art what Mrs. Ramsay attained in life: the moment in which ordinary and extraordinary are perceived as one. Lily sees life as a continual reality which is neither terminated by death nor circumscribed by external events. Similarly time is not the accumulation of seconds or hours but a continuum which is reflected in the image of weaving by Mrs. Ramsay. Life, of soul and sense, is important. The passage from one level to the other can only be made through one or the other of the senses because physical and spiritual realities constitute a unity. She visualizes with a sudden 'flash' that the 'awkward space' in the middle of the picture should be filled with a tree and thus she completes her painting. Now she is able to respond to Mr. Tansley who demands sympathy in order to relieve himself from egotism that prevents him to enjoy life. All this is under Mrs. Ramsay's doing;

For, of course, if Mrs. Ramsay said to her, as in effect she did, 'I am drowning my dear, in seas of fire, unless you apply some balm to the anguish of this hour, and say something nice to that young man there, life will run upon the rocks (TTL, 106).

In the same way, Lily Briscoe realizes that for arriving at the notion of reality it is essential to come out from the limits of her physical being. Human reality is not something tangible. It consists of the very warmth and feelings in our relations. Lily Briscoe is round character who passes through a series of journeys for arriving at the insight into the affairs of life. Initially, she fails to develop satisfactory relations with male characters because of her egotistical attitude. Her attitude towards Charles Tansley is ironic when she asks him about the letters he has written. Lily's personality is tilted as she does not possess the notion of feelings towards others. In order to have the balance in personality she must see the world 'through eyes of love' (TTL, 73). For this purpose, she must interact with the environment. But for this interaction in order to be constructive and positive she must be free from egotism. Only then she will be able to see the beauty of life.

Similarly, Lily Briscoe finds pleasure and harmony of mind when she experiences the notion that everything in this life is interconnected. Creative ideas come when she participates in the flow of life. It is always during her discussion with the people that enables Lily to have vision of her painting and of reality. This vision does not come in solitude rather from the warmth of life and from the sea when she looks at it. Following her walk of a long distance, she take rest for some time, thinks for a while and feels the message of serenity inhaled from the seashore. Here the individuality of Lily melts when she brings together her feelings and thoughts with the sea. Both Lily and sea becomes one body (Gunes, 178).

Therefore, Lily is more concerned with inner than outer aspect of reality. But physical objects are important because without these particular objects she cannot reach the essence which is permanent. Lily Briscoe is also a character and proponent of author's aesthetics. Her work of art is conceptual counterpart of the narrative itself. She ultimately finishes her image when the novel is equally completed;

Quickly, as if she were recalled by something over there, she turned her canvas. There it was—her picture. Yes, with all its greens and blues, its lines running up and across, its attempt at something. It would be hung in the attics, she thought; it would be destroyed. But what did that matter? She asked herself, taking up her brush again. She looked at the steps; it was blurred. With a sudden intensity, as if she saw it clear for a second, she drew a line there, in the centre. It was done; it was finished. Yes she thought, laying down her brush in extreme fatigue, I have finished my vision (TTL, 306).

Lily puts a line in the middle is also symbolic of the border that separates cognitive reality from intuitive reality. She realizes that there exists an apparent line of demarcation between these two aspects of reality. It can be reached through moments of being. Reality in its totality is infinite. It can neither be reached through thought nor through words and shapes. In the beginning, Lily is unable to complete the picture because she wants to catch and represent the same through shapes: signs and symbols. Lily's painting in fact is an attempt to investigate how reality is independent of the notions of serial time. The drawing of a line in the middle of the shape that completes the picture can be made parallel to the woman's desire for fulfilment through sexual intercourse. During the act of sex, one is the mover while the other is the unmoved. When both are together, it gives sense of wholeness. Similarly her quest is nothing but an impetus to make her move ahead. Ultimately, Lily develops sense of affection towards Mr. Ramsay. She is able to relieve herself from the obsession of the dead (Mrs. Ramsay). Lily Briscoe at last arrives at her vision but this vision is ultimately achieved with the help of factual reality provided by Mr. Ramsay and Carmichael. Lily's painting with its line down the centre enacts simultaneously both joining and division of the two sides of the canvas that stands for a 'break of unity and holding together' (Aytac, 32).

Lily Briscoe completes her painting and equally achieves a balance between opposing forces. She has overcome superficial distance which she tried to protect in the first part of the novel. In the third part she is in a position to carve out more space around her easel than she had previously secured. She develops deep attachment with the Ramsay's family. When Mr. Ramsay along with his family make trip to the *Lighthouse* though they are physically away yet emotionally remain present in the mind of Lily. Initially she is unable to complete her painting because her vision required seeing the world. When she sees the world then she is able to agree with Mr. Ramsay's point of view; his vision of the world and hence completes her work. It is because of the fact that she has realized that life is the combination of both subjective and objective aspects of reality. She begins to understand herself and the world around in a better way.

4. The Window, Time Passes and the Lighthouse

In this chapter the three sections of the novel have been analyzed. It is seen what they represent and how they contribute in arriving at the wholesome notion of human reality.

The structure of *To the Lighthouse* (1927) is like the letter 'H': two building blocks connected by a hallway. It presents actions that occur in two days but ten years apart. *Time Passes* provide a link to join the first part *the Window* and the third part *the Lighthouse*. Part two *Time Passes* throws a fleeting

look at the depiction of physical reality of the character's life. It elegantly compresses ten long years of Ramsay's life and presents objective outlook of the exterior world. It integrates "the entirety of perceptible, the relationship of perceiving and the perceived entities...it presents the node of the chiasmic relationship of the visible and the invisible through its extreme plasticity" (Moise, 234). The action is limited to twenty four hours. The first and third part reports a day. In first part: *the Window*, the action covers seven hours duration while in part three *the Lighthouse* the action takes seven hours. In part two *Time Passes* the action covers ten years where the dreaming selves ('I-less' detachment from self where 'I' is not linked with single but with plurality of lives) of the night are described (Roe, 74-5). Time has its influence on humans not on material and concrete objects. Theme is quite unified as the coherence has been provided by utterances that come from different individuals as single voice. Lily and Mr. Ramsay are linked by their desire to create and perpetuate.

The over-all time pattern is established by these three divisions. Throughout, the progression of clock time is paralleled with the characters' inner sense of time which allows an intermingling of thought about the past, present, and future. But the tone of the each section is varied. In part first the stress is upon the present. In part two the stress goes to the future when Ramsay's summer house will be reoccupied. In part three the stress shifts to the past where the morning's activities are haunted by the memory of Mrs. Ramsay whose death was announced in part two. Because of repeated references in part three to the beginning section of the book, a circular movement and a sense of wholeness is suggested by the novel.

In the same way, use of symbols in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) is not fixed but rather evocative and suggestive. The world of facts is merged with the imagination through images and symbols. The novel relies on the private symbols to portray the inner consciousness of the characters in accordance with the varying and "complex modern experience" (Gunes, 175). In the novel the external objects and characters cannot be separated from each other. The sea and the Lighthouse serve as incessant rhythm for characters' inner life. These symbols are used in an association with some idea in the mind of a character in order to enable him to assume the notion of authenticity at the back of visible objects. When the observer and the observed get fused in the moment of perception then they glimpse something deeper behind the apparent order. The main characters function as part of the symbolic structure of the novel. Mrs. Ramsay serves as a life force which animates other characters. Mr. Ramsay is part of socially constructed universal force that creates roles society needs for its continuation. Sometimes, he is almost on the verge of alienation. The three parts of the novel combine the shifting with the solid. It has symbolic significance for arriving at the notion of reality.

THE WINDOW:

The first section *the Window*, covers one hundred and eighty-six pages, depicts our epistemological insufficiency towards each other. The activities of sixteen characters are organized. The central one being dinner party that appears in chapter seventeen. Dinner party serves to create life spirit that runs through everyone. It animates the minds of all individuals and produces life energy. One may call this life force, fact or truth but it is a fundamental and indispensable component that encompasses

the whole humanity. People are unknowable. It is difficult to know them by the rooms they live in or things they do. What we gather from other characters about their personality is also skeptical. In *To the Lighthouse* (1927) this energy seamlessly runs in the shape of multiple voices from one character to another and creates a sense of complete unity, where, the notion of a 'true being is glimpsed' (Miller, 29).

The Window also reveals that an individual is not entirely sealed; there is always a gap through which people can be seen. It also suggests the image of sealed hive. Though one cannot enter the hive but at least one can have some knowledge by observing the humming and buzzing of bees. Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay do not know each other through any unity or mingling of any experience nor do they invade the privacy of each other. Mrs. Ramsay is well aware of the shallowness of her husband but she does not give any hint of his failure. Their relationship is based on the element of mutual respect. Mr. Ramsay also respects his wife. Though he intrudes on the solitude of his children and to some extent on Lily but he is very careful about his wife's privacy;

He turned and saw her. Ah! She was lovely, lovelier now than ever he thought. But he could not speak to her. He could not interrupt her. He wanted urgently to speak to her now that James was gone and she was alone at last. But he resolved, no; he would not interrupt her. She was aloof from him now in her beauty, in her sadness. He would let her be, and he passed her without a word, though it hurt him that she should look so distant, and he could not reach her, he could nothing to help her. And again he would have passed her without a word had she not, at that very moment, given him of her own free will what she knew he would never ask, and called to him and taken the green shawl off the picture frame, and gone to him. For he wished, she knew, to protect her (TTL, 100).

Mr. Ramsay shows profound respect for his wife by making every effort not to disturb her. He accepts her as a separate independent entity. They make every effort to retain the harmony of their conjugal partnership. But there are dissimilarities in their personalities also. They differ in thought pattern, in emotional response and in their attitude to life. In spite of these differences they do have knowledge of one another. This knowledge is due to the fact that they lived for a very long time and spent a long period assessing each other. Mrs. Ramsay also feels the odd behaviour of her husband. He is negligent to the ordinary things like in which Mrs. Ramsay is interested but to extra ordinary things he 'swoops like an eagle' (Nussbaum, 745).

The Window commences with a line uttered by Mrs. Ramsay followed by one and a half page in which inner mind of James is described. This recurrently happens in the whole novel. The inner notion of consciousness of the characters has been explored. Through *the Window* partial view of the outside is made. The exterior can hardly cover half an hour of dialogues. Not only this section but the whole of the novel has very little to find expression in speech. The person who reads is continuously made attentive to the fertility of consciousness and the gap that exists within personal and the impersonal world. This gap between inner and outer is bridged by limiting the prose to the exterior action. The inner world of the mind, like the group of gnats, travels swiftly, has numerous tiny intersection, all linked with the other but its simultaneous representation is "beyond human capabilities" (Nussbaum 733, 34).

Similarly, *To the Lighthouse* (1927) is a focused study of human consciousness. The novel shifts so rapidly from one centre of consciousness to the other (Lily Briscoe, Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay) that one is hardly able to feel what thought, so quickly do they communicate. The following excerpt from the last page of *the Window* expresses the same shift from the consciousness of one character to another:

But she was becoming conscious of her husband looking at her. He was smiling at her, quizzically, as if he was ridiculing her gently for being asleep in broad daylight, but at the same time he was thinking, Go on reading. You don't look sad now, he thought. And he wondered what she was reading, and exaggerated her ignorance, her simplicity; for he liked to think that she was not clever, not book-learned at all. He wondered if she understood what she was reading. Probably not, he thought. She was astonishingly beautiful. Her beauty seemed to him, if that were possible, to increase; Yet seem'd it winter still, and, you away, As with your shadow I with these did play, (TTL, 182).

There is rapid interchange of thoughts from Mr. Ramsay's consciousness to Mrs. Ramsay's mind. Both are well aware of the feelings they possess towards each other. The use of language is calculated and the scheme is to give relief and to console each other. Words have symbolic significance. They have no fixed meaning. They can denote both the extremes of politeness and harshness. Mr. Ramsay desires his wife to convey to him her feeling of love which she finds difficult to express in the realm of symbolic. She tries to convey the meanings he wants. Then realizing her husband's focus, she turns and looks at him with a smile. Her smile conveys the message that she loves him. This moment has importance because both have realized the fact that they are separate beings, having their own entity. Mutual respect leads them to better understanding. For Mr. Ramsay verbal articulation of emotions is easy and natural but for his wife it is very difficult and hard. She wants to express these feelings without distorting their purity because to articulate these emotions she needs to change the medium from imaginary into symbolic. She wants to retain the purity and originality. It is due to the same reason that cheerfully she glanced out of the windowpane and whispered within that nothing can replace this pleasure. It reflects moment of understanding between Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay which has reached almost to the point of perfect harmony. But this harmony has been achieved not suddenly but through long years of intimacy. *The Window* offers this opening through which the characters can understand each other. But this opening is not one sided observation but an all-encompassing inquiry into intimacy of the other. But this too, is susceptible to doubt. It does not offer perfect reality rather a glimpse of reality. Human beings are sealed hives. No one can comprehend their inner world in its totality. So is a human relationship which is not immune from doubt and always need reassurance. Doubts should be set aside for arriving to the factual notion of each other (Nussbaum, 749).

The Window ends with the message that the knowledge of the other is always immune to doubt. The characters in this section move from coherence to knowledge not by grasping or possessing, but simply by trusting. Mrs. Ramsay trusts her husband because her experience has shown her that Mr. Ramsay can be trusted. Mrs. Ramsay allows her experience to suggest this meaning that leads to trust. It also infers that she has added element of willingness through which she has totally placed herself at the

disposal of Mr. Ramsay.

TIME PASSES:

Time Passes covers only twenty-six pages of the novel. It covers a period of ten years. Ramsay's family departs and certain situation stops them from coming back. The house is left to the forces of nature and darkness prevails over it. The dark and desolate house foreshadows death in the family. *Time Passes* intensifies the complexities experienced by the characters in first section *the Window*. In this section all the social certainties dwindle and chaos is produced when Mrs. Ramsay dies. The time frame is divided into two parallels: horizontal and vertical plane. The former represent diachronic while the later represent synchronic moment of time. Further that time has no meaning when humans are not there. External reality matters when humans interact with it. External object kindles our primary and creative imagination and as a result human beings become productive.

Time passes deals with linear movement of time. What happens on this scale of time is also true and is a recognized fact. It cannot be altered or tempered with. Time has its bearing on the material objects. It, too, has its visible impact on humans because first of all an individual is born, grows and ultimately dies. Serial time that is the product of sequences while its opposite is intuitive time which is spontaneous and is the product of the moment of being. The one leads from individual to universal while the other leads from universal to individual insight. Factual experience is universal in nature and is same everywhere while intuitive experience is individual in nature and varies from individual to individual. It leads from universal to specific. Both these aspect are necessary for having a vision of reality.

Time Passes also reflects the destructive influence of the World War. The sad demise of Mrs. Ramsay and her two kids are placed in brackets in order to make them shocking but minor interruptions in the flight of time and natural process. These deaths are sudden and shocking for the reader but they are narrated from impersonal point of view to which they have no more importance than the fall of a leaf. The overall impression this section creates is that of destructiveness and indifference of nature and transitory nature of human life. *Time passes* presents timeless reality behind the flight of time where characters from the novel are absent. Time is nothing but a linking channel of individuality between two 'disjointed spaces' (Mepham, 110). It represents the changes and chaos brought by war on the face of the world. It brought the feeling of darkness and misery. The old construct of reality represented in *the Window* has lost its validity. It represents a shift from the security of Victorian era to the world of change and loss. It focuses on the disintegration of summer house in the absence of Ramsay's family. The beauty of the world is due to humans. Summer house of Ramsay's was full of life when the fluidity of life prevailed. The building in itself has no value it is the humans who invest it with warmth. The house is the symbol of social taboos and traditions representing material reality.

Time Passes also represent the period of transition from old social construct of reality and to the need for arriving at the new notion of reality and human understanding. After war reality became personal, free from traditional values because existing values failed to help in finding absolute truth.

Modern civilization was array of hope but war shattered that hope. Modern man was left all alone. He considered everything suspicious and was not satisfied with the external objective reality of the world. So he turned his gaze to inner self. Old system could not cope with the changing human needs. People lost faith in certain ways of seeing the world. Objective external world failed, dwindled and needed to be rebuilt according to the “new definition of reality” (Aytac, 22). In the section *Time Passes* the impact of serial time is visible on the personalities of Cam and James. Cam sees their home at the top of the rock which is sequential reality. In the very first pages of the novel James desires to get to the lighthouse but Mr. Ramsay prevents him. In the last part James is able to reach the lighthouse but not in the manner he liked. James has double vision of the lighthouse. First of all he considers the lighthouse as a symbol of factual reality but later on the same vision is transferred into intuitive reality. He experiences moments of being and gets the double vision of reality. This double vision is achieved as serial time and being time intersect to create wholeness.

THE LIGHTHOUSE:

The third section *the Lighthouse* encompasses the events of the single day. It takes place ten years after the first day. In this section of the novel Mr. Ramsay fulfils James’ wish to go to the Lighthouse. In the beginning James and Cam are unwilling to accompany him. When they reach the lighthouse James attitude towards his father undergoes a considerable change. Mr. Ramsay also appreciates James for his ‘seamanship’ (Aytac, 49). Similarly, Lighthouse also suggests some larger view of life and reality. It is linked with the imagery of day and night. In *the Window*, Mrs. Ramsay has been linked with the light. She preserves James’ hope that journey to the Lighthouse will take place and leave the possibilities unrestricted to James. She holds life in terms of radiance that shines “forever” (Gunes, 182). Mrs. Ramsay observes the strokes of the lighthouse and becomes the thing she looked at. In this observation she sinks down in a moment of vision and goes beyond her existence. Her identity is expanded and dissolved into a ‘being’ within her own ‘being’.

Likewise, *the Lighthouse* is poetic in its simplifications and repetitions. Words no longer serve as indicators of reality. They assume terrifying power of de-familiarizing the common world. *The Lighthouse* is also linked with the creative imagination and working of the memory. These memories of the past are made alive by beam of the lighthouse. The intensity of these memories is evident in exceptional moments that come to surface unexpectedly. Familiar scenes frequently recall the memories of James and Lily’s lives. During his trip to the lighthouse James suddenly recollects past and struggles to form internal harmony which had been forgotten for a long time. He feels extraordinary joy because this journey will enable him to realize his dream and fulfill his desire whatever it may be (Roe, 137). Journey to the lighthouse proves fruitful as every character achieves his/her vision of insight into life. Lily too, finds her vision. Lighthouse provides an organic unity to the contradictions, uncertainties, and the dualities within characters. These contradictions merge together and are ordered by the presence of the lighthouse. It permeates through the whole sequence of events. It functions as a mediator between concrete and metaphysical notion of reality. It serves as a middle line downwards to the centre of the novel to keep “the design together” (Miller, 48).

The Lighthouse represents the store house of intuitive energy where our ordinary experience is elevated, linked with the humanity and individual insight about reality is achieved. This experience is known as the ‘moments of being’ where serial time and being time intersects to create sense of wholeness. It is necessary that both aspects of reality should be recognized and balanced in a human personality. If the balance is distorted then there is no doubt that the society will be drifted into anarchy and disorder. In such situations human values will lose its importance and the total worth of human dignity will be decreased.

Light may refer to a better perception, a clearer understanding of the world. The lighthouse functions in two ways such as something to be reached at (new definition of values as the old social structure has lost its validity as a result of Great War) and as a source of flashing light. The symbolic meaning of the lighthouse changes and represents contrast in different contexts with respect to different characters in the novel.

Lighthouse suggests that life, like the waves of particles, is always in a state of flux. Its unknown and un-circumscribed spirit pervades everywhere. The lighthouse and sea convey the continuous rhythm of the character’s inner life. During moment of perception the boundary between subjective and objective world vanishes then the object at which character looks is transformed. This approach enables the characters to perceive a vision of reality behind appearances. Lily Briscoe, Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay always struggle to create meaning in life. Mr. Ramsay attaches himself to philosophical pursuit in order to reach the totality of knowledge. Mrs. Ramsay tries to discover significance in life by relating herself with the brightness of the Lighthouse. Lily Briscoe endeavours the same by painting a picture. Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe analyses the essence of the reality of life in an artistic manner in order to reach the ultimate notion of life.

Similarly, lighthouse has symbolic significance associated with emotions and thoughts of these characters. The inner and outer worlds merge through the means of images and symbols. This synthesis helps the reader to recognize the sentiments and responses of individuals regarding life and reality. Like the aquatic emblem it vests characters with a sort of intuitive consciousness in life. William Banks struggles to comprehend his friendship with Mr. Ramsay by associating him with sand dunes. He senses change in the attitude of Ramsay since his marriage and feels that the pulp had gone out of their relationship. Likewise sea has both soothing and chaotic effect on our lives. When it is calm, it represents the beauty of life but when it gets furious it destroys life. The sight of the sea and the rhythmical sound of the waves detach Mrs. Ramsay from the physical world. The transitory feelings of tranquillity which she received changes into a feeling of terror. Behind the apparent order of the sea there lies a deep mysterious world of chaos. Mrs. Ramsay, when she listens to the sound of the waves, is tranquilized by its calmness but suddenly her mind goes to the horror it may bring:

...the monotonous fall of the waves on the beach, which for the most part beat a measured and soothing tattoo to her thoughts and seemed consoling to repeat over and over again as she sat with the children the words of the some old cradle song, murmured by nature, ‘ I am guarding you- I am

your support, but at other times suddenly and unexpectedly , especially when her mind raised itself slightly from the task in hand, had no such kindly meaning, but like a ghostly roll of drums remorselessly beat the measure of life, made one think of the destruction of the land and its engulfment in the sea, and warned her whose day had slipped past in one quick doing after another that it was all ephemeral as rainbow- this sound which had been obscured and concealed under other sounds suddenly thundered hollow in her ears and made her look up with an impulse of terror (Gunes, 181,182).

Likewise, sea is a dominant symbol in *To the Lighthouse* (1927). The background of the novel is on an island encircled by sea. Sea can be seen all the daylong by Ramsay's family. It permeates thoughts, feelings and reflections of the characters. For instance the sight of the bay mesmerizes Mrs. Ramsay when she visits town with Charles Tansley. This scenic beauty awakes her thoughts:

The whole bay spread before them and Mrs. Ramsay could not help exclaiming, 'Oh, how beautiful!' For the great plateful of the blue water was before her; the hoary Lighthouse, distant, austere, in the midst; and on the right, as far as the eye could see, fading and falling, in soft low pleats, the green sand dunes with wild flowing grasses on them, which always seemed to be running away into some moon country, uninhabited of men. That was the view, she said, stopping, growing greyer-eyed, that her husband loved (TTL, 23).

It reflects the interaction that goes on between natural objects and the imaginary vision. Blue water serves as stimulant that gives Mrs. Ramsay a sense of peace and relief. She links herself with the light of the lighthouse and Mr. Ramsay with the sandbank. This association has symbolic significance. Lighthouse is the store of primitive energy while sandbanks are wiped out either by storms or natural forces. Sand dunes also symbolize the darkness and lack of human understanding that wears away the life of Mr. Ramsay. Physically he enjoys more freedom but at psychological level he is slave to culture and tradition. While physically Mrs. Ramsay enjoys limited freedom but from psychological scale she is able to gain more freedom and gets bolder in her mind within a fluid narrative. Imaginatively she desires a place (moon country) where she could be in perfect solitude and harmony. Charles Tansley, Lily Briscoe and William Banks pay regular visits to sea 'to discover similar serenity and harmony in the sea as it has some soothing effect on them. It serves as a source of mysticism and spiritual power that provides a special kind of privacy and coherence. It also reflects opposing qualities of light and dark. In the waters of the sea there is chaos behind the apparent order of the waves.

The three parts of the novel *To the Lighthouse* (1927) reflect on the 'unknown and un-circumscribed spirit which lives in the internal flux of impressions, feelings and forces' (Gunes, 177). Inner conception of things is full of contrast and collision that needs a shaping power to lend it harmony. Characters live in chaos, entertaining disbelief within the belief, and love within hate. They represent contradictory and complex experience of life. The internal flux of contradictory attitude to reality is portrayed by never ceasing motion. The principal motif behind characters' attitude is to catch the life spirit or what is called the real about human beings. Character's inner life swirls between chaotic and ordered motions over which there is no apparent control. For human notion of reality, there is no hard and fast rule. Life cannot be transfixed into single moment of existence. To transfix life means to destroy it.

5. Mr. Ramsay: A Cognitive Approach to Reality

Mr. Ramsay is representative of objective reality. He looks at life from a linear scale where reality is regarded as what is seen through physical eye. For him, the reality of facts and solid objects is truth. His sole belief in visible objects frustrates him and as a result he develops a hostile attitude towards things and people. Whenever Lily thinks about Mr. Ramsay's occupation she imagines a 'scrubbed kitchen table' (TTL, 38). The imagery of the kitchen table represents the superficial mannerism Mr. Ramsay believes in. He is educated, well qualified but blind and narrow towards others. Moreover, kitchen table represents dry and barren intellectual effort of Mr. Ramsay devoid of sympathy and passions. He is the symbol of inadequacy of human relations. It is this approach that deprived him of scholarly success. Kitchen table in itself has no meaning unless some meaning is 'invested in it' (Ettinger, 10). It also represents false values of a society. The use of imagery invests physical objects with metaphorical significance. In the very third paragraph of the novel his attitude is revealed to the reader. He appears to be a person of absolute ideals having no place for human decency. He irritates his son James who in turn "harbours thoughts had there been an ace handy, or a poker, any weapon that would have gashed a hole in his father's breast and killed him" (TTL, 10). Andrew informs Lily that Mr. Ramsay's books are regarding subject, object and about the notion of reality. He says, 'think of a kitchen table when you are not there' (TTL, 38). He attaches notion of reality with external objects. For him kitchen table possesses some sense of patriarchal power and authority. It is a symbol of masculine integrity based on solid and absolute principles. Mr. Ramsay is part and parcel of this system. He has contributed to this system by writing a book on philosophy at the 'age of twenty five' (Roe, 61).

In addition, philosophy being intellectual knowledge is not compatible with the practical life. An absolute cognitive approach to reality hampers individual's psychic growth that is evident from James' flow of mind. He always nourishes grudge against his father because Mr. Ramsay treats him like a grown up man. He forgets the fact that a child is like a tabula rasa without any knowledge of absolute norms. He fails to see that James's requirements are different than those of adults. Children need attention and when that is denied their personality will not be a balanced one. They do not bother about culture and traditions. In the same way, domestic environment is necessary for the animation of human spirits. It provides energy and harmony. Whenever Mr. Ramsay is near state of futility or when his equilibrium distorts, it is the family where he gets energy from. When he stumbles in his rational journey it is the family that sympathizes with him. Family serves as a centripetal force that refreshes him for next philosophical adventure.

Mr. Ramsay is always under 'some secret conceit at the accuracy of his judgment' (TTL, 10) that he can never deviate from truth which for him is reality. His staunch adherence to truth made him disregard the feelings of other mortals which made him tyrannical, hostile, and unjust. Eventual truth for Mr. Ramsay is that life is useless and worthless. Though life is difficult, facts uncompromising but if he responds to the problems in an accommodative way, the intensity will be lessened and he will be able to face the dilemma with perseverance. Courage, truth and power are needed to endure the felony of life. Where these qualities will come from when there is utter disregard for the feelings of others. Mr. Ramsay wants to be authoritative and suppressive towards his wife and children. Such an attitude brings

disagreement at home. He even hates Mrs. Ramsay's consoling attitude towards James. He loses his temper if someone goes against his will. He gets angry, outrageous and ill tempered just because Mrs. Ramsay has given James a hope that it might be fine tomorrow. He regards any deviation from the solid reality as folly:

The extraordinary irrationality of her remark, the folly of women's minds enraged him. He had ridden through the valley of death, been shattered and shivered; and now, she flew in the face of facts, made his children hope what was utterly out of the question, in effect, and told lies. He stamped his foot on the stone step. "Damn you," he said. But what had she said? Simply that it might be fine tomorrow. So it might (TTL, 50).

Similarly there is a universal life spirit that animates us all and energizes an individual when he comes out of the false persona. Mr. Ramsay is pompous in his false persona. He is not satisfied because he sees life from the point of view of phenomenal reality. This criterion evaluates life from absolute scale. He can be identified with consciousness, the visible world. He always disturbed the equilibrium that existed among Mrs. Ramsay and her children because of his egotistical and over domineering attitude. He totally relies on faculties of his splendid mind in the pursuit of truth. According to Mrs. Ramsay; 'To pursue truth with such astonishing lack of consideration for other peoples' feelings, to rend the thin veils of civilization so wantonly, so brutally was to her such an outrage of human decency...' (TTL, 51).

Mr. Ramsay always distinguishes himself by his scientific way of thinking. He insists that the weather would be bad and it would not be possible to carry out trip to the lighthouse. He is so mechanical and logical in his thinking that he misses the beauty of common objects and ironically moves away from the pursuit of truth which is the ultimate aim of philosophy. He pursues his end in a wrong way and tries to perceive reality through cognition. Cognitive approach distorts and divides reality into moments, periods and psychic states. This process works mechanically and is inclined towards the objective and material world. Intellect gets puzzled beyond the solids and can't follow the natural course. Its function is to assist life not to comprehend it.

Therefore, Mr. Ramsay amuses himself by reading the story of Hume stuck in a bog because it bears some metaphorical relation to his own intellectual predicament. To arrive at the notion of reality both cognitive and intuitive approaches are required while in Mr. Ramsay's case the balance is missing. He searches truth without having any consideration for human nature. He totally relies on his reasoning power and is thus mistaken. He misunderstands life and can't create harmony. He emphasizes the importance of logic and ignores the intuitive response to reality. Intellect is inclined towards matter and remains in itself while instinct steps out towards life and gets "absorbed in the utilization of inert matter" (Amjad, 121).

Likewise the ordered letters of alphabet suggest static keys of a keyboard that reveals the mechanical quality of Mr. Ramsay's splendid mind. He considers himself as a polar explorer who attempts to farther thinking but the moment he takes hold 'the lizard's eye flicked again' and he

stumbles down. He tries to reach the limits of thoughts by musing on his alphabetic campaign. Mr. Ramsay's yearning to attain 'Z' is his symbolic alphabet, the prospect of which he sees as achieving fulfillment in his career. Sometimes Mr. Ramsay's mental exercise is disturbed by his wife and son but he keeps himself busy in his philosophical measurement without paying them any attention. The way he speculates about his mind is very interesting. He compares his mind with a keyboard of piano;

It was splendid mind. For if thought is like the keyboard of 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 (TTL, 53).

Mr. Ramsay worked to provide protection to his family. When he vainly speculates about getting immortal fame his logical mind does not support him. He senses the sterility of life, when he will be forgotten say after two thousand years. He, ultimately, will die and no one will remember him. He has climbed upon the ladder of knowledge to the extent that he is able to see the near waste of time and the 'perishing of stars' (TTL, 56). Cairns rose after his death will give him nothing. His philosophical jargon has brought him almost to the state of disintegration. He does not know what to do. In this state of in-equilibrium, he needs response and sympathy from someone to assure him of his philosophical worth. It does not provide solution to human problems.

Similarly, Mr. Ramsay firmly believes in the factual reality or the horizontal continuum of time. His splendid mind can work on things that are linked with the clock- time or intellectual knowledge. Intellectual knowledge like the keyboard of piano is logically arranged but there comes a unique and varied flow of rhythm from the alphabetical keyboard of piano. Beyond the superficial world intellect cannot move. It does not refine the personality of its possessor as is evident from the characters of Mr. Ramsay and Charles Tansley. Though they are highly educated than the other characters in the novel yet they are victim to superficial mannerism which make them blind to the beauty of life. Mr. Ramsay knows that he cannot have knowledge of all things in one go. In spite of his scholarly approach he gets upset and stuck up in his philosophical journey in arriving at the reality of life. Mr. Ramsay wants an everlasting fame. Which is why, he does not accept the transitoriness of life. He is unable to catch the pattern that lies behind the objects because;

He had not genius; he laid no claim to that: but he had or might have had the power to repeat every letter of the alphabet from A to Z accurately in order. Meanwhile, he stuck at

Q. On, then, on to, R. Feeling that would not have disgraced a leader who, now that the snow has begun to fall and the mountain top is covered in mist, knows that he must lay himself down and die before morning comes, stole upon him, paling the colour of his eyes, giving him, even in the two minutes of his turn on the terrace, the bleached look of withered old age. Yet he would not die lying down; he would find some crag of rock, and there his eyes fixed on the storm, trying to the end to pierce the darkness, he would die standing. He would never reach R[eality] (Bourner, 62).

Though, Mr. Ramsay's knowledge of philosophy and philosophers has made him a distinguished metaphysician of the age but he terms this knowledge as nonsense. He realizes that there is much wisdom not accessible to the intellect. Knowledge is not limited to 'Q' which stands for intellectual quest. It is like piano separated into different tunes. Intellectual knowledge may bring fame but this fame is temporary. Fame is also subject to mutability. Intellectual knowledge has no bearing on the personality of the possessor. The more one advances, the more one is confused. Intellectual knowledge has made Mr. Ramsay more selfish and impervious to beauty and appreciations of the things around. He is blind and deaf to others. Mr. Ramsay uses his linear logic and observes the whole knowledge in one leap. Lily regards Mr. Ramsay as the epitome of wisdom but when she observes him minutely and deeply he appears to her as selfish, having devoid of human sympathy (Amjad, 127).

Likewise, Mr. Ramsay's profound wish is to know all the facts. He wants to dominate others through his knowledge: to reach ultimate point i.e. Z. The division of knowledge into alphabets is suggestive of his fragmentary and unstable state of mind. He lacks integrated view of life and reality. He is unable to articulate himself through his linear logic. He is the organizer of the lost "expedition" (TTL, 55) and loses his race. He can't see any pattern that exists beneath the objects of nature. It is due to the fact that he always makes rational explanations to comprehend life rationally and thus misses the best of it. He has one presumed judgment about life that it is like the layers of a stem where every layer reveals the age of a tree. But he forgets the fact that life is combination of temporal and permanent aspects of reality. Life moves on a linear direction. It cannot be reverted back. Time passed can never be recalled except the recorded moments of history. But that too, describes the factual reality. Factual reality misses the essence of things. For example, human beings cannot be judged through appearances because they are deceptive and can mislead. Our whims, desires, and sensibilities belong to both temporal and permanent aspects of reality. Our life will be more balanced if we consider both aspects as necessary ingredients of life. Life does not move and evolve logically.

Therefore, Mr. Ramsay must develop an intuitive and mystic approach to life. Only then he will be able to glimpse the reality of life. Intellectual quest can not reveal true nature of reality. Mr. Ramsay's approach is a utilitarian one. He evaluates the visible benefit of material objects. He realizes that he had no genius to claim accuracy over all knowledge. He cannot reach reality in its absolute sense. He needs to develop an intuitive response so that his splendid mind may come out of the limits of philosophy to observe that all the objects of nature are linked through specific pattern. In his case Mrs. Ramsay can teach him the true meaning of existence. In life ordinary and common things have importance. Every small bit of moment is important in the life of an individual while Mr. Ramsay totally ignores ordinary things.

Furthermore, Mr. Ramsay uttered melancholic things. It is all the result of his effort to catch reality solely through language. He tries to transfix his feelings through words which are an imperfect medium. Reality cannot be conveyed through symbols because symbols have no fixed meanings and varies from culture to culture. Similarly every individual has his own peculiar set of experiences which differs from others. When Mr.

Ramsay tries to know about peoples' consciousness by listening to the words they speak, he cannot gain awareness because he only knows the surface meaning and not the intended meaning of the speaker. Language is the product of the culture. It is not an independent entity and is always subservient to social norms. The words Mr. Ramsay speaks remind us that they convey meanings shaped by culture and individual history. Words are the only agents through which human consciousness can be reached at. In order to understand Mr. Ramsay, one needs to know the words he uses. In an intimate relationship of long duration, it is not possible to have full knowledge of individual's inner world. People lack such information even about themselves. Mr. Ramsay's pursuit of reality is an effort in a wrong direction which subsequently will turn him to sadness and life will remain an empty dream for him.

Mr. Ramsay has his own eccentricities. He is not satisfied from his life and is deeply interested in the question of what makes a personality. One lifetime is not enough for him. At the bottom of Mr. Ramsay's personality there lies a deep failure to accept the transitoriness of life. It is this sense that creates the impression of unreality about him. Instead of living a natural life he leads an artificial life of mannerism. He is victim to his redeemed sense of egotism that veils his inner notion of reality. He does not have 'moments of being'. In chapter eight of *the Window* he reflects on the progress of civilization and the overall improvement in the standard of life of a common man since the time of Pharaohs till date. Similarly, when Mr. Ramsay comes out of the false society into the lap of Mother Nature, he sheds his false personas which the so-called civilization has compelled him to wear. He comes out of all the superfluities when he stands on the spit of land beneath the bay. In this state of bareness, he loses nothing of the intensity of his mind. This moment enables him to realize:

The dark face of human ignorance, how we know nothing and the sea eats away the ground we stand on—that was his fate, his gift. But having thrown away, when he dismounted, all gestures and fripperies, all trophies of nuts and roses, and shrunk so that not only fame but even his own name was forgotten by him, he kept even in that desolation a vigilance which spared no phantom and luxuriated in no vision, and it was in this guise that he inspired in William Bankes...and in Charles Tansley ...and his wife now, when she looked up and saw him standing at the edge of the lawn, profoundly, reverence, and pity, and gratitude too, as a stake driven into the bed of channel upon which the gulls perch and the waves beat inspires in merry boat-loads a feeling of gratitude for the duty it is taking upon itself of marking the channel out there in the floods alone (TTL , 69).

Mr. Ramsay senses human ignorance when he looks at the sea. He sees chaos everywhere and wants to create order. He wants control of the sea and land. He applies a rigid and organized approach to a problem. He regrets the fact that 'the sea eats away the ground we stand on' (TTL, 69). This regret is aptly expressed in the *Time Passes* section representing the period of destruction brought by the 'World War I' (Mikko, 236). The bay and its surroundings supply awareness of his ignorance in many ways. After realizing the barrenness of his intellect he moves towards the seaside in order to relieve himself of his sufferings. His vision is one of loneliness in which he needs sympathy from his wife. He comes to believe that ground he stands on is not firm. It is slowly diluted by ignorance and indifference to life itself. There is a gap in him which his intellect cannot fill.

Likewise, the sea also reminds him, the vast expanse of knowledge yet to be explored in the pursuit of reality. He is one of those who achieve much before the age of forty. Mr. Ramsay has been trained in a straight forward way and soon diverts his attention from the spark of light into the dark regions of philosophy. It is also astonishing to imagine a man like him so heroic in thought should be so hesitant in life. He is all the time absorbed in books. Bookish knowledge is about the world ought to be and not the one he lives in. He ignores what is real about humanity and sticks to false values. Whenever he comes out of his books he finds his children busy in playing games and talking nonsense. He is not liked by others because whatever he preaches, he himself does not follow. How can his teaching affect others, when he gets angry if the porridge is cold? It is really pathetic that a man like him should behave in an odd way.

Furthermore, Mr. Ramsay suffers from an 'anguish: a feeling of threat that hangs over the moment of precarious nature of vision which extends to a whole being, since the whole being is basically that vision' (Mikko, 237). His vision creates a world of isolation and destruction. He fears the time when no one will remember him and all his intellectual work will be of no use. He feels sense of annihilation because he aims more than he desires. Genius, like him, prevents people to contribute something useful to life. Mr. Charles Tansley, his student, is his replica. He regards Mr. Ramsay as the greatest metaphysician of his time. Ramsay's children mocked Tansley not for his face and physique but for his dry view on life. He was such a miserable creature to take interest in anything except to move to and fro with Mr. Ramsay talking about "who won this, who won that" (TTL, 15). He thinks that life needs to be limited to only sophisticated things. It is worthless for him to waste time talking about things having nothing to do with the progress of civilization. Coherence is provided by the fusion of sequences. The thrill, in life, is there because of small particles that have contributed to the refinement of human civilization. Human civilization moves ahead due to flow of life spirit of the common folk. Mr. Ramsay's and Charles Tansley's favourite subjects are philosophy and mathematics. These focus at generalization from assumption. But the spirit of life defies such approaches. Observation of surrounding object is important but this should not be regarded as the driving force for intellectual inquiry without resorting to sensational and intuitive notions. Both the teacher and the student sought reality in splendid books of metaphysics. For them ordinary common things like playing cricket, talking about people, weather, history, and music has no attraction. They fail to realize that these common and ordinary things necessarily provide base for the intellectual progress. They deprived themselves of the joys of life by indulging in vain philosophical speculations. Their knowledge is limited. Life is multifarious. It gives insight when one is involved in his dealings with society. Books and philosophy provide limited portion of knowledge. Theoretical value has no scope for arriving at the notion of reality. Reality is not a philosophical adventure to be presented in a logical segments, nor does it has any scope for thesis, antithesis, and synthesis mechanism.

Hence, Mr. Ramsay is confused as philosophers always are. He counts time bit by bit for his own benefit. He wishes that the people should have philosophical pursuits rather than wasting time in trivial things. He considers himself as one of the intelligent man born once in century. His redeemed sense of understanding often puzzles Mrs. Ramsay because she thinks whether he has any aesthetic

sense to admire the beauty of the flower or of his daughter. He would sit and look at these things as a person in dream. He is not self sufficient. He stumbles on his way of philosophical journey because he tries to solve problems by deductive reasoning. His response to reality is inadequate. He suffers from pride, selfishness and insensibility and that is how he needs help and support of others. He always wanted something;

It was sympathy he wanted, to be assured of her genius, first of all, and then to be taken within the circle of life, warmed, and soothed, to have his senses restored to him, his barrenness made fertile and all the rooms of the house full of life (TTL, 59).

He cannot entertain the notion that the response or sympathy come from domesticity which to him is a banal thing. This response reassures him that he is also part of the common existence. Searching truth without any consideration to human nature is useless. He is easily irritated even when there is no cause for being irritated and he detested people eating when he had finished. He wants to impose his own whims on others. He forgets that Mr. Augustus is an independent being. Every individual is different from other on the basis of his own eccentricities. There is nothing wrong to ask for another plate of soup or to pursue philosophical adventure but what goes against the laws of human decency is the lack of tolerance towards others. Extremism can't do anything for the progress of civilization but can surely create rift and disorder in a society which stops the otherwise smooth march of civilization. Mr. Ramsay is the model for other male characters. Mrs. Ramsay reflects that all these young men copies and parodies Mr. Ramsay. Whatever he says is regarded correct and true. He is the follower of strict absolute system whose origin lies in primitive patriarchal society. All the values are made to protect his vested interests. It shows his hypocritical attitude and narrow mindedness.

In the same way, Mr. Ramsay's notion of understanding is based on the social construct of reality: whatever the society regards right should be regarded right without any scope for individual psychic growth. Every social code imposes some discipline on the expression of emotions. This social decorum on language makes it impossible, not merely for Mr. Ramsay in the narrative, but also in real life, an individual cannot express deep sentiments, or any thought that is publicly unacceptable. Due to the same fact, Charles Tansley suspects the sincerity of the social language. Behind all this reticence and reluctance seems a motif of shame. An individual does not want to be discriminated and humiliated in society due to his social rank. Charles Tansley denounces Ramsay's to other people because of the feeling of embarrassment that he is not like them. He is inferior to them in social rank. But he hides his embarrassment and anxiety underneath his irritated stillness. Mr. Ramsay, too, feels the same sense of insecurity through professional failure that underlies his unnecessary assertiveness in every matter. He contemplates what he can achieve and this is why there is a gap in his achievement. Practically he is not what he poses himself to be. He contemplates on the prospect of delivering lectures on 'Hume and Locke' (Nassbaum, 738). He seeks refuge in these self-consoling disguises:

But this and his pleasure in it, his glory in the phrases he made, in the ardour of youth, in his wife's beauty, in the tribute that reached him from Swansea, Cardiff, Exeter, Southampton, Kidderminster, Oxford, Cambridge—all had to be deprecated and concealed under the phrase "talking nonsense,"

because, in effect, he had not done the thing he might have done. It was a disguise, it was the refuge of a man afraid to own his own feelings, who could not say, This is what I like—this is what I am; and rather pitiable and distasteful to William Bankes and Lily Briscoe, who wondered why such concealments should be necessary; why he needed always praise; why so brave a man in thought should be so timid in life (TTL, 70).

Mr. Ramsay's attempt in concealing is not only an effort to cover his shame but also an attempt to cover his weakness and vulnerability. His concealment is also triggered at soliciting attention and comfort from others. He demands sympathy and comfort in an aristocratic and a sarcastic manner. He also puts demand of comfort on Lily whom she escapes and terms it imperious need. He constantly demands comfort and sympathy from Mrs. Ramsay. But his attitude is, not one of fortitude, rather very assertive and demanding: "Mr. Ramsay sighed to the full. He waited. Was she [Mrs. Ramsay] not going to say anything?" (Nassbaum, 738). But it must be noted that he exaggerates the intensity of his grief because emotions can't stay silent like solid objects. The act of expression frequently changes them. Our inner world is fluid always trying to adjust itself with the demands of the outer but the conflicting feelings cannot be reported in any solid and definite language without passing from transition. Even what we call frankness is unable to fill the gap that exists within an individual not to talk of individuals. Mr. Ramsay's external statements do not reveal his internal feeling in the manner he wants to convey his grief or whatever he wants to conceal.

Mr. Ramsay's world is hard one, which his wife strives to soften for the benefit of their offspring. Her lack of respect in factual reality is equally balanced by her husband's incapacity to deal with what lies beyond visible facts. Mr. Ramsay does not lack emotions but he lacks the ability to deal with it. He cannot adjust his emotions with the outside factual world. He loves his wife but he expresses that love in a corrective and protective fashion: 'you won't finish that stoking tonight.' There is no free flow of love among them. The only instance can be the serving of boeuf en daube where the meal ends with Mr. Ramsay reciting the romantic Luriana Lurilee.

Likewise, Mr. Ramsay's voyage to the lighthouse is a movement towards self realization. Instead of relying on Cam and James for emotional solace he must do something for them. As a result of this journey he also changes and realizes that truth is not simply one thing based on factual objects. He also realizes the fact that warmth of life lies in its acceptance and not in its rejection.

6. Mrs. Ramsay: An Intuitive Response to Reality

Mrs. Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) serves as a life force essential for the continuation of literary life of the text. She dies somewhat quickly but her influence is felt to the last. She is not an autonomous subject with self-sufficient integrity but rather a non-centred 'other' whose subjectivity is fashioned in relation to the needs and requirements of her egotistical husband. She allows her husband to develop into her inner core but she does that at the price of her own individuality by nourishing him from her essence. The formation and stability of Mr. Ramsay's identity as a whole, depends on the continuous misappropriation of the subjectivity of Mrs. Ramsay.

Mrs. Ramsay accepts life in spite of its infirmities and considers herself as part of the world. She does not move against the flow of life. She cares for others. She is busy in knitting which is creative process. She does the knitting for the lighthouse keeper's boy who belongs to the lower section of society. Mrs. Ramsay's knitting reflects her role as a creative centre of the house. She emerges as a figure of competence and protection. She restores her husband when he dwindles in his philosophical adventure. She sometimes assumes the 'influence of a deity' (Robson 167-8) by creating the subjectivity of Mr. Ramsay and making him place his trust in her. She restores her husband's ego whenever he is about to lose his self-esteem.

Furthermore, Mrs. Ramsay takes into account two aspects of the reality: the outward appearances and the iceberg in which we dwell invisibly. For Mrs. Ramsay the appearances are like a whale coming out to the surface of the sea while beneath the surface there remains another reality that is unfathomably deep. The depth can be explored when one comes out of egotism, sheds his false personas and establish link with the other that fastens all in one invisible web. Similarly death is not ending in itself rather an escape from the material to immaterial reality (Roe, 71). Unlike her husband Mrs. Ramsay possesses instinctive urge to help others as there exists a connection that binds us all. She is intuitive in her approach to the things around:

She was silent always. She knew then—she knew without having learnt, her simplicity fathomed what clever people falsified. Her singleness of mind gave her, naturally, this swoop and fall of the spirit upon truth which delighted eased, sub stained (TTL, 34).

In the same way, unified intuitive approach to reality is revealed when Mrs. Ramsay's inner thoughts are brought out to the reader. The part which can be ordered by a common sense seems to her so narrow and hollow that it totally ignores a deep and terrifying reality lying beneath. To move beyond ones personality relieves the boredom of life. When, she comes out of the shades of her persona, she is able to feel, not only herself but the feelings of others also. This intuitive response makes Mrs. Ramsay a sociable person who can make satisfactory relations with other characters in the novel. She is very hospitable and shows great respect for her guests. This sociability animates in her the universal spirit necessary for the continuation of life. She does not have any logical explanation for this:

Indeed, she had the whole of the other sex under her protection; for reasons she could not explain, for their chivalry and valour, for the fact that they negotiated treaties, ruled India, controlled finance; finally for an attitude towards herself which no woman could fail to feel or to find agreeable something trustful, childlike, reverential; which an old woman could take from a young man without loss of dignity (TTL, 13).

Mrs. Ramsay seems to possess something permanent which gleams like a ruby behind the flux. While in case of Mr. Ramsay he is unable to perceive such gleaming light that permeates through all. She serves as a comfort zone where these characters have a peculiar charm and grace. When they are with her, they feel themselves relieved of the 'boredom of life' (Bourner, 68). For example, Charles Tansley in her company "felt an extraordinary pride...he was walking with a beautiful woman for the first time in his

life. He had held her bag” (TTL, 18). Similarly, Lily Briscoe considers her unique and different whose influence inspires others and creates in them the flow of life. She sees “her hands over it[dinner party] to warm them, to protect them” (TTL,117). William Bankes, equally, feels her soothing power as the very scene of her reading a fairy story to her boy produces upon him exactly the same result as the solution of a scientific trouble. Mr. Bankes talking about Mrs. Ramsay’s marriage recalls a hen “straddling her wings out in protection of a covey of little chicks” (Bilbao, 43). With the imagery of hen, her intuitive, creative and soothing role is brought before readers. As compared to Mrs. Dalloway, Mrs. Ramsay is not a society hostess being dispossessed of creativity rather she has created something with her efforts that each character feels a unified sense of integration. She has the power to create harmony among human beings. The dinner party is the best example. It is in the dinner party that she is able to share her deepest part- moment of being, with all those around. Before party all the guest are scattered, egotistical and lonely but when they are congregated round the dinner tables, they feel a sense of community and are relieved of the boredom of life:

Now all the candles were lit, and the faces on both sides of the table were brought nearer by the candle light, and composed, as they had not been in the twilight, into a party round a table, for the night was shut off by panes of glass, which, far from giving any accurate view of the outside world, rippled it so strangely that here inside the room, seemed to be order and dry lands; there, outside, a reflection in which things wavered and vanished (TTL, 112).

They are able to feel for each other and enjoy the warmth of life. Mrs. Ramsay serves as a unifying intuitive force. The moment she comes out of the room ‘a sort of disintegration sets in; they wavered about, went different ways’ (TTL, 113). Nothing among them seems to have merged they are all seated separately. The sterility of Charles Tansley and William Bankes do not bring any warmth to the dining table. It is Mrs. Ramsay who creates clatter and chatter in the discussion and makes everyone feel the sociability of the gathering. She sheds the false persona and egotism which other characters are victim to. She faces their reserve behaviour with great forbearance. She does not possess egotistical attitude which makes her open to intuitive receptiveness, from life as a whole. Unlike other characters, she does not regard life as hostile and intolerant. It is through this quality that she assumes the status of centripetal force. She tries to integrate life and hold other characters in a unified sense of harmony.

Had there been no intuitive response to reality on part of Mrs. Ramsay she would not have been able to create harmony. Life becomes boring if egotistical and snobbish attitude is adopted. Mrs. Ramsay is the only person who preaches, though covertly, to live in harmony with the real selves. This harmony is the individual’s intuitive response to the reality beyond appearances. Intuitive link is not possible when there is no internal harmony. For arriving at the notion of intuitive reality internal harmony must be there. It is achieved when all the characters including Mrs. Ramsay resign to the flow of life. Mrs. Ramsay represents that part of human personality which has resigned to the flow of life without making any resistance. Her power of merging is instinctive and springs from her own needs instead of others. She suffers from anguish and is terrified by the sound of the waves engulfing their island. It is in the dinner scene that enables Lily to have a sudden ‘flash’ and she visualizes completing her painting by making a tree in the blank space. She is now able to complete her painting.

The credit goes to Mrs. Ramsay (Bilbao, 43-45).

Mrs. Ramsay believes that humans are not what they seem to be. “Beneath [the physical self] it is all dark, it is all spreading, it is unfathomable deep...now and again we rise to the surface and that is what you see us by” (TTL, 73). Behind the apparent incoherence of life there lies a deep coherence which only people like Mrs. Ramsay can feel and understand. She finds an intermediary way to pacify both James and Cam for they do not sleep well because of the pig’s head. Mrs. Ramsay wraps the pig’s head round her shawl. She makes the dull, beautiful for Cam and makes the unacceptable, acceptable for James. She possesses charismatic personality that always serves as a unifying force to bring the colliding forces of life into harmony. In life too, sometimes these contradictory attitudes result in misunderstandings and when characters do not face each other as self-certain individuals then a collision is bound to take place. Every collision brings destruction and backwardness. It is Mrs. Ramsay who makes uninterrupted power supply for the flow of life. She averts tussle between James and Cam.

Mrs. Ramsay’s response to reality is multi- dimensional. She lives, disintegrates, and exists only in minds of those who once knew her. She creates moments that render life meaningfulness. It is her faith that human wishes will finally be rewarded and human spirit will conquer death. She is created to have permanent endurance and her presence recurs throughout the novel. For all characters Mrs. Ramsay appears to be beautiful but apart from some hints no clear description has been made. Reality too, is beautiful and cannot be grasped in its totality.

Similarly like intuition which is the necessary ingredient for arriving at the notion of reality. The life of Mrs. Ramsay is one of intuitive coherence through which she made the best out of the worst. The images associated with the death of Mrs. Ramsay are those of destruction and barrenness. Her death puts the whole family in a state of confusion. She was;

The link that usually bound things together had been cut, and they floated up here, down here, off, anyhow. How aimless it was, how chaotic, how unreal it was, she thought looking at her empty coffee cup. Mrs. Ramsay was dead (TTL, 166).

The death of Mrs. Ramsay, like the vanishing of mystic trance, symbolizes the disintegration of Ramsay’s family. Her influence is felt even after she is dead. She has got symbolic value for other characters. She is alive in their minds. She serves as a lighthouse for the people to inform them of the meaning of existence which she found through intuition and sensibility. She exercises enormous influence on rest of the characters. Instead of criticizing and showing hostile attitude towards them she mothers them. That is why; they feel at ease when they are with her. Ramsay’s children represent chaos and disorder. They are full of ‘strife, division, “difference of opinion and prejudices twisted into the very fibre of being” (TTL, 17). But this is not something to be worried about. Mrs. Ramsay not only meditates upon her children but also about the problems of humanity: of rich and poor. She makes every effort to lessen the misery of others. When Mr. Tansley is alone and feels bore, it is Mrs. Ramsay who takes him to the town. Mrs. Ramsay is so sensitive and caring that she can read the dejected face of

Augustus. Likewise, his life is stationary and useless, doing nothing and hence making no contribution to life. As opposed to Mrs. Ramsay he is oblivious of the feelings of others. His life has no meaning at all. If he wants to have meaning in life, he must come out of his false persona and egotism. It is Mrs. Ramsay who plays progressive role by inquiring about others and entertaining guests. She is keen observer of life. She partakes in the miseries of humanity. She is so sensitive that whatever strange comes in her way appeals to her civic sense. While going to the town she sees one-armed man who stands 'on the top of a ladder' and works with the only right hand, 'which is terribly dangerous work' (TTL, 21). In spite of all the infirmities, life never comes to stand still. The narrative slides between inner and outer streams of moving thoughts. Mrs. Ramsay speculates within character's mind. She tries to catch inner thinking of the character and to present the same into linguistic order. The movement of narration shifts from one-armed man to circus and then to the inner stream of Charles Tansley's mind. Tansley is elevated in the company of Mrs. Ramsay because he has shirked his false persona. He has established a link with his true self which enables him to see life in greater perspective. Thus he is able to appreciate and feel Mrs. Ramsay's beauty:

For the first time in his life Charles Tansley felt an extraordinary pride; a man digging in a drain stopped digging and looked at her, let his arm fall down and looked at her; for the first time in his life Charles Tansley felt an extraordinary pride; felt the wind and the cyclamen and the violets for he was walking with a beautiful woman" (TTL, 25).

Furthermore, Mrs. Ramsay performs her intuitive role in a natural way. She does not show any antagonism towards anyone. She is affectionate and caring. She is neither domineering nor want to impress others. Due to this accommodative attitude she is liked by all. A lady once blamed her of depriving her of "daughter's affections and that she makes people do what she wishes them to do" (TTL, 89). Her attitude towards her own children is very appreciative. She does not make life hard on them. She never reacts rather adopts herself to the requirements of situation without any ostentatious behaviour. James likes her because she amuses him by narrating stories. She also respects social traditions. This is evident when she takes every care and is really worried about Minta's traipsing with Paul.

In the same way, in human personality there are some selves which they do not show to the society because the society has imposed taboo on these feelings. For this reason it is very important that whatever they do or say must be according to the social norms. If they violate these taboos the society makes them socially alienated. Same is the case with Mrs. Ramsay when she says that children do not forget, she means to emphasize the fact that children are the product of environment. She refers to social construct of reality. What they see, they imitate. Mrs. Ramsay feels relieved when they go to bed because;

She could be herself, by herself....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 other. Although she continued to knit, and sat

upright, it was thus that she felt herself; and this self, having shed its attachments was free for the strangest adventures. When life sank down for a moment the range of experience seemed limitless. And to everybody there was always this sense of unlimited resources....Beneath it is all dark, it is all spreading, it is unfathomably deep; but now and again we rise to the surface and that is what you see us by. Her horizon seemed to her limitless.... This core of darkness could go anywhere, for no one saw it. (TTL, 95-96).

Mrs. Ramsay's personality, unlike her husband, is not based on the elements of concealment or shame. She feels herself like a dark shape made up of free ranging meditation. She associates her conscious thinking with factual reality. Conscious acts are the product of environment. But these do help us in catching the moment of being. This moment of being provides us the passage through which a character can discover his true self. Self is limitless and no one can see it. It can spread its wings over the whole body of universe during ecstatic and intuitive moments. During these moments as achieved by Mrs. Ramsay the frit, the furry and the stir of life is lost and perfect moment of solitude is achieved that can be linked with eternity. For achieving this moment, it is essential that a character should push aside all the false veils that have been given by the patriarchal system. For arriving at the notion of perfect solitude character's spiritual self needs to come out of all the physical infirmities. Social construct of reality has debarred our link with eternity because of the difference in the nature of soul and body. The reader frames the identity of Mrs. Ramsay by her care of others and by her public acts. When she associates herself with the wedge-shape core of darkness, it is her effort to flee from the demands of others and she identifies herself with imaginary meditations. Imaginary meditation stands for non-linguistics and suggests something more complex than her symbolic utterances.

Social laws are made to regulate body while these laws cannot cater for the needs of soul. The body and social laws are within the confinements of serial time and space but the spirit is out of the limits of time and space. During extreme moments of intuition and ecstasy it establishes link with one unity of being. Mrs. Ramsay during this moment of solitude feels herself. She protects her private self. It is not the carefully fashioned conscious feature that can be communicated to others. This privacy is not directed towards the outer world. Here, the reader comes into contact, with another mind having alert mental performance that can be assumingly expressed in words and conveyed to others:

She took a look at life, for she had clear sense of it there, something real, something private, which she shared neither with her children nor with her husband. A sort of transaction went on between them, in which she was on one side, and life was on another, and she was always trying to get the better of it, as it was of her; and sometimes they parlayed(when she was alone) (TTL ,91,92).

She cannot share her inner most being with her husband or her family. She looks inward so far that she becomes "a wedged shape core of darkness" unable to relate with others. She loses link with her false personality and arrives at the extreme moment of peace: an eternal light that binds all things in the one moment of being. This moment is achieved when her inner self detaches itself from the physical body then all objects animate and inanimate seem to be celebrating the unity of being. This flash of light is momentary as inner self cannot keep itself detached from body for a long time. The body has

crippled its productivity as the so called taboos have debarred the personality of an individual. Intuition rather than intellect can take us to the abode of real happiness. This is the why; Mrs. Ramsay happily accepts life with all its fret, fury and stir. During this ecstatic moment she remains in touch with the abstract consciousness. Description of factual or physical details not only reveals her character but also places her in the world. Mrs. Ramsay lives in her little world framed by a window which she rarely looks out of.

Likewise, Mrs. Ramsay gives the notion of that eternal part of reality whose existence can only be felt and not seen. It makes no difference whether she is alive or dead. Her influence and her spirit is felt everywhere. Clock-time narrates the events as it happens in a horizontal continuum. Then the same event is taken to the intuitive zone where the 'moments of being' are widened out and placed on the vertical continuum. Intuitive zone is out of the limits of time and space. It represents and reveals the pattern of the unity. When Mrs. Ramsay enters into such an ecstatic moment it is filled with more and more experience. It gets widened, all-encompassing into a single present. Clock-time progresses with its usual movement but it has nothing to do with this intuitive zone where everything is contained. This intuitive moment is the sudden and complete understanding of the pattern that links things with each other. What may make my point clear is the passage where we have the glimpse of moment of being:

Nothing need be said; nothing could be said. There it was, all around them. It partook, she felt, carefully helping Mr. Bankes to a specially tender piece, of eternity; as she has already felt about something different once before that afternoon; there is a coherence in things a stability; something, she meant, is immune from change, and shines out (she glanced at the window with its ripples of reflected lights) in the face of the flowing, the fleeting, the spectral, like a ruby; so that again tonight she had the feeling she had had once today already, of peace, of rest. Of such moments, she thought, the thing is made that endures (TTL, 158).

It is a reflection of the permanent that pours itself out of the flux. Mrs. Ramsay considers every moment of life as important while Mr. Ramsay attaches importance to serious things like philosophy and mathematics. He wishes James to take scholarship. He does not work hard. Mr. Ramsay complains that when he was of James' age he used to roam about the village the whole day. But Mrs. Ramsay will be happy if James does not get scholarship. Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay in spite of their mental differences lead a happy married life as this relation is based on mutual respect. They usually disagree but do not impose their will upon each other. The significant point here is the selective use of language while expressing their feelings. Apparently their relation is very intimate and close but still there is some part in their personalities which they want to hide from each other. There is no denying the fact that no intimate relation is possible with anyone; be it husband, wife, father, mother or anyone else. According to social construct of reality these relations are very close and intimate but when analyzed from inner notion of human reality these relations appear hollow from within. Mr. Ramsay attaches exaggerated value to his own notion of being. Every human being exists independently as an individual but his mind does not exist independently. There exists a link, a notion, a life force; a unity of being that binds us all together. In order to feel that moment of extreme purity we need to remove the cover of our false selves to feel the bond that bind us all in one universal World Wide Web.

Mrs. Ramsay is a dynamic character whose presence in the novel animates other characters. Mrs. Ramsay is caring; affectionate like a sponge sopped full of sentiments. She is a comfort zone where other characters rush to find solace when they feel troubled. She judges life not by appearances but by peeping deep down beneath the surface. Life is not something symmetrically arranged. It is like the 'shower of atoms' coming in bits. She shares love, respect and sympathy which are the basic ingredients of life.

The importance of Mrs. Ramsay's character has been increased in today's world. Modern individual has lost its centre. There is nothing to hold him back to it. All the philosophies have failed to give him any definite track-path to follow. Mr. Ramsay in spite of his worth as a philosopher is confused. He does not know the meaning of life. He is egotistical and has ignored the fact that in life small and common things matter.

Mrs. Ramsay is a versatile character who, by virtue of her intuitive insight into life, arrives at the fact that we should not move against the flow of life. In order to find out the reality of life: we must share the universal spirit of love and brotherhood. We must come out of our social construct of reality that takes us away from our centre. Social taboos wrap us under the cloth of their own fabric that breaks our unity as human beings. We are linked into a common moment of being but to arrive at this moment of being requires us to be free from personal egotism.

Mrs. Ramsay is the symbol of universal life spirit. One can have communion with this spirit by establishing a link with spiritual self. This moment of ecstasy, though transitory but, enables us to realize the fact that as all atoms are interconnected so are we. Then we will make every effort to partake in the suffering and joys of humanity. This is what I have come up with Mrs. Ramsay's character not only from the notion of human reality but of reality as whole. It is not something solid to be found in solids through measurements rather it is fluid, volatile, and scattered. Its existence cannot be denied. Every day brings something new. This quest is continuous and open to interpretations. In the same way, modern individual is disintegrated and chaotic because he has worn false personas which prevent him from viewing life in its true perspective. These false personas present before him the distorted and meaningless view of life.

7. Conclusion

To the Lighthouse (1927) is an interesting and remarkable study of two aspects of reality; the visible and the invisible. The visible is based on what is observable whilst the invisible collides into one all-encompassing present, glimpsed through a series of mystical experiences. This dual approach to reality goes a long way to help grasp the mechanism of life. Virginia Woolf's reality is the discovery of truth and life through consciously subjective efforts. *To the Lighthouse (1927)* is the projection of what Woolf sees in real life. It is not based on analytical experiences but rather outcome of subjective perceptions. Virginia Woolf peeps down the organism and observes characters in metamorphosis while unconsciously demonstrating what theorists formulated later on.

Virginia Woolf demonstrates a unique mode of perception where both subject and object fuse together. She looks beyond the surface and discovers the reality that lies underneath common objects, and through physical reality, glimpses at invisible ones. She is not influenced by any writer, but rather describes her own perceptions and experiences. The reader is left to speculate about the workings of the relationship between Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay. Both the characters search for a better life where they can share their respective male and female peculiarities and prerogatives.

Our inner notion of things cannot mingle with exterior objects, despite the fact that they are conducive to providing durability to our inner-selves. It is by the application of language that harmonizes inner-with-outer-self. Language is semiotic which suitably changes inner perception into visible reality. Being a symbol, it fails to convey the ‘moment of being’ which is the essence of all living. The genuine exchange of subjective into objective is not possible and therefore a communication gap persists. Mr. Ramsay works hard to overcome the gap but fails.

Likewise, Lily Briscoe does not reconcile her inner conception with the outer; and mutual understanding can’t be reached due to unwarranted complexity. It is difficult to resolve two opposite feelings without common grounds; what one person feels is not known to other. Such feelings emerge as real combatants and an endless fight goes on in the minds of individuals; ending in a persistent struggle for either dominance or virtual defeat; this is how human relations are open to misunderstanding and misconceptions. With reference to male and female relationships, the elementary duality is due to the difference of opinion and outlook on life which comes from nature. This tends to endow women more liberally with intuition and men with reason. These differences can also be ascribed to culture and upbringing which ultimately become personal values.

This leads to the hypothesis that human thinking is spontaneous and volatile; not stationary. Similarly, there exists a gap of values and feelings within an individual, individuals, societies, and nations. If people want to make the world a better place it is necessary to be accommodative and receptive to what is good in others. Likewise, Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay represent mythical sides of human personality; factual and intuitive. What is needed is a fusion of the two. Mrs. Ramsay achieves a momentary fusion during her dinner party when she is out of her egotism while for Mr. Ramsay such an experience cannot take place until, long after the death of his wife. Mr. Ramsey undertakes a type of spiritual journey in search of unity of being; as symbolized by *the Lighthouse*. In life too, there is a time where individuals enter the “moment of being” that link them with others, but when that moment is spent one’s sense of unity and wholeness distorts.

Similarly, wisdom gained from life is more authentic and precious than the one gained from books. If serious attempts are made to understand life then the pattern that works behind things must be known; factual aspects alone do not provide the whole reality. Linear time, if all the human history is recorded, fails to give reality in its totality. The intuitive, unconscious, non-rational and eternal pole of reality is missing. Linear time moves on a vertical plane and becomes widened into a horizontal plane by filling it with more experience. Here, moments of being are created, possessing the sense of totality in

individual life. Clock time moves as usual but when it is expanded into a psychological zone then it breaks free from the limits of time and space. The experience at such a moment is contained and gleams permanently. Coherence like this shapes and creates the pattern that lies behind things; here, life can be seen as a whole. In the same way Virginia Woolf's characters are linked with themselves and to the outside world; they are linked through their consciousness. This connection with the outer world is made possible through the mind; they are not independent of each other but are interdependent and interlinked. Thus, reality is the co-creation of the sum total of personalities; their mutual relationship, sense perception, thinking and interconnectedness with the objects of physical nature. Reality is both a constant order and a fluid; a wavelike substance. New forms and shapes may arise but the underlying shape may remain constant like an ocean; it is fluid in the sense that it is composed of particles and waves where everything is entangled but hardly stable and permanent.

To the Lighthouse (1927) is not an ordinary novel to be read for pleasure at leisure; is a book that probes the mystery of existence, the nature of reality and the hollow nature of words. The book is meant to be read with purpose; the reader is then able to catch the real that exists beyond words and the pattern behind the cycle of life. This provides a complete structure of mysticism and spiritualism; and is a compendium to the whole philosophical jargon.

Similarly, *To the Lighthouse* (1927) is an attempt to catch the flux of time and the permanent shade of reality that lies behind this flux. Characters in the novel do not move physically but their mental world is full of excursions; they eat but never attend the washroom. They never make love like they would in a novel by D. H. Lawrence, for example; and when they die there remains a question involving the drama of existence.

In the same way, human personality continuously evolves and could not be accomplished by external description; the external is significant in the way that it triggers the inner flow of life. The reader, because of the scarcity of external events in *To the Lighthouse* (1927), is easily convinced that the life going on in the character's mind is all that matters. It is very difficult to squeeze the life of a human into birth and death because their experiences are an interwoven formulation of time and space, while reality includes the whole expanse of time and space. A moment in serial time cannot be isolated from the past and future. The present moment is linked with sequences both in backward and forward directions and is always in a state of change; reality is free from the limits of time and space as it contains both. When space and time are combined then wholeness can be seen as the sudden and complete understanding of a being which can only be felt; not expressed through unified judgment. Time and space are subservient to wholeness; Mr. Ramsey, Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe are related to each other not only in time and space but also spiritually and physically. Mrs. Ramsay is able to feel herself as a part of immortality; her established sense is more permanent than anything the society and earthly life can offer. Her death secures an eternal bond between herself and reality. Accordingly, the manner through which the characters in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) try to know each other and the world around in a real sense goes beyond consciousness. Both cognitive and intuitive approach helps to arrive at the notion of reality and co-create the structure of meaning.

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