

**T.C.  
KARABUK UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

**THE CONSTRUCTION OF FEMALE GENDER IDENTITY IN  
KATHERINE MANSFIELD'S SELECTED SHORT STORIES, VIRGINIA  
WOOLF'S *TO THE LIGHTHOUSE*, AND CARYL CHURCHILL'S *TOP  
GIRLS***

**MASTER'S THESIS**

**Prepared By  
Şirin ORAL**

**Thesis Supervisor  
Prof. Dr. Ali GÜNEŞ**

**Karabuk**

**FEBRUARY/2019**

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## THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

### To Karabuk University Directorate of Institute of Social Sciences

This thesis entitled "The Construction Of Female Gender Identity in Katherine Mansfield's Selected Short Stories, Virginia Woolf's *To The Lighthouse*, and Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls*" submitted by Şirin ORAL was examined and accepted by the Thesis Board unanimously as a MA thesis.

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**Thesis Exam Date:** 18/02/2019

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and all information included has been obtained and expounded in accordance with the academic rules and ethical policy specified by the institute. Besides, I declare that all the statements, results, materials, not original to this thesis have been cited and referenced literally.

Without being bound by a particular time, I accept all moral and legal consequences of any detection contrary to the aforementioned statement.

**Name Surname: Şirin ORAL**

**Signature** : 

## **FOREWORD**

There is not enough space to mention all the people's names who have actively taken part in the process of thesis preparation or whose invaluable advice, guidance and most importantly their great support have encouraged me to write this thesis. I must first express my gratitude to my thesis supervisor Prof. Dr. Ali GÜNEŞ, whose invaluable guidance, feedback and encouragement have shed light on writing the thesis and his great tolerance and patience motivated me to go on this study. I would also like to thank my husband Recep Ali ORAL for giving the power of his strong friendship, support and understanding that he endured during my study.

Finally, I must acknowledge my debt to my family for their endless sacrifices and psychological support for years. Without their support, I cannot complete my thesis, so I would like to dedicate this thesis to my family.

## ABSTRACT

Woman has been in the centre of many discussions since the beginning of human kind, and her position, profession, attitude, choices, and desires have drawn attention and found their expressions in innumerable literary works. However, the general assumption is that woman's life has been organized and formed by patriarchal society throughout centuries against woman's will. For instance, patriarchal system and culture have seen her inferior to man and deprived her of many opportunities in many fields of life. This situation has resulted in a chaotic atmosphere in terms of woman's life and identity. Therefore, she has had to rise up against the system, which creates a strict polarisation between the world of man and that of woman. Many leading figures as such Mary Wollstonecraft, John Stuart Mill, Florence Nightingale, Simone de Beauvoir, Katherine Mansfield, Virginia Woolf, Rebecca Walker, and Caryl Churchill have showed a strong stance against patriarchy that has always favoured man. They explicitly or implicitly reveal their ideas in their speeches, articles, essays, novels, shorts stories, and plays on how this unfair system must change. This thesis debates in selected short stories of Katherine Mansfield, Virginia Woolf's *To The Lighthouse* (1927), and Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls* (1982) not only woman's situations, identity, and roles in a patriarchal society, but also her desire and will to challenge traditional views and identity attached to her by patriarchal society, culture, and ideology, and then seek out new aspects of life, identity, roles, positions, and education from the beginning of the twentieth century onwards.

**Keywords:** Feminism; Virginia Woolf; Female Gender Identity; Katherine Mansfield; Caryl Churchill; Patriarchy.

## ÖZET

Kadın, insanlığın başlangıcından bu yana birçok tartışmanın merkezinde yer almıştır ve konumu, mesleği, tutumu, tercih ve istektekileri dikkat çekmiş ve sayısız edebi eserde bu ifadeler yer bulmuştur. Ancak, genel varsayım kadının hayatının yüzyıllar boyunca ataerkil toplum tarafından onun isteğine karşı olarak şekillendirilmesi ve düzenlenmesidir. Örneğin, ataerkil sistem ve kültür onu erkeğin aşağısında görüp yaşamın birçok alanında onu birçok fırsattan mahrum bırakmıştır. Bu durum kadının yaşamı ve kimliği açısından kaotik bir havaya neden olmuştur. Bu nedenle, kadın, erkek ve kadın dünyası arasındaki sert bir kutuplaşma yaratan sisteme başkaldırmak zorunda kalmıştır. Mary Wollstonecraft, John Stuart Mill, Florence Nightingale, Simone de Beauvoir, Katherine Mansfield, Virginia Woolf, Rebecca Walker ve Caryl Churchill gibi bir çok öncü kişi, her zaman erkeği destekleyen ataerkil sisteme karşı güçlü bir duruş sergilemiştir. Bu haksız sistemin nasıl değişmesi gerektiğine dair fikirlerini açık ya da dolaylı bir şekilde konuşmalarında, makalelerinde, denemelerinde, romanlarında, kısa öykülerinde ve oyunlarında ortaya koymuşlardır. Bu tez Katherine Mansfield'in seçilmiş kısa öykülerinde, Virginia Woolf'un *Deniz Feneri* (1927) romanında ve Caryl Churchill'in *Zirvedeki Kızlar* (1982) oyununda yirminci yüzyılın başından itibaren ataerkil toplumda kadının sadece durumunu, kimliği ve rolleri değil, kadının ataerkil toplum, kültür ve ideoloji tarafından ona yüklenen geleneksel görüşlere ve kimliğe meydan okuma ve daha sonrasında hayatın, kimliğin, rollerin, pozisyonları ve eğitimin yeni yönlerini araştırma arzusunu ve isteğini tartışır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Feminizm; Virginia Woolf; Kadın Cinsiyet Kimliği; Katherine Mansfield; Caryl Churchill; Ataerkillik.



## ARCHIVE RECORD INFORMATION

<b>Title of the Thesis</b>	<b>The Construction of Female Gender Identity in Katherine Mansfield's Selected Short Stories, Virginia Woolf's <i>To The Lighthouse</i>, and Caryl Churchill's <i>Top Girls</i></b>
<b>Author of the Thesis</b>	<b>Şirin ORAL</b>
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<b>Keywords</b>	<b>Feminism; Virginia Woolf; Female Gender Identity; Katherine Mansfield; Caryl Churchill; Patriarchy.</b>

## ARŞİV KAYIT BİLGİLERİ (in Turkish)

Tezin Adı	Katherine Mansfield'in Seçilmiş Kısa Hikâyelerinde, Virginia Woolf'un <i>Deniz Feneri</i> Romanında ve Caryl Churchill'in <i>Zirvedeki Kızlar</i> Oyununda Kadın Kimliğinin İnşası
Tezin Yazarı	Şirin ORAL
Tezin Danışmanı	Prof. Dr. Ali GÜNEŞ
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Anahtar Kelimeler	Virginia Woolf; Kadın Cinsiyet Kimliği; Katherine Mansfield; Caryl Churchill; Ataerkillik.

## **SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH**

This thesis mainly focuses on the construction of female gender identity in Katherine Mansfield's selected short stories, which are *Prelude* (1918), *At the Bay* (1921), *Marriage a la Mode* (1921), and *Bliss* (1918), Virginia Woolf's novel *To The Lighthouse* (1927), and Caryl Churchill's play *Top Girls* (1982).

## **PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

The purpose of this thesis is to debate in selected short stories of Katherine Mansfield, Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* (1927), and Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls* (1982) the women's issues including the traditional views and identity attached to women by patriarchal society, culture, and ideology, as well as changing perception of women's identity, roles, positions, and education from the beginning of the twentieth century onwards.

## **METHOD OF THE RESEARCH**

As this thesis is a qualitative research, all the supportive data has been collected from significant databases. Many articles, essays, books, and master theses and PhD dissertations have been accessed, and information gathered from them has been used to back up the hypothesis of the research. Main data has been obtained from Katherine Mansfield's selected short stories, which are *Prelude* (1918), *At the Bay* (1921), *Marriage a la Mode* (1921), and *Bliss* (1918), Virginia Woolf's novel *To The Lighthouse* (1927), and Caryl Churchill's play *Top Girls* (1982), by quoting important parts from the works to confirm the hypothesis.

## **HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH / RESEARCH PROBLEM**

This thesis discusses how female gender identity is constructed in consideration of the following questions: Is marriage a trap, Can woman write and paint, and Can woman survive in a man-dominated society without losing her identity?

## **SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS / DIFFICULTIES**

As *Prelude* (1918), *At the Bay* (1921), *Marriage a la Mode* (1921), and *Bliss* (1918) are short stories, it is hard to find and focus on important parts that support the research problem to be quoted. On the other hand, *To The Lighthouse* (1927) is a long

novel which consists of three parts, and this makes the novel difficult to discover critical points to be interpreted. Lastly, the play *Top Girls* (1982) composed of three acts is short and direct; however, it is not easy to follow a certain and direct story line because there are many characters from history, and there is no a linear time line.



## CHAPTER I

### Introduction: Female Gender Identity from Past to Future

Throughout centuries, the terms *sex* and *gender* have often been confused with each other ceaselessly in their usage. They are not only very interconnected with each other as for identity of both man and woman, but they are also employed for different purposes in life. This intertwined usage has gained speed since the eighteenth century, becoming a central focus of discussions in literary, feminist, cultural, political, and religious studies (Butler, Judith. (1990). *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge; R.W. Connell and Rebecca Pearse, *Gender* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015; Ingelhart, Ronald. & Pippa, Norris. (2003). *Rising Tide. Gender Equality and Cultural Change around the World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Juschka, Darlene M. (ed.). (2001) *Feminism in the Study of Religion. A Reader*. London: Continuum; Easthope, Antony. (1991). *Literary into Cultural Studies* London: Routledge). For example, David Matsumoto (2009) defines *sex* as “the characteristics associated with reproductive status as male or female and especially sexual organs” (p. 487). Besides, *the American Heritage Dictionary of English Language* (1992) states that it is “the condition or character of being female or male; the physiological, functional, and psychological differences that distinguish the female and the male” (p. 6585). As seen in these definitions and in many others elsewhere, the term is distinctly related to biological aspects of the human in which there seems a difference between man and woman in several physical and psychological aspects of their lives. On the other hand, *gender* has a wider implication as for cultural and ideological politics of a particular nation or country. In this respect, it thus “refers to cultural, social, and psychological aspects of being defined as female or male” (Matsumoto, 2009, p. 216). It is “a common term [that] generally refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviour, activities and attributes that a particular society considers appropriate for men and women” (Shastri, 2014, p. 27). From this point of view, *gender identity* “is the identification of oneself as female or male;...a cognitive process distinct from gender role behaviours” (Matsumoto, 2009, p. 217). It is the internal feeling and external imposition of the individual irrespective of his/her sex in which they are strictly categorized and segregated in their identities and roles. As the

gender role, Linda L. Lindsey (2016) argues that it is “the expected attitudes and behaviours a society associates with each sex” (p. 5). In addition, Matsumoto (2009) also debates how the gender rules are gained by both man and woman:

a gender role is a learned set of behaviours associated with women or men. These behaviours are so strongly associated with each sex that the set of behaviours comes to define masculinity and femininity in any given culture. The underlying basis for gender roles is biological sex differences, but most authorities agree that gender role behaviours are learned...Gender roles exist in all cultures, but the specific behaviours that are associated with the female or male gender role vary across cultures, making gender roles universal yet specific to each culture (p. 217).

As seen in the debates above, sex and gender are often interchangeably used on many occasions for a similar meaning, yet they have different meanings. While sex is related to the biological aspect of man and woman, gender is culturally and ideologically constructed value system in that certain identities, roles, and responsibilities are attributed to man and woman, basing upon the strict categorization- man who is strong, active, rational, breadwinner, superior, and educated, and woman who is inferior, passive, obedient, subservient, subjective, and domestic as Lois Tyson (2006) also states: “traditional gender roles cast men as rational, strong, protective, and decisive: they cast women as emotional (irrational), weak, nurturing, and submissive” (p. 85). In the past, women’s world was obviously the domestic environment in which they were responsible for domestic work, taking care of children, cleaning the house, cooking for the family, and pleasing their husbands. These roles and responsibilities do not come naturally from the birth, but they are culturally and ideologically constructed by the patriarchy later on and shown to women as their natural way of life. What is of vital importance in these roles and responsibilities is that they gave rise to the victimization and loss of identity of women in a narrow space of life while men enjoyed the benefits of the expansive outside the world.

Moreover, women were entrapped once again by the Industrial Revolution. It took women outside the home with the promise of freedom and economic independence. At the very beginning, these concepts were very enjoyable and touched their feelings and hearts. However, even though they were outside home and began to rejoice the benefits of the public world, and they worked in the factories such as mill, manufacturing, or dairy, and handled the same work which men did, women got lower salary than men. The policies decided by the factory owners caused working women to suffer most due to the ingrained predetermined perceptions that whatever women did in the factories or in any other outside places did not receive any favour or however

hard they worked in the factories and other places did not enable women to get the same value and eventually salary. Hence, whether it is home or outside does not matter. Women are entrapped and victimized in both ways in a patriarchal society. For instance, M.A.R Habib (2005) argues that “for most of this long history women were not only deprived of education and financial independence, they also had to struggle against a male ideology condemning them to virtual silence and obedience” (p. 667).

However, the perceptions of women’s lives, rights, roles, and professions have changed enormously since the nineteenth century onwards (Walby, Sylvia. (1997). *Gender Transformations*. London: Routledge; Alexander, Sally. (1994). *Becoming a Woman and Other Essays in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Feminist History* .London: Virago; Dubois, Ellen Carol. (1998). *Woman Suffrage: Women Rights*. New York: New York University Press). There are many factors which gave rise to the shift of perceptions. Of them, feminism as a single phenomenon has played an important role in the change and advancement of women’s rights. The term comes from the French word, femme, to describe woman, and the word, once it is added the suffix –ism, refers to a political or social movement or ideology about gender issue (Freedman, 2002, p. 15). M.E. Hawkesworth (2006) defines feminism as “a collection of movements and ideologies that share a common goal: to define, establish, and achieve equal political, economic, cultural, personal, and social rights for women” (p. 25). Even if it is thought as a new phenomenon, it has a deep-rooted historical background as Habib (2005) expresses:

It has antecedents going all the way back to ancient Greece, in the work of Sappho and arguably in Aristophanes’ play *Lysistrata*, which depicts women as taking over the treasury in the Acropolis, a female chorus as physically and intellectually superior to the male chorus, and the use of sexuality as a weapon in an endeavour to put an end to the distinctly masculine project of the Peloponnesian War. Feminism also surfaces in Chaucer’s *Wife of Bath*, who blatantly values “experience” over authority and was more than a match for each of her five husbands. In the Middle Ages, Christine de Pisan had the courage to enter into a debate with the predominant male critics of her day. During the Renaissance a number of women poets such as Catherine Des Roches emerged in France and England. In the seventeenth century, writers such as Aphra Behn and Anne Bradstreet were pioneers in gaining access to the literary profession. After the French Revolution, Mary Wollstonecraft argued that the ideals of the Revolution and Enlightenment should be extended to women, primarily through access to education. And the nineteenth century witnessed the flowering of numerous major female literary figures in both Europe and America, ranging from Mme. de Staël, the Brontës, Jane Austen, George Eliot, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning to Margaret Fuller and Emily Dickinson. Modernist female writers included Hilda Doolittle (H. D.), Gertrude Stein, Katherine Mansfield, and Virginia Woolf (p. 667).

One of the most significant early advocates in feminism is obviously Mary Wollstonecraft and her *Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) is a seminal work

which explains how the patriarchal ideology was traditionally formed, and how it constructed women's gender identity. For Gregory Castle (2007), Wollstonecraft's work is also a "work that criticizes stereotypes of women as emotional and instinctive and argues that women should aspire to the same rationality prized by men" (p. 94). Moreover, John Stuart Mill makes a great contribution to the debates of feminism. In his *The Subjection of Women* (1869), he announced that "all women are brought up from the very earliest years in the belief that their ideal of character is the very opposite to that of men; not self-will, and government by self-control, but submission, and yielding to the control of others" (Mill, 1988, p. 27). Furthermore, another important leading figure in feminist criticism is Virginia Woolf, a modernist female British writer, who attacks in her fictional and nonfictional writings patriarchal British society, culture, and ideology in which women's gender identity was predetermined against their wishes. In *A Room of One's Own* (1929), for example, she criticized the male authors and the way they depicted women in their works, in which she believed that men misrepresented women in line with their world views. Gregory Castle (2007) debates that Woolf as a feminist writer and critic "insisted that women be allowed the economic and social freedom to follow their aspirations and to forego the traditional role of serving as an enlarging mirror for male identity" (p. 95). With the impetus of the development of feminist movement behind, oppressed women reacted strongly against the traditional roles and responsibilities given to them and demanded more rights in life the same as men in the fields of economic, politics, education, marriage and so on.

As a result of feminism movements and arguments, three important waves came into being even though there are a lot of minor feminist movements. The first wave started with the First Seneca Conventions, which was held in 1848 in New York, and continued until the early twentieth century. The first wave feminism aimed at gaining political rights, the right to vote, which women thought would cause changes in women's life. In addition to the political power, the first wave feminists also focused on the issues such as sexual, productive, and economic aspects of life. As for the first wave, Estelle B. Freedman (2002) states that "as convention organizer Elizabeth Cady Stanton read *the Declaration of Sentiments*, these early feminists heard a litany of complaints about the unjust laws and practices that denied women education, property rights, and self-esteem" (p. 29). In *the Declaration of Sentiments*



(1848), Elizabeth Cady Stanton points out that “the history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man towards woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her” ([http://www.womensrightsfriends.org/pdfs/1848\\_declaration\\_of\\_sentiments.pdf](http://www.womensrightsfriends.org/pdfs/1848_declaration_of_sentiments.pdf)).

The second wave of feminism lasted from the 1960s to the early 1980s and “took on many areas of women’s rights, particularly violence against women, prostitution and pornography, birth control and access to contraception and the growing need for more women in the work force and in political office” (Trier-Bieniek, 2015, p. xvii). The one who made her mark in the second wave was decidedly Simone de Beauvoir with her significant book *The Second Sex* (1949). She focuses on how the patriarchal society treated and perceived woman throughout the history. De Beauvoir (2010) harshly criticizes the patriarchal society by saying: “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman” (p. 330). She also believes that the world of women is like a prison when she says: “a woman is shut up in a kitchen or a boudoir, and one is surprised her horizon is limited; her wings are cut, and then she is blamed for not knowing how to fly. Let a future be open to her and she will no longer be obliged to settle in the present” (De Beauvoir, 2010, p. 731).

Finally, the third wave feminism, which began in the early 1990s and continues now, is different from the previous ones in some ways. In the first place, this movement is regarded as a reaction to the second wave feminism and broadens the scopes of feminism in which the term, feminism, is not critically mentioned very often due to the fact that time has changed greatly, leading to the other aspects of life women have dealt with. For example, these aspects are as follows: cultural feminist studies, radical feminist studies, eco-feminist studies, liberal/reformist feminist studies, academic feminist studies and so on. The most important person who brought up the term of the third wave feminism is Rebecca Walker. In her essay, *Becoming a Third Wave*, she declares that “I am not a post-feminism feminist. I am the Third Wave” (Walker, 1992, p. 41). Moreover, she states that “for many of us it seems that to be a feminist in the way that we have seen or understood feminism is to conform to an identity and way of living that doesn’t allow for individuality, complexity or less than perfect personal histories”(Walker, 1995, p. xxxiii). Furthermore, Robbin Hillary VanNewkirk (2006) expresses that the “Third Wave signified a group of women who considered themselves too heterogeneous to be linked to the *white women’s feminism*

of the second wave and living too much in the margins or the interstice to associate themselves with the *power feminists* of the eighties and early nineties” (p. 14). From this point of view, Walker (2004) voices that “we want to be linked with our foremothers and centuries of women’s movement, but we also want to make space for young women to create their own, different brand of revolt, and so we choose the name Third Wave” (p. xvii). To sum up, it can be said that women have improved their rights and conditions with the help of these waves even though the ways have been tiring for them, yet there is still a long way to achieve the ideal conditions or status for women. There are many points to be polished for them despite the gained success. At least, it can be said that today’s woman is more powerful, independent, self-confident, and determined than she used to be.

Having looked at the reasons behind the development of feminism, as well as the three feminist waves, as for the construction of gender identity, it seems that it is obviously the patriarchal society, ideology, and culture, which have created the gender polarisation, power struggle, and inequality. Steve Bruce and Steven Yearley (2006) define the word *patriarchy* as follows:

[Patriarchy comes] from the Latin for one who rules because he is the father, this denotes the domination of women by men. Thus, we can have the patriarchal family, patriarchal societies or a work setting which is run in a patriarchal manner. Until the late 1960s, the term was used simply for describing societies characterised by marked male domination; now it carries a clear stigma. Patriarchal rule is oppressive. It is clearly the case that modern industrial societies remain patriarchal to varying degrees. But, though authors may agree that this is the case, it is harder to work out exactly why patriarchy is so persistent since men hardly act as a “class” to exclude women. The reproduction of patriarchy seems to take place without it being consciously willed. This leads to a potential problem for users of the term since, if one argues, that patriarchy is nearly universal (and that case is made by some feminists), it begins to look as though its roots are natural and even biological: the case that feminists reject (p. 227).

In fact, the root of patriarchy has existed since the beginning of human history. The earliest beliefs and culture played crucial role in the formation of this concept as in the myth of Athenians origins. Vigdis Songe Møller (2002) argues that:

The Athenians believed they could trace their descent back to Erichthonius, who was also called the ‘earth-born’ (*autochthon*)... This autochthonic myth relates the circumstances of Erichthonius’ birth. Athena once asked Hephaestus, the Olympian blacksmith, to make her a set of weapons. Hephaestus gladly accepted the commission, but declined any payment for his labours. He said he would do it for love. Without considering what this might entail, Athena visited Hephaestus in his smithy to watch him at work on her weapons. Hephaestus availed himself of the opportunity by attempting to ravish the goddess, but Athena proved an unconquerable virgin. As she tore herself from Hephaestus’ embrace, his seed fell on the earth, the soil of Athens, and inseminated that instead of her. And in due course the earth gave birth to a boy, Erichthonius (pp. 4-5).

As it is understood from the myth above, it is the man who causes the human being to see the light of the day and is thus accepted as the source of production attached to power whereas woman is nothing, she has no importance, but she just seduces and tempts man.

In mythology, moreover, woman was named as one who destructs the order and causes trouble for human being. For example, the story of Pandora in mythology, in which Pandora is sent by Zeus to punish human males with a jar that causes suffering and pain for mankind, is the evidence for man to show that women are destructive to mankind.

A well-known Greek philosopher Aristotle also has very firm view about gender identity. He states in his work *Politics* that “as regards the sexes, the male is by nature superior and the female inferior, the male ruler and the female subject” (Rackham, 1932, 1254b13-14). Harold D. Fishbein (2002) points out that “in the Aristotelian position, women are viewed as morally, intellectually, and physically inferior to men. They are incomplete human beings, without a fully developed soul. They are irrational, and even with extensive schooling could not attain the intellectual status of men” (p. 27). Besides, “in fact, Aristotle concluded, quite directly, that the female is inferior to the male; the female became identified with the properties of matter, with passivity, and with the lowest of elements. The male, correspondingly, became identified with the properties of form, with activity, and with the higher elements” (Allen, 1997, p. 89). Therefore, woman is just a womb for Aristotle in order to continue reproduction. Another famous tragedian Euripides also writes about the gender issue through his representation of his chief fictional character Medea in his play *Medea* (B.C 431). In the play, Medea kills her children to revenge on her husband since he thinks that “men should really have some other method / for getting children. The whole female race / should not exist. It’s nothing but a nuisance” (Euripides, 2008, 2.1. 593-95). According to Medea’s husband, women are troublemakers; he wishes men could have children without women. From the patriarchal point of view, the only good side of being a woman is to give birth to a child or to be what Virginia Woolf (2014) writes in *A Room of One’s Own* “looking glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size” (p. 33). To conclude, all these views of ancient Greek myths and philosophers, like many others, not only formed the basis of European culture but also influenced the ways patriarchy

was shaped in Europe in general and in England in particular in the following centuries.

In the Middle Ages, women were also victimized by the patriarchal society as it served the favour of men. The role casted for women was to be self-sacrificing for her family in the domestic environment, while men were active in the public space and brought bread to his family. Shulamith Shahar (2004) states that:

The law barred her [woman] from filling any public office and from participating in any institutions of government, from manorial courts to municipal institutions, royal councils and representative assemblies in the various countries. The literature of the estates declares explicitly: 'Women must be kept out of all public office. They must devote themselves to their feminine and domestic occupations' (p. 11).

In addition, in the Middle Ages, as in the ancient Greek mythology, women were also seen as a means of seduction, temptation as written in the well-known poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. In the poem, Sir Gawain tries to prove himself as a knight by accepting the challenge of the Green Knight, which is whoever hits the Green Knight by his own axe; he will do the same for him after one year on the same day. When time is about to run out, Sir Gawain leaves to find the Green Knight, and on his way, he comes across a lord of a castle and stays in his castle for his last three days. However, during these days, the lord goes hunting every day and says to Sir Gawain that whatever he hunts during the day he will exchange them with him on the condition that Sir Gawain also will give what he gains during these days. When the lord goes hunting, Sir Gawain stays with lord's wife alone and she attempts to seduce him persistently. Sir Gawain rejects her, but he lets her kiss him once on the first day, twice on the second day, and three times on the third day. Sir Gawain also do the same for the lord since he just gains these kisses from his wife. However, lord's wife gives her girdle and he does not give it to the lord on the third day. In the end, we learn that the Green Knight is the lord in the castle and just hurts Sir Gawain slightly since he does not give the girdle. He always remembers his failure owing to this girdle in the end. Therefore, in the poem, "a beautiful, "unfaithful" lady turns out to be a subtle tester collaborating with her husband" (Neimneh & Al-Thebyan, 2012, p. 236). The message is that "women act as the obstacle" for men in his way; therefore, a true man must not be duped by them if he desires to achieve success (Neimneh & Al-Thebyan, 2012, p. 238)

During the Renaissance period, the role and place dedicated to women were not much different from that in the previous century. Girls were deprived of basic

education since the given role by the society to them was more important. They “were not normally sent to school, since the only education considered appropriate for them was to learn how to run the home, to sew, to embroider and perhaps to play a musical instrument” (Brodey & Margaretti, 2002, p. 37). In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the patriarchal society even strengthened its power on women due to the dominant puritanical moral views. Brodey and Margaretti (2002) argue that “the power of husband and father increased: this was partly due to the influence of Protestants who saw the head of the household as the spiritual head of the family. Children were subjected to beatings, and women lost legal rights over their property” (p. 75).

The Victorian Age was the worst one for women and her gender identity. In this period, patriarchal moral values and culture favoured visibly the gender segregation in a way that it would satisfy men’s worldview, desires, and demands (Perkin, Joan. (1995). *Victorian Women*. New York: New York University Press; August, Andrew. (1999). *Poor Women’s Lives: Gender, Work and Poverty in Late-Victorian England*. London: Associated University Presses; Neff, Wanda Fraiken. (2015). *Victorian Working Women: An Historical and Literary Study of Women in British Industries and Professions, 1832-1850*. London: Routledge). Even the law enshrined gender polarisation, in which women, as in the previous centuries, were losers and subjected to inequalities in many aspects of life. For example, “parliamentary reform did not affect their voting rights (which were non-existent until after the First World War) and, although there was a Queen on the throne, progress towards the emancipation of women was slow” (Brodey & Margaretti, 2002, p. 172). Another obstacle women faced in the Victorian Age was linked to their working conditions. Industrial Revolution enabled women to enter the workforce beside the opposite sex. At first glance, it was fine and seemed to make women’s life much better than before; they started sharing the public space with men by moving out of domestic environment, and eventually they gained a certain level of freedom once their economic dependence on their husbands decreased gradually. That was apparently a radical shift in the centuries-long gender relationship, as well as a strong blow to the patriarchal culture and ideology. As Brodey and Margaretti (2002) argue, however, the working was not so favourable as it was expected, and particularly, “working-class women had to struggle against wages which were lower than those of their male companions” (p. 172). Besides, Florence Nightingale, a social reformer and founder of

modern nursing, also uttered her concerns about the subject in her well-known essay *Cassandra* (1854). She debated that “why have women passion, intellect, moral activity—these 3—and a place in society where no one of the 3 can be exercised?” (Nightingale, 2010, p. 1586). She harshly criticized society by voicing her concern that “a man gains everything by marriage: he gains a “helpmate”, but a woman does not” gain anything else (Nightingale, 2010, p. 1587). As debated above, women had great hardship in the patriarchal society and culture until the twentieth century. They were always expected to be obedient and submissive and then to follow what was decided from them by patriarchal society and ideology. As a wife or mother, they were forced to stay at home, deal with domestic responsibilities, look after the elder people and make a wife. When they worked, they were also treated unfairly, given lower wages.

However, women’s so-called inferior positions and maltreatment started changing from the nineteenth century onward because of some important developments in social, cultural, economic, political, and religious fields of life. These developments challenged obviously the centuries-long basis of patriarchal society, culture, and ideology in favour of women, leading to improve the lives of ordinary women. These changes were mainly caused by American, French, and Industrial Revolutions as well as feminist movements. American and French Revolutions favoured individual liberty and equality among individuals- men and women, while Industrial Revolution enable woman to get out of domestic life and participate actively in the public and economic life the same as man, and feminist movements became women’s intellectual voice to raise awareness about their lives, roles, education and so on. Because of these great changes, for instance, women gained in England the right of vote in 1918, which empowered to take their place in political life. Moreover, women started enjoying freedom in the other areas of life when compared to the past. In this respect, “in the 1920s they could wear their dresses and hair shorter, put on make-up, and smoke and drink in public without fear of recrimination” (Brodey & Malgaretti, 2002, p. 217). William E. Leuchtenburg (1958) describes the perception of new woman:

The new woman wanted the same freedom of movement that men had and the same economic and political rights. By the end of the 1920’s she had come a long way. Before the war, a lady did not set foot in a saloon; after the war, she entered a speakeasy as thoughtlessly as she would go into a railroad station.... In the business and political worlds, women competed with men; in marriage, they moved toward a contractual role.... Sexual independence was merely the most sensational aspect of the generally altered status of women (p. 159).

The quotation indicates how the image and perceptions of women shifted unimaginably in the first half of the twentieth century. They started taking part in social life more effectively than before. The number of working women increased rapidly, and we first witness the woman as a lawyer thanks to The Sex Disqualification Act in 1919. For Michael B. Katz, Mark J. Stern, and Jamie J. Fader (2005), “in 1900, about 6 per cent of married women were in the paid labour force; by 1990, the figure had multiplied nearly 10 times to 59 per cent, where it remained in 2000” (p. 67). Sally Ledger (1997) also maintains that:

pioneers such as Elizabeth Garrett Anderson and Sophia Jex Blake had established that women could occupy jobs traditionally reserved for men (they were Britain’s first female medical doctors), and it was clear towards the close of the century that women were becoming competitors in the more privileged sections of the economic marketplace to an extent that had never before been apparent (p. 19).

In addition, Women’s Royal Naval Service and Woman’s Royal Air Force embraced female soldiers as part of military profession. Unlike women’s payment in the nineteenth century, Equal Pay Act in 1963 in the USA and in 1970 in the UK also provided women to be paid equal wages the same as men.

It is obvious that women have acquired certain rights in many fields of cultural, political, and economic life as for their identity, profession, and roles since the nineteenth century. However, the new positions stripped them of the values which in fact destroyed their lives in particular ways. That is, the images and purposes of new woman have gone far away from their initial efforts. For example, women have freed themselves to some extent, but they have been the victim of another trap for the sake of freedom, in which man still use women in line with his expectation. For instance, “the New Woman’s loss of female characteristics was evident in the bearded chin, the bass voice, flat chest and lean hips of a woman who has failed in her physical development” (Pykett, 1992, p. 140). Furthermore, the lesbian relationships multiplied in this century since woman started to reject the idea in which she was seen like a birth-factory that just made a great contribution to the continuation of the generation.

The image of the woman in the media was also shifting. The new woman was highly different from the Victorian one. In that way, they show up in commercial advertisements to satisfy man’s both economic and visual expectation with their physical appearance. Zsófia Anna Tóth (2005) explains the situation by referring to an American musical-comedy film *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (1967). She expresses that:

in the film's very first song we learn the *rules* of how to become a modern woman (wear short skirt, bobbed hair, paint the lips and brows, kiss, smoke etc.), and what is more, Millie sings about the social changes. As she is singing, she becomes what she is singing about, appearing first as a *Victorian feminine ideal* and by the end of the song having transformed herself into a *perfect flapper*; and as an end result, she exclaims: "Goodbye Good-Goody Girl/I'm changing and how! /So, beat the drums/Coz here comes thoroughly Modern Millie now!" (Tóth, 2005, p. 259).

Another problematic area was education before the twentieth century. There was no equality between male and female students since it was thought that education was unnecessary for woman. Therefore, many women started to act this uneven education system out, "which gave to the little boy all games of skill, ingenuity and strength, indoors and out, and to the little girl dolls" (Forbes & Hale, 1914, p. 48). However, the system changed. The Elementary Education Act, which came into effect in 1870, obliged that both girls and boys between the ages of five and ten had to have elementary education. In the following years, educational environment started to be improved for woman. For example, "children are given an education in elementary and secondary schools; and boys and girls, on the basis of their ability, may win scholarship at Oxford or Cambridge, or the numerous city universities that have developed rapidly during the twentieth century" when boys and girls sit in the same class and learn the same subjects. (Inglis & Spear, 1958, p. 554). Accordingly, new female generation was influentially growing up with her best card, which was education.

Of course, there have been many vast changes in the political, social, and financial life of women in the twentieth century even though the shift in the perception of women's identity was not accepted so easily by the patriarchal society since this new picture of woman has reached a boiling point. The image of new woman is not completely female or male, and thus their movement has created something hard to define.

For instance, the new woman has been recognized as a threat to the social order in society. "Many doctors believed that the development of a woman's brain induced infertility by causing the womb to atrophy, and hence jeopardised the survival of the race" (Pykett, 1992, p. 140). Today many women work and run after their career by putting their families in a secondary place, so that the fertility rate has dropped dramatically in recent years, even though the survival of a race depends on 2.11 percent of fertility according to the UN report. Likewise, there is also a widespread notion among high number of women that their first role is not to be a mother



anymore. It has caused society in general to feel a chill of fear since woman “who refused her biological destiny of motherhood threatened to dissolve existing gender boundaries” (Pykett, 1992, p. 140).

Thus, one of the big dilemmas that the society today cannot solve is the balance between women’s working life and their contribution to family life. As it was accepted before the twentieth century, the natural role of woman was to deal with domestic works within the scope of home. Woman as a wife and mother did everything for her family. She was one who met her husband at the door after work. However, today man has started to open his door with his key, as there is no woman in the house. This has turned everything upside- down in the whole society as for gender roles. Men have to cook, take care of children, or do housework. As a result, we see masculinized women versus feminized men causing imminent peril for the natural order of life as claimed by society. Sally Ledger and Scott McCracken (1995) support this idea by stating that “the New Woman was also frequently presented as a danger to the continuance of the ‘race’, in the guise of a potential mother of physically weak and mentally feeble children” (p. 31). In addition, women have been treated as ill due to their reactions against the norms of society during this period. They were “persistently represented as a hysteric, whose degenerate emotionalism was both symptom and cause of social change. As symptom, her hysteria was a degenerate from of her natural affections” (Pykett, 1992, p. 141). Society also takes the debate one-step further by claiming that:

[It is] a form of brain poisoning induced by the pressures of modern life and by women’s attempts to resist their traditional roles and ape those of men. As cause, hysteria threatened social disintegration and, indeed, the future of the race, by disabling women and preventing them from fulfilling their ‘natural’ roles of wives and mothers (Pykett, 1992, p. 141).

As seen in the debates above, there are different debates in favour and disfavour about the issues related to women’s lives, roles, education, and profession yet the twentieth century, like the previous ones, was still hard for women to express themselves freely due to the fact that patriarchal, social, cultural, and ideological values continued to exert their lives, so that women were called rebellious and disobedient, or they were accused of being troublemakers and even ill-minded, yet they did not give up their struggles to achieve their purpose.

As for women’s struggles, now it would be useful to give examples from three prominent female writers in English literature not only about their own lives under patriarchy but also about their female fictional characters who represent the views and

life of new women in their writings different from that of traditional women. With their new views and ideas, as well as with their struggles, these new female characters become torch for women's demand for advancement of their rights in the future.

The first one is Katherine Mansfield. Born in 1888 in New Zealand, Mansfield passed with flying colours in the twentieth century as a modernist short story writer. She came from a wealthy family and attended Queen's College in London. Having completed her education, Mansfield returned to New Zealand; however, she came back to London since she had a dominant father and wanted to continue her career without his hindrance. Married twice, she had many love affairs turbulently; even it is told that she had a lesbian relationship with Ida Baker, with whom she met at Queen's College and became a close friend. "In spite of ill-health and a tragically short life, Katherine Mansfield wrote short stories that won her a secure place in modern English literature" (Inglis & Spear, 1958, p. 582). In her writings, she deals artistically with women's issues not only about her own life under the strict control of a patriarchal father, but also about the lives of other women around her, and thus it is possible to see the effect of her own experience in her writings. In her writing, as one critic debates, "with a woman's special keen sight, Mansfield shows a rich, colourful but somewhat poignant world of women" (Aihong, 2012, p. 101). Moreover, Kathleen Wheeler (1994) states that:

Her [Mansfield's] analyses are not simplistic; she does not portray women as victims and men as perpetrators or victors. Rather, women are shown to be as much enslaved by themselves as by society or by men (as Blake argued tirelessly), and especially by the 'insipid idea that love is the only thing in the world' (p. 133).

Indeed, the quotation suggests how the gender identity was constructed in a patriarchal society, culture, and ideology in which women were shown the way of life by society or men as if it was the right way for them, even though it never fit their lives and expectations but men's; women were mesmerized by the notion of love, which, as feminist critics argue, was used as a means of enslaving and keeping them under control for ages. Hence, what Wheeler (1994) suggests above is not different from what Simone de Beauvoir wrote in *The Second Sex* (1949), "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman" (p. 330).

On the other hand, "in the spite of the fact that Mansfield is more considered as a descendant of Antony Chekov rather than a feminist writer in the mainstream culture, many critics do recognize that there is a feminist awareness running throughout her

writing” (Aihong, 2012, p. 101). Wheeler (1994) explains this situation by citing one of the journal entries written by Mansfield:

I feel that I do now realise, dimly, what women in the future will be capable of. They truly as yet have never had their chance. Talk of our enlightened days and our emancipated country – pure nonsense! We are firmly held with the self-fashioned chains of slavery. Yes, now I see that they are self-fashioned, and must be self-removed... Here then is a little summary of what I need - power, wealth and freedom. It is the hopelessly insipid doctrine that love is the only thing in the world, taught, hammered into women, from generation to generation, which hampers us so cruelly. We must get rid of that bogey - and then, then comes the opportunity of happiness and freedom (pp. 138-9).

It is not decisive whether you are a feminist or not by just uttering this directly. There are some crucial points conveyed implicitly as Mansfield did in the quotation above. We cannot find the least glimpse of the word feminism; however, the context is purely so. She highlights the fact that it was not enough even though the level of contemporary civilization was high as this level just belonged to male ones. Perhaps, the chains of modern society for women were not concrete but invisible, yet it was harder to fight against that. She demands not love but “power, wealth, and freedom” since it was the biggest foolishness to think that women could just learn to love in the world, and thus Mansfield insists that women could have freedom and reach happiness by forsaking these kinds of thoughts to believe.

As for her feminism, for instance, Mansfield in her short stories writes mostly about the view of unhappy marriages, in which she “most vividly portrays a group of poor women who are trapped by their womanhood and motherhood in the patriarchal society” (Aihong, 2012, p.102). However, “she not only expresses her deep sympathy towards these women’s pathetic position, but also voices her anger over their silence and complete submission to their fate” (Aihong, 2012, p.102). For instance, while Isabel in *Marriage a la Mode* (1921) represents the image of an indifferent woman to her husband William and her marriage, Josephine and Constantia in *The Daughters of The Late Colonel* (1920) are caught in the patriarchal trap even though they have a chance to question and devastate it. On the other hand, we observe in *At the Bay* (1921) and *Prelude* (1918), the life of Burnell Family through the mind of Linda Burnell, who has internal confusion; she has no feeling of motherhood and thinks of leaving her husband and family behind, which is actually unthinkable for a traditional woman. Likewise, Aunt Beryl in the same story is represented as a new woman, who wishes to earn her money and dreams of being independent in her life. In addition, it is also unusual that Mrs Stubbs celebrates her husband death as a victory for freedom.

Having looked at their wishes, dreams and behaviours, Mansfield represents these female characters as obviously being different from traditional women. What they wish and dream and how they act clearly calls into question the very basis of patriarchal society, its culture and ideology.

The second example about the view of new woman comes from Virginia Woolf, modernist female British writer. Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) is one who “has long been celebrated as an innovative novelist and a radical thinker..., broke with the aesthetics of earlier generations and challenged their values” in the first half of the twentieth century (Gay, 2006, p. 1). Indeed, she is one of the most important novelists bringing new approaches to the art of novel-writing in early decades of the century named modernism, in which Woolf, unlike the realist writers of the previous century, solely focuses attention upon the inner subjective realm of human life or what she calls “the dark places of psychology”. The way she presented her art of writing has drawn criticism in that she was often accused of being passive, aloof and uninterested in social issues and problems in her writing. For example, E.M. Forster (1942) argued that “improving the world she would not consider...Her pen amused her” (pp. 8-9). Jean Guiguet (1965) also underlined that “the mechanical relations between individuals such as are imposed by the social structure, dominated by the concepts of class and money...are not her problem” (pp. 71-2).

Once her fictional and non-fictional writings are carefully examined; however, it is going to be very clear that Woolf obviously deals with social issues and problems not like a politician but like an artist. Ali Güneş (2007) argues that “she did not reveal her views directly in her novels, but tried artistically to make her readers aware of social, political, and economical issues through the lives and views of her characters in her novels and short stories as well as through her critical views in her essays, letters, and dairies” (p. 5). It is almost impossible for Woolf not to deal with social issues, particularly gender problem, in her own time because she herself as a woman was exposed in every way to the restrictions of British patriarchal society, culture, and ideology both at home and outside. In her *A Room of One's Own*, therefore, Woolf heavily criticized patriarchal British society for restricting women. She said that “there have been at least two colleges for women in existence in England since the year 1866; that after the year 1880 a married woman was allowed by law to possess her own property; and that in 1919 - which is a whole nine years ago – she was given a vote?”

(Woolf, 2014, p. 111). Also, she stated her opinion on how society treated women unequally and asserted that

‘Wife-beating’, I read, ‘was a recognized right of man, and was practised without shame by high as well as low. . . Similarly,’ the historian goes on, ‘the daughter who refused to marry the gentleman of her parents’ choice was liable to be locked up, beaten and flung about the room, without any shock being inflicted on public opinion. Marriage was not an affair of personal affection, but of family avarice, particularly in the “chivalrous” upper classes (p.48).

Woolf also questions from the point of a woman’s view the worldview and values of patriarchal British society. Why are daughters married to men who their families want? Why do they beat their daughters and wives or cannot marriages be based on love? Instead, her view of marriage is different from that of traditional one. For her, it is something personal, not general. She represents her opinion in a letter to her husband Leonard:

I say to myself, Anyhow, you’ll be quite happy with him, and he will give you companionship, children and a busy life - then I say by God, I will not look upon marriage as a profession ... I sometimes feel that no one ever has or ever can share something – It’s the thing that makes you call me like a hill, or a rock. Again, I want everything - love, children, adventure, intimacy, work (Lee, 1996, pp. 310-11).

Parallel to her view, Woolf’s female characters symbolize her vision and become her voice about marriage. For her, marriage should not be a place where woman lives a slave- like life under the strict control of her husband. What Woolf seeks in marriage is a little bit freedom. In *Night and Day* (1919), for instance, Woolf suggests a kind of friendship in marriage through the relationship between Katherina Hilbery and Ralph Denham, in which there will be no marriage contract to bind them but they will be free and leave each other whenever they wish to do so. Similarly, Clarissa Dalloway in *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) explains her opinion of marriage: “for in marriage a little licence, a little independence there must be between people living together day in day out in the same house” (Woolf, 1996, p. 6). What is written in these novels about marriage and husband- wife relationship apparently undermines the very basis of the traditional family, and today it is possible to see the signs of such views in the modern marriages.

In her *A Room of One’s Own*, Woolf (2014) also stresses her opinion concerning the restriction imposed upon women writing:

Here am I asking why women did not write poetry in the Elizabethan age...They had no money evidently; according to Professor Trevelyan they were married whether they liked it or not before they were out of the nursery, at fifteen or sixteen very likely. It would have been extremely odd, even upon this showing, I had one of them suddenly written the plays of Shakespeare, I concluded, and I thought of that old gentleman, who is dead now,

but was a bishop, I think, who declared that it was impossible for any woman, past, present, or to come, to have the genius of Shakespeare. He wrote to the papers about it. He also told a lady who applied to him for information that cats do not as a matter of fact go to heaven, though they have, he added, souls of a sort (pp. 43-4).

As the quotation suggests above, Woolf insists that women, unlike men, were deprived of basic education and being creative activity. For her, the main reason behind why women did not practice artistic profession the same as men was not their deficiency and inability, but lack of education as well as lack of money and a room as she writes in *A Room of One's Own*: “woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction” and be free (Woolf, 2014, p. 2). She even mocks men who thought that women did not have ability to write anytime in the way Shakespeare wrote. In her novel *Jacob's Room* (1922), Woolf (2012) writes about how women had difficulty in writing: “unfortunate Julia! Wetting her pen in bitterness and leaving shoelaces untied. When her books came, she applied herself to her gigantic labours...The male readers applied themselves to theirs” (p. 62). In her other novel, *To The Lighthouse* (1927), Woolf illuminates how the perception of women's so-called inability has been ingrained in the subconscious of men in the patriarchal society for ages. In the novel, her fictional male characters such as Charles Tansley and Mr. Ramsey often insult and belittle Lily Briscoe, the female painter, and try to prevent her from creating her work of art by saying: “women can't write women can't paint” (Woolf, 2013, p. 58).

Hence, Woolf, who was restricted as a woman in her life both at home and outside and who observed the life of other women around her, demands strongly to change the perception and ways in which women were treated in their lives for centuries. Later on in the thesis, Chapter II debates how Woolf challenges the traditional perception of woman, as well as her views of new woman in detail.

The last example is British playwright Caryl Churchill who, like Mansfield and Woolf, calls into question the traditional perception of woman and then puts forward her own view of new woman. Being one of the biggest innovative and prominent playwrights in British drama, the name of Caryl Churchill is also closely associated with women's issue across the world. Born in London in 1938 and grew up both in the UK and Canada, Churchill studied English language and literature at Oxford University. She has many awards thanks to her outstanding plays. She started to write her first plays even when she was a student at university and continued producing even

though she had three sons to take care of. Because of her interest in women's issues, Churchill is one of the ideal figures in the eyes of women, of those who try to succeed in both her private life and career. In addition, she is an innovative writer like Virginia Woolf since her collaboration with Joint Stock Company founded in 1974, has enabled her to develop different ideas in her writings due to the fact that this company "pioneered a new way of creating theatre working with writers and actors in a workshop environment" (McKeown, 2008, p. 4). Elaine Aston and Elin Diamond (2009) state:

She [Churchill] learned methods of making work collaboratively, of experiencing theatre making as 'joint', democratized labour informing all aspects of process, practice and production. Even when she did the actual playwriting in private, her ideas and images were viscerally inspired by the labour of the actors and director in rehearsal (p. 4).

This artistic environment has obviously expanded the vision of Churchill positively. Moreover, she also deals with political issues and is a member of Palestine Solidarity Campaign which harshly protests and criticises Israel owing to its invasion of Palestine; she even wrote a play titled *Seven Jewish Children- A play for Gaza* (2009) on this subject. In his article in *The Guardian*, for example, Mark Brown (2009) argues that Churchill, in addition to her success in drama, condemns Israel that "has done lots of terrible things in the past, but what happened in Gaza seemed particularly extreme" (<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2009/jan/24/theatre-gaza-caryl-churchill-royal-court-seven-jewish-children>)

Besides her achievement in drama and political views, Churchill is also well known by women since she has become recently the voice of women in that she dramatizes the difficulties a traditional woman had faced in her life, along with the perception of new woman. In order to get her voice heard further loudly, she joined feminist theatre groups such as Monstrous Regiment founded in 1976 in England and one of the most important feminist theatre groups in the UK. Churchill utters:

For years and years, I thought of myself as a writer before I thought of myself as a woman, but recently I've found that I would say I was a feminist writer as opposed to other people saying I was. I've found that as I go out more into the world and get into situations which involve women what I feel is quite strongly a feminist position and that inevitably comes into what I write (as cited in Ashton, 1997, p. 18).

However, what makes Churchill different from Mansfield and Woolf is that she has experienced the second and third wave feminism. Like Mansfield and Woolf, she has conveyed her messages with the help of female or male character she has created in her drama. She has shown us that "women...women who curse, women who enjoy

sex and feel no need for relationships, women brave enough to make their own choices regarding pregnancies, women who are old and alone...would have been hanged, burned and/or tortured as witches a few centuries ago” (Kerns,1998, para. 4), yet as Jenny M. Djundjung and Yap Bie Yong (2002) point out today “her concern over problems and situations that women everywhere for centuries have to face in the world where male bias is as strongly as ever, has put Churchill in the position of giving women chances to voice their opinions and feelings over their situations in the characters of her plays” (p. 161).

Janelle Reinelt (2009) deepens the discussion by giving examples from her plays. She says that:

In works such as *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire* and *Vinegar Tom* (both 1976), she asked about the construction of women’s identity at turbulent historical moments in the seventeenth century. ... Churchill not only made ordinary people the fulcrum of history, she also dramatized how ordinary women were disciplined and punished for deviant behaviour and how they resisted. She portrayed the collusion of state power with religion in this oppression and also showed how women built fragile connections to each other in spite of their situations... in *Cloud Nine* (1979), she traced the legacy of colonial regimes’ sexual and racial oppression in contemporary life (p. 21).

As seen above, Churchill’s view of new woman, like that of Mansfield and Woolf, is free, creative, disobedient, self-conscious, and innovative. She gives her view of new woman through her representation of her female characters in her plays, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter IV.

In relation to debates above, the thesis debates in selected short stories of Katherine Mansfield, Virginia Woolf’s *To The Lighthouse* (1927), and Caryl Churchill’s *Top Girls* (1982) the women’s issues including the traditional views and identity attached to women by patriarchal society, culture, and ideology, as well as changing perception of women’s identity, roles, positions, and education from the beginning of the twentieth century onwards. In so doing, Chapter II focuses upon the issue of marriage in Mansfield’s four short stories such as *Prelude* (1918), *Bliss* (1918), *At the Bay* (1921) and *Marriage a la Mode* (1921). In these stories, Mansfield represents how woman in the traditional marriage is trapped and suppressed and then envisions a new perception of woman who seeks not only to avoid the burden of marriage but also to live a free, decent, and equal life in both domestic and public space. Chapter III examines the life of woman as an artist through Woolf’s portrayal of Lily Briscoe in *To The Lighthouse*. Hence, the chapter first looks at the traditional condition of a woman artist and secondly suggests the strategies by which Lily as a



female artist devalues the traditional patriarchal manners to achieve success in her art of painting the same as man. Chapter IV of this thesis explores the struggles of new women to achieve a successful career in the male dominated world through Churchill's representation of Marlene, Dull Griet, Isabella Bird, and Pope Joan in *Top Girls* (1982).



## CHAPTER II

### Is Marriage a Trap?

As discussed in the first chapter, there was a close relationship between traditional values and marriage in a typical patriarchal society, in which marriage was obviously construed as “the legally-ratified union, normally of a man and a woman” (Bruce & Yearly, 2006, p. 182). For example, Marjorie Maguire Shultz (1982) asserts that:

[Traditional marriage is a constitution] where husband is breadwinner and wife is homemaker, men have been seen as contributing [to] the economic values and as shouldering the economic burdens. The bonbon-eating housewife watching soap operas or the alimony parasite squeezing her ex-husband’s wallet dry are images ensconced in the popular imagination (p. 70).

As it is understood from the quotation above, spaces are gendered and allocated for men and women in different ways, in which it is clear that in a traditional marriage women are the ones dealing with domestic works which visibly limit their vision whereas men work outside and earn money to survive and to furnish the economy. From this point of view, women may be seen as burdens for the economy of a patriarchal country developed by men. Moreover, Shultz (1982) continues to state that traditional marriage “was permanent and monogamous; children were automatic, essential, and central; husbands earned money and made decisions; wives stayed home taking care of house, children, and husband” (p. 207). In other words, “women are perceived as being naturally (as opposed to socially) nurturing, passive, private, at-home companions to men who are erroneously viewed as naturally providing, active, public, and sole income earners” (Richie, 2017, p. 17).

Furthermore, in traditional marriages, women have to cope with raising their children since this role is assigned to them by the patriarchal society. All these household responsibilities are a must for women. She is the centre of the family. Even in proverbs in different cultures, it is insisted that men make houses, women make homes. The view in such proverbs has been ensconced into the subconscious of both men and women, in which both men and women have automatically internalised and then accepted this notion of the roles naturally as Ray Strachey (1928) maintains that:

in one section of society there stood the sacred hearth and the inviolable family, and there women were, in theory, sheltered and respected, not so much for themselves as because

they were the centre of the home and the guardians of the ‘honour’ of their husband”(p. 189).

Why patriarchy emphasised the polarisation of gender roles, proper marriage and family is because of the fact that the order is of vital importance for a patriarchal society and its continuation, and that the family and its proper working play a significant role in keeping on this order, so that the distribution of labour and segregation of roles are ingrained to avoid confusion. The traditional marriage reinforces this purpose. For instance, Patrick J. Ryan (2009) points out that:

[The term] “husband” comes from combining two words, “house” and “bounde” (ownership). To be a husband was to own, work, and improve the land—this is why we still speak of “husbandry.” Prior to industrial capitalism, a propertyless man was not only an undesirable spouse, he had no right to “espouse” (claim) a wife and had to accept a life as a servant in another man’s house. This makes perfect sense when we know that the term “family” originated, not as a reference to children or sexual procreation, but through the Latin word “famulus,” which meant servant, and its immediate forerunner “familia,” which meant household. A man who had no property had no way to establish a family. As a result, most such men lived in a position of servitude within their master’s household. Even sons of propertied fathers, who could hope to become masters and husbands, usually had to await their inheritance before establishing an independent household (p. 26).

In a patriarchal society, family is accepted as a source of reproduction which enables successive generations to carry on the patriarchal tradition and culture intact. Accordingly, woman is a source of this process and must keep up with this reality in a traditional marriage. “Women are at the mercy of their reproductive biology and are therefore dependent upon men for survival” (Barrett, 1986, pp. 195-96). As Ryan (2009) explains the term:

“wife” does not correspond to the term “husband”. Wife is directly linked to the word “woman,” but it is entangled with terms for women who traded things or provided valued services: “alewife,” “fishwife,” “midwife,” or ‘housewife.’ The “housewife” legally and economically belonged to a husband (a house owner) (p. 26).

Hence, Sir James Fitzjames Stephen (1882) declares that marriage is “a contract between a stronger and a weaker person involving subordination” (p. 230). Moreover, Ali Güneş (2007) states that “the patriarchal system constantly supports stringent gender polarisation, in which women are always and naturally considered inferior to men in every aspect of life- public and private” (p. 68).

Also, as for the traditional perspective, women are expected to be an obedient helpmate for their husbands as “obedience is not indicative of mutuality, but rather servitude” (Richie, 2017, p. 18); they unknowingly submit to men’s superiority in a marriage since they do not have a job, and thus “this lack of economic freedom not only forces them to become wives, but also makes them dependent upon

men” (Güneş, 2007, p. 70). Likewise, Caroline Zielinski (2015) also argues that “in the past, women were generally forced into marriage for economic security. In a world where the ‘welfare state’ did not exist, a woman’s best chance at survival was to marry” (<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/rendezview/first-comes-love-then-comes-marriage-not-for-me-thanks/news-story/d53ae485a9015c0562b3f054427796f4>). In this traditional system, laws also stand with men. “By marriage, the husband and wife are one person in law: that is, the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage, or at least is incorporated and consolidated into that of the husband: under whose wing, protection, and cover, she performs everything” (Blackstone, 1915, pp. 625-26). In this sense, for women, traditional marriage is not so different from what Michel Montaigne said: “[Marriage] is like a cage; one sees the birds outside desperate to get in, and those inside equally desperate to get out” (as cited in Cohen, 1967, p. 267).

In addition, men get more than women do in a traditional marriage “within the context of the family system specifically, we see men exploiting women’s practical, emotional, sexual and reproductive labour. Loving women does not prevent men [from] exploiting them” (Delphy & Leonard, 1992, p. 258). Man has the ultimate power in the marriage. “A husband’s ‘rule’ over his wife, children and servants was seen as an analogy to the king’s reign over his people” (Brabcová, 2004, p. 21). Therefore, it is observed that in traditional marriages men stand head and shoulder above women.

As seen in the debates above, woman has to get through all the responsibilities for taking care of children, husband, and household and obeying her husband in order to be accepted as a wife and mother in traditional marriage by the society whereas the only responsibility allocated to man is to work and earn money to continue family’s living. From this perspective, the burden on woman’s shoulders is obviously heavier than man’s. This polarization in responsibilities and roles indicates how gender identity is constructed in a patriarchal society based on the relationship of power and subordination.

The notion of gender identity based on the relationship of power and subordination becomes a main concern in Katherine Mansfield’s short stories, where she obviously and artistically brings the issue to the attentions of the reader. Mansfield focuses on family and husband- wife relationships in her short stories. Her short stories

become a tool for her through which she mostly illustrates the casted roles for men and women in British society. In her stories, she endeavours to draw attention to the conditions of married women who seek their own identity in their trapped marriages through the means and weapon of alienation and isolation. Mansfield “criticizes the traditional conventions regarding women’s conditions and prepares the ground for an essential transformation” (Kurşuncu, 2006, p. 103). Most of her female characters in her short stories are not happy in their marriages. Therefore, this chapter deals with the suppressed women in traditional marriage, along with whether they could get rid of the burden of marriage or not.

For example, the main female character Linda Burnell will generally be focused in Mansfield’s *Prelude* (1918) and *At the Bay* (1921), in which Mansfield writes about the same family in different settings. Linda Burnell is the wife of Stanley Burnell and the couple has three daughters named Isabel, Lottie, and Kezia. They live in a house with Linda’s mother Mrs. Fairchild and sister Beryl Fairchild. Moreover, even it is not clearly written in *Prelude*, we understand that Linda is expecting a boy when it is said, ““that’s where my boy ought to sit,” thought Stanley. He tightened his arm round Linda’s shoulder” (Mansfield, 1918a, p. 20). In *At the Bay*, all the characters are the same; however, there is a baby boy to whom Linda has just given birth. Probably, he is the one that is not clearly mentioned in *Prelude*.

First of all, Stanley Burnell, the male character in both stories, is a dominating figure over female characters and represents the power of patriarchy. He is “the major male force dominating the whole story and affecting many female lives and psychologies under his reign due to his traditional ‘manly’ attitudes” (Uysal, 2014, p. 4). For instance, in *Prelude*, Stanley criticises all the women in the house, saying ““What the hell does she expect us to do?” asked Stanley. Sit down and fan herself with a pal-leaf fan while I have a gang of professionals to do job? By Jove, is she can’t do a hand’s turn occasionally without shouting about it in return for...” (Mansfield, 1918a, p. 8). In this part, Stanley reminds that all the domestic works belong to women and they do not have a right to complain as a wife and mother while doing this because patriarchy claims so. He is so important figure in the family that his slippers are put in “urgent necessities” during moving to a new house (Mansfield, 1918a, p. 7). Mansfield writes these in double-quote deliberately to show his impact on the family. In *At the Bay*, Stanley is a control freak and workhorse. He bosses all the women in the house

and complains that they do not show him the respect what he deserve. He tells, “the heartlessness of women! The way they took it for granted it was your job to slave away for them while they didn’t even take the trouble to see that your walking-stick wasn’t lost”(Mansfield, 1921a, p. 6). In this part, on one hand, he feels pity for himself and introduces himself as a “slave” for her family; on the other hand, he thinks that he is at the core of family and everybody must find his “walking-stick”, which is crucial to him. “As the head of the Burnell household, Stanley expects nothing less than full compliance from his female subordinates-be they his wife, sister-in-law, mother-in-law, daughters or servants” (Runkle, 2002, p. 20). For example, he really gets angry at Beryl’s reaction when she says that she has forgotten to put sugar in his tea since he expects respects as a breadwinner: “Beryl didn’t help him; she pushed the basin across. What did this mean? As Stanley helped himself his blue eyes widened; they seemed to quiver” (Mansfield, 1921a, p. 4). He even takes his anger out on Linda and “waved his arm to Linda. “No time to say good- bye!” he cried. And he meant that as a punishment to her” (Mansfield, 1921a, p. 6). Not hugging or kissing your wife is accepted as a punishment for her in Stanley’s view; therefore, it can be said that women are so passive in the marriages that you can just hurt them by not kissing them.

Furthermore, Linda’s mother Mrs. Fairchild embodies the values of patriarchal society. Instead of disobeying system, she perfectly performs the task given by patriarchy. For example, all the lines in which Mrs. Fairchild is mentioned give us the sense of motherhood. When Mansfield (1918a) describes her in *Prelude*, she writes that:

It was hard to believe that she had not been in that kitchen for years; she was so much part of it. She put the crocks away with a sure, precise touch, moving leisurely and ample from the stove to the dresser, looking into the pantry and the larder as though there were not an unfamiliar corner (p. 14).

As it is obvious from the part above, Mrs. Fairchild manages the entire household; she always fulfils her responsibilities, even her daughter’s. Unlike Linda, Mrs. Fairchild is an emblem of traditional woman, who believes that abiding by society is *sine quo non* for all the women since “men were in the home for comfort, women were in the home for the comfort of men” (Yeh, 2013, p. 3).

In both stories, Mansfield represents Linda in a way that she is deprived of the responsibilities that she has to deal with as a wife and mother. She is apparently unhappy with her marriage or family concept unlike a traditional woman. She

imagines a life without her husband and children. She does not take care of her children. For instance, when her daughters come to home, Linda says that “‘Are those the children?’ But Linda did not really care; she did not even open her eyes to see” in *Prelude* (Mansfield, 1918a, p. 7). Instead, her mother, Mrs. Fairchild does all the things about the children even “they were taken off to bed by the grandmother” (Mansfield, 1918a, p. 8). Linda is so ignorant about her children that she leaves children behind since there is no enough place for them while they are moving to in the beginning of the story; instead, she prefers to take household goods and children come with storeman in the evening. “Linda does not consider her children a part of the absolute necessities which she will not let out of her sight, but commodities that can be dispensed” (Cooper, 2008, p. 40). Furthermore, she does not mostly attend family breakfast and it can be inferred that she rejects to be a part of family, even to be a family.

In addition, in the story, we often observe Linda’s thoughts in her inner world, which prove that she is depressed and captured in this marriage, feels as if she was drowned, and wants to leave everything behind, including her family. She thinks, “Looking at them she wished that she was going away from this house, too. And she saw herself driving away from them in a little buggy, driving away from everybody and not even waving”( Mansfield, 1918a, p. 11). In this part, she does not feel this house as a nest; instead, it is like a jail which holds her captive, swallows her freedom, and forces her to be submissive, obedient and to give birth to a child. Actually, she knows that her identity is eradicating and she always dreams of freedom: “She dreamed that she was caught up out of the cold water into the ship with the lifted oars and budding mast. Now the oars fell striking quickly, quickly. They rowed far away over the top of the garden trees, the paddocks and the dark bush beyond. Ah, she heard herself cry: ‘Faster! Faster!’ to those who were rowing” (Mansfield, 1918a, p. 31). This ship is her way to be able to escape the chains of society that forces her to be a mother and wife and she is so eager to get rid of it. “Her imaginary escape is an expression of liberation from the demand of patriarchal society, from the rigid prescription of motherhood, and its accompanying association of sexuality that she perceives to be an inescapable component of being a woman” (Cooper, 2008, p. 43). In this sense, all these show that Linda’s psychological awakening takes place. Even her husband, Stanley, is not a breadwinner or someone to be loved by her; he is a kind

of guardian who hinders her to go away or whose existence annoys Linda in reverse as “Linda did not rest again until the final slam of the front door told her that Stanley was really gone” (Mansfield, 1918a, p. 12).

Similarly, in *At the Bay*, we see the same relief of Linda in different words: “Oh, the relief, the difference it made to have the man out of the house” (Mansfield, 1921a, p. 6). “She is in search of feminine authenticity and something she can associate her unrealised dreams with. She needs an escape from her husband’s restrictions and her role as loving wife and child-bearing affectionate mother” (Uysal, 2014, p. 3). She is so indifferent to her marriage and husband that even she does not care her sister flirts with her husband while playing cribbage. Besides, in the following part, we infer how she is desperate and longs for freedom:

Yes, everything had come alive down to the minutest, tiniest particle, and she did not feel her bed, she floated, held up in the air. Only she seemed to be listening with her wide-open watchful eyes, waiting for someone to come who just did not come, watching for something to happen that just did not happen (Mansfield, 1918a, p.13).

Eventually, she falls into a trance in this part in a sense. This trance enables her to forget everything around her and makes her feel alive. She is always on the alert hoping someone to come and save her. Someone is obviously freedom and she cannot hold her freedom since it does not come. Linda is so desperate in her marriage that she tells:

“I dreamed about birds last night,” thought Linda. What was it? She had forgotten. But the strangest part of this coming alive of things was what they did. They listened, they seemed to swell out with some mysterious important content, and when they were full, she felt that they smiled. But it was not for her, only, their sly secret smile; they were members of a secret society and they smiled among themselves. Sometimes, when she had fallen asleep in the daytime, she woke and could not lift a finger, could not even turn her eyes to left or right because THEY were there; sometimes when she went out of a room and left it empty, she knew as she clicked the door to that THEY were filling it. And there were times in the evenings when she was upstairs, perhaps, and everybody else was down, when she could hardly escape from them. Then she could not hurry, she could not hum a tune; if she tried to say ever so carelessly –“Bother that old thimble”–THEY were not deceived. THEY knew how frightened she was; THEY saw how she turned her head away as she passed the mirror. What Linda always felt was that THEY wanted something of her, and she knew that if she gave herself up and was quiet, more than quiet, silent, motionless, something would really happen (Mansfield, 1918a, p. 13).

As in *A Portrait of Artist as a Young Man* (1916), birds are the symbol of freedom in this sense, but freedom is just in Linda’s dreams, even she forgets it since it is too far. In addition, everything in the house makes her unhappy and feel that she is bound hand and foot. Here “they” is used for objects in the house. She accused them of being “sly” or “a secret society”. Actually, all the objects seem chains of marriage and



patriarchy for Linda. She tries to run away from them; however, they are everywhere. She knows that if she gives in to them, she will be a part of this family, in other words, of patriarchy and its value system. In this way, trance and the symbol of birds illuminates Linda's desire for freedom, which traditional woman was deprived of.

Moreover, Linda also associates herself with nature in *Prelude*. As it is well known, nature is always described as female or often called "mother nature" in romantic literary tradition since it symbolizes fertility, production, and reproduction. Hence, nature reminds Linda of her duties, being submissive, productive, supportive, defensive, fertile, and embracing her family. For example, she describes aloe tree as being "the fat swelling plant with its cruel leaves and fleshy stem" as though she mentions about a woman's appearance (Mansfield, 1918a, p. 17). She also thinks that this tree holds "so fast to the earth it grew from, it might have had claws instead of roots" (Mansfield, 1918a, pp. 17-18). This implies that woman must save her roots, which is society and its values, and take care of her family; in brief, she must practice her female virtues as expected by her. Furthermore, just as the tree aloe represents the inactivity or passivity since it cannot live without its roots stuck in earth, so Linda experiences the same situation as she wishes to be free and to break the chain of marriage; however, she never takes the action to fulfil her desires. Her identity is crippled, fragmented, and unable to assert herself. In addition, the tree aloe is paradoxically also a symbol of hope for Linda in the story. When Kezia, her daughter, asks her mother whether it yields any flowers or not, Linda answers, "Once every hundred years" (Mansfield, 1918a, p. 18). It can be concluded that Linda knows one day she will also have a chance to get rid of this situation even if it comes once every hundred years.

Also, the way Linda seems ambivalent, weak, and fragmented in her attempt to acquire freedom suggests her fear of society which forces her to be a wife and mother and she has to put up with this reality as she is represented in *Prelude*. For example, she says, "I shall go on having children and Stanley will go on making money and the children and the gardens will grow bigger and bigger, with whole fleets of aloes in them for me to choose from" (Mansfield, 1918a, p. 33). This is the bitterest truth that she has to bear, even she dreams of escaping from this "marriage" cage. Nothing will change; therefore, "Linda accepts or is forced to accept her role as wife and mother, though rather reluctantly" (Uysal, 2014, p. 4).

This reluctant situation indicates a kind of duality of Linda, in which she wants to achieve a sense of freedom from the chain of her traditional marriage in a romantic sense, yet she is very much crippled and weak in her attempt to succeed in it. Hence, Linda always tries on different strategies to avoid the burden imposed on her. For instance, her little daughter, Kezia, becomes a symbol of rejection of manly-dominated society and marriage. As it is known that all the girls like playing house and being a fake mom in the plays in their childhood, which is, in fact, a fiction thought by patriarchal society to girls beginning from early ages; however, Kezia refuses to play that game by saying, “I hate playing ladies,” said Kezia. ‘You always make us go to church hand in hand and come home and go to bed’” (Mansfield, 1918a, p. 24). Kezia summarizes the role of women in a marriage with these two short sentences: Women must pray in a church and go to bed with her husband, which is a sexual exploitation of woman in order to continue the existence of society by giving a birth to a child and this phenomenon is deliberately embedded in girls’ subconscious from the early age of their lives.

Besides, Linda harshly criticises the rules that are allocated to woman by society:

Yes, that was her real grudge against life; that was what she could not understand. That was the question she asked and asked, and listened in vain for the answer. It was all very well to say it was the common lot of women to bear children. It was not true. She, for one, could prove that wrong. She was broken, made weak; her courage was gone, through childbearing. And what made it doubly hard to bear was, she did not love her children. It was useless pretending. ... She had no warmth left to give them (Mansfield, 1921a, p. 13).

In the quotation above, Linda disobeys the perception of society, which, she believes, destroys her identity, makes her health frail, and wipes out her courage by compelling her to give births. “Each birth has taken something from her – a piece of her vitality and strength or a part of her spirit” (Middleton, 1966, p. 44). She questions the role a woman plays in a marriage; however, she cannot find a satisfying answer. She still knows that all of these thoughts are useless because nothing is going to change, yet the result- she does not love her children- is not so surprising for Linda since she does not choose to live that kind of life. Therefore, it can be said that most women are not just happy in their marriages, but also with their children as society burdens these roles on women.

Linda also understands that she is just a helpmate in her marriages since she spends all her time “in rescuing him [her husband], and restoring him, and calming

him down, and listening to his story. And what was left of her time was spent in the dread of having children” (Mansfield, 1921a, p. 13). She is not the active one in the marriage, rather expected to be self-sacrificing. She does not have a special time for herself and thus she is stuck in this marriage, which absorbs her identity.

In addition, another female character Mrs. Stubbs, who has a shop selling beach items, is pleased with her life although her husband has died. She tells, ““All the same, my dear,’ she said surprisingly, ‘freedom is best!’ Her soft, fat chuckle sounded like a purr. ‘Freedom is best,’ said Mrs. Stubbs again” (Mansfield, 1921a, p. 19). She gives the message that marriage restricts woman and limits her freedom, so there is nothing better than a dead husband for her. The maid, Alice, also hates men when she tells, ““Oh, these men!’ said she, and she plunged the teapot into the bowl and held it under the water even after it had stopped bubbling, as if it too was a man and drowning was too good for them” (Mansfield, 1921a, p. 6). All these women reject the manly authority; however, they are somehow victims of the society. Actually, they all know that the way of freedom passes by earning your own money since it represents power and Beryl’s thoughts clearly prove this: ““And then as she lay down, there came the old thought, the cruel thought- ah, if only she had money of her own” in *Prelude* (Mansfield, 1918a, p. 9).

Mansfield’s third story *Marriage a la Mode* (1921) also shows the corruption of relationship between a husband and wife in a marriage because of its burdens. In the story, the protagonists William and Isabel are a married couple and have two sons. They have just moved from city centre in London to countryside; however, William still lives in the city centre and only comes home at the weekends. Having moved to this new house, some new changes also appear in their relationship. For instance, while William describes Isabel, he often uses the word “new”, “the new Isabel...She laughed in the new way” (Mansfield, 1921b, p. 1), which implies us that there is something ruined in this marriage, and William has a “familiar dull gnawing in his breast” (Mansfield, 1921b, p. 2).

First, William is not pleased with the situation in which Isabel is more sociable than she used to be. She does not deal with him; instead, she spends all her time with her friends after moving to this new house. He even does not have special time with his wife and longs for the old house,

[where] every morning when he came back from chambers it was to find the babies with Isabel in the back drawing-room. They were having rides on the leopard skin thrown over

the sofa back, or they were playing shops with Isabel's desk for a counter, or Pad was sitting on the hearthrug rowing away for dear life with a little brass fire shovel, while Johnny shot at pirates with tongs ( Mansfield, 1921b, p. 3).

As it is understood from the quotation above, the old house is a symbol of a warm home, in which, according to William, they live happily, Isabel takes care of him and children, and she is a truly wife and mother. It is where William portrays Isabel as "rose-bush, petal-soft, sparkling and cool" (Mansfield, 1921b, p. 2), but she shows her thorny side now because she starts to consider marriage "as an oppressive dominating institution primarily employed to suppress women's freedom and will" (Matarneh & Zeidanin, 2017, p. 89). "William is in love with a fantasy of the old Isabel, while she, in turn, pretends to be enamoured of her bohemian friends" (Dunn, 2008, p. 208). This new house has given Isabel a chance to dispose of the fetters of marriage jail. On the other hand, this new Isabel, house, and even bedroom is not familiar to William: "He stood in the middle of the room and he felt a stranger" (Mansfield, 1921, p. 2). For example, Ya-Ju Yeh (2013) clearly explains the situation for William:

The old and new household objects from the two individual houses cause conflicts between the husband and wife. The husband believes that the old house will maintain family order and keep the wife as a good wife. However, Isabel grows as a new wife surrounded by new objects in the new house. Clearly, William wants a traditional wife without the new life, including new ideas and new friends. Eventually, he refuses to acquaint himself with his wife's friends, and indulges in the nostalgia from the past. Thus by contrasting old and new objects, a kind of old-fashioned or conservative femininity is demanded from Isabel, since for William, an ideal wife must be a *démodé* wife (p. 9).

As it is stated in the quotation above, Isabel also leaves the identity constructed by the society back while moving to this house, and now she wears her new identity, which is like a costume she longs for a long time but could not have. Even her friends do not mostly call her Isabel, instead "Titania". The physical separation between the couple -since William works in London during weekdays- enables Isabel to adapt the new atmosphere because if William is not around, patriarchy is not as well. In fact, Isabel "is torn between two worlds: that of her traditional role as wife and mother, which implies responsibility, and that of her irresponsible, pseudo artistic friends" (Martin, 2011, p. 161). Even if William accuses her of having changed, she does not admit that and says, "Please! Please do not be so dreadfully stuffy and—tragic. You're always saying or looking or hinting that I've changed ... killed our love or something" (Mansfield, 1921b, p. 3). However, William names all these acts as a "bad sign" and he is aware of the fact that Isabel is not the one she used to be. For example, he believes that they will never sleep "in that immense feather bed with their feet

locked together” again as they used to do during old holidays (Mansfield, 1921b, p. 3). In a traditional marriage, if woman does not behave according to anticipated values, it means that alarm bells start to ring for society, which mostly results in divorce. “Unlike most 19<sup>th</sup> century women, Isabel considers divorce an escape from the loneliness of her marriage life and restrictions of patriarchy culture” (Matarneh & Zeidanin, 2017, p. 89).

Besides, the picture on the wall of the living room shows us the relationship between husband and wife. In the picture, there is “a young man, over life-size, with very wobbly legs, offering a wide-eyed daisy to a young woman who had one short arm and one very long, thin one”(Mansfield, 1921b, p. 5). It is surely beyond doubt that these young man and woman are William and Isabel. Mansfield uses the word “wobbly” which implies that William does not stand so strong for his marriage, have enough authority to manage his wife and Isabel’s friends, and is not an ideal representative of patriarchy that requires both physical and psychological strength. On the other hand, Isabel being pictured as two different arms insinuates that she has two different identities or sides which are clearly the old Isabel with whom William was happy in the old house and the new one who forgets her past and builds a new future for herself, in brief, *a la mode*.

In addition, while reading the whole story, we see that characters’ only first names are mentioned in the story. The reason may be that this new house and new Isabel bring changes into the couple’s life. “The couple has no last name, implying how far they have escaped from family and traditions, how free they are from the conventional” (Weaver, 1990, p. 30). This lack of last name is a sign of insignificance of man, seeing as the last name of the man is given to woman in a patriarchal society, yet there is no last name in the story which signals that Mansfield deliberately did not mention their surnames to show the resistance of woman to society.

At the end of the story, while William is on the way to London again, he writes a long letter to Isabel, uttering his worries about their marriage -which probably means this marriage is coming to an end, yet Isabel does not write back although she understands the life she experiences these days is not real at first sight. “Now was the moment, now she must decide”; as a result, she chooses not to write back, which means freedom instead of William, “laughing, in the new way” (Mansfield, 1921b, p.

8). This implies “a shift to the new life she has been fostering and a rejection of her old life with her husband” (Martin, 2011, p. 160).

Moreover, Martin (2011) states that there is a parallelism between William and Matthew Arnold’s poem *The Forsaken Merman* (1849) as also noted by Vincent O’Sullivan, who is the editor of Mansfield’s many works. In the poem, the Merman is married to a human wife and they have two children; however, his wife leaves her family behind after hearing the bell coming from church. In the story, while Isabel tries to decide whether she must write to William or not, her friends tempt her to join them, saying, “Call her once before you go, call once yet!” (Mansfield, 1921b, p. 8). We see the same lines in the poem: “Call her once before you go / Call one yet! (Arnold, 1849, 10-11). Martin (2011) points out that “the Merman willingly allows his wife to return to shore, but before she leaves he pleads her to return to them once again. Likewise, William has tried his best to accommodate Isabel’s new lifestyle, and his letter is a plea to rekindle the life they had together” (p. 161). Both Isabel and the Merman’s wife, Margaret, nevertheless go back. However, the difference between Isabel and Margaret at this point is that Isabel chooses to get rid of the chains of marriage and start a new life, which offers her freedom; on the other hand, Margaret leaves her freedom behind since she lives in the sea that offers freedom to her and is captured on earth.

The last story in which the role of woman in a marriage will be discussed is *Bliss* (1918). The story tells us that a married couple, Bertha and Harry Young, organize a dinner party in their house and invite their close friends Mrs. and Mr. Norman Knight, Eddie Warren, and Pearl Fulton, who is a mysterious woman and Bertha has newly befriended. Bertha makes all the arrangements for dinner during the whole day in bliss; however, a bad surprise will be waiting for her at the end of the party, which is the betrayal of her husband.

At first, as I have mentioned above, Bertha is a young woman and has a baby called Baby B, yet she is not mature enough to overcome all the responsibilities given to her as a wife and mother according to the patriarchal values. For example, at the very beginning of the story, it is written that:

ALTHOUGH Bertha Young was thirty she still had moments like this when she wanted to run instead of walk, to take dancing steps on and off pavement, to bowl a hoop, to throw something up in the air and catch it again, or to stand still and laugh at- nothing – at nothing, simply (Mansfield, 1918b, p. 1).

We see in the quotation above that Mansfield deliberately capitalizes “although” to emphasize how Bertha is inappropriate to be a mother or wife even if she is thirty she behaves like a child, which sharply conflicts with society and its principles. A married woman is expected to be a woman of compassion and dignity. Here, her manner is “similar to that of a child when given a precious gift or playing with other children in a playground and feeling innocently happy” (Sadeq, 2012, p. 17). Besides, she does not have enough authority to take decisions and actions in her house. For instance, when she enters the room of her baby and sees the nanny’s glance at her, she thinks that “she has come into the nursery at another wrong time” (Mansfield, 1918b, p. 2), or whereas nanny is talking about the dog they have seen in the park with Baby B. and Baby B. touches its ears, Bertha cannot ask whether it is dangerous or not even though she really wants to do it.

On the one hand, as a woman, wife, and mother, Bertha criticises the patriarchal system, or the burdens of this system for women, which orders them how to behave, act, and think from time to time. For example, she believes that there is no way to express the bliss she feels this morning for a married and thirty-year-old woman “without being drunk or disorderly” and she wonders “ why be given a body if you have to keep it shut up in a case like a rare fiddle” (Mansfield, 1918b, p. 1). “The way the statement is phrased also indirectly suggests that, as opposed to drunkenness and disorderliness, the accepted (and endorsed) norms of behaviour for the main female character are dignity and propriety” (D’Arcy, 1999, p. 351). In this part, Bertha also objects to patriarchy that mostly thinks woman must not show herself up. On the other hand, all these criticisms are just in Bertha’s mind; she does not take any actions to destroy these thoughts in reality. She is just a traditional married woman who only worries whether purple grapes will suit to the carpet in the dining room or she shows her new coffee machine to her guests. She fancies inviting her friends to her house and welcoming them as Bertha thinks that:

They were dears- dears- and she loved having them there, at her table, and giving them delicious food and wine. In fact, she longed to tell them how delightful they were, and what a decorative group they made, how they seemed to set one another off and how they reminded her of a play by Chekov? (Mansfield, 1918b. p. 8).

As it is also stated in the quotation above, Bertha dotes upon preparing or arranging things for her friends in the role of a homemaker just as a traditional woman in a traditional marriage. As a traditional wife, she also needs her husband’s approval

for everything. For instance, while they are having dinner all together, Bertha thinks that “when he [Harry] looked up at her and said: ‘Bertha, this is a very admirable soufflée!’ she almost could have wept with child- like pleasure” (Mansfield, 1918b, p. 8). She also glorifies and makes too much of her husband as she thinks, “Harry had such a zest for life. Oh. How she appreciated it in him. And his passion for fighting- for seeking in everything that came up against him another test of his power and of his courage- that, too, she understood” (Mansfield, 1918b, p. 6). We can conclude from these lines that Bertha thinks Harry is superior to her since he is more courageous, resistant, and stronger in his attitudes to life; therefore, he must be respected and held up as an example. She is also proud of her marriage and believes that they are a perfect couple:

Really—really—she had everything. She was young. Harry and she were as much in love as ever, and they got on together splendidly and were really good pals. She had an adorable baby. They didn’t have to worry about money. They had this absolutely satisfactory house and garden. And friends- modern, thrilling friends, writers and painters and poets or people keen on social questions- just the kind of friends they wanted. And then there were books, and there was music, and she had found a wonderful little dressmaker, and they were going abroad in the summer, and their new cook made the most superb omelettes... (Mansfield, 1918b, p. 5).

The quotation above suggest that Bertha looks at the world with rose-tinted glasses and creates a utopia in her house with pink shutters. As I have mentioned above, she boasts of her marriages since she does not have anything such as education, knowledge, job etc. Therefore, just like a traditional woman, her only source bringing happiness is her marriage, yet this praised marriage fizzles out because of Harry’s betrayal.

As a mother, Bertha also takes care of her baby, but Harry tells guests that “My dear Mrs. Knight, don’t ask me about my baby. I never see her. I shan’t feel the slightest interest in her until she has a lover” (Mansfield, 1918b, p. 9). As in a traditional marriage, it is obvious that, instead of father, Harry, Bertha is responsible for raising up the baby. The role of Harry is to make ends meet for his family. As a father, his daughter will be of interest to him when she has a boyfriend in the future just as a traditional man or father will do. “Rather than partner, the men in [Mansfield’s] stories appear to want their wives to be at once mothers and obedient children...whom the consequently feel they have the right to draw from and ignore at will, while going on with the status quo” (New, 1999, p. 133). Moreover, he shares the same ideas with the patriarchal system when he says his opinions on Pearl Fulton,



“cold like all blonde women, with a touch, perhaps, of anaemia of the brain” (Mansfield, 1918b, p. 4). Not just in British, but also in our society blonde women are mostly called dumb, yet the main reason behind this argument is not known. At this point, we see that Harry’s character is shaped by patriarchy elaborately since he mocks blonde women and hints that they are stupid and do not have enough blond in their heads to think.

Another important issue in the story is that the sexual relationship between the couple is also shaped according to the values of patriarchal society. In a traditional marriage, woman is expected to be sexually passive and man active. In other words, woman is a sexual figure for man and this is one of the reason that they need a woman. In this sense, woman is seen as a “commodity...within an oppressive patriarchal system...which reduces woman to a mere instrument for man’s sexual and emotional pleasure within the family and private life” (D’Arcy, 1999, p. 255). In a part of story, we see that “the first time in her life Bertha Young desired her husband” (Mansfield, 1918b, p. 10). Even if they are married for years and have a baby, Bertha has not wanted her husband sexually up to now, which signifies sex as just a duty for the couple to continue the generation. We also deduce that society suppresses woman’s desires and requests of sex and gives priority to men’s. By desiring her husband “ardently”, Bertha shows a sign of rejecting the values of society to some extent.

Furthermore, the marriage of Bertha and Harry is really a traditional one, in which the role of woman and man is sharply expressed. For example, a phone call conversation between the couple insinuates the fact that a married woman must not speak so much: “What had she to say? She has nothing to say. She only wanted to get in touch with him for a moment. She could not absurdly cry: ““Hasn’t it been a divine day!”” (Mansfield, 1918b, p. 3). Bertha cannot have enough courage to continue talking to William since what needed to be said is said and she finishes the conversation just with a “Nothing, Entendu” (Mansfield, 1918b, p. 3). The position of the woman in a marriage must be behind man in silence; therefore, in a patriarchal society, chatty married women are not approved because a married woman must be demure. However, the situation also annoys Bertha as she thinks, “how much more than idiotic civilisation was” (Mansfield, 1918b, p. 3), but even if she is mentally active, she is so passive to change this so-called civilisation again.

In addition, the pear tree in *Bliss* represents Bertha and Harry's family and all "its wide open blossom a symbol of her [Bertha's] own life" (Mansfield, 1918b. p. 4). This tree is her love, friends, nice time with them, baby, husband, home, or to sum up it is a symbol of her utopia. However, when Bertha and Pearl Fulton look at the pear tree together, it is described "like the flame of a candle, to stretch up, to point, to quiver in the bright air, to grow taller and taller as they gazed- almost to touch the rim of the round, silver moon" (Mansfield, 1918b, p. 9). At this point, we can also say that silver moon personifies Ms. Fulton because of her name "Pearl" which is very similar to the moon in form and her skin colour that is blonde. From this part, it is understood that the pear tree is Harry or his love and all these are now about to be taken by Pearl Fulton, which means Bertha's utopia will be a dystopia soon. When she hears the whispers between Harry and Pearl, she immediately understands that they have a secret affair and she is cheated on by her husband. Apart from that Ms. Fulton mutters to Bertha while leaving the house that "your lovely pear tree!", implying her family is about to come to an end; however, Bertha watches the tree after Ms. Fulton leaves the house, and she thinks that the pear tree is "as lovely as ever and as full of flower as still" (Mansfield, 1918b. p. 12). This part actually shows that Bertha will not give up Harry or her family even if he cheats on her because she still sees the pear tree, which is a symbol of her family, unique and irreplaceable just as a traditional woman does, and at this point society involves in this situation since a married woman must not forsake her husband in the case of betrayal; however, if a woman does the same thing, she can even be killed by her husband in a patriarchal society. In the continuation of the story, Bertha will highly probable turn a blind eye to this betrayal and continue to live in her imaginative and so-called happy house.

In conclusion, as seen in the debates above in her short stories, Mansfield is very critical of the patriarchal society, culture and ideology based on the stringent gender identity and segregation. Within this strict gender segregation, woman was very much subservient to the control of man: that is, woman was submissive, obedient, disadvantaged, inactive and weak, whereas man as active, educated, active, strong and so on. In her short stories, Mansfield represents her concern through her representation of female characters, in which these female characters are obviously seen as being unhappy with the norms of the patriarchal society which have imprisoned them. On the one hand, what they are told is that their primary responsibility is to become a good

mother and a good wife; on the other hand, they always appear strongly dissatisfied with their lives and thus often long for an alternative form of life, which, they think, will avail themselves of chance to be free and happy in their lives. However, Mansfield portrays her female characters in her stories in a way that they seem trapped and crippled in their wishes: that is, they seem unhappy with their lives as wife and mother, yet they, like George Eliot's female characters in *The Mill on the Floss* (1860) and James Joyce's characters in *Dubliners* (1914), also appear unable to get rid of the chain of their crippling lives, because they are too timid, shy and weak to spring into action. Instead, what Mansfield's female characters do is similar to what George Eliot's female characters do. That is, they react against the patriarchal perception of life through their inward reaction, as well as through their forging a form of life in which they seem a self-sacrificing mother, obedient and pleasing wife, yet the ways they act are not what is demanded by patriarchy, so that their relation to the rules of patriarchy is an ambivalent relation which tacitly undermines the basis of patriarchal world view. Finally, the way Mansfield represents her female characters in her short stories as being her unhappiness with the patriarchy view of the world, but enthusiastic to free themselves is of importance in the sense that she artistically paves the way for and encourages female writers to question further the bias attitudes of patriarchal society in the coming years. Today what Mansfield did in her short stories has obviously found its meaning in the writings of female writers. It is the next chapter which examines this courageous voice of a female artist in Virginia Woolf's *To The Lighthouse* (1927).

## CHAPTER III

### Can Woman Write and Paint?

As discussed in the previous chapters, the condition of women was not satisfactory in certain ways in the patriarchal society because the public and domestic spaces were obviously gendered in that women were expected to follow closely particular roles: to stay at home, give birth to and take care of children, deal with all the domestic household activities, and perform the roles of motherhood or womanhood in their houses. The door of the external world was closed for them, and thus women, in contrast to men, were deprived of wider experiences of the outside public world, which had been explicitly allocated to men by patriarchal society and culture. That is, any activity outside domestic sphere was considered out of question for women due to the gendered perception of space. One of these activities was the artistic field, in which female artist was not given the same chance as man with the belief that art was not woman's job and responsibility, but man's main activity. Because of this prevailing and discriminating belief, women faced difficulty in their artistic activities to prove their creative ability the same as men.

Throughout the centuries, general perception had been running counter to this view in what woman was deprived of performing or creating a piece of art. The utmost reason behind this view was that patriarchal society and culture regarded art not as a field of woman but as that of man. This gendered-based categorical perception has been ingrained into the subconscious of patriarchal society and culture and eventually has been viewed and practiced as a normal or natural way of life. It is the result of this polarized gender view that women, though they are as capable as men in their imaginative and creative abilities, have been prevented from displaying their talent in art such as literature, painting, sculpture, and so on. Because of this gender polarization, most of female writers published their works under masculine pen names not to be marginalized and criticised in society. For example, Louisa May Alcott, Mary Ann Evans, and Charlotte Bronte used the names of consequently A. M. Barnard, George Eliot, and James Tiptree. As it is seen, the condition of female artists was heart breaking and very tough to exhibit their capacity in the artistic creation. In the first half of the twentieth century, this disadvantaged situation arose interest of Virginia Woolf,

one of the most innovative and influential British novelist and critic of her time, who pays much attention to this crucial issue in her fictional and non-fictional works. In her highly critical essays *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and *Three Guineas* (1938), for instance, not only does she denounce the attitudes of society that hampers women to be an artist, but she also unfolds the reasons behind why a woman cannot be an artist in a patriarchal society and culture. As she debates in *A Room of One's Own* and *Three Guineas*, what a female artist lacks is **a room of her own, money and education**, which, Woolf believes, will definitely enable the female artist to be successful in their artistic creativity. For Ali Güneş, Woolf “tries to establish a historical, cultural and ideological relationship between gender and writing as well as the relationship between room and female creativity in a patriarchal society” (2007, p. 157). This chapter discusses the condition of woman as an artist in Woolf's *To The Lighthouse* (1927). In so doing, the chapter is divided into three parts. The first part seeks to explain what art is, as well as the relationship between artist and artistic creation. Secondly, it examines the status of woman as an artist in the patriarchal society with reference to Woolf's non-fictional works as well as to *To The Lighthouse*, in which Lily Briscoe as a female painter faces an enormous difficulty in painting her picture in the patriarchal British society. Finally, the chapter argues that if a female artist is given equal chance the same as a male artist, she will be able to show and prove her talent and ability in creating an artistic work as Woolf represents Lily Briscoe in the novel as a female artist in a way that Lily Briscoe becomes able to complete her picture, even though she is confronted by the prejudices of the patriarchal British society and its culture towards the female artists.

There have been many intense debates and disputes throughout the centuries about what art is. For example, Morris Weitz (1956) believes that art cannot be defined and it is an open concept (pp. 27-35). On the other hand, George Dickie, as an institutional theorist, claims that “something is an artwork if some institution or person representing the ‘artworld’ deems it so and plays some part in disseminating it, such as a gallery exhibiting the work” (As cited in Haynes, 2015, pp. 5- 6). Moreover, Arthur Danto (2013) states that “something is a work of art when it has a meaning- is about something- and when that meaning is embodied in the object in which the work of art materially consists. . .works of art are embodied meanings” (p. 149). For Pablo Picasso “art is the lie that enables us to realize the truth” (<https://www.good->

reads.com/quotes/tag/art). And it is “the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as painting or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power” (<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/art>). When it comes to artist, he or she is defined as “someone who produces art, especially paintings or drawings” or “a professional performer, especially a singer, dancer, or actor (<https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/artist>). Furthermore, he or she is a person “who practises or performs any of the creative arts, such as a sculptor, film-maker, actor, or dancer”, “creates paintings or drawings as a profession or hobby”, and “[is] skilled at a particular task or occupation” (<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/artist>). As it is understood from these definitions, art or creating a piece of art is not exclusively dedicated to a specific gender – man or woman – but human beings in general. Besides, no one can prove that man is better than woman and vice versa in their creative talent and abilities, which are bestowed upon them by the Creator.

Although there has been no natural gender difference concerning talent and ability in artistic creation, patriarchal society, culture and ideology had instilled for ages a strict way of thinking into the minds of people that the artistic activity was only within the domain of man. Eventually this perception had been shown a normal practice of life in which women accepted submissively their condition and bowed to the inevitable. Because of this deep-rooted approach, patriarchal society had done its best to impede all the ways before women which would enable them to recover from their lethal condition. Prior to the twentieth century, there had been certain obstacles before a female artist when she came to create her artistic work. One of them was the ban on woman’s access to library. Library is the place of knowledge, ideas, culture and so on; it enlarges our understanding of the meaning of life, world and reality through reading various and different points of views; it enriches our imaginative world and makes us a better individual. But as Virginia Woolf writes at the very beginning of *A Room of One’s Own*, Woolf herself, like the other women, was not permitted to enter library alone due to her gender: that is, she, like her peers, was bereft of the benefits of library: “He waved me back that ladies are only admitted to the library if accompanied by a Fellow of the College or furnished with a letter of introduction” (2014, p. 5). Library is an important place where knowledge and intellect are produced,

accumulated, and by all the people to improve their understanding of life and its meaning, as well as the meaning of their existence. Since all the books had been written mainly by men before the twentieth century, library was considered the property of men. Simply, entering library was seen not only as the violation of the right of property in the public space, but it was also regarded as an act to undermine the basis of the knowledge produced by men. Hence, men did not want women to infringe men's space, knowledge, authority, and so on. Therefore, it is a futile and desperate attempt for woman to even search for something to learn, not just to teach. The light of knowledge and information was dark for her.

The second obstacle before woman when they happened to write was money. Because money was earned and controlled by men, so that Woolf also criticizes the system that gives priority to man and hinders woman to earn money since all the money and prosperity of woman belonged to man for centuries and that made her focus upon the other issues. Therefore, woman could not bequeath money to her daughters. This is a critical point for Woolf because if a woman wants to be an artist, the first crucial thing is to have money. Money forms bases for woman to stand upright in society for Woolf. It makes a woman free in her acts of life. Woolf even states, "of the two- the vote and money- the money, I own, seemed infinitely the more important" (p. 34). For centuries, "the safety and prosperity of the one sex and insecurity of the other" have been favoured in society (p. 21). This financial problem is so important for Woolf that she declares in *Three Guineas* that:

She need[s] no longer use her charm to procure money from her father or brother. Since it is beyond the power of her family to punish her financially, she can express her own opinions. In place of the admirations and antipathies which were often unconsciously dictated by the need of money, she can declare her genuine likes and dislikes. In short, she need[s] not acquiesce; she can criticize (p. 133).

As it is suggested in the quotation above, the condition of woman starts to get better; therefore, she does not demand money from her parents any longer. The reason behind why she cannot express her own opinions or denounce society is lack of money, and money is such an influential weapon which has forced woman's identity to be shaped in accordance with the demand and expectation of the patriarchy, so woman has had to accept all the dictations and limitations imposed by the patriarchal society. From this point of view, money signifies the freedom of thought, power act freely, get education freely, and write freely. Since women did not own money; therefore, men have used money as a means to control the life of women. Hence, Woolf strongly

insists on money women should own. Money, she believes, will definitely endow a woman with the power of free movements, with the power of freedom and independence, as well as with the power of expression and speech. As soon as she gets rid of the prevailing chain of patriarchal society through the financial power, women have become able to get involved in artistic activities and eventually creativity the same as men. She has acquired power and authority to create her own form of atmosphere, in which she has found herself empowered not only to challenge men's tradition of representing women in their arts, but also to write, paint, act, sing, compose songs, and create sculptures; she is able to construct her own tradition of writing, her own tradition of culture, her own tradition of painting, which will express in the future women's feelings, life, identity and experiences different from what men wrote about women, different from the way in which men defined and described women.

Moreover, money provides education, which leads women to achieve knowledge and eventually intellectual power. Why women lacked knowledge in the past was because of the fact that almost all the schools, colleges, and universities have been founded by man for their benefits, which fitted perfectly their worldview and identity; money gathered from people has been spent for the education of men. Therefore, one of the main reasons behind why woman is culturally, socially, educationally, professionally, and intellectually inferior to man is unfortunately lack of money. Money is one of the most important integral parts of being an artist. In short, doing whatever you want and especially being an artist as a woman pass through the way of having money since "intellectual freedom depends upon material things" (p. 106). What is more, "money is the only means by which we can achieve objects that are immensely desirable" (p. 189).

As it is mentioned above, another problematic area has always been education for woman. She was not permitted to get education. Thus, she could not have a profession due to lack of education. The discussion on this point went further because it was disturbingly claimed that the "desire for learning in women was against the will of God" (p. 141). When religion gets involved in the issue or society uses it according to its own benefits, the result will be much more influential because religion, as usual, has a dominating role in the lives of people. If someone supports this opinion based upon religion, religious circles will cut the point to the quick. What has happened



throughout the centuries is almost as follows: society has searched every single way to stand in woman's way not to get education, even exploiting the religion and fabricating so-called rumours. This suppression of woman is not just psychological or this is not just an idea because we have read that many bishops have acted in compliance with alleged and blindly attracted thoughts as written in the ensuing quotation: "Bishop Burnet was of opinion that to educate the sisters of educated men would be to encourage the wrong branch, that is to say, the Roman Catholic branch, of Christian faith" (p. 142). Not just governments but also religious institutions have inhibited woman from getting involved in education system. Even Pope announced that "most women have no character at all" (p. 27). Oscar Browning, an English writer, historian, and reformer in education "was [also] to declare [that] 'the best woman was intellectually the inferior of the worst man'" (p. 51). Besides, when money allocated for man and woman are compared, the result is miserable for woman. Conditions are improving; however, it is not enough for woman as Woolf says, "your class [man's] has been educated at public schools and universities for five or six hundred years, ours for sixty" (pp. 133-4).

In addition, while Woolf searches fictions written by women in the Elizabethan period, she also touches upon the issue that woman did not have literary tradition and culture due to lack of education. To be an artist, woman must also have a right to receive decent education; however, as happened in the other fields, she could not have proven herself for centuries in the field of literary production. In *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf discusses this point by giving example of Shakespeare:

Let me imagine...what would have happened had Shakespeare had a wonderfully gifted sister, called Judith, let us say. Shakespeare himself went...to the grammar school, where he may have learnt Latin- Ovid, Virgil, and Horace- and the elements of grammar and logic... Very soon, he got work in the theatre, became a successful actor, and lived at the hub of the universe, meeting everybody, knowing everybody, practicing his art on the boards, exercising his wits in the streets, and even getting access to the palace of the queen. Meanwhile his extraordinarily gifted sister...remained at home. She was as adventurous, as imaginative, as agog to see the world as he was. But she was not sent to school. She had no chance of learning grammar and logic, let alone of reading Horace and Virgil...She was to be betrothed to the son of a neighbouring wool-stapler. She cried out that marriage was hateful to her, and for that she was severely beaten by her father...She...took the road London...She wanted to act...Men laughed in her face...No women...could possibly be an actress...[She] killed herself one winter's night (pp. 44-6).

This long quotation succinctly summarizes women's miserable artistic condition, which they were given equal chance to prove herself and her creative ability the same as a male artist. Thus, this privilege of artistic production has been in the

hands of man for years. Women have been brought up in a manner in which they were unaware knowledge of her time. “One daughter longed to learn chemistry; the books at home only taught her alchemy” (p. 266). Even if a woman had the ability or talent of acting, writing, or painting without education, the end would be the same as Judith Shakespeare, who commits suicide by losing mind. Because “the world did not say to her as it said to them [men], Write if you choose; it makes no difference to me. The world said with a guffaw, Write? What’s the good of your writing” (p. 50). What society does is to force woman to choose just one of the ways imposed by it since woman does not have a right or power to wish more due to her gender. This is the reason why we do not see woman as an artist like Shakespeare in the literary tradition, and this is not the fact that man is more talented than a woman is, but he is a man and benefits from the privileges of society and culture he has created. As Woolf says, “any woman born with a great gift in the sixteenth century would certainly have gone crazed, shot herself, or ended her days in some lonely cottage outside the village, half witch, half wizard, feared, and mocked at” (p. 47). She has always been despised, belittled, and scorned in her acts and efforts. Her abilities have been ignored, fallen on deaf ears, and treated with contempt: “A woman’s composing is like a dog walking on his hind legs. It is not done well, but you are surprised to find it at all” (p. 52).

Besides, a minority group of women try to survive in spite of all these injustices and inequalities, looking for the ways to receive education and eventually to have a job. However, the first obstacle woman meets is that she is not permitted to work even though she is qualified enough to do so. If she earns her own money, it will leave a bad impression on society. We can give example of Sophia, who tells her father about her desire to work, in Woolf’s *Three Guineas*. The answer of her father is that “it would be quite beneath you, darling, and I cannot consent to it...To be paid for the work would be to alter the thing completely, and would lower you sadly in the eyes of almost everybody” (p. 260). While working woman must be represented as strong enough to be able to deal with all kinds of works, it is sad to say that the idea which woman will devalue if she works and earns money has been instilled for centuries. There is “no meanness in earning, but in those that think it means” (p. 262). She has been considered as an untouched doll and earmarked for other specific purposes. The borders of woman have already been decided by the patriarchal system and ideology.

The media such as radio also irrationally propagated this idea to support the patriarchal view of woman:

Homes are the real places of the women...let them go back to their homes...The government should give work to men...A strong protest is to be made by the Ministry of Labour... Women must not rule over men... There are two worlds, one for women, the other for men... Let them learn to cook our dinners...Women have failed...They have failed...They have failed (p. 270).

The tone of the quotation above is really irritating for a woman. It makes us feel as if she was a fugitive from justice, should immediately be caught, and put in prison which is actually her house. Man has always claimed to have dibs on woman's life. As Woolf considers, "anything may happen when womanhood has ceased to be a protected occupation" (p. 38). She has just been deemed worthy of these four walls that are her fences of prison. "At Cambridge, in the year 1937...the women's colleges are not allowed to be members of the university" (p. 147). Moreover, if woman teaches something, she can also do this for those of a certain age. "Women were not fit teachers for boys over the age of fourteen" because she is not accepted capable enough to teach them, a fourteen-year-old boy is mentally superior to woman (p. 212).

On the other hand, those who are barely able to work and earn money face with another injustice in workplaces, which is the issue of unequal wages. She has unfairly been treated in every workspace this time. "In England in 1938 the salary of an archbishop is £15,000; the salary of a bishop is £10,000 and the salary of a dean is £3,000. But the salary of a deaconess is £150" (p. 251). The situation is also similar in civil offices. "Women civil servants deserve to be paid as much as men; but ... they are not paid as much as men" (p. 172). We can see these kinds of differences in a private sector since someone holds the aces; however, when a government discriminates in favour of just one gender, it can be concluded that this is its policy to deter woman from playing an active role in workforce. No matter how cruel the circumstances are for her, woman is in a battle against the system. There is no real weapons, guns or killing people, yet she tries to kill the ideas of patriarchal ideology, which names the world of man "with the care of his family and the nation...[woman with] her family, her husband, her children, and her home" (p. 173). However, woman does have enough competence to be able to do all kinds of works cognitively. She "too can leave the house, can mount those steps, pass in and out of doors, wear wigs and gowns, make money, administer justice" (p. 182). She can also overcome almost all the works requiring physical power as man can; therefore, "remove that protection,

expose them to the same exertions and activities, make them soldiers and sailors and engine-drivers and dock labourers” (p. 38). Then, why has she been suppressed for centuries? Or why has she been locked in the house or silenced? The reason is that man always wants to feel superior to woman. Woman is the source of motivation for him to evoke his perfection, supremacy, and domination. In *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf points out that “women have served all these centuries as looking glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size...Take it away and man may die, like the drug fiend deprived of his cocaine” (pp. 33-4).

Furthermore, what has been done to woman throughout the years is to be educated or prepared just for marriage, which kills her desires to be an artist since marriage imposes great burden and responsibilities on her, and “the one profession that was open to her- marriage- was held to need no education” (p. 142). Here we can also witness the hypocrisy of patriarchy because

it was with a view to marriage that her mind was taught. It was with a view to marriage she tinkled on the piano, but was not allowed to join an orchestra; sketched innocent domestic scenes, but was not allowed to study from the nude; read this book, but was not allowed to read that, charmed, and talked. It was with a view to marriage that her body was educated; a maid was provided for her; that the streets were shut to her; that the fields were shut to her; that solitude was denied her- all this was enforced upon her in order that she might preserve her body intact for her husband. In short, the thought of marriage influenced what she said, what she thought, what she did. How could it be otherwise? Marriage was the only profession open to her (p. 156).

As Woolf states above, woman's mind has been captured with the thought of marriage. What has been taught to her is to make her ready for marriage. She can learn to play the piano, but can only play for her husband. She can paint “innocent” things, or she cannot criticise even if she is allowed to read certain types of books. She cannot go alone outside or spend time in the public space. She must be a maid. Even she cannot spare time for herself. She has been grown up with the knowledge of marriage, not of education. She has been imprisoned in the world of patriarchal society, which just offers marriage as a profession. She is a pawn whose destiny is in the hand of the king who is the patriarchy in chess, which is society and culture. Therefore, it is not a surprise for us not to see woman as an artist because she cannot earn money to be free and independent, get education to be invested with knowledge, which will help her hone her creative skills. Moreover, it is known that there has been no paid salary for a woman even if marriage or being a mother is accepted as her occupation. The income of the father is thought to be shared with his wife, but the situation is not so. While

husband puts some money on the side for his hobbies, wife does not have this kind of income in order to buy some books, to have a hobby, or to socialize. “It seems that the person to whom the salary is actually paid is the person who has the actual right to decide how that salary shall be spent” (p. 177). The condition is still the same in today’s world. In the past, marriage was accepted as a profession, yet woman could not be paid. However, it is not seen as an occupation today since it does not require a specific education and even now, woman as a mother or wife does not earn money.

On the other hand, to change yourself as a woman is harder than to change the attitudes of society to some extent owing to the fact that all of these ideas have been stuck in her mind for centuries. She has to leave the identity forced to admit by society behind and create a new one according to her own values without the fear of judgements. Woolf also emphasizes this point in her famous speech *Professions for Women* in the Women’s Service League in 1931. She declares that she has to kill “the Angel in the House” to be an artist:

I discovered that if I were going to review books I should need to do battle with a certain phantom. And the phantom was a woman... I called her...The Angel in the House... It was she who used to come between me and my paper...It was she who bothered me and wasted my time and so tormented me that at last killed her (Woolf, 1965, p. 202).

Woolf confesses that she has been straggled with a kind of monster created by the system to continue to write. This Angel in the House is a compelling force for her to prevent her from writing and a torture that cannot be endured. The Angel in the House was “sympathetic...charming...unselfish...excelled in the difficult arts of family life...sacrificed herself daily...,so constituted that she never had a mind or a wish of her own, but preferred to sympathize always with the minds and wishes of other” (p. 202). This is explicitly the description of a traditional woman who is an enemy for woman to be an artist. This traditional woman being shaped, dictated, created, loved, and praised by society compels her to behave as per patriarchal values. She orders that “they [women] must charm, they must conciliate, they must- to put it bluntly- tell lies if they are to succeed” (p. 203). Woman grapples both with the system and with herself to achieve her desires; therefore, “killing the Angel in the House was part of the occupation of a woman writer (p. 204). As a case relevant to this issue, Woolf refers to Dorothy Osborne, a British writer in the seventeenth century, in *A Room of One’s Own*:

One could have sworn that she had the makings of a writer in her. But ‘if I should not sleep this fortnight I should not come to that’ - one can measure the opposition that was in

the air a woman writing when one finds that even a woman with a great turn for writing has brought herself to believe that to write a book was to be ridiculous, even to show oneself distracted (pp. 61-2).

Woolf shows us here the fact that woman does not have enough courage to believe in herself and she even despises herself. Dorothy Osborne believes that writing is waste of time for as propagated by the domineering patriarchal society. To sum up, the point is that woman not only fights against repression and injustice in the society, but she also does the same against herself in order to exist as an artist.

Last but not least, another fundamental issue which puts a stop to woman to be an artist is that she did not have a private place or a room of her own. She needs to be alone and free to create art. First of all, solitude is mandatory for an artist since it provides him/her with focus on his/her own ideas or listening his/her inner thoughts. Secondly, as a result of this isolation, the artist has the opportunity to fall into a trance, which is prerequisite for creating artistic works. We can also name this as a mood of tranquillity feeding the artist mentally and psychologically. However, even though woman has been locked in her house or it has been the whole of her world for centuries, she did not have a room of her own. In addition to lack of money and education, and lack of a personal room for herself has caused her not to perform her creative ability for years. Woolf also significantly emphasizes this point in *A Room of One's Own*. "To have a room, let alone a quiet room or a soundproof room, was out of the question, unless her parents were exceptionally rich or very noble, even up to the beginning of the nineteenth century"( p. 50). Where can she go ahead when inspiration arouses to write, to paint, to act, or to make a sculpture? Where can she reach the verge of solitude or stillness? There is, alas, nowhere to achieve. "As Miss Nightingale was so vehemently to complain- 'women never have half hour...that they can call their own'" (p. 65). Nightingale properly ascertains the situation when we analyse woman dealing with cooking, cleaning, bringing up children, and pleasing her husband. Perhaps she hardly finds time to sleep. On the other hand, man who waives all these duties and responsibilities has considerable time to do everything he wants. Then what has woman done? Woolf answers this question through the example of Jane Austen:

Jane Austen wrote like that to the end of her day. 'How was able to effect all this,' her nephew writes in his Memoir, 'is surprising, for she had no separate study to repair, and most of the work must have been done in the general sitting room, subject to all kinds of casual interruptions. She was careful that her occupation should not be suspected by servants or visitors or any persons beyond her family party' (p. 65).

As Austen's nephew reveals in his memoir, woman had no place to focus on her artistic works as in the case of Jane Austen. However, how woman managed to succeed in completing her artistic work under these difficult circumstances was that she either had to hide or keep her works completely confidential in order not to be judged by society or use pseudonym name to avoid obstacles and find space to practice her creative ability. Doing all of these stuffs under pressure and in strict confidence equally influenced her performance to create art. In addition, this situation highly affected the genre in which woman writes. Therefore, Austen gravitated to novel instead of poetry since it requires less consideration. On the other hand, those being opposed to the idea by claiming that man being also poor or not having a room has achieved to become an artist are mistaken because "five hundred a year stands for the power to contemplate, ...a lock on the door means the power to think for oneself" (p. 105).

As seen in the debates above, woman faced many physical and psychological difficulties and obstacles in the patriarchal society when she attempted to write and paint. Her life was controlled and suppressed; she was not given an equal chance the same as man to practice her talent and creative ability, express her experience, create female literary culture, and eventually take her place in the literary tradition.

Similarly, Woolf's female artist, Lily Briscoe, faces many obstacles, while she is painting her picture in *To The Lighthouse*. As Woolf represents her, Lily Briscoe is often exposed to male inhibitions and discouraged to complete her work of art throughout the novel. Like many female artists before her, she seems the victim of patriarchal society and culture when she attempts to infiltrate into the field which had been controlled by men for ages. With her painting, in fact, Lily Briscoe infringes the minefield and challenges the long-lasting patriarchal culture and notion about female artist.

In *To The Lighthouse*, Woolf centres on the Ramsay family and their visit to the Isle of Skye in Scotland between 1910 and 1920. She divides the novel into three parts: "The Window", "Time Passes", and "The Lighthouse". Mr. Ramsey, a metaphysician, and his wife Mrs. Ramsay are traditional married couple and live on the Isle of Skye in Scotland; they have eight children named James, Andrew, Jasper, Roger, Prue, Rose, Nancy, and Cam, which is actually a sign of a typical traditional family. Moreover, the Ramsay family has many friends such as a single painter Lily

Briscoe, a young philosopher Charles Tansley, William Bankes, Paul Rayley, Minta Doyle, and Augustus Carmichael, who frequently visit the family, have dinner with them, and accompany them during the journey to the lighthouse. The first part takes place just before the World War I and represents the peaceful time, in which life is good, in which everyone seems happy in their lives, and in which there are warm relations among people. In the section of "Time Passes", the peaceful time leaves its place to misery, destruction, fragmentation as a result of World War I; a sense of complexity, emptiness, isolation, and loneliness prevail in people's lives. In this section, Mrs. Ramsay and Andrew Ramsay also die. The last part of *To The Lighthouse* ends when the remaining Ramsay family and their guests arrive at the lighthouse, and it is the time when Lily Briscoe also completes her painting.

As a young passionate artist and single woman, Lily Briscoe stands against all the values of the patriarchal society concerning the condition of a woman and a female artist. First of all, she is opposed to the idea of marriage in spite of Mrs. Ramsay's pressures on her:

Minta must, they all must marry, since in the whole world whatever laurels might be tossed to her (But Mrs Ramsay cared not a fig for her painting), or triumphs won by her (probably Mrs Ramsay had had her share of those), and here she saddened, darkened, and came back to her chair, there could be no disputing this; an unmarried woman ( she lightly took her hand for a moment), an unmarried woman has missed the best of life...Oh, But, Lily would say, there was her father; her home; even, had she dare to say it, her painting (Woolf, 2013, p. 60).

In the novel, Lily represents the new woman while Mrs. Ramsay embodies the traditional one. The only concern of Mrs. Ramsay throughout the novel is that every single girl around her must marry and start a family life. She has been grown up according to principles of patriarchal ideology or to "a code of behaviour...[claiming that] the woman, whatever her own occupation might be, [must] go to the help of the young man opposite so that he may expose and relive the thing bones, the ribs, of his vanity, of his urgent desire to assert himself", so her attitudes do not result in confusion for us (p. 105).

On the other hand, Woolf represents Lily Briscoe in a way that she is thoroughly the opposite of Mrs. Ramsay, in which she challenges the presuppositions of patriarchy about woman, their lives, marriage, and artistic activity. In this respect, Lily Briscoe completely represents the view of a new woman. Unlike Mrs. Ramsay, Lily Briscoe believes that the joy of life cannot be in marriage. That is, woman can be happy without marriage in different ways. For instance, Lily Briscoe finds happiness



in painting and proving her talent in the artistic creativity, which had entirely been allocated to men by the British patriarchal society. Simply, she questions the existing perception: “If Mrs. Ramsay represents the mother in the novel, then Lily offers an image of the anti-mother” (Anderson, 2004, p. 9). In addition, Mrs. Ramsay implicitly impacts upon Lily as she is perfectly a traditional woman, wife, and mother. Her being so superbly and treating in the line with patriarchal ideology forces Lily to bow to pressures leading her to take Mrs. Ramsay as a model. For instance, unlike her husband, Mrs. Ramsay is calm, humble, and helpful woman. She fully dedicated herself to her husband and her children. However, she loses her identity due to the patriarchal ideology insomuch that she becomes a pawn in the system. For example, she takes getting people married as a mission and she always thinks “William and Lily should marry...They all must marry” (Woolf, 2013, p. 34. See also p. 60). As I have mentioned before, marriage is the only profession that woman must carry out in a patriarchal society; therefore, we can conclude that Mrs. Ramsay has become representative of the patriarchal British society. Besides, she feels inferior to her husband all the time. For instance, she considers that “there was nobody she revered more. She was not good enough to tie shoe strings, she felt” (p. 41). How can a woman think that she does not deserve to tie her husband’s shoelaces or can she assume such a manner denigrating herself while she must believe the equality of men and women? The answer is clearly that: the woman who is oppressed by the patriarchal doctrine. She is so blindly attracted to this doctrine that

She did not like, even for a second, to feel finer than her husband; and further, could not bear not being entirely sure, when she spoke to him, of the truth of what she said. Universities and people wanting him, lectures and books and their being of the highest importance... [people] must know that of the two [Mr and Mrs Ramsay] he was infinitely the more important, and what she gave the world, in comparison with what he gave, negligible (pp. 48-9).

As it is stated in the quotation above, Mrs. Ramsay feels insignificant when compared to her husband. What she does for her family or life is nothing vis-à-vis her husband does. Indeed, she takes care of her children and pleases her husband as a wife; and she is a unifying force in the family, which is obviously understood in the second part of the novel when Mrs. Ramsay dies, the family disperses; however, she still feels subordinate to her husband because all these are accepted as unimportant and do not occupy a significant place in man’s world. Man is the productive one, so he has a voice in society. In the unlikely event of feeling superior to man, woman must

immediately overturn that idea like Mrs. Ramsay. In this system, woman even cannot dare to think or dream of being so, can she?

Moreover, the young philosopher Charles Tansley is a creep figure and often insults people around him, especially Lily Briscoe in the novel. He is a misogynist to some extent since he claims that:

For he was not going to talk the sort of rot these condescended to by these silly women...“One never gets anything worth having by post”- that was the sort of thing they were always saying...They never got anything worth having from one year’s end to another. They did nothing but talk, talk, talk, eat, eat. It was the women’s fault. Women made civilisation impossible with all their “charm”, all their silliness (pp. 99-100).

As it is explicitly understood from the quotation above, Charles feels superiority to women. He both snubs them in character and intellectually by asserting that they deal with trifling things. Being a young philosopher and having a post represents intellectual knowledge of Charles, and he thinks that women are deprived of it. The only woman he likes is Mrs Ramsay because she behaves in accordance with the patriarchal values which obviously please him: “She was the most beautiful person he had ever seen” (p. 20). Therefore, it is so natural that he feels intimate with her. He actually represents oppressive patriarchal society since he repeatedly mocks and pressurizes Lily by claiming, “Women can’t paint, women can’t write...” (p. 58). He tries to demotivate and poison her by sharing the imposed values by the system. Nobody treats Lily’s attempt seriously; even Mrs. Ramsey as a woman must support or back Lily up, yet she thinks that

But the sight of the girl standing on the edge of the lawn painting reminded her; she was supposed to be keeping her head as much in the same position as possible for Lily’s picture. Lily’s picture! Mrs Ramsay smiled. With her little Chinese eyes and her puckered-up face, she would never marry; one could not take her painting seriously; she was an independent little creature, and Mrs Ramsay liked her for it; so, remembering her promise, she bent her head (p. 24).

Lily draws the portrait of Mrs. Ramsay; however, she does not believe that her painting is precious. As a female character suppressed by the patriarchal perception of women, she also considers woman not to have enough ability to paint. She permits Lily paint her portrait but she does this not to hurt her feelings in a sense. In reality, she knows that Lily seems to be flogging a dead horse. Lily even is not found suitable enough for a marriage owing to her appearance being “skimpy [and] wispy” (p. 175). She also thinks that “all except myself, thought Lily, girding at herself bitterly, who am not a woman, but a peevisish, ill-tempered, dried-up old maid, presumably” (pp. 175-6). In fact, she describes herself from the eyes of society, as she is single despite a

certain age. “They [traditional women] are happy like that; I [Lily] am happy like this” (p. 199). However, there is one thing escaping society’s notice that what makes Lily happy is not marriage or starting a family; instead, she wants to leave a lasting thing behind, which will be her picture. “‘You’ and ‘I’ and ‘she’ pass and vanish; nothing stays, all changes; but not words, not paint...it ‘remained for ever’” (p. 204). This is why her priorities are different from a traditional woman and she believes that “she need not marry, thank Heaven; she need not undergo that degradation. She was saved from that dilution” (p. 116). She names the marriage as a humiliation because she knows that she will have to forsake her dreams if she marries in this patriarchal system.

Furthermore, Mr. Ramsay is an influencing factor for Lily. What makes Mr. Ramsay an obstructive figure is that he always annoys or disturbs Lily with his glances:

Lily Briscoe went on putting away her brushes, looking up, looking down. Looking up, there he was- Mr Ramsay- advancing towards them, swinging, careless, oblivious, remote. A bit of hypocrite? She repeated...he is absorbed in himself, he is tyrannical, he is unjust; and kept looking down, purposely, for only so could she keep steady, staying with the Ramsays (p. 57).

The existence of Mr. Ramsay causes Lily to feel lack of self-confidence. The usage of her words also indicates that she does not like him due to his character. Therefore, she prefers not to catch his eyes because she knows that she will face the eyes scoffing at and belittling her portrait. He causes her to get in a lather: “She had taken the wrong brush in her agitation at Mr. Ramsay’s presence, and her easel, rammed into the earth so nervously, was at the wrong angle” (p. 182). He does not physically but psychologically exercises control over her. He has so devastating impact upon Lily that she expresses that:

Let him be fifty feet away, let him not even speak to you, let him not even see you, her permeated, he prevailed, he imposed himself. He changed everything. She could not see the colour; she could not see the lines; even with his back turned to her, she could only think (p. 173).

Mr. Ramsay does not need to do anything to cause Lily to lose her concentration. His presence is enough for Lily as he stands for patriarchy and imposes its values in the novel. “He is a distracting and irritating figure for her, because she cannot continue to paint when he stands by her and looks down her picture: simply, she cannot concentrate upon her painting” (Güneş, 2007, p. 187). He indirectly causes psychological pressure on Lily.

In addition, Lily also starts to lose her self-confidence due to this patriarchal atmosphere. The system forces her to think that “it would be hung in the servants’ bedrooms. It would be rolled up and stuffed under a sofa. What was the good of doing it then, and she heard some voice saying she couldn’t paint, saying she couldn’t create” (p. 183). She has to struggle with herself, which is not different from what Woolf does by killing “the Angle in the House”. In some parts of the novel, Lily feels as if she did not complete her work:

She could have wept. It was bad, it was bad, it was infinitely bad! She could have done it differently of course; the colour could have been thinned and faded; the shapes etherealised; that was how Paunceforte would have seen it. But then she did not see it like that. She saw the colour burning on a framework of a cathedral. Of all that only a few random marks scrawled upon the canvas remained. And it would never be seen; never be hung even (p. 58).

As it is understood from the quotation above, Lily, unlike Mr. Paunceforte, who is a famous painter and “may be an allusion to James Whistler [visiting] St Ives in 1883-4” since he wears yellow boots like Paunceforte in the novel”, has difficulty in perceiving the colour (Briggs, 2006, p. 176). She is so desperate that she feels like giving up painting because she knows that no one will like her painting, or they will hang it on their walls in their houses. The system absorbs her motivation and eager to paint by suppressing and thwarting her. However, the point is that there is a difference between man and woman as for understanding and recognizing the nature; and this does not mean that one gender’s perception is utterly true. Male perception is, nevertheless, recommended as if woman’s one was wrong. This is why Lily feels hopelessly inadequate for being an artist because she believes that she must see the colours faded and thinned just as Paunceforte. As it is seen, this situation is really hard for Lily to overwhelm, so she continues to feel in the same way:

The jacmanna was bright violet; the wall staring white. She would not have considered it honest to tamper with the bright violet and the staring white, since she saw them like that, fashionable though it was, since Mr. Paunceforte’s visit, to see everything pale, elegant, semi-transparent. Then beneath the colour, there was the shape. She could see it all 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. And it was then too, in that chill and windy way, as she began to paint, that there forced themselves upon her other things, her own inadequacy, her insignificance, keeping house for her father off the Brompton Road, and had much ado to control her impulse to fling herself [thank Heaven she had always resisted so far] at Mrs Ramsay’s knee and say to her – but what could one say to her? “I’m in love with you?” No, that was not true. “I’m

in love with this all,” waving her hand at the hedge, at the house, at the children. It was absurd; it was impossible (Woolf, 2013, pp. 26-7).

Lily rejects the style of Paunceforte who mostly paints people or objects in blurred form. Instead, she wants to transfer the atmosphere how it is and how she perceives even if Paunceforte's style is in vogue. This is a kind of revolt against the patriarchy, rejecting its rooted artistic rules. However, even if she deeply believes in this idea, she has big trouble in painting due to the repression of the society. “The demons” are the symbols of patriarchy that forces her to give up her own ideas and style, discourages and demotivates her, and makes her feel incompetent. In those moment, she feels so defenceless that she is about to admit the superiority of Mrs. Ramsay by praising her behaviours and attitudes. She nonetheless perseveres with her determination, turns a deaf ear to the society, and does not lose her faith. As a new woman, she forms her own style and does not yield to the system even if the way is so thorny. It is hard for Lily because this branch of art is commonly performed by man. “Painting is a type of discourse. Lily cannot understand the dominant discourse specially framed by men because when faced with the overwhelming influence of male discourse hegemony, Lily, a voice of new women, becomes aphasic” (Jingrui, 2013, p. 75). She even hesitates and is afraid of showing her painting to the others to boot. When Mr. Bankes looks at her work, Lily is so tense that:

when Lily, rousing herself, saw what he was at, and winced like a dog who sees a hand raised to strike it. She would have snatched her picture off the easel, but she said to herself, one must. She braced herself to stand the awful trial of someone looking at her picture. One must, she said, one must (Woolf, 2013, pp. 61-2).

Even if Lily is loath to show her painting for the fear that people will criticize, ridicule, and belittle her, she is aware that people will inescapably see her work. In this point, she manages to conquer her fears, which signals that she believes in herself and is confident enough to be a female artist now. Sharing her work with others is the second step, which means the first one- creating art- is being done by holding fearlessly her head high. She “could walk away down that long gallery not alone but arm in arm with somebody – the strangest feeling in the world, and the most exhilarating [for Lily]” (p. 64).

Furthermore, another struggle that Lily faces is that she does not have a room for herself as an artist. She performs her art everywhere, which causes her to be interrupted and disturbed. This atmosphere also affects her creativity since she does not have enough silence or personal area in which she can feel safe from judgements.

She must be always on alert to protect her painting: “Indeed, he [Mr. Ramsay] almost knocked her easel over, coming down upon her with his hands waving shouting out, “Boldly we rode and wee,” but, mercifully, he turned sharp, and rode off” (p. 25). People around Lily do not respect her painting; and they can damage not only her work since it is insignificant for them, but also her psychology due to their prejudices against a female artist. Therefore, she does not want to show her work to people at first:

She was safe; he [Mr. Ramsay] would not stand still and look at her picture. And that was what Lily Briscoe could not have endured. Even while she looked at the mass, at the line, at the colour, at Mrs Ramsay sitting in the windows with James, she kept a feeler on her surroundings lest someone should creep up, and suddenly she should find her picture looked at (p. 25).

As it is mentioned before in *A Room of One's Own*, a place where an artist can feel free and ease or remain in seclusion cultivates his or her ability and creativity of art; however, Lily is debarred from that right. Accordingly, “she liked to be alone; she liked to be herself” in that she knows that she can complete her work in that way (p. 60). She in some sort has to tackle this problem, yet it has made her a better artist because this situation extents her vision and causes her to be more determined to finish her picture.

Despite all the suppression, humiliation, and derision, Lily achieves to complete her painting in the end of the novel. There are many reasons behind this attainment of course. Mrs. Ramsay is dead; therefore, her death makes Lily free to act and think by reflecting her own views. Moreover, Lily finishes her picture as soon as Mr. Ramsay arrives at the lighthouse, which also shows us the importance of the absent of people irritating Lily since “[it] so much depends, she thought, upon distance; whether people are near us or far from us” (p. 218). She is or has been aware of the fact that all these people are the ones preventing her from being a female artist owing to the seeds of patriarchal doctrine sowed in their characters. If they vanish with their cruel judgments, Lily will have an opportunity to realize her dream. And it happens so when they have gone. Woolf describes the last scene by following Mr. Ramsay's leave:

Quickly, as if she were recalled by something over there, she turned to her canvas. There it was – her picture. Yes, with all its greens and blues, its lines running up and across, its attempt as 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; they were empty; she looked at her canvas; 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 had my vision (pp. 236-7).

In the end, Lily completes her work by showing society that what it had thought about the female artist was wrong even though she needed “claws of steel and beak of brass even to penetrate the husk” which is the patriarchal ideology and its values (pp. 24-5). She manifests that woman also has enough ability and capacity to be an artist and thus paint if she chances the same as man. Lily does not have education, money, or a room of her own, yet she manages to fulfil her aim. As Woolf (2014) declares in *A Room of One's Own*, you can “lock up your libraries if you like; but there is no gate, no lock, no bolt, that you can set upon freedom of my mind “(p. 74).

Furthermore, Lily Briscoe proves that woman cannot be successful just in marriage; instead, she can create a piece of art with the help of her own vision since she has it now. Her act will be a good example for future generation in the matter of encouraging young female artists. “By portraying Lily Briscoe, the struggling artist, who had failed to become herself a mother, a wife, a lover, Virginia Woolf stresses the fact that art would assist her in compensating all of the above” (Munca, 2009, p. 280).

Moreover, it can be said that Woolf reflects herself in the vision of Lily as a female novelist. She encourages woman to react against the values of society which favours man since “women have sat indoors all these millions of years, so that by this time the very walls are permeated by their creative force, which has ...so overcharged the capacity of brick and mortar that it must needs harness itself to pens and brushes and business and politics” (Woolf, 2014, p. 86). She gives her messages through the mouth and mind of Lily:

Lily's experiences as a modernist artist struggling to express her vision recapitulate Woolf's efforts to complete her novel. She linked herself verbally with Lily when she wrote of 'brisking, after my lethargy'. Lily, like her author, makes up scenes while she is working, and, like her author, she is 'tunnelling her way into her picture, into the past (Briggs, 2006, p. 178).

Lily is actually Woolf or all of the women whose desires and dreams have been suppressed by the system. Every single woman can find a part of herself in Lily's soul and attempt even in today's world. The experiences she gains are not so far from us these days. Woolf carries a step off that will be a long ladder used to reach ambitions, aspirations, or Holy Grail via Lily. Even if Lily is not totally intellectually, financially, or socially free, she takes the plunge and becomes the source of inspiration for the next generations.

In conclusion, Woolf informs us of the desperate condition of woman who wants to be an artist. She reveals how woman is despised, undermined, torn down,

behaved as a second-class citizen, or convinced psychologically to be inferior to man. She also utters the ultimate importance of education, money, and a room of one's own in her famous essays *A Room of One's Own*, *Three Guineas*, and in her speech *Professions for Women* for woman to accomplish her wish to be an artist. She also indirectly conveys her messages to us via her fictional characters as she does in *To The Lighthouse*. She ascribes a meaning to her every single character. Lily is the symbol of each woman passing through delicate corridors of patriarchal society and culture to be able to reach the light of being an artist. In Chapter IV, the focus will be how woman struggles to achieve a successful career in the male dominated world through Churchill's representation of Marlene, Pope Joan, Isabella Bird, and Dull Griet in her famous play *Top Girls*.





## CHAPTER IV

### **Can Woman Survive in a Man-Dominated Society without Losing Her Identity?**

Referring to my discussions in the previous chapters, having a job and existing in a man-dominated society were two of the most strenuous efforts of woman owing to the fact that she was always rejected by society since it was claimed that she was expected to stay at home, deal with children, and handle domestic works in the house. As Jennifer Holt (2011) maintains, “women were considered domestic caregivers, with sole responsibility for the home and child rearing, while men ‘brought home the bacon’” (p. 1). The true profession was just recognized as being a mother or a wife for woman. Instead of empowering her in the work environment, society prevented her from being a part of business world by displaying a sphere where women were “the continual victims of social and economic discrimination. Upper- and middle-class women’s choices were limited to marriage and motherhood, or spinsterhood. Both choices resulted in domestic dependency” (Cruea, 2005, p. 187). However, the Industrial Revolution (1760- 1840) opened a new door for woman into business sector.

Before the revolution, woman was a worker in the domestic world; she was not only dealing with the affairs of mending clothes, but also taking an active role in the fields of agriculture. However, these activities were not a kind of profession for her; instead, they were the responsibilities that she was expected to cope with, so that she could not earn money and be free financially. As a result of the industrial revolution, people had to migrate from towns or villages to city centers in the hope of getting a job in factories or mills since the revolutions caused struggle to make a living for them. Therefore, woman’s, especially in the working class, position changed as a worker into labour force because she got rid of all of the works that she was doing in the rural life thanks to the revolution. Moreover, she was supposed to work as families managed their existence barely, so she broke the doors of the houses, and headed for a new life or future for her.

First of all, woman started to get a job in textile mills and coal mines. For instance, R. M. Hartwell (1961) says, “it was during the industrial revolution,

moreover, and largely because of the economic opportunities. It afforded to working class women, that there was the beginning of that most important and most beneficial of all the social revolutions of the last two centuries, the emancipation of women”( p. 415). Moreover, she became a godsend for the system at this point since

Factory owners' preference for female labour was based not only on its cheapness: many women assumed the yoke of hard labour in the factories without complaint, and this fostered the widespread opinion that female workers were more docile, and therefore less likely to cause trouble than men (Valenze, 1995, p. 91).

This revolution offered new opportunities to woman while it caused a great burden for her. As the late 1700s and 1800s were the years when capitalism was reign, woman also became a victim of it because “in industries deploying large-scale production, such as the factory textile industry and paper making, more capital-intensive processes were associated to some extent with the substitution of women and children for men”(Berg, 1991, p. 4). John and Barbara Hammond (1995) explain the condition as follows:

What the new order did...was to turn the discomforts of the life of the poor into a rigid system. Hours were not shortened, the atmosphere in which they worked was not made fresher or cleaner,...In none of these respects was the early factory better than the home, in some it was worse. But to all the evils from which the domestic worker had suffered, the Industrial Revolution added discipline, and the discipline of a power driven by a competition that seemed as inhuman as the machines that thundered in factory and shed (p. 19).

This situation resulted in protests among female workers since she suffered from gender discrimination and was treated unfairly even if she started working. For example, in 1888 at Trades Union Congress, “the secretary of the League, Clementina Black, moved the first successful equal pay resolution...the League supported strikes and encouraged women to join existing trade unions” (The Union Makes Us Strong: TUC History Online, n.d). The National Federation of Women Workers was also established in 1906. However, Carroll Smith-Rosenberg (1986) states that, “low wages, the absence of upward mobility, depressing and unhealthy working conditions, all made marriage an attractive survival strategy for working-class women. Once married, women found the workplace closed even more firmly against them” (p. 13). Therefore, woman preferred not to get married in order to have economic freedom to some extent. Maxine Berg (1991) points out that:

women married late at this time, so that there were higher numbers of single women and widows in the population than in the early nineteenth century. The average age at first marriage peaked at the age of thirty in the last half of the seventeenth century and stayed high until the later eighteen century (p. 2).

This case caused another chaos in society as there were many people who were single and stricken in years in the streets. Society hung by a threat since it was hard to continue its existence. Apart from this, it was believed that working woman ignored her domestic works, and homes were filled up with turmoil. She was also a threat for man due to the fact that she was chosen by job holders as her wage was lower than man's was. Therefore, society supported the idea that woman must be productive, but not in a workplace. This productivity just covered giving birth to children, which was keystone to be able to continue generations and showed us that woman was a tool to help the system attain its goal, so her abuse was inevitable. The atmosphere for woman was so:

years ago nurses were little more than indentured servants and women teachers, for whom poverty was ever present, had to quit their jobs when they married. These women, and the telephone operators, women in the garment industry and the manufacturing sector, in health care, education, the public sector and civil service, and those who did office, domestic, and industrial work, were exploited (as millions still are) as cheap and expendable labour by governments, employers and captains of industry (1900-2000: A Century of Women and Work, 2007, p. 5).

The situation for her was absolutely as in the quotation above. She was locked out, unwanted, belittled, felt inadequate, dishonored, and the worst part is that male-dominated society convinced her to accept these ideas. She was seen a kind of creature that must be kept under control or restricted in the house. The only choice of woman was to resist and fight in order to survive in society as an individual without pressure. And she did so.

With the help of feminist movements; however, woman has managed to acquire certain rights, even though they are not yet fully satisfactory. She has revolted against governments to have a right to vote, even to be elected to the parliament. She has insisted on having proper education and getting a regular job. Even though she has succeeded in gaining all these rights enforced in the laws, there have been some difficulties in the application and practice of the law because the ingrained patriarchal values and perceptions have created obstacles for woman, and this disappointing situation is still evident in today's world. She still has difficulty in subsisting on workplace and holding economic independence. Unfortunately, "we are the only animal species in which the female depends on the male for food, the only animal species in which the sex-relation is also an economic relation" (Gilman, 1998, p. 5). Therefore, woman is constantly obligated to try other ways to achieve her goals.

First, she refuses to get involved in the traditional marriage as Lily Briscoe does in Virginia Woolf's *To The Lighthouse* (1927) since having a family would be one of the biggest challenges for her career. Woman has to choose; she would either settle down and bring up a family or have a job and be financially free. Secondly, thanks to right to abortion as a result of women's rights campaigns, many woman have preferred not to give birth to a child because having a child will be another trap for them to take part in business world. Thirdly, she has changed her appearance to give the impression of a stronger person. For instance, woman generally wears pompous waist dresses which features her slim, has long and neat well-groomed hair, and always puts on make-up as her initial role is to look attractive for man. Hence, she can be distinguished by a man, find the love of her life, get married, have children, and finally do her duty determined by society, but, by contrast, new woman has started to wear pants, jeans, jackets, and shirts, given up long hair and had her hair cut, and left the feminine appearance behind. In consequence of these steps, masculine woman has emerged. Henceforth, woman eluded from all difficulties and restrictions is ready to survive in society. The new kind of woman is not only seen now in streets of the real world, but also penetrates into the sphere of literature, especially theatre stages. Victoria Bazin (2006) explains that

particularly significant during this period [between the mid-70s and the early 1980s] was the feminist involvement in subsidized fringe theatre. For a brief moment in Britain, fringe theatre became a site in which feminism informed not only political content but also performance. Increasingly frustrated with the persistence of patriarchal structures within the theatre itself, a small number of feminist theatre groups emerged specifically formed to provide opportunities for women as actors, writers, directors, and technicians (p. 118).

A British playwright and mostly known for her feminist themes Caryl Churchill, whose "theatre has been enormously important to subsequent generations of playwrights (women and men) and to the evolution of a contemporary feminist theatre practice and scholarship in the English stage and in the theatre academy", also gives wide coverage of this kind of woman that has to forsake something to continue existing in her plays (Aston, 2003, p. 18). In her works, for instance, she "criticizes the institutionalized gender identities, gender roles, sexuality under the dominant ideology, which put women in a marginalized position so that they are always politically disadvantaged and victimized" (Djundjung & Yong, 2002, p. 161). This chapter analyses how woman has to abandon her characteristic features behind in order to achieve a successful career in the male dominated world in Churchill's most

popular play *Top Girls* (1982). The chapter focuses on the characters such as Marlene, Pope Joan, Isabella Bird, and Dull Griet, who behave against the perception of traditional woman by giving up their female identities to exist in male dominant system.

Written in 1982, Churchill's *Top Girls* is one of the most conspicuous plays in the history of literature. She writes the play in an innovative way because "the unique structure of *Top Girls* violates the linear structure and breaks the chronological order of time setting and place and it uses overlapping and continuous dialogues" (Djundjung & Yong, 2002, p. 162). In her interview with Lizbeth Goodman in 1995, Churchill states that

*Top Girls* was a play whose ideas came together over a period of time and in quite separate parts. I think some years before I wrote it, I had an idea for a play where a whole lot of people from the past, a whole lot of dead women, came and had cups of coffee with someone who was alive now. That idea was just floating around as something quite separate, by itself. Then I started thinking about a play possibly to do with women at work and went and talked to quite a lot of people doing different jobs and one of the places I visited was an employment agency, which later became the focus of the play (Goodman, 2000, p. 85).

The play consists of three acts. In the first act, Marlene organizes a dinner party in a restaurant to celebrate her promotion since she has become the manager of the "Top Girl" agency. She invites her five friends who are influential figures from different periods of history in the past, which enables Churchill to represent women's different lives and views in the past; therefore, the reader will be able to see a wider perspective of patriarchy with its implications and manoeuvrings in different periods. These are: Isabella Bird (1831-1904) who is a world traveller, Lady Nijo (b. 1258) who is Japanese and an Emperor's courtesan, Dull Gret that is actually painted figure by Pieter Breughel and represented in an apron and armed with helmet and sword in the painting, Pope Joan who disguises herself as a man and becomes Pope between 854-856, and Patient Griselda whose story is told by Chaucer in *The Canterbury Tales* (1387). As in *Decameron* (1349-1355) by Giovanni Boccaccio, the six women gather, have dinner and drinks, tell their stories, and talk about their past bittersweet experiences. There are two scenes in the second act. We meet Joyce who is the sister of Marlene, sixteen-year-old Angie being the daughter of Marlene, but raised by Joyce. Angie does not know that Marlene is her mother and she hates Joyce in the first scene. In the second scene, many interviews are conducted by employees working in the "Top Girl" agency. Moreover, Angie runs away from the home and goes to

Marlene's office. Howard Kidd who expects to be the manager of the agency instead of Marlene is also upset and shocked and his wife Mrs. Kidd comes to Marlene's office and wants her to give up the job to her husband. The last act mentions Marlene's visit to Joyce and Angie, which took place one year ago, and represents Marlene and Joyce's disagreements.

In her play, Churchill gives wide publicity to many different kinds of woman, from the rebellious ones to enslaved one by patriarchy and so on. Especially the six female characters in the first act "symbolize the exploitation of women throughout the ages, providing the perspective for evaluating the contemporary model of success in Marlene" (Innes, 1992, p. 465). Churchill deliberately picks up many characters from different centuries to emphasize the point that woman had the same difficulties in every part of history. Djundjung and Yong (2002) also argue that

[in the play] all of these characters have several similarities ,in a sense that they all have experiences dealing with the misery of living in a patriarchal society and are victimized by the system despite their effort to defeat the system. All of them have tried to beat the system either by adopting what are considered to be masculine or feminine traits, yet all of them are either trapped in the social construction of feminine traits or betrayed by their own bodies (p. 162).

All female characters meet on a common ground, which is the oppression of the patriarchal system. This system forces woman to act according to particularized unwritten patriarchal laws, if not; she will be marginalized and ostracized. However, the system does not ponder that this repression will result in emerging a new kind of woman who does refuses to be a wife, mother, and even woman.

First of all, the main character Marlene in the play is one of these woman. She is grown up in a low-income family.

JOYCE. You say Mother has a wasted life.

MARLENE. Yes I do. Married to that bastard.

JOYCE. What sort of life did he have? / Working in the fields like

MARLENE. Violent life?

JOYCE. an animal. /Why wouldn't he want a drink?

...

MARLENE. I don't want to talk about him.

JOYCE. You started, I was talking about her. She had a rotten life because she had nothing. She went hungry.

MARLENE. She was hungry because he drank the money. / he used to hit her.

JOYCE. It is not all down to him. /Their lives were rubbish. They

MARLENE. She didn't hit him (Churchill, 2013, Act Three. p. 94).

As the quotations above suggests, Marlene and her sister Joyce witness violence committed by their father against their mother during their childhood. Their father is the breadwinner of the family and dominant figure since he represents the

patriarchy. Therefore, Marlene declines to start a family or have a child because all marriages, she thinks, will end in the same way as her mother and father's. Moreover, this is why she says, "I hate working class" as man works to maintain family, woman deals with domestic works, and she has to endure all the things including violence in this class. Also, this class discrimination is something that patriarchy utilize in order to suppress woman; therefore, Marlene being a part of patriarchy by thinking and taking decisions like a man does not surprise us because of her thoughts. In accordance with this opinion, Kate Millett (1970) expresses that "One of the chief effects of class within patriarchy is to set one woman against another, in the past creating a lively antagonism between whore and matron, an in present between career woman and a housewife" (p. 38). Marlene is determined not to be a part of that class. For example, even though she gets pregnant at an early age, she never thinks of marriage; instead, she gives her baby to her sister Joyce who is unable to have a child biologically.

JOYCE. So what's that got to do with you at the age of seventeen?

MARLENE. Just because you were married and somewhere to live-

JOYCE. You could have lived at home. / Or live with me

MARLENE. Don't be stupid.

JOYCE. and Frank. / You said you weren't keeping it. You

MARLENE. You never suggested.

JOYCE. shouldn't have had it. / If you wasn't going to keep it (Churchill, 2013, Act Three. p. 89).

As it is seen, Marlene evades the responsibility of having a child for the reason that a being mother will trap her in a marriage, a child is a poison to demolish her dreams, and the only way to achieve a successful career is to get rid of it. She tells that "I've had two abortions, are you interested? Shall I tell you about them? Well I won't, it's boring, it wasn't a problem. I don't like messy talk about blood/ and what a bad time we all had. I don't want a baby" (p. 90). It is clear that every pregnancy is a choice for Marlene whether she will give up working or not because man does not have to leave his work due to pregnancy, and thus he easily builds a distinguished career for himself. "Her decision to be successful unmarried career woman is the manifestation of her effort to escape what is considered to be the traditional trap in the form of the marriage institution, where male domination reigns" (Djundjung & Yong, 2002, p. 164). Marlene does believe that it is not possible to have a successful career for a married woman with children. According to her, she may have a chance if she earns a large amount money, and supports her opinion by stressing that "I know a managing director who's got two children, she breast feeds in the board room, she

pays a hundred pound a week on domestic help alone and she can afford that because she's an extremely high-powered lady earning a great deal of money" (Churchill, 2013, Act Three. pp. 88-9). In this point, she makes up an excuse by claiming that this is the only way, indeed she "points out a new type of modern woman-an imaginary one like the five guests in the first act because she does not even call her by name-with a career... [this] superwoman figure sounds like a utopia creation, not realistic" (Erkan, 2018, p. 725). Consequently, Marlene chooses the other path which converts her into a childless, insensitive, self-centred, biologically female, but mentally a male woman to survive in the world of business and become successful.

Furthermore, Marlene's dissenting opinions on marriage reveal when she has a job interview with Jeanine, who wants to get a better job in the "Top Girls" agency.

JEANINE. I'm saving to get married.

MARLENE. Does that mean you don't want a long-term job, Jeanine?

JEANINE. I might do.

MARLENE. Because where do the prospects come in? No kids for a bit?

...

MARLENE. There's no need to mention it when you go for an interview (Churchill, 2013, Act Two. Scene Two. pp. 53-4).

According to Marlene, woman does not have a place in a business world if she dreams of getting married and having a child, which are tricky pits of the system waiting for woman to fall in. Therefore, Marlene directs Jeanine to a position where she will probably be lost in the system because "Jeanine is eliminated through the present system as she was not found 'fit' or survival" (Dincel, 1995, p. 171).

In addition, it is also noted in the play that Marlene is a supporter of Margaret Thatcher who was the Leader of Conservative Party and the first female and also the longest-serving Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

MARLENE. ...First woman prime minister. Terrifico. Aces. Right on./ You must admit. Certainly gets my vote.

JOYCE. What good's first woman if it's her? I suppose you'd have liked Hitler if he was a woman, Ms Hitler. Got a lot done, Hitlerina. / Great adventures (Churchill, 2013, Act Three. p. 93).

As it is known, Thatcher was a highly controversial figure in the British politics during her terms in office and even called the "Iron Lady" owing to her rigid politics and leadership style. She was not supported by many women because she was not much in favour of women's cause. Hadley Freedman (2013) states in *The Guardian* that

In 11 years, Thatcher promoted only one woman to her cabinet...Rather, she was a classic example of a certain kind of conservative woman who believed that all women should pull



themselves up just as she had done, conveniently overlooking that not all women are blessed with the privileges that had been available to her, such as a wealthy and supportive husband and domestic help...She wasn't a feminist icon and she wasn't an icon for women (<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/apr/09/margaret-thatcher-no-feminist>).

Thatcher, being firm, individualistic, and man-like woman, is a role model for Marlene. Like Thatcher, Marlene does not have unorthodox views on women. Churchill (1987) claims that

There was talk about whether it was an advance to have a woman prime minister if it was someone with policies like hers: she may be a woman but she isn't a sister, she may be a sister but she isn't a comrade. And in fact things have got worse much for woman under Thatcher (Betsko & Koeing, p. 77).

Thatcher did not care about women's issues; instead, she said in 1987 that "I am homeless, the Government must house me!" and so they are casting their problems on society and who is society? There is no such thing! There are individual men and women and there are families" (<https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/106689>). Like Thatcher, Marlene is a woman who does not manifest her female identities as it will totally destroy her confidence, hope, or faith to be successful. "Churchill warned of a backlash inherent in the pursuit of success achieved on exclusively male terms. Marlene's-and Thatcher's- success can mainly be registered as individual cases that did not contribute sufficiently to the alternation of the average woman's life" (Komporarly, 2007, p. 56). They choose to have a masculine manner by avoiding their femininity, as a result, they forget to be a woman, become a man, in fact they are neither man nor woman; they are sexless for the sake of surviving in manly-dominated world by even leaving their sister fellows behind with no mercy. "Marlene pays a high price for her success since she ends up possessing patriarchal characteristics to reach male standards. By doing this she illustrates how women segregate from each other rather than combining to create sisterhood or community of women" (Jordan, 2010, p. 85). Furthermore, both Marlene and Thatcher are so individualistic characters. Georgiana Vasile (1982) claims that

Thatcher's emphasis on individualism was creating a new climate in Britain, offering a small privileged part of the population the possibility to earn much more money than before, but at the same time depriving the vast majority of employment opportunities, thus producing an ever-wider divide between social classes. It is exactly this reality that Churchill captures in *Top Girls* (p. 244).

Marlene is so liberal that she leads a solitary life, and it is possible to say that all the characters from the past in the first act may just be in her mind since she believes there is a link among them. She utters, "We've all come a long way. To our

courage and the way we changed our lives and our extraordinary achievements” (Churchill, 2013, Act One. p. 14). They all may become the source of inspiration for Marlene because all have endeavoured to stay alive in society ruled and controlled only by man.

As for Pope Joan, the situation is not so different from Marlene’s. Likewise, she has to disguise herself as a man because she wants to study.

JOAN. I dressed as a boy when I left home.

...

ISABELLA. You dressed as a boy?

MARLENE. Of course, / for safety.

JOAN. It was easy, I was only twelve. Also women weren’t/allowed in the library. We wanted to study in Athens (p. 9).

As stated by Marlene, being a male is the safest and luckiest way to survive in the world of masculine. Joan does not have a right to enter in the library, which is similar to what Virginia Woolf writes in *A Room of One’s Own* (1929). To reach information and have education, Joan changes her appearance. She behaves so carefully not to be recognized in public as she states, “do you know why I went to Rome? Italian men didn’t have beards” (p. 12). Besides she is so clever, works hard, and becomes famous. People come to hear her since she is completely preoccupied with the pursuit of truth, teaches at many schools in Rome, and first and foremost she seems like a man, which enables her to come to that position. If she had revealed her identity, nobody would have respected for her no matter how smart, educated, or talented she is; she is still a woman and Joan says, “I shouldn’t have been a woman. Women, children and lunatics can’t be Pope” (p. 17).

Moreover, people hold Joan in high esteem thanks to Pope’s status which she gains because not of her intelligence, but of her gender. Since she seems like a man and appears to be Pope, she becomes so powerful: “Yes, I enjoyed being a Pope. I consecrated bishops and let people kiss my feet. I received the King of England when he came to submit to the church” (p. 16). Joan wins extensive admiration; she is met with a great deal of public approval, and becomes an icon of veneration that she cannot have if she reveals her female identity. She does not have to bow to society in this position, so that she declares, “I never obeyed anyone. They all obeyed me” (p. 22). Nevertheless, she falls in love with a chamberlain, who only knows she is a woman, and gets pregnant. She forgets being a woman that she is not aware of this fact, as she tells, “I wasn’t used to having a woman’s body” (p. 18). As M. Sibel Dincel asserts,

“Joan is a revolutionary woman firstly because of her extraordinary interest and success in learning, which led the authorities to elect her pope. However, as passed herself off for a man as pope for two year[s] she did not at all live and understand the life of a woman” (1995, p. 164). On the Rogation Day, Joan gives birth to a baby in the crowd on the road and is stoned to death. A baby ruins her life just as Marlene thinks it will also shatter hers. “When haunted by her own femininity she [Joan] loses her success and the whole life she has built up by being a man, the only betraying her is her own inherit sex” (Folkesson, 2017, p. 26). Joan does not have a right or is not entitled to be a pope since “the physical form of a woman becomes the cause of her being inferior to a man, as her body will bear the mark of her actions that she is liable for social punishment” (Djundjung & Yong, 2002, p. 167). In fact, being a Pope is a symbol that covers all the positions or professions woman has wanted to have since it is claimed that she cannot write, read, learn, and teach. She has not had a career or occupation for ages, as she is found inadequate to deal with it. Therefore, those women who have revolted against the authority and tried to reach their dreams may not have killed like Joan Pope by stoning to death, yet they are ruthlessly suppressed and their rights and dreams are slaughtered by the system. In the meantime, patriarchal society has turned a blind eye to this situation, and woman has been swallowed and lost in the cruel system. As for Joan, she does not need to leave or protect her identity anymore; she pays a heavy price for attempting to do it with her death, which is final loss of self.

Another character Isabella Bird is also an unusual woman when compared to those in her time. She is the daughter of a clergyman, and lives under the pressure of her father until he dies. She utters: “I tried to be a clergyman’s daughter. Needlework, music, charitable schemes...I studied metaphysical poets and hymnology. /I thought I enjoy intellectual pursuits...I was more suited to manual work. Cooking, washing, mending, riding horses” (Churchill, 2013, Act One. pp. 3-4). Isabella’s situation is much the same as Sophia’s in Virginia Woolf’s *Three Guineas* (1938) because Sophia’s father does not want her to work even though she is highly competent to become a teacher just as Isabella’s one who lets her daughter learn poetry, hymnology, and Latin, but prefers her to cope with simple tasks. After her father’s death, she is free to do anything and starts to travel. However, travelling is not a kind of activity that is not supposed to do by a woman in those times. Dincel (1995) expresses that “she committed herself to travelling alone (which took extra courage for a single woman

during the Victorian era), and managed to become the first European woman ever to be able to see the Emperor of Morocco” (p. 163).

On the other hand, it seems that Isabella is also against the idea of marriage as she tells: “I didn’t get married till I was fifty” (Churchill, 2013, Act One. p. 3). Marriage will be an obstacle for her to take trips all around the world due to responsibilities attracted to it, so she “wouldn’t have wanted to go abroad while [she] was married”(p. 23). She tries to behave in line with rules of patriarchy and gets married to Doctor Bishop, but it causes her to suffer from breakdown, and she expresses the condition as “I did wish marriage had seemed more of a step. I tried very hard to cope with the ordinary drudgery of life. I was ill again with carbuncles on the spine and nervous prostration. I ordered a tricycle that was my idea of adventure then” (p. 12). It will be also hard for someone who savours her/his days of freedom to put down roots and start a family, hence Isabella continues travelling and leaves her grief behind after the death of her husband. She is a world traveller, loves the sea, makes the best of her surname “Bird” and is as free as it is. “Isabella reasoned that having once accomplished such remarkable success, and having one reached self-awareness, she could not go back and act the Victorian lady any more” (Dincel, 1995, p. 163). This is why she names the houses “perfectly dismal” in England, and “felt dull when [she] was stationary” (Churchill, 2013, Act One. p. 8. See also p. 15). Moreover, Djundjung and Yong (2002) claim that “Isabella is free from any male supremacy, which regulates what she should or should not do as a woman, so that she has the choices and the freedom to follow her desire”( pp. 172-3).

In addition, like Marlene and Joan, Isabella is also averse to having a child, thus she remarks that “I never had any children. I was very fond of horses” (Churchill, 2013, Act One. p. 19). At this point, she favours having a horse over having a child because the first one symbolizes freedom, independency, and liberty while the second signifies imprisonment, detention, and captivity for her.

However, she is not as rebellious as Marlene or Joan as she always regrets not behaving like or living life of a lady. She states that

ISABELLA. Whenever I came back to England I felt I had so much to atone for. ...I did no good in my life. I spent years in self-gratification. So I hurled myself into committees, I nursed the people of Tobermory in the epidemic of influenza; I lectured the Young Women’s Christian Association on Thrift. I talked and talked explaining how the East was corrupt and vicious. My travels must do good to someone beside myself. I wore myself out with good causes (p. 20).

Isabella suppressed by the patriarchal society is so poisoned by its insinuations that she considers herself not to deserve touring, or to keep time for herself. She thinks that she has done some activities which are not right for a woman by forgetting her female identity. Instead of delighting in pleasure of travelling, she believes what she has presented is egotism, which Marlene and Joan have also preferred in their lives. At this juncture, she devotes her life to charity events as she mentions the quotation above. She wears like a lady at all times into the bargain and tells that “well, I always travelled as a lady and I repudiated strongly any suggestion in the press I was other than feminine” (p. 9). On the contrary, she also adds that “I cannot and will not live the life of a lady...Why should I? Why should I?” (pp. 29-30). She is confused, stuck in patriarchy, and walks in a fine line between accepting the rules of male dominance and crossing the bridge of being like Marlene and Joan. She is close to the second choice owing to the fact that she has a late marriage, no child, and takes attitudes against society, but it cannot be said she is completely free from it.

The last character Dull Gret who is the subject of one of renaissance artist Pieter Brueghel needs to be analysed from a different point of view. In the painting, she is portrayed as so huge when compared to other women. She wears a military costume, including an armour, a metal cap, and carries a sword. In the play, she does not talk much, her sentences are made up of just a word, and mostly deals with the meal in front of her, which can be described as manly attitudes. She also makes her presence felt thanks to her powerful male appearance, wearing a kind of military uniform. She declares her story at the end of the first act, and says:

GRET. We come into hell through a big mount. Hell's black and red. / It's like the village where I come from. There's a river and...a bridge and houses. There's places on fire like when the soldiers come. There's a big devil sat on the roof with a big hole in his arse and he's scooping stuff of it with a big ladle and it's falling down on us, and it's money, so a lot of the women stop and get some. But most of us is fighting the devils. There's lots of devils, our size, and we get them down all right and give them a beating. There's lots of funny creatures round your feet, you don't like to look, like rats and lizard, and nasty things, a bum with a face, and fish with legs, and faces on things that don't have faces. But they don't hurt, you just keep going. Well we'd worse, you see, we'd had the Spanish. We'd all had family killed. My big son die on a wheel. Birds eat him. My baby, a soldier run her through with a sword. I'd had enough, I was mad, I hate the bastards. I come out my front door that morning and shout till my neighbours and I said, 'Come on, we're going where the evil come from pay the bastards out.' And they all come out just as they was/ from baking or washing in their... aprons, and we push down the street and the ground opens up and we go through a big mouth into a street like ours but in hell. I've got a sword in my hand from somewhere and I fill a basket with gold cups they drink out of down there. You just keep running on and fighting / you didn't stop for nothing. Oh we give them devils such a beating (pp. 30-1).

As it is clear from the quotation above, Gret suffers a lot because her children are cruelly killed by the soldiers. Determined to find the source of this devilish action, she comes to the hell with her sister fellows, and fights the evil. First of all, this scene can be classified or described as the reminder of women's protests marched on the streets today. From this perspective, the evil is patriarchy; the hell is its system, and all these women are not different from today's ones since they fight the patriarchal system, which renders them helpless. Going to hell is a simple concept with which woman is familiar as her everyday life is extremely akin to it, where devils are her father, brother, or husband. Moreover, "money" figure is important as Virginia Woolf states in *A Room of One's Own* that woman must have enough money to create works, and become part of society. At this point, money falling from the evil's arse represents financial dependence of woman on men. Some women stop to collect money, while the others who do want to earn it themselves instead of getting it from a male authority continue to fight as written in quotation. Therefore, Gret reveals us the fact that the condition of woman is the same no matter how long time has passed by portraying the action in a different time and setting, which takes us as a reader by our scruff of the neck and shakes it until we get the message.

Additionally, Gret struggles with the system, which forces her not to have a child or obliges her to believe that her children must die in order to survive and to be active in the society. In this respect, "taking her neighbours with her demonstrates the needs for all women who have been deprived of their rights and children to unite to fight the devils together. The devils in hell she refers to symbolize all aspects of life that have robbed women of their happiness" (Djundjung & Yong, 2002, p. 175). Gret's view diverges from Marlene, Joan, and Isabella's beliefs as she represents third wave of feminism, which is not so individualistic. On the other hand, she stays at their side because she also becomes a soldier, dresses up, and behaves like them to beat the devils, which signifies that she has to abandon some parts of her identity as well because "a consistent theme among these women is the struggle to balance historic preconceptions of obedience, duty, and obligation with desire to live their lives fully. Not to live just as daughter, mother, lover, wife, but as their own person" (Diffractions, 2016, p. 8).

As a conclusion, women struggle with society to be part of it by using different strategies in public space. Even though the system offers them to live their lives within

the boundaries of the rules it decides, they do not accept it and give in to the pressures; instead, they change their attitudes, appearances, and even identity to challenge the norms of patriarchy beyond the walls of domesticity. Therefore, it is actually the patriarchal society that creates a new woman who has power, desire, and energy to undermine the patriarchal perception of woman and then be in the place they deserve. They are called “ballbakers” or “unnatural” as Mrs Kidd names Marline in the play, but to beat monsters, the only way is to be a monster (Churchill, 2013, pp. 64-5). As a result, Marline, Joan, Isabella, and Gret choose to be so because if they were not, they could not survive in a man-dominated society. Unfortunately, they lose their identities for the sake of existing in this system which obliges them to give up themselves.



## CHAPTER V

### Conclusion

Some certain identities, roles, and responsibilities has been assigned to woman for centuries, naming her as inferior, weak, and sensitive when compared to man. Patriarchal system has forced her to accept its rules, which lead her to domestic works. That is, she must live within the boundaries of system determined by patriarchy. As time passes by and when it comes the nineteenth century; however, the system has erupted at a certain point, and woman has sought the ways to overcome and defeat it. The first chances are American and French Revolution which support individual liberty and equality. They have become the light at the end of the tunnel to believe freedom for woman. The second one is the Industrial Revolution that helps woman go out of home, but in fact, it is a kind of social and political trickery that confines woman to the system exasperatingly. It has offered her long working hours, miserable working conditions, and unfair wage payments. Nevertheless, woman has never given up, and three important waves of feminism has given new opportunities to reach her goals and dreams. Thanks to public suppression emerged from these waves, woman is close to fulfil her desires ever before.

First of all, she has a right to vote which proves that she is important as an individual, and also she can decide who is going to represent her ideas and thought in the parliament. This is significant step for woman since her demand must be taken into consideration now due to receiving votes of considerable female population. She cannot be ignored any more.

Secondly, the Sex Disqualification Act in 1919 provides woman to have a new profession in a wider concept; therefore, she takes part in the social life more actively now. Moreover, as a result of Equal Pay Act in 1970, she has kept her feet strongly on the ground. In addition, many acts in education have enabled woman to have education in primary, secondary, high schools, even at universities. These changes in society have caused a shift in the perception of woman. Therefore, a new woman has emerged.

New woman being active, self-confident, strong, and rebellious is so different from traditional one. She has enough confident to break the chains round her neck



now. Furthermore, she demonstrates that she is a source of hope for the next generation. And young female generation models and follows her path determinedly. Hence, there is no way to stand in front of this growing act because it is too late.

In addition, these changes have not only affected the social life, but they have also influenced political, economic, religious, and the most prominently literary sphere as literature is a mimesis of real life, this is not a surprise. Poets, novelist, and playwrights in these periods have paid attention to those issues, and they have treated what problems woman has had and what she has done to overcome them in society.

As for the first example, Katherine Mansfield, who is a modernist short story writer, highlights the subject of unhappy marriages in which woman is captured by patriarchal society. Her female characters, who are Linda Burnell in *Prelude* (1918) and *At the Bay* (1921), Isabel in *Marriage a la Mode* (1921), and Bertha Young in *Bliss* (1918), are not pleased with their traditional marriages and try to get rid of the burden of it. At this point, Mansfield gives the message that marriage is an institution which hampers woman's freedom and causes her to suppress her own thoughts and identity. Some characters in the stories succeed in constructing their own identities like Isabel, yet others fail, and so they are all doomed to endure the burden of marriage to the end.

Virginia Woolf, who is a prominent British writer, critic, and having modernist thoughts ahead of her time, does not also ignore problems that woman experiences and gives wide publicity to woman's issues in her diaries, articles, and novels. For example, in her well known essay *A Room of One's Own* (1929), Woolf emphasizes the importance of having a room of her own, money, and education for woman, thanks to which she is able to be a successful artist. She believes that society has deprived woman of these three keystones deliberately, so woman's choices are restricted by patriarchy. In her novel, *To The Lighthouse* (1927), Woolf conveys her opinions on whether woman can be an artist or not via the female character Lily Briscoe, who is forced to accept male dominance and discouraged to complete her picture. Woolf shows us which processes Lily goes through and what kind of internal conflicts she has as she tries to be an artist. However, Lily proves us that woman can be an artist just as man by finishing her work of art; therefore, by being an artist now, Lily builds a new identity for herself.

In addition, Caryl Churchill, who is one of the leading playwrights of her generation, dramatizes woman's problems in her plays. In her famous play, *Top Girls* (1982), she presents the fact that woman always has to leave some parts of her identity behind and have manly attitudes, visions, or perception to survive in a man dominated society and work place. Churchill also thinks that woman's miserable situation is the same throughout the centuries by animating important historical female characters. In the play, Marlene, Pope Joan, Isabella Bird, and Dull Gret are the ones who have to forsake their identity and forget their female features to persist in life by constructing new identities for themselves.

To sum up, woman's history is full of pain, sorrow, and supress. It has always been hard for her to achieve her goals and reach her desires. She has had to overcome many obstacles presented by patriarchy. However, she has completed all of phases despite her wounds. And, in the end, she has achieved her dreams.

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## **CURRICULUM VITAE**

Şirin ORAL was born on June 3, 1989, in Rize, Turkey. She graduated from Fener Super High School in 2007 and at the same, she started studying her undergraduate degree in the department of English Language and Literature at Karadeniz Technical University. She graduated with a first degree from the department in 2012. Then, she worked as an English instructor at Nisantasi University for two years, from 2012 to 2014. She started working as an English instructor at Bartın University and she has still been working in the same institution since 2014. She lives in Bartın. In 2015, she began her MA degree in the department of English Language and Literature at Karabuk University and graduated from the university in 2019.