

**THE ENGLISH BILDUNGSROMAN IN THE AGE OF MODERNISM:
VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *JACOB'S ROOM* AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL
INSIGHT INTO CHARACTER FORMATION**

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**Yüksek Lisans Tezi
İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı
Danışman: Doç. Dr. Petru GOLBAN**

2015

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NAMIK KEMAL ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI
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TEKİRDAĞ-2015

Her hakkı saklıdır

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Derya AVER tarafından hazırlanan **THE ENGLISH BILDUNGSROMAN IN THE AGE OF MODERNISM: VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *JACOB'S ROOM* AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL INSIGHT INTO CHARACTER FORMATION** konulu YÜKSEK LİSANS Tezinin Sınavı, Namık Kemal Üniversitesi Lisansüstü Eğitim Öğretim Yönetmeliği uyarınca günü saat'da yapılmış olup, tezin* OYBİRLİĞİ / OYÇOKLUĞU ile karar verilmiştir.

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Özet

Bu çalışma, Bildungsroman edebi geleneğinin içeriksel özelliklerini, Alman ve İngiliz edebiyatında ortaya çıkışını ve bu geleneğin 20. yüzyıl modernist yazar Virginia Woolf tarafından tekrar ele alınmasını inceler. Bildungsroman 19. yüzyılda kişi ve sosyal çevre arasındaki güçlü ilişkiyi edebi eserlerinde yansıtan gerçekçi yazarlar arasında önem kazanır ve modernizm döneminde varlığını devam ettirir. Çalışmanın özünü oluşturan Virginia Woolf'un *Jacob'un Odası* adlı romanı modernist yazarların kişilik gelişiminde içsel ve dışsal faktörlerin bir arada bulunamayacağı görüşünü yansıtır. Yazarın romanda Bildungsroman geleneğine sadık kalması, aynı zamanda gelenekten sapması ve ana karakter Jacob'un fiziksel ve ruhsal gelişimini genç kuşağın kişisel hedeflerine ulaşmalarını engelleyen ve gelişimlerini tamamlayamadan başarısızlığa uğramalarına sebep olan sosyal yapının ve geleneksel değerlerin eleştirisi çerçevesinde ele alması bu çalışmanın odak noktasını oluşturur.

Anahtar kelimeler: Bildungsroman, gelişim, modernizm, modernist roman, modernist kahraman, modernist Bildungsroman, Virginia Woolf, *Jacob'un Odası*, Viktorya dönemi romanı, Viktorya dönemi Bildungsromanı, gerçekçilik.

Abstract

This study investigates the thematic aspects of the Bildungsroman fictional pattern, as well as its emergence in German and then English literature, and its flourishing as the Victorian Bildungsroman, as to focus ultimately on the adaptation of the tradition by the modernist writer Virginia Woolf in the 20th century. Our study is based on the premises that the Bildungsroman gained popularity among the Victorian realists for having offered the necessary extension in a fictional discourse to their primary concern with the based on the principle of determinism relationship between individual experience and the milieu, but the Bildungsroman maintained its vitality in the age of Modernism, as to mention just *Jacob's Room*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and *Sons and Lovers*. Virginia Woolf's novel, representing the main concern of our study, reveals that the modernists call attention to individual experience in the detriment of the social concern to show the impossibility of the harmony between internal and external factors in the process of character formation. To present the ways in which *Jacob's Room* both continues and deviates from the tradition of the Bildungsroman, and expresses the protagonist's physical and spiritual development, while criticizing the social structure that restrains the achievement of the personal desires of the young generation and provokes their failure before completing their development, represent the topical concern and originality of our thesis.

Key words: Bildungsroman, formation, modernism, modernist fiction, experimental novel, modernist character, modernist Bildungsroman, Virginia Woolf, *Jacob's Room*, Victorian fiction, Victorian Bildungsroman, realism.

ÖNSÖZ

Bu çalışmada 19. yüzyıl edebi akımlarından Bildungsroman geleneğinin 20. yüzyıl yazarları tarafından tekrar ele alınmasının incelenmesi ve tezin ana konusunu oluşturan modernist yazar Virginia Woolf'un *Jacob'un Odası* adlı romanının modernist Bildungsroman çerçevesinde tartışılması amaçlanmıştır.

Bu süreçte akademik bilgi birikimiyle bana yol gösteren ve bu çalışmanın ortaya çıkmasında büyük katkısı olan saygıdeğer danışman hocam Doç. Dr. Petru GOLBAN'a, değerli bölüm hocalarıma, çalışma arkadaşlarıma, aileme, desteğini benden hiç esirgemeyen ve her zaman yanımda olan Sercan BENLİ'ye sonsuz teşekkürlerimi sunarım.

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INTRODUCTION: DEFINING THE BILDUNGSROMAN AND ASSERTING ITS THEMATIC AND NARRATIVE PERSPECTIVES

Bildungsroman, also known as the “novel of formation”, is a trend in literature, which originated in Germany in the 18th century. After the tradition of picaresque novel had spread in Europe, certain obvious traces of the Bildungsroman tradition began to appear in Germany in the mid-18th century, with Weiland’s novel *Die Geschichte des Agathon*, which includes the development and the maturation of the protagonist from his early age. However, not until Goethe’s novel *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1795) it can be said that Bildungsroman is introduced to the readers of German literature. Then comes the rising of the Bildungsroman, its consolidation and popularity in England and in Victorian literature, followed by the 20th century connections of the pattern.

To start with the common definition of the Bildungsroman, it generally narrates the story of a male character (usually an orphan), starting from his childhood to adulthood, by exhibiting his mental, physical and psychological maturation and formation. His story begins with his departure from his ordinary environment caused by a certain reason that might be search for a job, following personal desires and dreams, or a love affair. During this adventurous journey, the hero comes across variety of individuals that accompany him or direct him in his choices and decisions. Actually, these companions belong to the present circumstances and demands of the social context which directly affects the protagonist’s life and his personal education. That is to say, society plays an important role in the personality of the protagonist in general. Golban explains this principal as:

The process of maturation they are passing through is long, arduous, and gradual, consisting of repeated clashes between the protagonist’s needs and desires and the views and judgments imposed by an unbending social order. Eventually, the spirit and the values of the social order become manifest in the protagonist, who is then accommodated into society. The novel ends with

an assessment by the protagonist of himself and his new place in that society. (2003: 112)

In the article of Sarah E. Maier, the description of Bildungsroman gains a different shape:

The German term *bildungsroman* has been used to designate a genre of novel (*roman*) which demonstrates the formation (*bildung*) of a character; indeed, the possibilities for such a novel proliferate. Ideas of literary characters' self-development have been variously categorized as novels of growth, education (*erziehungsroman*), development (*entwicklungsroman*), socialization, formation, culture, or as novels of coming-of-age of the artist (*künstlerroman*). (2007: 317)

Another important point that must be revealed is the relationship between the character and the author. In the experiences of the protagonist, one can find the reflection of the author's own life and experiences. He uses the character to express his own ideas and views, which create the resemblance of his life and personality to the protagonist's. That is why; some definitions of the Bildungsroman include the term "autobiographical". In Charles Dickens' novels, main characters such as Pip and David have many similarities with the author himself, like the problematic father figure and the characters' marriages. Besides, Teufelsdröckh's views on religion and existence of universe share a similarity with Thomas Carlyle's, in his Bildungsroman *Sartor Resartus* (1831).

Presenting and examining the psychology of the hero is the main element that separates Bildungsroman from other types of novel, such as picaresque novel. It helps reader to come to a conclusion about whether the character is having any progression about his character development or not. Here, the author has a very important role in narrating the character's state of psychology and feelings. The choice of the omniscient narrator provides the necessary information about depths of his psychology; it gives us extra knowledge which the protagonist himself does not even notice about his own emotions. Thus, the reader is the one who realizes the hero's transformation from the beginning of the story to the end.

It is generally accepted that the Bildungsroman represents an established literary tradition, a particular type of fiction, or genre, or sub-species of novel, in the line of picaresque novel, historical fiction, psychological novel, and so on. In this respect, it is only true to regard the Bildungsroman as a literary system consisting of certain thematic and narrative perspectives that provide its uniqueness and specificity.

Concerning the narrative level, in a Victorian Bildungsroman novel, the events are told in a chronological order, which can be related to the linear narrative structure. Every event is linked to each other and constitutes the plot of the story. At the end of the novel, self-development is accomplished with the help of the incidents which are engaged to the final of the apprenticeship of the main character. The omniscient narrator is another important element in the narration of the story, which enables the reader full access of the character's development process.

Concerning the thematic level, the literary system of the Bildungsroman displays a no less complex framework of interrelated elements. These thematic components, or elements, or motifs, of a typical Bildungsroman fictional pattern have formation as their unifying theme and render a particular syntagmatic structure. In his *The Victorian Bildungsroman* (2003:239-240), Petru Golban considers the following thematic perspectives in a Bildungsroman:

- 1 a child (sometimes orphaned or fatherless) lives in a village or provincial town
- 2 he/she is in conflict with his actual parents, especially father, or any parental figures (the trial by older generation)
- 3 he/she leaves home to enter a larger society (usually city, especially London, definitely not a ultima Thule); the departure is determined by 2 or other external stimulus, or an inner stimulus (for instance the desire for experience that the incomplete, static atmosphere of home does not offer)
- 4 he/she passes through institutionalized education and/or self-education
- 5 a young person now, he/she seeks for social relationships with other humans
- 6 his/her experience of life is a search for a vocation and social accomplishment
- 7 he/she has to undergo the ordeal by society (professional career)
- 8 he/she has to resist the trial by love (sentimental career)
- 9 he/she passes through moments of spiritual suffering and pain

10 now in his/her early manhood, he/she experiences epiphanies that lead to (or should determine) his/her final initiation and formation (complete or relativistic, or not existing at all – that is to say, the final stage of the formative process implies the dichotomy success/failure, or a third possibility of partial success/partial failure).

With regards to the consideration of the Bildungsroman as a particular literary system, the ultimate aim of this thesis is to reveal the ways in which Virginia Woolf's novel of formation both adheres to and deviates from the established pattern on both narrative and thematic levels.

In this respect, our critical endeavour focuses on the thematic level more than on the structural one given the main concern of our study, which is with character representation strategies and the insight into individual psychology presented in the process of character formation.

This introductory part of my study which presents brief information about the Victorian Bildungsroman is continued by another section that includes more detailed statements on Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* as a prototype of the Bildungsroman and its characteristics reflecting the principals of the form. The second section is the examination of Carlyle's translation of *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* and his own Bildungsroman *Sartor Resartus*. And the third section that comes before the second chapter provides the information on Victorian fiction that creates a base for the rise and the consolidation of Bildungsroman tradition in British literature, and a close study on three major novels *David Copperfield*, *Great Expectations*, and *Jane Eyre*, which are considered as Bildungsromane of English literature. The last two chapters constitute the basis for my thesis, in which the 20th century modernist novel and the modernist Bildungsroman is introduced and examined comparatively with the previous period. Then, a detailed analysis of Virginia Woolf's *Jacob's Room* (1922) is presented, which is followed by the exploration of the novel within the frame of the modernist Bildungsroman and the disclosure of the ways the novel follows and deviates from the classical tradition.

1. THE RISE AND CONSOLIDATION OF THE BILDUNGSROMAN AS A LITERARY TRADITION IN VICTORIAN LITERATURE

1.1 Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* as the Prototype of the Bildungsroman

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), a German philosopher, novelist and poet, can be considered as one of the most influential and significant figures not only in German literature, but also in world literature in general. Sturm und Drang movement, which is a starting point for romanticism in Germany before it spreads all around the world, is a clear reason for him to be remembered as an important name for centuries. His other contributions in the fields of philosophy, science, politics and even music, cannot be denied, but for this study, one of his literary contributions is the “novel of formation” or “Bildungsroman”.

Although the term “Bildungsroman” was first introduced to literature and vocabulary by German philosopher and sociologist Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1941) (Boes, 2006: 231), Goethe's novel *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* is considered as the first example of the Bildungsroman. Golban states in his *The Victorian Bildungsroman* that “Goethe's novel marked the consolidation of the Bildungsroman as a literary tradition in the late 18th century and became the most familiar model for 19th century Victorian writers of Bildungsromane” (2003: 44).

To provide a more clear analysis of the novel as a Bildungsroman, a consideration of the story would be revelatory. The protagonist Wilhelm is the son of a businessman and he has a special interest in puppet theatre. Instead of following his father's business when he grows up, he wants to specialize in theatre and art. His love for theatre results also in his love for an actress named Mariana: “These two loves, that for the theatre involving also an ambition to write plays and poetry, seem to be two aspects of a single attraction. Together they pull him away from his father's business world, a world he feels to be altogether ugly and barren” (Stock, 1957: 85). However, upon learning Mariane's unfaithfulness, he becomes so

disappointed that he decides to burn all his papers and poems and even joins his father's business trip, which is the beginning of his adventures. On his way, he makes new friends, Philina and Laertes. Together they join plays and shows during the trip and while watching a show, Wilhelm sees a child that belongs to the owner of the show. After seeing the violent behaviors of the master of the child named Mignon, Wilhelm decides to save her and "he buys her freedom" (ibid., 86). From that moment, Mignon becomes a loyal servant and follower of Wilhelm. As the days pass, Wilhelm once again finds himself in the world of theatre and actors. The number of his actor friends is gradually increases, and on behalf of a company of actors they together prepare a play and perform it in a castle of a count and a countess. Until the end of the novel, Wilhelm's apprenticeship continues with his father's and Mignon's passing away; the company's performing "Hamlet". But some time later, he realizes that he has no future with theatre and he will not gain anything with it. After this realization, Wilhelm pushes himself away from theatre and focuses on his son Felix and friends. But he is still in search of the meaning of his life and how to make a happy and satisfactory life for himself, until he again realizes that the real gain is his own experiences and the choices that he has made throughout his life. And the novel ends with his marriage with the Amazon woman, Natalie.

Throughout the novel, the reader witnesses all stages of Wilhelm's life, his adventures, passions, ambitions, disappointments, determination and so on. But, in general, his "character formation" is a prominent outcome of the novel. Goethe creates a strong protagonist, who follows his ideals and clearly designates his destination to live a life by following a way which he himself chooses, not another person. However, at the beginning, we see an inexperienced and naïve boy who can easily be impressed and directed by other people in his environment. In one stage of the life, the protagonist of a Bildungsroman must live through such experience which is required by the novel of formation. When he is a young boy, his identity is shaped mostly by his father, even if it seems just the opposite. His father's business world and his constraints on him about what to do and not to do, give a form to his ideas and goals in life when he is a little boy at the very beginning. This leads to his

separate path from his father's contemptuous attitudes on Wilhelm's life. From now on, his apprenticeship begins in real terms.

Here, we would like to elaborate on the key word "apprenticeship" and its meaning in the progress of the novel. It is a word chosen by Goethe intentionally for the title, and it carries two distinct and ironic meanings for Wilhelm's "uneducated" life. To be an educated person, Wilhelm must achieve a successful apprenticeship and become a master. But in which field? First, it seems like that so-called apprenticeship is necessary for Wilhelm in the profession of his father's merchandise business. His father's will is to educate him in this way, so he sends his son to business trips as a necessity for his "apprenticeship". On the other hand, upon his rejection of his father's imposing, another life starts for Wilhelm, which means that another education and apprenticeship are needed to stay alive. Until the end of his journey and adventure, he learns many things from his experiences, his companions and his mistakes. Finally, we understand that his apprenticeship actually refers to his life education; as it is explained in Golban's quotation from Buckley:

(...) soon after his production of the play, he is willing to abandon the stage altogether in the belief that his histrionic talents are strictly limited. And the theatre he rejects suddenly becomes an allegory of all the illusions of troubled youth. The true apprenticeship, we then see, is spiritual rather than professional. When he has served his term, he is formally released; through many dark passages, he has been led into the light; and the mysterious abbe salutes him, 'Hail to thee, young man! Thy Apprenticeship is done: Nature has pronounced thee free'. (2003: 45)

In many aspects, *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* verifies that it is the first novel which reflects the characteristics of Bildungsroman. To start with the main character, there is a male protagonist whose life is presented to us from his early ages. His problematic relationship with his father is another point that fits to the entailment of the novel of formation. But this should not be forgotten that, Wilhelm is not an orphan. He has a family unlike the typical notion of Bildungsroman in which the protagonist is generally without a family. The events are narrated in a chronological order. The character's departure from his ordinary environment and

beginning to a totally new adventurous life gives us the hints of a Bildungsroman. Throughout the adventurous journey Wilhelm conducts a gradual spiritual and physical formation which finally leads him to the successful end of his self-education. Here, the important point that I want to mention is: this formation is supposed to be achieved by the help of the environment and the society around the protagonist. The Society of Tower which is the representation of institutionalized and ideal society possesses a significant influence upon the character's development. As it is very obvious in the novel, Wilhelm's friends and the society that he is living in constitute the fundamental agent for his accomplishment of life. Every person in his life puts a piece to Wilhelm's self-formation and together they create a whole. And Wilhelm begins to understand his place in society, and get to know his identity. Because from now on, he is a mature and a fully grown-up man both mentally and physically.

However, there is a possibility of a question whether Wilhelm really finishes his journey successfully or not. Some may see him as a failed man who never succeeds in anything; in his father's profession or in theatre which is a passion for him. But this shouldn't be disregarded that, he becomes a successful man in the trial of life, by forming his own identity with his own experiences. His self-development is accomplished and he is a determined man who knows himself better than anyone else.

1.2 The Reception of Goethe's Novel in English Literature: Carlyle's Translation of *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, His Critical Comments on the Novel, and His Own Bildungsroman: *Sartor Resartus*

Admittedly, Goethe's influence on literature in general has its traces substantially in English literature by causing an entrenched innovation and transition, especially from picaresque novel to the novel of formation. In the 19th century, English literature began to be affected by German literature to a great extent, mostly with Goethe's works, including novels, their translations, editions and the critical articles on these novels. However, before German influence on English literature, there was a

strong rejection and prejudice about the literature of Germany by the English, until Carlyle's efforts aimed to eliminate these bad opinions about German literature, like its being ludicrous.

Since his early age, Thomas Carlyle had been a great admirer of German literature, and made many contributions about its perception in other countries, particularly in England. His admiration emerges when he starts to read German literature at first. His ideas are deeply influenced as he reads more and more Goethe and other important German writers and philosophers: "Carlyle dated the commencement of his fame from his first two articles in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1827" (Ashton, 1976: 1). But before his writings in 1827, he already starts to translate *Wilhelm Meister* in 1823, which would be his real introduction of Goethe to England. In the first edition of the book (1824), he explicitly states his intention of translating the book in the Preface: "Fidelity is all the merit I have aimed at, to convey the Author's sentiments as he himself expressed them; to follow the original in all the variations of its style has been my constant endeavour. In many points, both literary and moral, I could have wished devoutly that he had not written as he has done; but to alter anything was not in my commission" (Carr, 1947: 223). Beyond his admiration to Goethe, he was not content with his style and loose plot at some points, as he frankly confesses in his Prelude. He also says that he 'could sometimes fall down and worship [Goethe]; at other times I could kick him out of the room' (Ashton, 1976: 5). That is to say, he somehow tries to explain to the readers the tasteless and dull nature of the novel. He deliberately focuses on Goethe's moral values and discipline, instead of his special emphasis on aestheticism. Carlyle even changes a saying of Goethe in the novel while he is translating it. He translates "the Whole, the Good and the Beautiful" (*Ganzen, Guten, Schönen*) as "the Whole, the Good and the True" (*Ganzen, Guten, Wahren*). He even criticizes the protagonist Wilhelm as being a "milk-sop". Nevertheless, Goethe and his *Wilhelm Meister* are well accepted and embraced respectfully by the English readers and critics, except some fierce accusations. Lockhart for instance, comments on Carlyle's translation of *Wilhelm Meister* in one of his reviews in *Blackwood's Magazine* (1824), approves

Goethe's work and appreciates Carlyle's translation. On the other hand, G. H. Lewes harshly criticizes Goethe and Carlyle in his article:

Göthe a charlatan! Such is one view of the man. Another view is, that he was a sort of god- a Weimarian Jove, sitting high above this imperfect world, smiling serenely, contemplating its short-comings with pity ... speaking to mankind (with a star on his breast) a gospel which it were insanity or guilt to question! (*British and Foreign Review*, xiv, 78-9)

Carlyle's translations and his later critical articles on Goethe and Richter had an important influence on the change of England's attitude towards German literature and writers. Carlyle's articles begin to appear in magazines and reviews, including 'State of German Literature' in 1827, which gets a praise by Goethe himself during their letter friendship, but not knowing that Carlyle is the writer of it, 'Goethe's Helena' and 'Goethe' in 1828. In all his writings about Germans and German literature, he praises their superiority to other nations, their concept of religion and lifestyle (including also Goethe's concept of religion), their nationality and so on. Furthermore, he gives lectures on German literature, by making use of his own deep knowledge of the field.

Goethe is known with his different religious perspective about Christianity and his strict rejection of church doctrines. He argues about the existence of the world and living things, the true nature of knowledge which depends on perspective, and the importance of aestheticism that directs our lives. Furthermore, he is famous for his ideas of 'renunciation', utilitarianism and how life continues as a cycle. According to him, one should use his/her internal side to seek ultimate happiness, external life could not bring anything useful. Carlyle, who is strongly influenced from Goethe's views, "was grateful to Goethe for showing that the essence of Christianity- blessedness, duty and renunciation- could be redeemed from its miraculous and theological trappings, which had become irrelevant in the modern age" (Sorensen, 2004: 201). His arguing ideas similar to Goethe's are expressed in his articles that make him and Goethe popular in England. Carlyle himself was a believer of God and always respected His mysterious existence. For him, one can feel the existence of God in himself, not in churches or in other materialistic

elements. That is why in a certain period of his life time he had great instability in his own beliefs on Christianity, which even lead him to an experience of conversion. Sorensen states that “Goethe played an important role in Carlyle’s conversion and helped to shape the controlling ideas of *Sartor Resartus*: renunciation, the clothes philosophy, natural supernaturalism, and the open secret of the universe” (ibid.).

Carlyle’s all admiration, interest and understanding of Goethe’s style and point of view help him to produce his own Bildungsroman, which is *Sartor Resartus* in 1831. *Sartor Resartus* is a seminal work, which was published as serial parts in *Fraser’s Magazine* between 1833 and 1834, since Carlyle could not find a proper publisher for a while to publish his work as a whole book. It was first published in America in 1836, then in England in 1838. The novel is considered as an autobiography, biography, essay, and a semi-fictional novel which possesses a different style with its plot and the characters.

The novel includes both the philosophy of a professor called Teufelsdröckh and his biography provided by an editor. The editor is the narrator and the organizer of the plot. By using the professor’s biography, he explains his philosophy and ideology, which is called *Philosophy of Clothes*.

The novel is constructed as three books. But it is the Book II that contains Bildungsroman elements most, in which the biography of Teufelsdröckh is told. His painful journey of self-development, maturation and his achievement at the end of the novel build up the first example of the Victorian Bildungsroman.

As a common feature of the Bildungsroman tradition, the hero is introduced to the reader from his early age in childhood. However, Teufelsdröckh’s story begins when he is an infant in cradle. He is an orphan who is left in front of a door in a basket. Unlike other typical Bildungsroman characters, Teufelsdröckh has a happy childhood, and a loving step-family. His self-formation journey begins when he is sent to school for education. He departs from his ordinary environment and family, and goes into the first part of the real life. After he spends a few years at school, his university education begins, and he becomes a young boy. Besides the institutional education, he tries to educate himself by reading books and researching philosophical

issues. In his maturation process, his self-education plays an important role, which is the beginning of his later philosophical thoughts and studies.

Then comes his search for a profession and career, which means a more difficult path for his formation. Throughout this path, he has two important companions: Herr Towgood and a woman called Blumine, whom he passionately falls in love. Love affair and friendship are important elements in Bildungsroman tradition, which designate an important part in the character development of the hero. As in other Bildungsromane, it is an inevitable pattern in *Sartor Resartus*, too. Teufelsdröckh suffers in his love affair and other fields of his life, and learns that without suffering and pain, one could not achieve a necessary understanding of life.

After his disappointment in love, he needs to escape and disappear to find a proper cure to heal his mind and spirit. He becomes a traveller, and this escapism reminds us the most important feature of the Romantic tradition, which makes a great contribution to the rise of the Bildungsroman in Britain.

Steadily, he comes closer to his final stage of maturation, by shaping his philosophical concepts and ideas. In his three philosophical notions; 'The Everlasting No', 'Center of Indifference', and 'The Everlasting Yea', he develops his beliefs on the existence of God and religion, his rejection of values and beliefs, and finally his discovery of affirmation of the values, and the idea that the salvation of the soul depends on the individual's inner existence and faith. Through all these philosophical beliefs, Carlyle presents his own ideas which he inherited from Goethe, his idol.

By coming to a realization, Teufelsdröckh feels free from all his pains and sufferings. He eventually finishes his challenging adventure which leads to his reward of self-accomplishment as an important Philosopher. Carlyle shows the end of his maturation process as being a success explicitly.

With his novel, Carlyle contributes in a great extent to the development of the Victorian Bildungsroman by writing the first example of the tradition in Britain, and successfully creates a character that directly fits the hypostasis of a typical Bildungsroman protagonist.

1.3 Victorian Fiction Providing the Rise and Consolidation of the Bildungsroman as a Literary Tradition in British Literature, and Major Victorian Bildungsromane

In this part of my study, we provide information on certain literary forms and movements that have direct influence on the emergence of the Victorian Bildungsroman in the 19th century, and the similarities between them. Two main sources providing an opportunity for the rise of the Victorian Bildungsroman- picaresque novel and the English Romantic Movement- will be discussed in terms of character development as a principle of picaresque novel, and the emphasis on the psychology of the character, individual experience and the theme of childhood which are the major concerns of the Romantic Movement in England.

The gradual increasing effects of Bildungsroman in Britain caused some certain changes in the presentation of the main character and his adventures in Victorian fiction, previously written as a product of Romantic Movement, or picaresque tradition. This change was actually a transition of a literary form, also having been influenced by significant social, political, technological and industrial changes and reforms. Especially industrial improvements between the late 17th and 18th centuries brought serious problems for society and individuals, while providing high quality living standards and mass production. Victorian Bildungsroman writers, especially Charles Dickens, usually use the state of human beings in the industrial society as the main theme together with their self-awareness and formation as a principle of the Bildungsroman tradition. This situation proves the beginnings of Victorian Bildungsroman's deviation from picaresque and romantic kind of novels. Additionally, woman protagonists began to appear in the novels which were written as examples of the Bildungsroman, such as in *Jane Eyre*.

Although there seems to be typological and contextual differences between Victorian Bildungsromane and other types of Victorian fiction, they still carry some similarities in plot and characterization. These types of Victorian fiction constitute the basis for the emergence of Bildungsroman in Britain, and the similarities will be discussed in next sections within a deep analysis of the protagonists, plots and

themes of the following three major representative novels of the Victorian Bildungsroman: *David Copperfield*, *Great Expectations*, and *Jane Eyre*.

1.3.1 The Condition of Victorian Literature before the Rise of the Bildungsroman in Britain

In order to determine the factors in the development of the Bildungsroman tradition in Britain, we should initially focus on two major literary forms that flourished in Britain and prepared the condition for another literary form. Although they are separate kinds of literature, since the beginning of British novel in the 18th century, they have always had an inter-mingled structure within different types of novels.

The first and the oldest type of fiction that has a direct influence on the flourishing of the Bildungsroman in Britain, is picaresque novel. It is a kind of fiction whose origin goes back to the 16th century of Spain. Its definition differs from scholar to scholar, but in general terms picaresque novel traditionally depends on the story of the adventures of an anti-hero (also called as picaresque), who is isolated from society and in search for a high social rank and position, and does whatever necessary, including deceit, lying, amoral and wicked things. Ulrich Wicks also describes picaresque in his article “The Nature of Picaresque Narrative: A Modal Approach” as the following: “Picaresque presents a protagonist enduring a world that is chaotic beyond ordinary human tolerance, but it is a world closer to our own (or to history) than the worlds of satire or romance” (1974: 241).

The first picaresque novel *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554) is written in Spain anonymously, and then it spreads out to Germany and England when the novel is translated in these countries. But some scholars claim that before the first example of picaresque in Spain, Chaucer had already started the tradition with his famous work, *The Canterbury Tales* in the 14th century, much earlier than Spain. He told the stories of a number of travellers, who differ from each other as the prototypes of the society wanting to reach a respectable rank. One of those scholars pointing Chaucer as the

first writer of picaresque in England is Ligia Tomoiaga, who states her opinion on the subject as the following:

In British fiction, Chaucer, almost two centuries before the Spanish picaresque, proved to have that ‘inclination picaresca’ Cervantes spoke about in the Preface to *La ilustre fregona*. He used almost all the consecrated literary forms of his day: the dream-bestiary, confessions, chivalry love-stories (romances), fabliaux, pious tales, sermons, didactic essays, elements of the miracle plays with humorous interludes. [...] In the group of pilgrims who meet at Tabard Inn we will not only find characters who try to transgress their place in society, who cannot be pinpointed in any well-defined group, a gallery of characters within which Chaucer placed himself, too, and who can be labeled as *rogues*: the reeve, the Miller, the Summoner, the Pardoner, and the Maniple. (2012: 13)

If we do not count Chaucer as the first picaresque writer in England, we can claim that Thomas Nashe, who wrote *The Unfortunate Traveller: or, the Life of Jack Wilton* in 1594, is the first picaresque novelist. With Nashe, the first sparkling of the novel genre in Britain began to appear, and Henry Fielding, Daniel Defoe, Tobias Smollett and Charles Dickens became major representatives of the picaresque form.

The main characteristics and principles of the picaresque novel, which share similarities with Bildungsroman, are the following:

- A protagonist who is travelling and searching for his identity; at the end of the story, he becomes a mature and grown-up individual, who comes to a realization about the society he is living in, and his own place in this society;
- Themes of childhood, youth, love affair, education and adventure;
- Instability and crisis of the protagonist;
- Traveling and experiencing of life;
- Autobiographical form, which reflects certain moments of the author’s life;
- Episodic narrative and sequence of adventures.

Although they share many common characteristics, there are also contradictory elements that make the picaresque narrative and the Bildungsroman totally different types of fiction:

- While traveling and searching his identity, the protagonist who is an anti-hero, may reveal amoral and wicked character. In this respect, picaresque novel does not emphasize moral values and teachings. On the contrary, in Bildungsroman, the hero fulfils his character development and formation within an idealistic and moral aspect;
- The character in Bildungsroman is not an isolated and lonely person. There are always a number of companions who help and direct him in his decisions and accomplishments. He is influenced by his environment;
- In picaresque novel, there is no emphasis on the psychology and inner side of the main character. He just does something, goes somewhere, and calls someone. He only wants to be socially and externally developed and possess a respectful life, whereas the psychological and spiritual development of the character is the main concern in Bildungsroman. He can complete his formation only if he reaches a sufficient maturity;
- The episodes in the first form are connected to each other with a loose structure. The events and incidents are not related to each other and make any contribution to the progress of the story and the protagonist's development. But in the latter, each episode and incident leads the character to his achievement, and all of them have special significant upon him.

All of these similarities and differences mentioned above provide the consolidation of a completely distinct form of literature. Although Bildungsroman became popular in England with the influence of picaresque novel, picaresque kind continued its existence as a distinct type of fictional discourse co-existing with the Bildungsroman and other kinds of fiction.

The Romantic Movement or Romanticism as another influential element, which affected many types of literature coming after it, including Bildungsroman, originated in Germany at the end of the 18th century, with *Sturm und Drang* movement rejecting highly sophisticated and rationalistic types of writing. As a

reaction against the principles of Enlightenment, a new trend appeared in all areas of literature and art, which supports the idea that artists should reflect the psychology and inner self of the individual in their works instead of the realistic sides of the industrial life and harsh living conditions. For them, art ought to be a vehicle that helps people to escape from realism and to find their real self and emotions.

The principle of individualism and the emphasis on emotions, inner existence, childhood, and escapism are easily adopted by English writers and poets in the industrial period of England. Especially poetry is fairly affected by romanticism when compared to prose writing. Poets begin to present their own individual experiences, feelings and insights in their poems:

English romantic writers attempted to reveal a major concern with psychological issues, their special insights into the inner human existence, placing the accent on the individual and the experience of childhood, all of them being artistically intermingled with a number of other literary concerns, to say nothing about the concept of imagination, or the importance of natural objects and phenomena (as both actual appearance and promotion of pantheism). (Golban, 2003: 49)

Related to the theme of individual experience, the concept of childhood plays an important role in the experience of the poet or the 'lyrical I', who goes through a development and maturation. Child or childhood, which is also an archetype described by Jung, represents innocence, naivety, original self and wholeness. Romantic poets' focus on the experience of individual manifests the idea that the innocence of childhood is an idealized point where everyone should reach. William Blake, a major English romantic poet, in his famous work *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* presents two different states of human soul including childhood and adulthood. Childhood symbolizes innocence and a purified period of human life, in which everything is in a perfect order. But adulthood is the symbol of the individual experiences and the real side of life. Blake's poems for Golban are

an intense conviction of the importance of childhood in the general development of human personality, a special concern with the universe of

childhood, the condition of the child, his place in a world that governed by mature principles, all these in close relationship with the writer's attempt to touch on the problems of religion, the relationship between man's religious attitude, power of knowledge, and his '*Poetic or Prophetic*' capacity (a concept introduced by Blake in *There Is No Natural Religion*, 1788), the last three aspects being actually explored to a greater or lesser extent in all his work. (2003: 51)

Romanticism is regarded as a very important period in English literature, especially in poetry. In Romantic Movement, the most important elements that create the roots of the Bildungsroman tradition, which is a form of prose writing, are the concerns with childhood experience and individual psychology. In other terms, the Bildungsroman rises from the ashes of Romanticism in the 19th century Britain, in which the movement comes to an end, although its effects continue their existence in many Bildungsromane. Not until the Romantic period the concern with childhood was considered as a theme in literature. The emergence of this trend made a radical change in English literature by shifting attention to individualistic writings, psychology and emotions, rather than didactic and strict types of writing. Childhood continued as a theme in the Bildungsroman tradition as supported by other additional themes which occurred with the rising of the Bildungsroman, such as the formation of character from childhood to maturity, adventure, self-realization within moral and social aspects.

Emphasis on the psychology of the main character as an element of Romanticism continues to be a significant characteristic of another form of literature, the Bildungsroman. The focus on individual psychology in the Bildungsroman provides a chance to reader to analyse the character formation of the protagonist in an easy and accurate way. The author gives the protagonist's psychological state, his feelings, transitions and his changing thoughts and ideas that reveal his gradual formation and self-education of his identity. Character formation in the Bildungsroman is achieved mostly in psychological terms. That is to say, if the main character is psychologically developed and matured, then he fully achieves his formation process and completes his apprenticeship of life. Additionally and

different from Romantic tradition, psychology of the character is displayed in a moral context in the Bildungsroman, although Romantics do not have any concern to be morally suitable to society.

By making all these assessments, we can come to a conclusion that the emergence of the Bildungsroman in Britain is a result of a union of two patterns that belong to two literary forms. That is to say, the Bildungsroman tradition borrows the themes of journey, adventure and protagonist's search for an identity from picaresque kind of novel. And then it is rendered with another pattern of romantic idea which focuses on the individual, psychology and inner-self, and a totally different kind of literature emerges which manifests the character's travels and experiences within a spiritual maturation. In other words, his psychological journey is revealed, as well as the physical and moral growth.

1.3.2 The Power and Extent of the Victorian Novel of Formation

Since its publication, *David Copperfield* (1850) has been the most liked and popular novel by Charles Dickens, and in fact it was the favourite of the author himself among his other novels. *David Copperfield* is a perfect example of the Bildungsroman, which presents male character David's maturation from his early childhood to adulthood. The novel exposes many certain points that directly fit the Bildungsroman pattern with its narrative and thematic structure.

When the novel is broadly examined, its autobiographical form obviously shows itself and becomes one of the important elements that make it a Bildungsroman. Dickens intentionally chooses characters, settings and incidents which are the reflection of his own life and experiences. His own family life, which was mostly in misery, his indifferent and careless father, and his sufferings all become inspiration for Dickens while composing his novel. When David and Dickens are compared, one can find many common and similar points in their lives and experiences. Although all Bildungsromane are not autobiographical, it is a habit for Dickens to use some moments and fragments of his life in certain parts of his novels. I suggest that the autobiographical form provides an opportunity to present a character's formation in a more accurate way, because both autobiography and the Bildungsroman cover a life

time period which includes inevitable human formation and development, even if successful or not.

In order to start a maturation process and a journey, the character is supposed to have a problematic life that urges him to embark on a search for a better life and identity. In David Copperfield's childhood period, being an orphan with a cruel and wicked step-father is enough for him to pursue a happier life. Actually, after the death of his mother, David is somehow pushed in this journey by his step-father Murdstone, when he decides to send him to school which is far away from his ordinary environment. This is the starting point of his maturation process. Here, we should point out that Dickens uses Murdstone as a reflection of his own father in *David Copperfield*, as well as in his other novels, in which all the characters lack a father or a family.

During his journey which starts with his education life, David meets many people with different character prototypes. And each of them has significant places in the development of his identity. First of all, his mother constitutes a figure of an angelic woman, for whom David always searches in his maturation process. This also leads him to fall in love with Dora Spenlow, who resembles his mother with her beauty and naivety. She becomes his first wife, which is actually a fail for David. Apart from them, James Steerforth, Mr. Wickfield, Agnes, and Uriah Heep are the major influential characters on David's maturation and development.

After he finishes the school, he begins to search for a job and goes to London. Now, his physical journey starts, and he is also already grown up physically. Looking for a job, or a profession is an important theme for the Bildungsroman, for it is an opportunity to experience real life conditions and difficulties. In this period, the protagonist's maturation of intelligence and mind begins, and he starts to get to know himself, his desires and wishes to accomplish in life. And he forms a profession that he wants to complete during his life time. David finds his way in the field of journalism, and at the end of the novel he becomes a successful and well-known writer. This indicates that he accomplished his formation and self-education, when he becomes a fully grown-up man.

Apart from professional issues, David experiences love affairs with two different women, which constitutes an important part in his development. These two women represent the state and the level of his maturation process. With the help of the psychological analysis of the characters provided by the author, the reader can understand whether he is emotionally grown up or not from his feelings for these women he loves. With Dora, Dickens draws a character, who is weak, childish, foolish but very beautiful like his mother. She is a key character that helps reader understand that David's development is not completed yet. He marries Dora, who always acts inappropriately, and he loves her because of her resemblance to his mother. Because of her wife's childishness, they always have quarrels on insignificant subjects. In the novel, David is aware of this situation and speaks of this matter:

I began immediately. When Dora was very childish, and I would have infinitely preferred to humor her, I tried to be grave – and disconcerted her and myself too. I talked to her on the subjects which occupied my thoughts; and I read Shakespeare to her - and fatigued her to the last degree. I accustomed myself to giving her, as it were quite casually, little scraps of useful information, or sound opinion - and she started from them when I let them off, as if they had been crackers. No matter how incidentally or naturally I endeavored to form my little wife's mind, I could not help seeing that she always had an instinctive perception of what I was about, and became a prey to the keenest apprehensions. In particular, it was clear to me, that she thought Shakespeare a terrible fellow. The formation went on very slowly. (Dickens, 1992:583)

On the other hand, Agnes, who is a very reasonable woman and always supports and encourages David in his hard times and decisions, turns into a woman David passionately falls in love, after Dora's death. Agnes represents the final stage of David's maturation process, since, by marrying such a woman, it means that he becomes reasonable enough to understand that he needs Agnes for the rest of his life. The novel ends with their happy marriage and everything about David's job is on the highest level, he becomes a successful writer. He finishes his apprenticeship for his life education and accomplishes his self-formation and development.

Great Expectations (1861), another novel of formation written by Charles Dickens, narrates the story of a character called Pip, his physical and spiritual development and evolution as a part of the Bildungsroman tradition. The novel is usually compared to *David Copperfield* because of their similarities about the child characters and their gradual formation throughout their life, their circumstances of childhood, their ordeal and struggle in life.

In spite of these similarities, one can detect major differences between two novels, including the tone of social determinism, the protagonist's attempts to change his own character, the ambiguity of the ending of the novel, and the character types in the novel.

Pip's story begins when he is a little child living with his cruel sister and Joe who is an affectionate fatherly figure. As mentioned before, most of Dickens' child characters are orphans and have cruel family members that stimulate their need of a spiritual and physical journey. In this novel, there are more than one wicked character that have a significant influence on the shaping of Pip's character formation. Before he leaves home, his sister has that role of an evil person. Then he meets Estella and Miss Havisham, who are the major characters that have a direct influence on Pip's self-maturation and identity. They both create, although mostly Miss Havisham, false expectations for Pip about his life and future, which are actually "great expectations" for him. He becomes a man whose only goal is to unite with Estella and to have a high social rank and money. His goal of having money is provided by another character that affects him, Magwitch. During his formation process, Joe tries to show and teach him good human behaviours and genuine moral values, but Pip becomes such a wrongly directed person -namely a snob- that he is even ashamed of Joe and his urban, uneducated manners.

As the novel proceeds, it gradually becomes obvious that Pip's formation is going in a wrong way. Because the reader sees how his character changes from an innocent and pure child to a fallen and incapable man who cannot build his life on a strong ground, which is also stated by Golban:

However, external forces and manipulations determine his condition, which is a result of the weaknesses in his own character. His excessive pride and narcissism, his obsession with Estella and his indulging into wishful thinking of some new ‘great expectations’ turn him upside down and make him to cast off and forget the genuine, concrete truths and virtues of his true friends Joe Gargery and Bidley. (2003:160)

The social determinism, which is an important pattern in the novel, is highly emphasized in the formation process of the protagonist, as it is the main element and the reason for the failure of Pip’s formation. Because of the people around him that influence him in a great extent, Pip could not manage to shape his identity successfully. He could not save himself from Miss Havisham’s hands and his dream of Estella. And the novel ends with his failure as an unhappy and incomplete person, although the ending is sometimes indicated as ambiguous. However in the second ending version of the novel provides a more optimistic view, which is “succumbed to the Victorian reading public’s demand for happy ending in bringing together the hero and heroine who can now live happily ever after” (ibid., 163).

In our opinion, Pip’s failure is not only because of the social determinism that has a great influence on him. It is also because of his character’s weakness and incapability. He has the chance and opportunity to get over all these influences and he could shape his identity in a better way. That would be his accomplishment if he would have been able to overcome being a slave of his emotions, of Estella and Miss Havisham. Even it seems like there is a happy ending in the second version of the novel, Pip is still unsuccessful and a failure. He is united with Estella, which is his big dream, but that does not mean that he could get rid of the social determinism to draw his own way and take his own decisions.

Among other Victorian Bildungsromane, *Jane Eyre* has a separate place and importance for the fact that it contains a deeper concern with human psychology, emotions and social issues. Apart from its focus on the protagonist’s formation, the traces of feminism and the status of Victorian woman are highly explicit concerns framed within a moral aspect.

The heroine Jane's formation process begins with her departure from her aunt's house, which is a place full of torment and oppressiveness for her, caused by her relatives. Jane is an orphan like other Bildungsroman protagonists, and in this part, as well as later throughout the entire novel Charlotte Bronte presents the condition of Victorian woman and the oppression of patriarchal society very intensely. The women in the house are the representatives of the passive and dependent Victorian women. However, from her early age, Jane's character is formed as being an independent and rebellious child, and girl. She learns in that house that she should not be like her aunt and cousins who are the slaves of the patriarchal constraints, despite her aunt's attempts to teach her to be obedient:

And you ought not to think yourself on an equality with the Misses Reed and Master Reed, because Missis kindly allows you to be brought up with them. They will have a great deal of money, and you will have none: it is your place to be humble and to try to make yourself agreeable to them. (Bronte, 1992: 8)

The other place in which Jane finds her rebellious identity is Lowood School. Patriarchal images are again very obvious, which can be related to the cruel school master. He is a symbol of patriarchal oppression on women in Victorian era. He causes serious sufferings to the students, even makes them starve.

As a common element in the pattern of the Victorian Bildungsroman, there are in this novel characters who influence the development of the main character. Jane's classmate Helen Burns makes the conditions easier for Jane to deal with the difficulties. On the other hand, Miss Temple is another character that helps and protects her. These characters have an important role in the development of Jane's character and identity.

To search for a job and a profession is an important theme in the Bildungsroman tradition, which provides the character an opportunity to develop their identity in real life conditions which are full of difficulties. Jane leaves school, after she becomes a grown up girl, and is determined to build her life by her own efforts. She starts working in Thornfield, which will be the main part of her spiritual and emotional

maturation. Her irresistible love for Mr Rochester creates a great conflict between her emotions and ideals. She is determined to be rational and sufficient for herself, by standing on her own feet, rather to give in a man and her emotions. Here, Bronte explicitly exposes the feminist ideas, while deeply focuses on the psychology of the protagonist. Her feelings and emotions for Rochester give the clue of her emotional maturation. Therefore, it can be said that sentimentalism goes hand in hand with the Bildungsroman tradition, including the traces of feminism.

Jane Eyre's maturation process ends with her marriage to Rochester. Although first it seems that she could not accomplish her development, it can be concluded that she successfully accomplishes her formation when her equality in marriage with Rochester is achieved. She always tries to construct her ideas on the equality of women with men in society and marital issues. When Jane becomes financially equal to Rochester, there would be no problem for her to be his wife. Jane is an individual who has the capacity to build her life with her own hands.

Apart from her marriage, in her other experiences, her ability to resist oppression by other people and institutions is the main reason for her successful maturation process:

She successfully withstands St. John's missionary zeal and resists the claims of his Christian vocation. She refuses his 'partnership' in religious service, regarded as another attempt to dominate her spirituality, and as she needs no support from others. What she needs is personal completeness of both mind and soul, spirit and body as the premises of her formation. Protected by the principle of divine love, Jane accepts the union with Rochester, which is both spiritual and passionate, and, especially, is founded on an independent position. (Golban, 2003:195)

2. THE FORMATION OF PERSONALITY AS A LITERARY CONCERN IN MODERNIST LITERATURE

2.1 English Modernism and Its Experimental Novel in the 1st Half of the Twentieth Century

In the general context of the modernist reaction against Victorian tradition, the writers of the experimental novel attempted to change the ways of representation of individual experience. The dominant aspect of every Bildungsroman, the representation of personal experience takes in the modernist novel of formation new and interesting thematic perspectives. The novel which developed in and dominated the Victorian era, gains a totally different form and content by generating a new path from tradition to innovation. The experimentation with narration and novel form flourishes in the age of radical change and progress in humanity, which is called as “Modernism”, at the beginning of the 20th century. This innovative idea constitutes the outline of the modernist way of thinking at the same time. To comprehend the main points of the transition from traditional Victorian literature to modernist idea and modernist literature, this new era and its characteristics have to be examined attentively and closely.

As the effects of the Industrial Revolution and technological advancements are still going on at the end of the nineteenth century, the first half of the twentieth century brings many social, political, economic, and cultural changes with its devastating, as well as innovative outcomes. The general situation in Britain was not so much pleasing, as the economy of the country draws a decreasing profile, and increasing unemployment dominates the economic condition because of the devastating results of the Great War which ended in 1918. Gillies in her study *Modernist Literature: An Introduction* explains this new period and the emergence of modernism as follows:

As the 1920s drew to a close, Britain was thus much diminished, economically, socially, and politically. Yet for some in Britain, especially for the privileged classes, the 1920s were a vibrant age in which fashion, music, art, and literature flourished. The 1920s were the era of the flapper, jazz, cocktails, country parties, and motoring trips. It was also the age in which modernism established itself as the primary cultural movement. (2007: 100)

Modernism influenced almost all areas of social life in the 20th century, including literature, culture, art, music, and even hobbies of people of that period; however, literature is the one that should be intensely focused on in this study. The main concern and subject matter of the modernist literature take their roots from everyday life and experience. Thus, the modernist writers try to reveal the ordinary life as realistic as individual experiences. It can be very ordinary, insignificant, uncertain, ambiguous, and temporary. But it is as real as we experience a moment in our daily life. This new artistic expression alters many perspectives, techniques, forms, and structures of the novel writing, including the exposition of time and place, organization of plot, content, and language. The writers' concerns in novel writing are highly affected by the pessimistic and negative atmosphere of the post-war period, and they focus on topics like war, hopelessness, emptiness, human insight and psychology, subjectivity, individual experience, and daily life, while trying to fracture the conventions of the Victorian period and its novel writing technique. The most prominent writers of the modernist period can be listed as Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, T. S. Eliot, and Ezra Pound, who wanted to create a new movement that would satisfy the expectations of the readers by presenting them "real" characters and sequences from everyday life. Therefore, realism that emerged in the 19th century gains a different aspect in the 20th century by reflecting the reality in mind and unrestrained thoughts, instead of the reality that is imprisoned and limited under the restrictive social and moral codes of the Victorian traditions. The Victorian literature and narrative style were harshly criticized by the modernist writers, and their struggle was to demonstrate the right way of narration and character representation by comparing both movements. Woolf, in her renowned essay on modernism "Mr. Bennet and Mrs. Brown" (1924), excoriates the Victorian novelists and addresses their successors as "Edwardians" and the modernists as "Georgians",

while constantly comparing these two groups. According to her, Georgian writers are “the Victorian cook lived like a leviathan in the lower depths, formidable, silent, obscure, inscrutable; the Georgian cook is a creature of sunshine and fresh air (...)” (1924: 5). She accuses them, especially Arnold Bennet, one of the most significant representatives of the 19th century realistic novel, for being materialists.

It is because they are concerned not with the spirit but with the body that they have disappointed us, and left us with the feeling that the sooner English fiction turns its back upon them, as politely as may be, and marches, if only into the desert, the better for its soul. (Woolf, 1994: 148)

Woolf blames the traditional novelists for presenting life only from outside perspective, narrating events in perfect order, one after another, like a diary. Their stereotypical and traditional style does not reflect the complex, invisible, ordinary side of real life. To provide the necessary solution to the problem, the modernists announced the need of an entirely new and modern style and technique, which led them to a radical change in novel writing.

The experimental novel in the age of modernism possesses a totally different narrative structure, form, and language as well as the content. Structural elements of novel such as language, plot structure, point of view, unity of time and place are arranged according to the ordinariness and irregularity of events and actions. For the modernist writers, a certain period of our lives or a day mostly consists of insignificant, incoherent, simple, and ordinary flow of thoughts and actions. They are not arranged orderly, as Woolf describes in “Modern Fiction”:

Examine for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives a myriad impressions--trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel. From all sides they come, an incessant shower of innumerable atoms; and as they fall, as they shape themselves into the life of Monday or Tuesday, the accent falls differently from old (...). (1994: 150)

Thus, they cannot be depicted within a linear structure. The writer dives into the depths of the character’s mind like a diver, observes and tells the flow of his thoughts, and instant desires. These thoughts might not appeal to the reader because

of their simplicity and commonness, and might be rather boring. However, they are the reality everybody experience in their daily lives. Not each moment of our lives and our thoughts are as worthwhile to tell, and not all of them are as excitable as the lives of the characters that realists describe in their novels. These mundane moments and events make a novel closer to our perception of reality, and the reader finds similar and common points between himself and the character. The sincerity and ordinariness of the thoughts, for modern writers, reveal the true personality of the character.

Repetitions play an important role, while supporting the idea that ordinary and repeated actions and thoughts constitute the reality. The first sentence of *Jacob's Room* immediately introduces the reader the feelings and thoughts of Betty Flanders that are instantly appearing in her mind: “‘So of course,’ wrote Betty Flanders, pressing her heels rather deeper in the sand, ‘there was nothing for it but to leave’” (2013: 1). After a paragraph the same sentence is presented again: “‘(...) nothing for it but to leave,’ she read”. This repeated thought might not have any importance and meaning for the reader; however, the writer’s aim is to reveal the character’s mind as it is. The function of repetition in modern novel is to prove that life is composed of repeated actions, events, and thoughts, which also make life more regular and oriented. Repetition is “the cotton wool of daily life”, as Woolf calls it.

It was not so easy for the modernist writers to make a complete change in novel writing technique, for Victorian novel tradition dominated literature for almost two hundred years. The Victorians established certain rules in novel tradition, which Woolf also refuses, and built their works upon this structure of rules. Among the things that the modernists reject, the absolute order and form is the biggest enemy of the writer, which contradicts the idea that a writer should be open-minded and free. No rule and convention should create an obstacle for the writer in the process of writing and creating his characters. From that point, “formlessness” becomes one of the most significant characteristics of modernist novel. Without form and structural rules, a writer can express the mind of the character freely. Linear narrative structure in which events go on in a chronological order and follow each other, is the most common narrative structure used until modernism. That is to say, the Victorian

novelists establish their plot by using linear narrative structure, while claiming that with this type of narration, the story can be presented to the reader with a more organized way, and tension would be higher. The profile of the Victorian reader demands materials more easy to read and understand which are constructed upon an ordered structure. However, the modernists strictly resist the traditional linear structure, claiming that the real life is not linearly constructed. Our lives do not include only actions and events that we live through in sequence. While living today, we might live in past simultaneously. We can turn back and think our past experiences, and they might even influence our present life. It is our minds that constitute our lives and experiences, not our body. And our minds are timeless and limitless; we cannot fit it in a chronological structure, as Victorians do. According to the modernists, traditional Victorian concept of presenting the reality ignores the mind and inner-self of the character. The character is introduced to the reader by giving him only an outside view. Physical world is the only reality to them.

One of the most common techniques that modernist writers use, especially Virginia Woolf and James Joyce - although they use it in different ways - , is the stream of consciousness technique. Woolf presents her fictional characters by using this technique to make them real while traveling through their instant thoughts and memories, “a myriad of expressions”. She reveals the mind of the character without getting involved to make any comment. She just wants to play the role of a mirror to reflect everything as they are, without any touch. Her aim is to make the reader active by leaving the interpretation to him, through which she would be able to achieve reality. By revealing the personal experiences and thoughts of the character, she tries to create an environment in which the reader can find something from his own life, his own experiences. Contrary to the traditional technique, in which plot is formed upon a structure that has a beginning, middle, and an end, she avoids putting things in order. That is how her novel technique diverges from the traditional realistic novel.

It is undeniable that the 20th century has been accepted as the beginning of an era of innovation. With the change of the literary tradition and techniques, literary texts began to be analysed through different perspectives. Besides the shift in terms of

form and structure in the 20th century novel, language gained a very distinctive function and meaning. “Rather than describing or reflecting the world, language was now seen to form it” (Bell, 1999: 16). The understanding of language in literary texts is influenced by the studies of the prominent scholars and the founders of Structuralism, such as Ferdinand de Saussure, and Claude Lévi-Strauss. Their argument was that we understand the world through our linguistic structures, our language. Thus, the reality that the modern writers try to create in their novels should coincide with the language they use. The modernist perception of the real world is complex, unorganized, and arbitrary. They assume that their language should reflect the reality. Hence, the language of the traditional was now more complex, elevated, ambiguous, symbolic, and has multiple meanings. Liesl Olson in his work *Modernism and Ordinary* claims that

the realism of modernist novels such as *Mrs Dalloway* and *Ulysses*, in comparison, questions and foregrounds language’s ability to signify an objective reality while nonetheless fixating on the problems of representing the details of the everyday, thus amplifying our sense of the everyday’s presence. (2009: 21-22)

It can be understood that the authors experiment with language in the process of writing their novels by using language actively. They impose a particular role onto language to make the novel achieve the everyday reality and complexity. James Joyce in *Ulysses* (1922) clearly presents his concept of modern language by using quite fragmented, incomplete, and sometimes meaningless sentences and interior monologues in order to reveal pure and natural state of the mind of the characters. In the novel we witness the instant thoughts of Leopold Bloom without any filter and interpretation of the author. The sentences seem to have no order, no meaning; they emerge instantly and randomly from Bloom’s mind. They are presented to us just like they are, because that is how our mind works. That is the reality. We do not filter our thoughts, or try to organize them in our everyday life. That is what Joyce wants to demonstrate by adopting an experimental language:

Fly by night. Just the place too. POST NO BILLS. POST 110 PILLS. Some chap with a dose burning him.

If he...

O!

Eh?

No... No.

No, no. I don't believe it. He wouldn't surely?

No, no. (2008:147)

Woolf's style of language shares the same idea, although it seems different from Joyce's. Her language can be defined as more fluent, fragmented, symbolic, poetic, and descriptive. As many modernists do, she was aware of the fact that a change in language was needed to represent the ordinary, daily life. Marianne Dekoven mentions in her article "Modernism and Gender" the style of Virginia Woolf, which reflects the ordinariness of the daily life:

At the same time, Woolf pushed fiction as far formally as any of the other major Modernists, using fragmentation, collage-like juxtaposition, densely poetic language, epistemological and therefore narrative multiplicity and indeterminacy, temporal dislocations, heavy reliance on symbolism, fluidity, and dedefinition of characterization, and an utterly destabilizing, pervasive irony, to realize her vision of a transcendently truth-revealing art – like all the Modernists, she saw art as the only remaining avenue to truth, meaning, value, and transcendence in the otherwise bankrupt twentieth century. (1999: 188)

Ordinary life, everyday experience, the life of the modern man that tries to keep up with a constant social, economic, and cultural change caused by the World War constitute main themes and subjects of the modernist novel. The decline of economy and social values during and after the war in the first quarter of the 20th century induces a big depression and hollowness in the daily lives of people. T. S. Eliot expresses successfully the mundaneness and emptiness of the modern life and the condition of the modern man in his famous modernist poem *The Waste Land* (1922). Thus, the psychology and the interior state of the individual becomes the main concern for the modernist writers. Until the 20th century, literature and novels were

based on social relationships, ethical and moral didacticism, and social problems after the Industrial Revolution, which were depicted from the surface by using stereotype characters. However, these were not useful to present the condition of the modern era according to the modernists, who wanted to turn their routes from objectivity to subjectivity. They focus on the psychology and the mind of the character by using their own experiences and the state of mind while creating their characters and plot. The reader can explore the mind of the writer while reading the psychological description of the character and find pieces and moments of their own life and experiences.

The writers of the 20th century are no more the agents or guides of social and moral concern of the Victorian era who undertake the role of directing society to truth and revealing the present social, political, economic, and cultural condition. They reject the idea that novels should have the duty of imposing discourses and the traditions of the century. On the contrary, novel should be free from the conventions and social restrictions to be able to express the ordinary and everyday life with all its purity and originality.

The new era has brought the World War, together with many changes and new movements, one of which is Modernism. After a long period with its focus on society, ethics, morality, social classes and institutions, individual relations with society, the modernist writers claim that the main concern of the novel must be centred on the “individual”. The writers should not commit themselves to a duty while writing their novels in order to create a social, political, or cultural influence on the reader. The modernists’ concern is to reveal the status of the individual, as the main character, his mind and flow of thoughts, the ordinary experience and daily life in order to establish a connection between the character and the reader in terms of a different aspect of realism. Although they do not seem to reflect social or political situation of the country they live in on the contrary to the Victorian writers, modernists actually reveal the situation of the individual, who is influenced by the circumstances and tries to find an escape. They are not directly interested in social background, but they indirectly reveal the general condition of the first half of the

20th century, the War, by portraying the ordinary life which is shaped by social circumstances.

Virginia Woolf, in her *Jacob's Room*, to give an example, narrates the life of Jacob starting from his childhood concentrating on Jacob's character, mind, and his daily life. She does not say anything about the war, except for several references, or about society which is influenced by the war and other social changes. Her only interest is Jacob and his place in and interaction with society are only tangential. The reader encounters the most striking effect of the war when it is admitted that Jacob goes to war and dies there at the end of the novel.

James Joyce's prominent modernist novel *Ulysses* can be accepted as another example of the main concern of the modernist writers. Like Woolf, Joyce aims to reveal the condition of modern man, his frustration, alienation, desperation, and state of mind, by expressing the characters' momentary thoughts about themselves, their families, or environments. The writers of the age never intend to question the moral values of society, or attempt to be the voice of the public. They put the reader in an active position to interpret the multiple meanings in the novel, complex plot and to come to a conclusion depending on his own personal experiences and emotions.

The 20th century experimental novel projects the essence of modernism that qualifies the significance of human mind, conscious, individual experience, ordinary life, and individualism. The modernist movement has precipitated a radical change in novel writing and aesthetics of presenting the reality both contextually and structurally. The rejection of Victorian traditions and norms of literature, particularly with regards to novel, has dominated the process of change and innovation in the early 20th century. Modernist writers expressed their innovative ideas about novel writing in their articles, which have been regarded as substantial within the frame of modernism. Written by Virginia Woolf, "Modern Fiction" (1921) and "Mr Bennet and Mrs Brown" (1924), for instance, were dedicated to introduce the new type of fiction and the core of modern novel to the public, and to give significant instructions on novel writing to the writers of the age, while criticizing Victorian novelists and

their conventional standardized style. They also applied their theoretical ideas to their novels, which stimulate the first steps of the new era and modernism.

The technique of stream of consciousness, the form of interior monologue, and the moment of epiphany are mostly used in modernist fiction to demonstrate the thoughts and mind of the character explicitly to the reader in order to make the protagonist more realistic, and to make him the spokesman of the individual's state of mind in ordinary and daily life. Multiple narrative structures, multiple narrative voices, non-linearity and non-unity of time and place are other common techniques that modernist writers use to achieve fragmentariness. The modernists do not accept any kind of rules both structurally and thematically that limit the vision and the writing process of the writer. He is supposed to be free of any convention to be able to create an original and useful work. Personal experiences play an important role both for the writer and the reader. The writer while instructing his novel applies to his own experiences to create the inner world of the protagonist. The reader at the same time builds a relationship with the character because of the shared ordinary experiences and thoughts in the dullness of modern life.

In modernist novel, characters or the protagonist becomes the crucial part of the whole that the author focuses on. He does not have any concern other than the character and his psychology. Traditions, conventions, ethic, moral, cultural, and social rules are neglected in order to diverge from Victorian realistic novel. Thus, another difference emerges in terms of character representation strategies, which will be discussed in the next section.

2.2 Realistic Fiction vs. Modernist Fiction with Regards to the Character Representation Strategies

Among the various changes that the newly emerging periods, movements, and trends provide diachronically in the movement of literature is the one concerning character representation. The literature of ancient period, the medieval one, that of Renaissance, and so on, construct their particular visions on human existence and reveal in their particular ways the individual experience. In the following, we will attempt to disclose the differences in character representation strategies between

realistic fiction and the modernist one, differences which would assist our discussion of the modernist representation of the formation of personality – as in *Jacob's Room* – and show the thematic mutations which differentiate it from the traditional realistic consideration of the formation of character.

First, the realistic fiction of the 19th century which emerged under the changing social conditions ostensibly separated itself from the previous literary and artistic movement that is Romanticism. Although many structural and thematic adjustments occurred within this transition from Romanticism to realism, Romanticism continued to influence the Victorian fiction and its character representation in terms of inner state and psychological perspective of the character, especially in the Victorian Bildungsroman. Petru Golban mentions about the two major influences of the English Romanticism; ‘insight into human psychology’ and ‘the experience of childhood’ as:

What I mean is that every Victorian Bildungsroman focuses on the individual that can be defined by his experience of past and growing self. The essential experience is that of childhood, and the essential mode of operation of hero's psyche is memory. (2003: 301)

In the Victorian realistic fiction, the character is represented as an “individual”. The individual experience - the key element of Romantic Movement of the previous age – as well as imagination and emotional condition are presented within a psychological insight. That is to say, the romantic influence on Victorian realistic novel shows itself in the character formation and representation by introducing the protagonist as a self-sufficient individual. In the next period which is dominated by the innovative modernist thought, the character is represented within a different approach with regards to psychological insight and individual experience. Human conscious and mind is represented as a vehicle that reflects reality best. The modernist writers use certain techniques and strategies to uncover the mind and thoughts of the protagonist such as stream of consciousness technique, in which the flow of thoughts of the character is narrated as they are without any organization and filter by the author.

The emphasis on the individual experience in modernist novels is much more enhanced when compared to the realist ones.

Secondly, in the realistic fiction the character is a social and moral type, which totally contradicts with Romantic idea of individualism that is dominated by escapism from society and rebelliousness. Because realistic writings picture and emphasize the social, political, and economic life without any idealization, the characters they produce have to be convenient figures socially and morally. They reflect demanded social and moral structures within their personalities and actions throughout the novel. So, the author embarks a special function on the hero and his adventures in the industrial social background. However, the situation is quite opposite when we look at modernist fiction. Among the traditional features of the Victorian fiction that modernists reject, the social background and moral didacticism come first. The protagonist is totally disconnected with the social concern, and the social sanctions have no influence on him. The prominent concern is only the individual, and the protagonist does not have a role to be a stereotype of moral structure of the society. He is an ordinary man living an ordinary life, and having ordinary thoughts far from perfection, as with Leopold Bloom, for instance.

The other type of character representation strategy in realistic fiction is achieved by combining the social concern and individual experience. This relationship is defined by the term “determinism”, which particularly means the effects and influences of society on the individual. In his article “The Quest for Insight and a Congenial Philosophy in Lieu of Materialistic Comfort: Marius the Epicurean as an Alternative to the Victorian Realist Novel of Formation” (2012), Golban discusses and compares two novels by Dickens, *David Copperfield* and *Great Expectations*, in terms of social determinism of the protagonists, by claiming that in the first novel David’s formation mostly depends on his individual success with a tiny amount of social influence on his personality, although the social background is highly detectable. David’s formation ends up with both individual and social success in spite of the absence of effects of determinism. However, in *Great Expectations* the protagonist Pip is exposed to social influence and fails to develop a successful character formation. That is to say, social determinism affects the character in a

negative way during the process of his spiritual and moral development. The relationship between society and individual constitutes an important part of the Victorian Bildungsroman; however, the modernists deny this relationship although they continue other principles of Bildungsroman tradition. The principle of “social determinism” is completely refused by modernist writers. The protagonist is alienated from society; he is frustrated, and searches for an escape. Gregory Castle explains the contradiction between the traditional Bildungsroman and the modernist one in his work entitled *Reading the Modernist Bildungsroman* (2006):

Many modernists resisted this pragmatic model of intersubjectivity and attempted to devise ways by which the presumed failure of the subject to satisfy the demands of society (especially in contexts of education and work) could be revalued and transformed into new forms of identity. One way of doing this was, paradoxically, to retrieve the classical conception of Bildung and redeploy it in a progressive fight against ‘rationalized’ forms of socialization and in the search for satisfying modes of self-cultivation. (30)

The principle of moral didacticism, which is a remarkable characteristic of English Realism, manifests itself in most of the Victorian novels. The author tries to give moral and ethical lessons through the character representation strategy s/he applies to. The main concern of the author is the reader, and this makes the literary work a ‘reader-oriented’ novel. S/he acquires a peculiar strategy by determining a style which appeals to mostly non-intellectual and middle class reader while creating the work. Roland Barthes calls this type of fiction as “readerly” in his seminal work *S/Z* (1970). In this sense, *Jane Eyre* (1847) can be exemplified as a “readerly” novel in which the protagonist Jane passes through a set of social and individual experiences and accomplishes her both individual and social formation. At first, she is introduced to reader as a rebellious and rational girl who possesses her own moral values and ideals. Nevertheless, after she falls in love with Mr Rochester she gives up her rationality and rebelliousness while keeping her moral values. Here, the aim of Charlotte Bronte is to create a perception for the reader that as long as being loyal to moral values, one –even females - can reach a high status in society, which also leads to personal and social accomplishment and fulfilment. In *S/Z*, Barthes calls the

other type of fiction as “writerly”, which puts the writer on a high and intellectual position. This kind of fiction manifests itself in the modernist novels of the 20th century, in which the writer is detached from the social and moral concern and does not care whether the reader understands the novel or not by thinking that if the reader wants to comprehend the novel, he should reach the intellectual level of the author. For instance, *Ulysses* by James Joyce, which is very difficult to read, evidently illustrates this common principle of the modernist novels with its complex structure.

Verisimilitude had been the primary aim of the realist writers of the Victorian era in order to reflect the actual aspect of the social life that was affected by industrialism and changing economic conditions. To do so, they avoided using unusual, supernatural and fantastic elements in their works. Their main concern was reality and to narrate it to the reader as understandable as possible. But mostly because of the Romantic influence on Victorian fiction, some novels diverged from the borders of Realist tradition by involving sentimentalism and individual experience. Some even include unusual gothic elements such as *Wuthering Heights* (1847) by Emily Bronte and *Jane Eyre* which are also considered as the examples of Victorian Bildungsroman. The gothic and gloomy atmosphere in *Wuthering Heights* and Catherine’s ghostly image generate a Romantic perspective on the novel, while the themes of formation and coming of age are highly detectable. Also in some parts of *Jane Eyre* we can come across gothic elements; such as the red room Jane was locked in when she was a child, and the cries of a woman coming from somewhere upstairs that she was hearing time to time. All these create a mysterious ambiance which is at the same time fused with a realistic approach. Fidelity to the principle of verisimilitude concerning external reality is now modified by the modernist writers whose aim is to render a new type of fidelity to verisimilitude, this time with regard to inner consciousness. Here we should remember Virginia Woolf’s statement from “The Modern Fiction” that emphasizes the non-stop impressions and thoughts that flow inside our minds, and generate our actual existence. This reality of existence can be best expounded by entering the conscious of the protagonist and narrating it with the stream of consciousness technique. The modernists as well exclude the

fantastic elements from their narratives, however because of their “writerly” fiction, they do not avoid from using unusual and complex structures.

The character representation strategies in realistic and modernist fiction are achieved in several ways and have a significant role in analysing the novel and the main character. As it has been discussed above, realistic and modernist fiction conflict with each other with regard to the character representation strategies, which include the reflection of reality as it is and social concern, and the rejection of it (the rejection of the importance of social background), the combination of both that leads to social determinism, the didactic role of the protagonist, and the refusal of moral didacticism, and their different approaches to verisimilitude, as external reality and reality concerning the inner consciousness.

In the present section we have attempted to compare the realist and modernist fiction concerning the character representation in general, whereas in the following section, we will particularize the approach by comparing the two types of novel concerning their adaptation of the Bildungsroman literary system according to their fictional premises.

2.3 Realistic Fiction vs. Modernist Fiction with Regards to the Bildungsroman Literary Pattern

The 19th century, which was an epoch of significant industrial, economic, social, and cultural changes and developments, was dominated by the realistic approach in literature in the light of the overall influential changes in England. Novel appeared as the most popular genre in the 19th century Victorian period, which can be categorized as realistic fiction, although at the same time enduring the Romantic elements. The Bildungsroman tradition, which deals with the protagonist’s physical, psychological, and spiritual formation and maturation by representing him within social and ethical practices, became the most common type of fiction of the 19th century. The concept of “apprenticeship” possesses a substantial meaning in terms of the hero’s “becoming” a mature, developed, and self-achieved man as Franco Moretti evaluates the term “apprenticeship” within the context of formation and youth in the Victorian era:

Already in Meister's case, 'apprenticeship' is no longer the slow and predictable progress towards one's father's work, but rather an uncertain exploration of social space, which the nineteenth century – through travel and adventure, wandering and getting lost, 'Boheme' and 'parvenir' – will underline countless times. (2000: 4)

The expected final formation occurs as a result of the protagonist's apprenticeship which is carried on by acknowledging social and moral demands until he finds his place in society.

The transition from 19th century to 20th century brings changes also in philosophical movements, one of which is individuality and the continuation of humanism instead of realism, in which society and its strong entailments dominate and shape every stage of individuals' life. Subjectivity and individuality as main modes of thinking of modernism of the 20th century have impact on the literary pattern of the period as well as many other things. The modernist writers' repudiation of the 19th century realist type of fiction shows itself in the innovative version of the Bildungsroman tradition which can be categorized as a part of the modernist literature. In this respect I intend to disclose the similarities and differences between the classical Bildungsroman and the modernist one in the present subtitle.

First and foremost, it would be a mistake to classify the modernist Bildungsroman as a very distinct and contrast type comparing to the traditional one, as the modernist Bildungsroman occurs as the continuation of the former. However, because of the refusal of the Victorian fiction and the social concern by the modernists, the modernist writers reshape and distort the elements of Bildungsroman by diverging from the original structure to make a critique of the conventional patterns and of the 19th century Bildungsroman within a modernist context:

In the modernist Bildungsroman, a critical perspective reconfigures the conventional structures of narrative, while retaining most of its main elements (plot trajectory, characterization, thematic emphases), and reinstates a revalued classical Bildung as the goal of the modernist Bildungsheld. (Castle, 2006: 25)

While adopting the traditional type, the modernists maintain many of the thematic components such as the formation of a character first of all, education, leaving for a

bigger society, travel, growing up, and the final stage, but they alter the contents of the components according to their modernist perspective. The social concern replaces with the individual concern that can be related to the experimental novel as the most common type of novel in the 20th century. The subjects such as individual experience, aestheticism, freedom, and ordinariness are applied as the themes of the modernist “novel of formation” besides other sustained thematic elements of the traditional Bildungsroman.

These thematic and ideological discrepancies between the two periods precipitate two different approaches to the formation process of the protagonist and different outcomes. Castle makes a comparison between the traditional and the modernist Bildungsroman in terms of the hero’s failure or success in completing his development and the role of society. On the realist Bildungsroman he asserts that “for the nineteenth century generally, the heroes of the Bildungsroman are always returning to the authorities they have spurned, not because they have seen ‘the error of their ways,’ but because they have, for all their efforts, found no other home” (ibid., 23). However,

[t]he modern hero, marginalized by race, class, education, nationality, or gender, refuses socialization and assimilation into social institutions that do not advance his or her artistic designs. If Stephen Dedalus must flee his native land in order to try to achieve his goals, if Jude Fawley fails to achieve his goals of self-cultivation and slips into fatal illness, if Rachel Vinrace dies before she can even find out what her goal is, the failure is not that of Bildung, which remains an ideal for all of these young people, but that of the specific social conditions of their development. (ibid., 24)

While in his first argument, the society and social codes which have the role of determiner and authority, are presented as superior entities and cannot be the reason for the failure of the hero, in the second one the social demands and institutions are suggested as obstacles for the hero to achieve his goals in the direction of his development by causing his failure.

Regarding the social authority on the protagonist in his maturation and the critical approach of the modernist fiction towards the social concern, the character formation of the modernist Bildungsroman is generally presented as a failure. But this failure does not show up as an unexpected result, on the contrary it is an expected outcome. Unlike the Victorian Bildungsroman hero whose goal is to adapt himself to the demands of the society to be successful in his development, the 20th century modernist Bildungsroman hero assimilates himself to pursue his individual and aesthetic desires separate from the environmental expectations, thus collides with social entailments of the period which leads him to failure. Gregory Castle in his *Reading the Modernist Bildungsroman*, in which he makes a detailed analysis of the modernist Bildungsroman, expounds the difference regarding the modernists' deviation from the classical pattern in terms of the character's isolation from social institutions:

For this recuperative project seeks not to circumvent or 'opt out' of socialization processes, but rather to develop new conceptions of self-cultivation, which often take the form of a liberatory *depersonalization* and which respond more effectively and productively to the demands of modern social conditions. The modernist Bildungsroman may fail in terms of genre, but that failure only serves to articulate more effectively its singular triumph, the abstract affirmation of Bildung as a cherished ideal. The constitutive irony of the modernist Bildungsroman lies in this affirmation made from the perspective of the subject who, in the final analysis, can feel only its absence. (ibid., 28)

The failure of the modern hero signifies the main motivation of the modernist Bildungsroman, which is the criticism of the social structure of the previous century. While growing up, the protagonist designates his own goal to find his identity free from the social conventions. He struggles to fulfil his personal desires instead of the demands of society and institutions. By not being able to do this, he becomes a fail for the society although he is successful in accomplishing his individual goal and transferring the intention of the modernist fiction.

In the light of the presented information on how the modernist writers mutate the traditional pattern of the Victorian Bildungsroman under the influence of

realism and establish their own way of demonstrating the self-development of the hero, Virginia Woolf's *Jacob Room* will be investigated as both modernist novel and Bildungsroman by analysing the main character Jacob's maturation process starting from his childhood to his death.

3. JACOB'S ROOM AS A MODERNIST BILDUNGSROMAN

3.1 *Jacob's Room* as a Modernist Novel

Virginia Woolf's third novel *Jacob's Room*, which has been considered as the first step of the author to her experimental modernist novels, was first published in 1922. In her first two novels, *The Voyage Out* (1915) and *Night and Day* (1919), her style reflects a more traditional arrangement both contextually and structurally. When she put into practice her innovative concept of novel writing in *Jacob's Room*, the novel induced confronting reviews from different critics and writers. According to Woolf's *Diary of Virginia Woolf* (1978), the first one came from her husband Leonard Woolf saying that "the people are ghosts" (186), after he finished the novel. The loose and intangible characterization was the sense of the reviews of Leonard Woolf and other critics who argued that the novel was far from being a novel. That is why some refer it as "a hybrid of the essay, the short story, and the novel (...)" (Froula, 2005:74). However, Woolf got supporting feedbacks from some valuable writer-critics, as Mina Urgan quotes from T.S. Eliot's letter to Woolf in her review on Virginia Woolf: "You have freed yourself from any compromise between the traditional novel and your own gift" (2009: 101). According to Urgan, the most significant remark comes from E.M. Forster:

The improbable has occurred; a method essentially poetic has been applied to fiction. *Jacob's Room* is an uneven little book, but it represents her great departure and abandonment of the false start of *Night and Day*. It leads on to her genius in its fullness; *Mrs Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse* and *The Waves* (ibid.).

Jacob's Room is composed of fourteen chapters, in which the author tells the story of the protagonist Jacob, starting from his early childhood to his adolescence which tragically ends up with death. Although the novel lacks a full-developed plot

and story because of Woolf's unusual and fragmented style, there is actually a blurred story and characterization. The reader meets widowed Betty Flanders in the first page of the novel with *Medias res*, then her sons Archer and Jacob, who live in the city of Scarborough. Woolf presents a part of their daily lives, while introducing some other characters from their environment. Throughout the novel, Woolf never explicitly indicates the changing of time period and place as one of her distinctive narrative techniques.

Jacob goes to Cambridge in October, 1906 for his college education, and his journey begins as "Mr Flanders". His college years elapse within a social circle different from his childhood environment. He spends time with his college friends, especially Timothy Durrant with whom he sails to the coast of Cornwall. There he meets with Timothy's family, and his sister Clara who is the first woman in the novel that Jacob has feelings for. But they cannot develop a steady relationship. A few chapters later we see Jacob in a celebration held for the November 5th: "The hotel dining-room was brightly lit. A stag's head in plaster was at one end of the table; at the other some Roman bust blackened and reddened to represent Guy Fawkes, whose night it was" (Woolf, 2013: 73).

Another woman, Florinda, with whom Jacob has a short-time affair, is introduced to the reader. She is described as a beautiful woman, but at the same time stupid. This creates an unsatisfied feeling inside Jacob, when he realizes her stupidity. "In her face there seemed to him something horribly brainless - as she sat staring" (ibid., 79). Jacob later learns that she is actually a prostitute when he sees her with another man in the street.

As his education continues, he develops his artistic and intellectual knowledge by joining artistic groups, reading literary texts from British to Greek, and going to museums. In chapter 9, we see him going to British Museum to read Marlowe. He also reads Plato and his *Phaedrus*, and Shakespeare.

Chapter 10 begins with a new character Fanny Elmer "who passes right beneath Jacob's window" (ibid., 113) while going to the painter Nick Bramham's studio to be a model for one of his paintings. Later on Jacob comes across with them on the

street, and he is introduced to Fanny. At that moment Jacob makes a strong impression on her by his awkwardness and voice. She is also influenced by his interest in literature, remembering his words about Fielding; she goes to a bookstore and buys *Tom Jones* in order to find a common interest with Jacob to establish a connection to him, although she is not educated in literature:

At ten o'clock in the morning, in a room which she shared with a school teacher, Fanny Elmer read *Tom Jones*- that mystic book. For this dull stuff (Fanny thought) about people with odd names is what Jacob likes. Good people like it. Dowdy women who don't mind how they cross their legs read *Tom Jones*- a mystic book; for there is something, Fanny thought, about books which if I had been educated I could have liked- much better than earrings and flowers, she sighed, thinking of the corridors at the Slade and the fancy-dress dance next week. She had nothing to wear. (ibid., 121)

When they are sitting together, Fanny tells Jacob that she liked *Tom Jones*; however, immediately Jacob realizes that she is lying. Here, Woolf enters Jacob's mind and unfolds his past love for Clara:

Alas, women lie! But not Clara Durrant. A flawless mind; a candid nature; a virgin chained to a rock (somewhere off Lowndes Square) eternally pouring out tea for old men in white waistcoats, blue-eyed, looking you straight in the face, playing Bach. Of all women, Jacob honoured her most. (ibid., 122)

While exhibiting Clara's importance for Jacob, Woolf also touches upon the condition of women in a male dominated society by describing Clara's current situation doomed forever to serve men, like Sisyphus who is cursed to carry out the same task endlessly.

In the next chapter, Jacob is presented in Paris where he takes break on his way to Greece. Meanwhile, he and his mother send letters to each other, but Jacob never tells any detail about his life, because it makes no sense for him (ibid., 130). Here, Woolf makes a sudden shift to Mrs Flanders and Mrs Jarvis's trip to Dods Hill while talking about Jacob, death, and other things with a detailed description of nature around them.

Jacob finally arrives to Greece after he passes from Italy. There he meets a married couple, Sandra Wentworth Williams and Evan Williams, and falls in love with Sandra. Jacob and Sandra make short trips to Acropolis while trying to know each other better. Then, he joins the couple with their visit to Constantinople. In the meantime, he sends letter to his friend Bonamy in which he talks about Greece and his admiration about this place.

Jacob's trip is over and he turns back to London "very brown and lean, with his pockets full of Greek notes (...)" (ibid., 165). When he is telling his experiences to Bonamy, Bonamy understands that he is in love, and Bonamy's rage upon this reveals his passion for Jacob and his homosexuality. At the end of the Chapter 13, the writer reveals that the World War I has started and Jacob has gone to fight: "Again far away, she (Mrs Flanders) heard the dull sound, as if nocturnal women were beating great carpets. There was Morty lost, and Seabrook dead; her sons fighting for their country" (ibid., 177).

In the last and the shortest Chapter 14, Bonamy and Mrs Flanders enter Jacob's empty room where everything has been left as it was. The empty room strikingly reflects the absence of Jacob. Bonamy sorrowfully shouts his name two times which reminds the reader of Archer's call for Jacob at the beginning of the novel. Lastly, Mrs Flanders' words upon finding Jacob's old shoes, "What am I to do with these, Mr Bonamy?" (ibid., 179), symbolize the death of Jacob and create an emotional end for the novel. We suggest that Mrs Flanders finds her answer at the very beginning of the novel, when she writes in her letter that "So of course, there was nothing for it but to leave" (ibid., 1). Although the end of the novel seems inconclusive, and Mrs Flanders' question remains unanswered, Woolf connects the end to the beginning and provides an answer to the question by reversing time's order and linearity as one of her unusual techniques of modernist novel. In this point, it is noticeable that the novel ends with a question, and starts with an answer. Upon her answer, it can be said that Mrs Flanders finds the solution by letting go and keeping drifting in the ordinariness and simplicity of life.

Jacob's Room concentrates on certain thematic elements which strengthen its function as a modernist novel. As we have presented in previous chapter, the most remarkable thematic element of the modernist novel is every day and ordinary life. Ordinarity is a major concern for modernist writers because of their rejection of the 19th century traditional novel writing in which the 'real' ordinary life is excluded. Virginia Woolf, values this thematic feature as the most noticeable source of her novels. In *Jacob's Room*, the ordinarity is so intense that a plot cannot find a place to occur. The insignificance of the ordinary is felt all through the novel in the experiences of Jacob and other characters. By using a descriptive language, Woolf usually portrays a situation or an event which does not end up with any result or conclusion, for she thinks that the daily life is full of these insignificant and inconclusive moments. For instance, during Jacob and Timmy Durrant's boat journey to the Scilly Isles in Chapter 4, the narrator suddenly begins to tell Mrs Pascoe without any introduction of the character. The narrator depicts her as a regular character by assuming that the reader has all information about her, although she is narrated for the first time. However, the reader understands that she is an ordinary Cornish woman carrying out her daily routine:

Although it would be possible to knock at the cottage door and ask for a glass of milk, it is only thirst that would compel the intrusion. Yet perhaps Mrs Pascoe would welcome it. The summer's day may be wearing heavy. Washing in her little scullery, she may hear the cheap clock on the mantelpiece tick, tick, tick . . . tick, tick, tick. She is alone in the house. Her husband is out helping Farmer Hosken; her daughter married and gone to America. Her elder son is married, too, but she does not agree with his wife. (...) For the millionth time, perhaps, she looked at the sea. A peacock butterfly now spread himself upon the teasle, fresh and newly emerged, as the blue and chocolate down on his wings testified. Mrs Pascoe went indoors, fetched a cream pan, came out, and stood scouring it. Her face was assuredly not soft, sensual, or lecherous, but hard, wise, wholesome rather, signifying in a room full of sophisticated people the flesh and blood of life. (ibid., 49-50)

Mrs Pascoe exists just for four pages in the novel and does not have any influence on other characters or the story. This four-page part about Mrs Pascoe does not seem to have any significance, but it actually serves Woolf's aim of displaying everyday life

and giving the message that each of us encounters such moments, observes the environment around us, and develops irrelevant instant thoughts about it. The novel is full of such vague characters and moments appearing and disappearing within short periods.

The accelerating technological developments which began at the end of the 19th century and continued during the 20th century influenced every aspect of life including literature. Thus, the modernist literature in the 20th century which takes its roots from the theme of everyday and ordinary life, reflects the ‘modernized’ life as a background. In *Jacob’s Room*, Woolf describes the city and the streets of London within a modern outline, and indicates her main point about modern life as the reason of the alienation, despair, and unhappiness of man:

The proximity of the omnibuses gave the outside passengers an opportunity to stare into each other’s faces. Yet few took advantage of it. Each had his own business to think of. (...) The omnibuses jerked on, and every single person felt relief at being a little nearer to his journey’s end, though some cajoled themselves past the immediate engagement by promise of indulgence beyond- steak and kidney pudding, drink or a game of dominoes in the smoky corner of a city restaurant. (...) Jacob, getting off his omnibus, loitered up the steps, consulted his watch, and finally made up his mind to go in... (ibid., 62)

In another chapter, Woolf touches upon the condition of modern man, and modern life with her own thoughts by using a first-person narration:

(...) And telephones ring. And everywhere we go wires and tubes surround us to carry the voices that try to penetrate before the last card is dealt and the days are over. ‘Try to penetrate,’ for as we lift the cup, shake the hand, express the hope, something whispers, Is this all? Can I never know, share, be certain? Am I doomed all my days to write letters, send voices, which fall upon the tea-table, fade upon the passage, making appointments, while life dwindles, to come and dine? (ibid., 91)

Modernization traps man in its eternal cycle, and makes a victim of its system. Man feels lonely, desolated, and it brings unhappiness. Woolf creates her characters

as the victims of modernization, but does not end up with any solution, for she thinks that there is no way out. Thus, her common themes such as isolation, hopelessness, absence, and unhappiness are related to the main topic, which is modernization. Relatedly, absence can be felt in every part of the novel, and the novel “figures absence in more substantial terms than presence” (2004: 93), as Laura Marcus suggests in her book. If we look from outside of the novel, plot, and events, they may seem as a unit. However, when we look inside incompleteness, absence, and fragmentariness is everywhere. One of the tragic realizations of absence appears at the beginning of the novel when Jacob wanders on the shore and thinks that he saw his nanny, but later he realizes that she was actually a rock, and he is lost (Woolf, 2013: 4). His nanny becomes absent, and Woolf displays this moment in a heart-breaking tone.

Admittedly, Jacob is the main victim of the modern life in the novel. Woolf tries to present his fate and condition in modern life by intentionally making his identity very incomplete and absent. Alex Zwerdling in his article entitled “Jacob’s Room: Woolf’s Satiric Elegy” asserts that “her novel emphasizes the image of Jacob *adrift*, moving rapidly but lightly from one social set to another, from one romantic attachment to another, without either the intention or the ability to ‘settle’” (1981: 898). As well as his presented identity, his deeds are never complete and stable, either. This is actually the general situation of man in modern life, which Woolf aims to reflect and criticise by using the protagonist Jacob as an agent.

War is another outcome of the modern era, which can be observed as one of the major themes of the novel. *Jacob’s Room* covers the period just prior and during the World War I, and demonstrates its effects on society and characters indirectly. That is to say, Woolf’s intention has never been to deal with war directly, but how it affects the lives of young men as the victims of both society and the war, as an outcome. Although the war constitutes the major reason of the protagonist’s fate, Woolf never directly depicts or talks about war except for several parts. Nevertheless, she successfully creates and transfers the feeling of the war period and its tragic results to the reader. As well as the social system, the notion of war also influences and entraps the young generation, and they become slaves and victims of

both the idea and concrete presence of war. Many critics suggest that the novel is written as an elegy for the loss of generation in war, and Jacob Flanders represents the youth that is slaughtered in wars. However, Zwerdling claims that Woolf's attitude is quite different from the styles of the war poets and writers of the period:

By contrast, Woolf's elegiac novel is persistently small-scaled, mischievous and ironic. She had an instinctive distrust for reverence of any kind, feeling it was a fundamentally dishonest mental habit that turned flesh-and-blood human beings into symbolic creatures. She was no more interested in a cult of war heroes than she had been in a religion of eminent Victorians. (...) Woolf's elegy for the young men who died in the war is revisionist: there is nothing grand about Jacob; the sacrifice of his life seems perfectly pointless, not even a cautionary tale. *Jacob's Room* is a covert critique of the romantic posturing so common in the anthems for doomed youth. (ibid., 903)

The theme of death, which also goes hand in hand with the theme of war, makes its presence felt from the beginning to the end of the novel. In the very first pages, Jacob's father Seabrook is revealed as dead. Betty Flanders sometimes thinks about his dead husband, and tries to imagine his condition if he had not been dead:

Had he, then, been nothing? An unanswerable question, since even if it weren't the habit of the undertaker to close the eyes, the light so soon goes out of them. At first, part of herself; now one of a company, he had merged in the grass, the sloping hillside, the thousand white stones, some slanting, others upright, the decayed wreaths, the crosses of green tin, the narrow yellow paths, and the lilacs that drooped in April, with a scent like that of an invalid's bedroom, over the churchyard wall. Seabrook was now all that; and when, with her skirt hitched up, feeding the chickens, she heard the bell for service or funeral, that was Seabrook's voice- the voice of the dead. (Woolf, 2013:10)

The writer gives a detailed description of the graveyard and the tombstones on the ground by giving the feeling of the inevitability of death, and she creates a parallel between the funeral bell and the dead person, by identifying it as his voice.

Towards the end of the novel, Woolf again apparently demonstrates her idea of the insignificance of life by putting forward her characters' conversation about death

and dead people on “a calm night; when the moon seemed muffled and the apple trees stood perfectly still” (ibid., 130). The environment and the stillness of nature create an atmosphere that reminds death and eternity.

‘I never pity the dead’ said Mrs Jarvis, shifting the cushion at her back, and clasping her hands behind her head. Betty Flanders did not hear, for her scissors made so much noise on the table.

‘They are at rest’ said Mrs Jarvis. ‘And we spend our days doing foolish unnecessary things without knowing why’. (ibid.)

When Mrs Jarvis reveals her opinion about being dead and “doing unnecessary things”, Woolf immediately validates Mrs Jarvis’ opinion by making Mrs Flanders not hear Mrs Jarvis’ words, for she is lost in her work, which is one of the ‘unnecessary things’ that we are lost in every day, every moment of our lives. Our everyday life is full of these insignificant, aimless, and mundane moments that we cannot escape. That is why Mrs Jarvis considers the dead people as lucky because of their salvation.

The presence of death can be felt directly when Jacob’s last name “Flanders” appears in the first page. It is a strong and direct reference to a place named Flanders, related to the World War I, a place where millions of British soldiers died during the war. Here, Woolf’s aim is to make a foreshadowing to Jacob’s fate and death at the end. Laura Marcus comments on Woolf’s preferences of names and she claims that there are strong connections between names and identities in the novel by making a reference to Jacob’s last name: “Ironically, it is ‘Flanders’ – a name, a place, and a way of dying – which renders Jacob absent, deceased, and voiceless; the name both grants identity and cancels it out” (2004: 88).

Besides these major themes of the novel, Woolf uses supporting thematic elements and motifs throughout the novel. For instance, she embeds literature and literary components in every part of the novel. Jacob’s interest in literature that starts from his childhood continues until he dies. His interest in literature is first revealed when Archer, Jacob, and John are supposed to choose one of Mr Floyd’s belongings as a remembrance when he leaves the city, and Jacob chooses a volume of Byron’s

works, while others choose a paper-knife and a kitten (Woolf, 2013:16). In his young adulthood, his interest regularly appears in his college years, even in his love affairs, or his trips. He goes to British Museum to read Marlowe, or when he goes to Greece he visits Acropolis, sits there and reads his book. In his room,

there were books enough; very few French books; but then anyone who's worth anything reads just what he likes, as the mood takes him, with extravagant enthusiasm. Lives of the Duke of Wellington, for example; Spinoza; the works of Dickens; the Faery Queen; a Greek dictionary with the petals of poppies pressed to silk between the pages; all the Elizabethans. (ibid., 34)

Related to the theme of literature, Woolf's emphasis on Greece and Greek antiquity carries a special meaning. She makes references to the literary works of Plato and Aristotle, and tries to highlight the importance and, influence of the ancient Greek civilisation on today. In this point, Jacob takes a journey and leaves his 'modern society' to go to Greece, an 'ancient' society', where he finds happiness: "Stretched on the top of the mountain, quite alone, Jacob enjoyed himself immensely. Probably he had never been so happy in the whole of his life" (ibid., 143). Woolf refers to Greece as a place where Jacob can be free of the difficulties of the modern life, and maybe as a solution to all the problems of the everyday life. Jane de Gay in her book claims that Jacob's interest in antiquity and English philhellenes, especially Byron, may have caused his death by creating a tendency to join the war (2006: 71). For Byron is known as a supporter of Greece against Ottomans in World War I, and Jacob is probably influenced from his ideas. On the other hand, Laura Marcus asserts her own approach about Greece as a recurring theme in the novel:

Woolf uses the idea of Greece in *Jacob's Room* to explore the paradoxes and ironies of our concepts of civilization, particularly in relation to war; she anticipates Freud's title (*Civilization and its Discontents*) in her exploration of civilization and Jacob's discontents. She also takes a distance from the neo-classicism that marks so much modernist writing. (2004: 90)

Although the novel discloses Jacob's life from his childhood to his young adulthood, his life and position in the social environment around him is also an

important element in context. While exhibiting Jacob's life, Woolf deals with the patriarchal society and how this society gives some privileges to males in terms of education and gaining a profession. She also expresses the condition of women in this social system, and tries to demonstrate how they are excluded from all areas that prevent them from having a voice. Although many woman characters exist in the novel, their presence is suppressed under the dominance of the male characters. They are the ones who go to the college, gain a qualified education, and have a job. In chapters which deal with Jacob's college education, the reader never encounters with a woman student in Jacob's group of friends. The woman characters of the novel are mostly uneducated housewives, prostitutes, or the girls whose social lives consist of only house and domestic works. Even in Bonamy's homosexuality, Woolf reflects the exclusion of women: "It was to Bonamy that Jacob wrote from Patras – to Bonamy who couldn't love a woman and never read a foolish book" (2013: 139). Woolf aims to criticize the patriarchal system by expressing female characters as repressed by male dominance, because she herself is a woman who is excluded from this society. Yet, Zwerdling claims that

Woolf's feelings about her exclusion from this world are quite complex. She envies the men their guaranteed success (assuming they follow the rules) while pitying them their lack of freedom. The whole exploratory stage of life through which Jacob is passing is subtly undermined by the preordained, mechanical program he is acting out; and the machinery that would have assured him a place in *Who's Who* sends him off to war instead. In *Jacob's Room*, Woolf describes a 'dozen young men in the prime of life' whose battleship has been hit 'descend with composed faces into the depths of the sea; and there impassively (though with perfect mastery of machinery) suffocate uncomplainingly together' (p. 155). (1981: 905)

The social system provides opportunities and privileges to males while shaping them with a pre-determined order. What Woolf tries to show is how these young men are educated for a purpose and victimized for the sake of the system, and the country, by writing an elegy for a generation. The lives of youth are worthless and serve for a purpose. That is why she does not assign any significance and value to the short life of Jacob, and his death at the end. His total absence, incomplete characterization, and

insignificance throughout the novel represent the unessential presence of youth for the system, and their futile annihilation and victimization.

The 20th century modernist novel separates itself from the previous traditional novel both with its thematic and structural features. However, *Jacob's Room*, which is one of the modernist novels of the 20th century, has a special place among its kind with its distinct form besides its thematic structure. As we have mentioned before, the novel is considered as Virginia Woolf's first work, on which she tried her extraordinary, unusual, and experimental style. She intends to create a unique form by making some specific changes centred basically on these three structural elements of novel: plot, narrator, and characterization. In this sense, *Jacob's Room* is not only different from the previous type of novel tradition, but also from Woolf's first two novels before *Jacob's Room*.

To begin with the plot of *Jacob's Room*, it can be said that the novel lacks a complete and ordered plot structure. It starts with an abrupt beginning, with Mrs Flanders' words she writes to her letter. However, the writer does not provide any information about what she is talking about. The abrupt beginning and the lack of information can also be observed clearly at the first paragraph of Chapter 3:

‘This is not a smoking-carriage,’ Mrs Norman protested, nervously but feebly, as the door swung open and a powerfully built young man jumped in. he seemed not to hear her. The train did not stop before it reached Cambridge, and here she was shut up alone, in a railway carriage, with a young man. (Woolf, 2013: 25)

Who is Mrs Norman? Who is this young man? The questions arise in the reader's mind, however, without giving any answer the writer describes the moment in detail and after one and a half pages later she prefers to reveal that the young man is Jacob Flanders, but she never tells who Mrs Norman is. She creates a scene with intense descriptions to evoke the reader's imagination, however, she suddenly destroys it and jumps into another moment of the story, which I believe disturbs the reader's imagination process and makes it difficult to follow the narrator. Consequently, it becomes impossible for the writer to construct a unity of plot and action. The novel is full of sudden shifts and changes in time, place, and action, which Woolf does

intentionally. Again in Chapter 3, Jacob's thoughts about the service in King's College Chapel and the women taking part in it are presented to the reader in a long paragraph, and the next paragraph suddenly begins with a moment of a Sunday lunch time with many people (ibid., 28). When and how many days later has he gone there? There are such gaps between the shifts of time and place throughout the novel, and this causes a kind of fragmentariness and incompleteness. In this sense, Alex Zwerdling summarizes Woolf's style as following:

The style of *Jacob's Room* is that of the sketchbook artist rather than the academic painter. Scenes are swiftly and allusively outlined, not filled in, the essential relationships between characters intimated in brief but typical vignettes chosen seemingly at random from their daily lives: a don's luncheon party at Cambridge, a day spent reading in the British Museum, a walk with a friend. No incident is decisive or fully developed. Nothing is explained or given significance. The narrative unit is generally two or three pages long and not obviously connected to the one before or after. The effect is extremely economical and suggestive but at the same time frustrating for an audience trained to read in larger units and look for meaning and coherence. All of this was innovative, as Woolf's first readers saw. (1981: 895)

Woolf uses this unusual technique in order to create a more effective atmosphere to transfer her modernist point of view and themes to the reader. The significance of the ordinariness of our lives and moments pushes her to focus on the most realistic side of life. She wants to show that in real life we cannot obtain information about everything around us, and there is no one to explain the things that remain unknown, like a narrator. That is why she does not provide all the information about the characters and events, and has a fragmented style which works together with the thematic structure of the novel. After all, she wants to write a novel that serves the life itself to the reader.

Apart from the plot, Virginia Woolf constructs her novel by reorganizing the role of the narrator. Narrator is one of the most important components of a novel's structure, and it has the potential of determining the novel's process and characteristics. In *Jacob's Room*, Woolf appoints a peculiar task to the narrator

which carries her idea of modernist fiction. As she recurrently uses the notion of absence, lack of information, and fragmentariness in the novel's thematic structure and plot, she applies the same ideas on her narrator. In most parts of the novel, she continues the omniscient narrator tradition, in which the narrator has the authority and can know and see everything thus, can freely move in time and place, makes predictions about the future fate of the characters, and indicates his/her personal opinions on a situation. "Jacob, getting off his omnibus, loitered up the steps, consulted his watch, and finally made up his mind to go in.... Does it need an effort? Yes. These changes of mood wear us out" (Woolf, 2013: 62). Here, the authority of the narrator is the most remarkable, for s/he emphasizes his/her authority by asking a question, providing an answer to it, and suggests his/her own point about changing moods. It is also noteworthy that the word 'us' adds a more personal inclination to narration. Although Woolf rarely consults her stream of consciousness technique in this novel, her narrator sometimes gets in the characters' minds again by using its authority. "'So that's all? Well, a gloomy old place.... Where's Nelson's tomb? No time now-come again-a coin to leave in the box.... Rain or fine is it? Well, if it would only make up its mind!' " (ibid., 63). The quotation exhibits that the omniscient narrator reveals Jacob's mind and instant thoughts, because it has the control and freedom to access the minds.

Nonetheless, the novel gains the characteristics of the modernist fiction at the point where Woolf alters the narrator's position considering its authority. In some parts of the novel, the narrator suddenly gives up its authoritative power and turns into some kind of narrator, an ordinary person who possesses a limited vision and knowledge. Clearness and complete knowledge leave their place to absence, ordinariness, ambiguity, and uncertainty. For instance, in Chapter 3 the narrator's mode changes by creating gaps of information and expresses the idea that its vision is limited:

Was it to receive this gift from the past that the young man came to the window and stood there, looking out across the court? It was Jacob. He stood smoking his pipe while the last stroke of the clock purred softly round him. *Perhaps* there had been an argument. He looked satisfied; indeed masterly; which expression changed

slightly as he stood there, the sound of the clock conveying to him (*it may be*) a sense of old buildings and time; (...). (ibid., 40) [Italics mine]

The writer intentionally chooses the words “perhaps” and “may be” to produce the sense of doubt, and to show that things are not always known and explained, or we cannot fully get to know a person, as in real life.

Woolf ruins the novel’s unity and order by creating a contradiction with these two kinds of narrators. With the non-omniscient narrator, the reader’s questions and expectations from the writer remain unanswered. By doing this, the writer puts the reader in an active position to find answers on their own, or does not care whether they find the answers or not, which can be related to Roland Barthes’ idea of “writerly fiction” that he introduces in *S/Z*. Woolf’s approach explains her concept of modernist fiction and her aim to change the novel tradition by building a new one.

Kathleen Wall makes a detailed examination of Virginia Woolf’s narrative style in *Jacob’s Room*, and identifies Woolf’s point of using these two kinds of narrators, particularly the non-omniscient one. She calls it as the “character-focalizer”, and explains its function as below:

But the narrator’s care in examining the various kinds of limitations that bedevil her full knowledge of characters’ behaviour and motives suggests that Woolf’s broader purpose is to explore and exemplify the epistemological crisis of authority that in part characterizes modernism. The character-focalizer is aware of all the perspectival limitations on our knowledge of our world – of the ways in which our feelings distort our vision; of the fact that, looking at others, we see ourselves and our own expectations; of the way our distance from a scene dictates what we see; of our need to rely upon the experience of others to fill in the gaps created by our inability to be in more than one place at a time. (2002: 310)

The limitations in our vision, knowledge, and knowing a person designate our nature, our existence in the world. The novel expresses this unknowable aspects and details of our lives by attributing a special purpose to the detached non-omniscient narrator. Its limitation in the novel is very obvious especially when Jacob and Florinda come

to Jacob's room, enter the bedroom and shut the door behind them. The narrator stays out. It no longer can depict what is going on behind the door, for it is closed. It is crucial to state that the door here symbolizes the narrator's, and our limited access to knowledge. Again in another chapter towards the end, when Jacob and Sandra are walking around Acropolis, the narrator states that "[t]hey had vanished. There was the Acropolis; but had they reached it?" (Woolf, 2013:160-161). The narrator does not provide an answer. The mystery behind the question is just one of those infinite moments that remain unknown in real life, as Woolf tries to demonstrate.

Lastly, I want to point out Virginia Woolf's characterization technique in *Jacob's Room*. She clearly presents her protagonist Jacob with the novel's title. Interestingly, contrary to the idea of absence and ambiguity that Woolf widely uses throughout the novel, the title carries a very simple and clear meaning that explains the novel's content to some extent. However, although the title apparently propounds the main character, the writer's idiosyncratic style changes the situation when the reader witnesses the gaps within the characterization of Jacob. She intentionally never fully describes Jacob's appearance and personality; instead, she assigns this duty to other characters – mostly women. That is to say, the writer deliberately reveals Jacob's character by revealing other minor characters' impressions and descriptions of him. Here, we will attempt to unfold a complete description of Jacob by combining all minor characters' remarks of Jacob upon meeting him from the beginning to the end of the novel.

Not until the Chapter 3, the reader has an idea of Jacob's appearance, how he looks like. For the first time the writer provides a description of Jacob, who is nineteen, but from the eyes of Mrs Norman, in a train carriage: "powerfully built young man" (ibid., 25). She continues her impression on him:

Taking note of socks (loose), of tie (shabby), she once more reached his face. She dwelt upon his mouth. The lips were shut. The eyes bent down, since he was reading. All was firm, yet youthful, indifferent, unconscious – as for knocking one down! (...) then he fixed his eyes – which were blue – on the landscape. (ibid., 26)

Then comes Mrs Durrant's opinion about him as "extraordinarily awkward (...) [y]et so distinguished looking" (ibid., 58). The remarks are intensified especially in Chapter 5:

Mrs Durrant again: "distinction", "distinguished-looking", "extremely awkward", "[t]here was something in the shape of his hands which indicated taste", "[t]hen his mouth – but surely, of all futile occupations this of cataloguing features is the worst" (ibid., 68).

Clara Durrant writes in her diary: "[h]e is so unworldly", "frightening" (ibid., 68).

Julia Eliot: "the silent young man", "[i]f he is going to get on in the world, he will have to find his tongue" (ibid., 69).

Betty Flanders: "clumsy in the house" (ibid., 69).

Two dancers in the celebration party: "the most beautiful man we have ever seen" (ibid., 73).

Florinda: "like one of those statues in the British Museum", "such a good man" (ibid., 78).

Fanny Elmer: "awkward", "beautiful voice", "little and firm he speaks" (ibid., 116).

Sandra Wentworth Williams: "very distinguished looking" (ibid., 145).

These characters' impressions about Jacob throughout the novel expose and summarize Jacob's personality, which the author avoids to reveal directly. The reader concludes about Jacob that he is a silent, attractive, extraordinary, awkward, well-built, and blue-eyed man, who is fond of literature. Woolf could describe Jacob in one sentence like this; however, her modernist characterization technique produces such fragmented and incomplete characterization process. Her aim in doing this is to show that in real life, our impressions on someone determine the way we know and recognize that person and they are both not enough and deceptive to know his/her real character. It is impossible to know a personality with its whole aspects. That is why Woolf deliberately creates and exhibits Jacob's personality as deficient and a mystery. In the following paragraph taken from the novel, Woolf clearly states her idea of the elusiveness of the reflected or expressed personalities:

But how far was he a mere bumpkin? How far was Jacob Flanders at the age of twenty-six a stupid fellow? It is no use trying to sum people up. One must follow

hints, not exactly what is said, nor yet entirely what is done. Some, it is true, take ineffaceable impressions of character at once. Others dally, loiter, and get blown this way and that. Kind old ladies assure us that cats are often the best judges of character. A cat will always go to a good man, they say; but then, Mrs Whitehorn, Jacob's landlady, loathed cats. (ibid., 154)

Even though *Jacob's Room* has been criticized for departing from the conventions of novel writing, especially in terms of the structure of the novel, and to lack a complete meaning and message, I agree with the idea that it is a successful representative of the modernist fiction thematically and structurally, which is also the first novel that Virginia Woolf applies her experimental modernist technique. After the analysis of the novel as a modernist fiction, in the next section I would like to examine it by applying the elements of the Bildungsroman tradition with its modernist version, which is also the main argument of my thesis, while focusing on the protagonist Jacob's character formation from the beginning to the end of the novel.

3.2 The Formation of Character and Its Thematic Perspectives in *Jacob's Room*

Besides being a representative of the 20th century modernist novel, *Jacob's Room*, in which the protagonist Jacob's life is presented beginning from his early childhood to his young adulthood, can also be classified as a Bildungsroman considering its thematic perspectives. By discussing the thematic elements of the Bildungsroman in relation to the novel, we will disclose the ways in which Woolf follows and deviates from the pattern by following a specific thematic line: (1) childhood and education, (2) youth and university life (3) the experience of love and friendship, (4) the pursuit of the meaning of life, and the theme of journey; and (5) failure or success in completing the formation.

3.2.1 Childhood and Education

In *Jacob's Room*, as in other Bildungsromane, the story of Jacob and his character formation process are presented from their beginnings in childhood. The childhood part covers the first two chapters before he goes to college to Cambridge.

In this part, Woolf follows the theme of childhood as a characteristic of the traditional Bildungsroman by making Jacob a fatherless protagonist. He is raised by his mother together with his two brothers living in countryside, Scarborough. Generally, in a Bildungsroman, the protagonist spends his childhood in a rural place, and the natural environment carries an important role in his first step to his character development before he goes into an urban and larger society after he completes his childhood. In the novel, we first meet Jacob when he is wandering around on the seaside alone, searching and collecting natural objects such as shells, crab, and a skull while her mother and brother are searching for him. Here, the author actually gives the very first hint of his personality, by demonstrating him as a person who likes to be alone in nature, and becomes happy, which also immediately reminds the reader the time when Jacob feels a great happiness in his journey to Greece, walking alone through the historical places and nature. Woolf gives another hint of his personality related to nature when Captain Barfoot asks for Jacob to give him a letter, and Mrs Flanders replies as “Jacob is after his butterflies as usual” (Woolf, 2013: 23). Instead of demonstrating Jacob every time he goes after butterflies to reveal his relationship with nature, Woolf prefers to use just one sentence dictated by his mother to give the idea without losing the intensity of meaning that the author tries to transfer to the reader.

Another point that should be included in the childhood of the protagonist in a Bildungsroman is his first experience of gaining education. In the 19th century Bildungsromane, the character generally begins to have a formal education, sometimes in boarding schools, which is considered as the first stage of his spiritual formation, while at the same time maintaining his self-education related to his personal interests. However, unlike in the Victorian Bildungsroman literary pattern, in *Jacob's Room* the protagonist is never introduced as having an institutionalized education until he leaves home for his college education at the age of nineteen. The only part Virginia Woolf refers to Jacob's education in his childhood is as below:

‘Oh, bother Mr Floyd!’ said Jacob, switching off a thistle’s head, for he knew already that Mr Floyd was going to teach them Latin, as indeed he did for three years in his spare time, out of kindness, for there was no other gentleman in the

neighbourhood whom Mrs Flanders could have asked to do such a thing, and the elder boys were getting beyond her, and must be got ready for school (...), and Mr Floyd, like his father before him, visited cottages miles away on the moors, and, like old Mr Floyd, was a great scholar, which made it so unlikely – she had never dreamt of such a thing. (ibid., 14)

Even though the author does not indicate anything related to Jacob's formal education, it seems like she does not want to skip the education stage in the childhood process while creating her modernist Bildungsroman, and presents Jacob as having Latin courses from Mr Floyd, which can be classified as an informal education, unlike the 19th century Victorian Bildungsroman.

It is also important to state that society and its moral codes which have a strong influence on the protagonist's maturation and formation in the realistic Bildungsroman, do not have any presence in *Jacob's Room* as a modernist novel. The author never mentions about the social order and the society that Jacob lives in throughout his childhood. Considering the fact that in the realistic Bildungsromane the educational institutions are the first places where the child protagonists are introduced to social and moral rules, the lack of the presentation of the formal education in Jacob's childhood which we have mentioned in the previous paragraph can be connected to the idea that the modernist novels do not deal with the social structures that shape the maturation process of the character.

In the part which includes Jacob's childhood, Virginia Woolf does not provide a detailed description of his childhood moments. Instead, she blends the bits and pieces of his childhood with the natural descriptions, and some parts of lives of the other characters including Betty Flanders. By not following a specific order and not focusing only on Jacob while telling this part of Jacob's life, Woolf deviates from the traditional pattern and applies her modernist technique of narration, which promotes the notion of fragmentariness.

In *Jacob's Room* as a modernist Bildungsroman, it can be asserted that in the childhood process of the protagonist, the author both follows and diverges from the traditional literary pattern of Bildungsroman. By creating an orphan character that

grows up in a rural and natural environment, she exhibits a proper prototype of a Bildungsroman hero. However, she distorts the concepts of education and the influence of society on the protagonist; thereby she separates her literary type and technique from the realist novel.

3.2.2 Youth and University Life

The childhood period of the protagonist ends and he becomes a young man required to leave his local environment and home to continue his professional education or apprenticeship in a larger society where he takes his first steps towards the real life which is full of ordeals. Jacob, like all other Bildungsroman heroes, completes his childhood and begins his university education at Cambridge, a larger urban city, as a nineteen year-old young man. In the realist Bildungsromane, generally the hero's departure from his home is triggered by some reasons such as the pain of losing someone, anger, dissatisfaction, or the need for having a social status in a bigger society. However, in *Jacob's Room* as a modernist Bildungsroman, no specific reason for Jacob's departure is provided except for his college education. The author makes a quick shift from the childhood period to the young adulthood by using just one sentence without any former implication on his departure: "Jacob Flanders, therefore, went up to Cambridge in October, 1906" (Woolf, 2013: 24).

The reader can sense the change in Jacob's personality and the maturation he is passing through as he grows up. His childish and inexperienced habits leave their places to more serious issues, as in Chapter 3 he questions women's place in King's College Chapel:

But this service in King's College Chapel- why allow women to take part in it? Surely, if the mind wanders (and Jacob looked extraordinarily vacant, his head thrown back, his hymn-book open at the wrong place), if the mind wanders it is because several hat shops and cupboards upon cupboards of coloured dresses are displayed upon rush-bottomed chairs. (...) So do these women – though separately devout, distinguished, and vouched for by the theology, mathematics, Latin, and Greek of their husbands. Heaven knows why it is. For one thing, thought Jacob, they're as ugly as sin. (ibid., 28)

Woolf presents Jacob, who is a young man now, in a different social environment consisting of elderly people or his class mates, talking about social, political, or daily matters and sharing their own ideas. She illustrates a scene from a Sunday lunch with the Durrant family and other guests, in which she clearly reveals Jacob's realization of the things he has lost upon his maturation from childhood to youth, his changing environment, and she presents the condition of youth in a world in which they have to find their own ways and build a life for themselves:

Anyhow, whether undergraduate or shop boy, man or woman, it must come as a shock about the age of twenty – the world of the elderly – thrown up in such black outline upon what we are; upon the reality; the moors and Byron; the sea and the lighthouse; the sheep's jaw with the yellow teeth in it; upon the obstinate irrepressible conviction which makes youth so intolerably disagreeable – 'I am what I am, and intend to be it,' for which there will be no form in the world unless Jacob makes one for himself. (...) Every time he lunches out on Sunday – at dinner parties and tea parties – there will be this same shock – horror – discomfort – then pleasure, for he draws into him at every step as he walks by the river such steady certainty, such reassurance from all sides, the trees bowing, the grey spires soft in the blue (...), whatever it is that gives the May air its potency, blurring the trees, gumming the buds, daubing the green. (ibid., 31)

It is also noteworthy that Virginia Woolf evidently discloses the difference between Jacob's childhood and youth and his formation process by reflecting his mind and thoughts within a disparate approach. While Woolf rarely opens Jacob's mind and thoughts to the reader in his childhood period, in his years of youth, she intentionally begins to give more attention on exposing his thoughts in order to demonstrate his intellectual and spiritual maturation.

University education plays a significant role in establishing a philosophy of life and an intellectual vision in the formation process of the protagonists of the 19th century Bildungsromane. In *Jacob's Room* Virginia Woolf follows this pattern while creating her Bildungsroman hero, and Jacob as well, is presented as a more developed, educated, and intellectual young man in his university years. However, as in the first two chapters which cover Jacob's childhood, the author again seems to be

distant to the theme of education, which is related to the social structure in the realist Bildungsroman. She does not even clearly states what field Jacob is studying on, except for indicating frequently his deep interest on literature throughout the novel. She illustrates university life and friendship, and Jacob's expanding social environment also by adding new characters as the novel progresses, and his relationship with society as an important aspect of the Bildungsroman tradition.

3.2.3 The Experience of Love and Friendship

Besides the fact that the Victorian Bildungsroman tradition focuses on a specific individual and his formation process which ends up with a success or failure, his interactions and relationship with other individuals have a special significance in establishing his own philosophy of life and making sense of his existence in society. In this respect, *Jacob's Room* can be elucidated as a Bildungsroman which mirrors the main character's relationship with his friends and his emotional experiences.

Beginning from Jacob's college years to other stages of his life until his death, Timothy Durrant has been presented as Jacob's closest friend with whom he shares most of his experiences. They sail together to Scilly Isles, while having conversations on different subjects. The author uses Timothy and his other friends as vehicles to expose Jacob's ideological perspectives and thoughts as he shares his opinions with his friends, instead of narrating them directly by using the omniscient narrator. Besides Timothy, Jacob gains more friends as his environment changes and expands, such as Richard Bonamy, Edward Cruttendon, Mallinson and Jinny Carslake, whom he meets in France. Yet, unlike the influence of friends on the protagonist in his maturation that exists in the 19th century Bildungsromane, Woolf ignores the pattern in her modernist novel. She includes the element of friendship; anyhow she does not devote any significance on it. It is obvious that Jacob's friendships do not contribute anything to his personality and do not have any effect on Jacob's decisions. He does not consult anyone while deciding on something although he has friends around him. As I have pointed out before that Jacob is detached from the reader because of the fragmentariness of the novel, he is also detached from his friends and environment although he seems to have a connection

to them. He talks to them, he writes to them while he is travelling, but he is always alone.

In the realist Bildungsromane, falling in love is an important stage in the protagonist's spiritual and emotional development. Generally, the hero experiences mostly two love affairs, of which the first one ends in disappointment and pain. Sometimes the situation causes the hero's departure from his homeland to heal himself and form his identity, and the second one makes him have an epiphany and distinguish the good and bad. In *Jacob's Room* as a modernist Bildungsroman, Virginia Woolf adopts the theme of love, however, by distorting the tradition again. Contrary to the realist Bildungsroman, the emotional experience does not have any influential role in Jacob's formation in Woolf's novel. As she does in applying other thematic elements of the Bildungsroman tradition, she puts the pattern but leaves it empty or altered. She presents Jacob as having love affairs with different women such as Clara, Florinda, Fanny, and Sandra; however, neither of them is strong enough to influence Jacob in his self-development. Like everything else in the novel, they are incomplete and fragmented.

It can be asserted that Virginia Woolf exhibits different types of woman who have emotional relationship with Jacob. The first woman that Jacob falls in love, Clara, is illustrated as a domestic house girl. Even if she seems like an appropriate woman to marry, they could not maintain their relationship. Unlike Clara, Florinda is depicted as a loose girl, with whom Jacob has a sexual intercourse, but does not continue to see her, either. Then he meets Fanny, who deals with painting and art. Fanny is deeply impressed by Jacob; however, Jacob could not develop an emotional response to her feelings. Lastly, in his trip to Greece, he meets a married woman named Sandra and falls in love with her. They do not establish a relationship except for short trips to the historical places in Athens together, and Jacob turns back to England.

It is very obvious that although Jacob involves in many love affairs, the author never mentions his thoughts and plans on marriage. As a social institution, marriage does not have any presence in the novel, which is a supportive proof of the modernist

novel's approach to the idea of social concern. In the Victorian Bildungsroman, the relationship with the opposite sex should lead the character to a suitable marriage that fits into social norms and values which can also be related to the protagonist's successful formation; nevertheless, in *Jacob's Room*, Jacob's relationships do not lead him to anywhere, or have any significance in his formation process, which actually ends up with a failure.

3.2.4 The Pursuit of the Meaning of Life and the Theme of Journey

As a necessity of the contextual structure of the Bildungsroman literary tradition, in order to reach a successful formation the hero is supposed to find his own path in the social order depending on his experiences, mistakes, and sufferings. This path, which is guided by social demands and rules, takes him to the success or failure of his self-development as the final stage of maturation. While moving along in this path, the Bildungsroman hero tries to make his life meaningful and to find his place in society.

The modernist Bildungsroman which alters the conventional pattern of the realist Bildungsroman does not allow society and social expectations to lead the protagonist to his formation. In this respect, Jacob's individual development should be examined within the frame of a modernist approach.

We hypothesize that as a Bildungsroman hero, Jacob's deviation from traditional society-centred Bildungsroman starts with his early interest in literature. In his every stage of life, he is always presented as connected to literature and books, namely in his conversations, in his room, and in his spare time. To Jacob, literature becomes a place to escape from people, from society. He tries to find his identity and his existence in books, and assimilates himself from society. In this regard, he refuses the social guidance by designating himself as his own guide, and tries to achieve his self-cultivation by being alone, and going distant places, which also emphasizes the idea of individuality in modernist literature. In Greece, he realizes the moment he feels happiest, as alone and isolated: "And though Jacob remained gloomy he had never suspected how tremendously pleasant it is to be alone; out of England; on one's own, cut off from the whole thing" (Woolf, 2013: 140). Although throughout

the novel he participates in different social groups and classes, his spiritual isolation and direction towards his intellectual and artistic development determine his self-sufficiency by rejecting social codes.

The theme of journey is another influential factor in protagonist's road to his self-accomplishment, which represents both physical and spiritual journey. A journey is always full of new experiences and adventures, therefore becomes a good opportunity for the author to create the atmosphere of formation for the Bildungsroman hero. In the realist Bildungsroman, the hero is tested by social and moral values during his physical and spiritual journey proceeded to his complete maturation, while in the modernist one the concept of journey acquires a more symbolic and essential meaning.

In *Jacob's Room*, although Jacob's journey commences the time when he leaves his homeland, on the whole, his trip to Greece determines the crucial meaning and function of the theme of journey in the novel. Until he decides to go to Greece, Jacob's interest in ancient Greece and classics is hinted beginning from his college years. In his room there are "books enough, (...) a Greek dictionary with the petals of poppies pressed to silk between the pages (...). Then there were photographs from the Greeks, and a mezzotint from Sir Joshua – all very English" (ibid., 34). Considering Virginia Woolf's reflection on antiquity and Greek literature, it would not be surprising to come across this significant paragraph that reflects both Woolf's and Jacob's sympathy for antique literature, which is expressed through a conversation between Jacob and Timmy:

The Greeks – yes, that was what they talked about – how when all's said and done, when one's rinsed one's mouth with every literature in the world, including Chinese and Russian (but these Slavs aren't civilized), it is the flavour of Greek that remains. (...) Civilizations stood round them like flowers ready for picking. Ages lapped at their feet like waves fit for sailing. And surveying all this, looming through the fog, the lamplight, the shades of London, the two young men decided in favour of Greece.

‘Probably,’ said Jacob, ‘we are the only people in the world who know what the Greeks meant’. (ibid., 74)

Jacob’s travel to Greece uncovers the main perspective of the novel, as the perception of modern life and its effects on human in modernist fiction, and also the idea of self-achievement as a thematic component of the Bildungsroman tradition. By going to Greece, Jacob symbolically escapes from modern and metropolitan city life to an ancient place where the first civilization of humanity flourished. The author delivers an obvious message by contrasting modernity and antiquity, where antiquity is glorified: “Though the opinion is unpopular it seems likely enough that bare places, fields too thick with stones to be ploughed, tossing sea-meadows half-way between England and America, suit us better than cities” (ibid., 144). She integrates the idea of the superiority of antiquity with Jacob’s admiration of Greece by making it the most meaningful part of his life. He reflects his enthusiasm and adoration of the place in his letter to Bonamy during his journey: “I intend to come to Greece every year so long as I live. It is the only chance I can see of protecting oneself from civilization” (ibid., 145-146). We believe that this is a crucial part in the novel considering the notion of formation that is presumed to be completed in the Bildungsroman. Woolf clarifies the value that Jacob grants for his life by exhibiting his happiness in Greece as if he finds the true place to live and his purpose. Regarding the idea of individuality as a thematic approach of the modernist novel, Greece appears to be the place where Jacob can complete his individual achievement. However, as a prerequisite of the modernist Bildungsroman, the failure of the hero and the distortion of the tradition, Woolf does not let her character complete his formation and self-achievement and bestows him an early death, by intentionally reflecting his ironic words upon his intention of visiting there every year as long as he is alive (ibid., 145).

3.2.5 Failure or Success in Completing the Formation

To remember the main concern of the modernist Bildungsroman while determining the fate of the protagonist at the end of the formation process will be helpful to analyse Jacob’s condition with regards to his development. The

modernists' rejection of the traditional type of fiction which deals with the social concern and the idea that the social and moral didacticism should be included in the works of literature is reflected as a kind of criticism in their fiction. For this purpose they apply to the Bildungsroman literary tradition which originally belongs to the Victorian period and regard it as an appropriate platform to make the critique of the realists' perspective; because the Bildungsroman pictures an individual's exposure to the social influence in every stage of his life.

The notion of social power in the modernist fiction operates as a handicap for the protagonist of the Bildungsroman to achieve a successful formation, instead of being a substructure that provides him a social status. Because the condition of man in society gains a totally different perspective in the 20th century, which is presented as individuality, alienation, and assimilation of human from social structure. Therefore, the desires and goals of the individual that are needed for his self-cultivation contradict with the demands of society, and this causes his failure in completing the anticipated formation.

At the end of the novel, the consequence of Jacob's maturation in terms of success or failure should be examined in two different perspectives considering the social and subjective accomplishments. These two opposite perspectives exhibit how Jacob responds to the demands of society and his personal goals within a critical approach to the realistic fiction.

Considering the social aspect, Jacob's interaction with society and social institutions is deliberately excluded and ignored throughout the novel. As it has been argued in previous parts, Woolf dismisses certain elements of Bildungsroman that are related to social power, and focuses on Jacob's personal desires and inner world. Jacob is not able to maintain a stable connection in his relationship with his environment, love affairs, experience of job and so on. As a prototype of a modern man, he is presented as obscure, insignificant, and assimilated from society, who goes after his own objectives. Thus, he becomes so unimportant and meaningless for the society that his death in war does not signify anything. It is also noteworthy that by not establishing a permanent relation to anything in his life, Jacob seems like to

be aware of his temporary existence in this modern, chaotic, and disordered civilization.

Woolf makes another social criticism about the World War I and the country's attitude towards the war by sending young lives to death. Her vision that society and its rules are obstructions for the individual freedom makes sense when Jacob's early death at war is contemplated as an end of his future complete formation. Unlike other war poets and writers of the period that glorify war and refer it as "heroic", Virginia Woolf treats the issue in her novels as tragic as a modernist writer as Christine Froula states; "[t]he First World War inspired the modernists not to heroic mythmaking but to a critical unmaking" (2005: 66). By focusing on Jacob's death at war, she also asserts that;

Woolf does not tell Jacob's story but unwrites it to expose the social forces that initiate him into masculinity and leave him dead on the battlefield. What facilitates this deconstructed bildungsroman is the fact that the war story evoked by Jacob Flanders' very name did not have to be told in 1922, for (as Lucrezia Warren Smith says) 'Every one has friends who were killed in the War' (*MD* 66). Leaving 'character-mongering' to the 'gossips,' the essayist-narrator frames Jacob's life and death not as a unique and personal story but as that of a generation. (*ibid.*, 70)

Jacob eventually becomes a victim of the social order, and his death in war can be interpreted as his failure that prevents him visiting Greece every year, which is an ideal place for his escape from the modern civilization. He finds his purpose, but the war and his refusal of integration into social entities provide the basis for his failure as a Bildungsroman hero.

As for Jacob Flanders, he is at once an elusive being no net of words can capture and – delivered by his education to a modern war that overwhelms individual will – a puppet moved hither and thither by fate, one of the war dead, a ghost. As Rachel Vinrace dies in a battle to bring to light civilization's hidden 'truth,' Jacob dies in the gap between founding ideal of European civilization – summed up as the 'Greek myth' or 'illusion' – and modern barbarity (*JR* 137, 138). Through the deaths of their young protagonists, these companion pieces of the modernist bildungsroman suggest that to learn to read the modern novel is to become aware

of the hidden forces that drive modern lives; that to witness the life and death of the puppet or ghost its pages pursue may be in some sense to save one's own. (ibid., 64)

By considering the individualist approach of modernism which highlights the individual freedom over abiding the social restrictions, Jacob's situation can be interpreted within a different outlook. Although his death symbolizes his failure that interrupts his maturation process, I believe that by being able to discover his goal and the meaning of his short life, Jacob gains a victory over society that tries to devour him into its powerful mechanism and achieves his first stage of the successful formation.

Throughout the novel, Jacob is always in search for a better society instead of the modern one that he lives in. Starting from his early readings and interest in Greek and antique civilization and literature, antiquity becomes for him superior to the modern civilization:

'You ought to have been in Athens,' he would say to Bonamy when he got back. 'Standing on the Parthenon,' he would say, or 'The ruins of the Coliseum suggest some fairly sublime reflections,' which he would write out at length in letters. It might turn to an essay upon civilization. A comparison between the ancients and moderns, with some pretty sharp hits at Mr Asquith – something in the style of Gibbon.

A stout gentleman laboriously hauled himself in, dusty, baggy, slung with gold chains, and Jacob, regretting that he did not come of the Latin race, looked out of the window. (Woolf, 2013:135)

He turns back from his journey with a sense of happiness of fulfilment, but either way, his death in war as a victim of the modern civilization renders his formation a failure.

In many ways, *Jacob's Room* is a significant novel which represents Virginia Woolf's and all other modernist novelists' attitude towards modern life and modern civilization's enforcement upon individuals. However, *Jacob's Room* diverges from other modernist novels by adopting the Bildungsroman tradition which originates

from the 19th century dominated by the realist movement while reversing the tradition and criticising the conventions of that period. Thus, Jacob becomes the key element by being a Bildungsroman hero whose formation and development process is investigated beginning from his childhood, but ends up with a tragic failure.

CONCLUSION

In English literature, there have been many stimuli which have a direct influence on the birth of the Victorian Bildungsroman. Thomas Carlyle's translation of *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, written by Goethe, is the first step of the introduction of the trend in Britain. Then, the effects of other literary forms which have already existed before Bildungsroman, including picaresque novel and Romantic Movement, provide a proper environment for the rise of the Victorian Bildungsroman. On the other hand, Carlyle's own novel *Sartor Resartus*, written in the same style with *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, becomes the first example of the Bildungsroman in Britain.

The Victorian Bildungsroman writers express primarily a male character's gradual psychological and physical formation beginning from his early childhood to his adulthood. During his formation process, maturation is necessary for the final accomplishment of his development. At the end of the novel, the character becomes a fully grown up and mature person, who can successfully finish his development, or fails to be able to develop his identity, and could not finish his own self-education.

Usually, the Bildungsroman writers present their novels within an autobiographical or semi-autobiographical structure, in which they insert some fragments of their own lives. This is quite noticeable in Charles Dickens' novels, two of which I've already analysed by considering the autobiographical elements.

The Victorian Bildungsroman possesses a well-developed linear structure, which provides an ease for the reader and the critic of the novels. It has certain major patterns and elements, including thematic and structural order. Most of the

Bildungsroman's characteristics distinguish itself from other similar types of novels, such as picaresque and romantic novels. In the first half of this study, the origins of the Bildungsroman tradition which appears in Germany, and its rise and consolidation in Britain have been executed by indicating the certain thematic and structural characteristics of the Victorian Bildungsroman within the analysis of major Bildungsromane of the 19th century.

By the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, triggered by many social, cultural, and political developments, a new era opens its gates, which focuses on the idea of innovation in every aspect of life. This new era called modernism, initially rejects the domination and the representation of the social concern and moral didacticism of the 19th century fiction, by offering a new kind of literary form. The modernist writers advocate the liberty of the individual free from the social restrictions, while at the same time embracing an innovative form of literature that refuses the idea that the novel writing must be based on certain rules, which to them, impedes the potential of the author in reflecting the true nature of life and human being. Hence, they abandon all kinds of order, social concern and moral didacticism, by principally concentrating on the individual experience, inner world of the character, and the ordinariness of everyday life.

As a way of criticism of the realist fiction, Virginia Woolf, one of the chief modernist writers, chooses to adopt the Bildungsroman tradition in her *Jacob's Room*; however, she does so by reversing and distorting the convention. Her novel covers the main character Jacob's life beginning from his childhood to his young adulthood which ends up with his death in war. As a modernist experimental novel, *Jacob's Room* reflects the characteristics of this type of fiction, including the ordinariness, daily life, fragmentariness, non-linearity, ambiguity, and absence. The basic features of the modernist novel have been disclosed in this study, while examining them by comparing to the characteristics of the 19th century realist fiction regarding the character representation strategies and adaptation of the Bildungsroman tradition.

Within the frame of the Bildungsroman, in the novel Woolf can be observed while both abiding and diverging from the classical pattern. In this study, the main target has been to detect in which ways the novel continues the tradition and deviates it. By specifying certain thematic elements of the novel, which are also common with the Bildungsroman, such as childhood, education, friendship, emotional experience, determination of the philosophy of life, and success or failure at the end, Jacob's maturation and formation process have been studied. Finally, it has been concluded that the modern civilization and social restrictions victimize Jacob by sending him to death which is resulted with his failure in his incomplete formation; however, by discovering his ideal place for his escape from the modern life, he is able to achieve his individual desire but unable to maintain it because of his death at a young age.

This study provides the readers with a basic knowledge of the Bildungsroman tradition, its rise and consolidation in Britain, the characteristics of modernism and modernist fiction. Moreover, it can be also a guide to the examination of the Bildungsromane written in the 20th century other than *Jacob's Room*, and to the comprehension of the possibility of the continuation of the traditional literary types by adapting them according to the patterns of the present literary movements.

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