

ÇANKAYA UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND CULTURAL STUDIES

MASTER THESIS

**THE TRANSFORMATION OF THEORY AND DISCOURSE IN GENDER
ISSUE: THE ENDLESS QUEST FOR SEXUAL IDENTITY FROM
VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN* TO JEANETTE
WINTERSON'S *WRITTEN ON THE BODY*: TWO EXTREMES OF
OPINION**

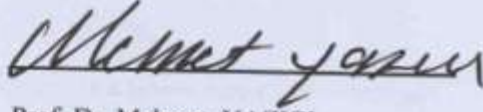
NİMETULLAH ALDEMİR

NOVEMBER 2014

Title of the Thesis : **THE TRANSFORMATION OF THEORY AND DISCOURSE IN GENDER ISSUE: THE ENDLESS QUEST FOR SEXUAL IDENTITY FROM VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN* TO JEANETTE WINTERSON'S *WRITTEN ON THE BODY*: TWO EXTREMES OF OPINION**

Submitted by : **Nimetullah ALDEMİR**

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences English Literature and Cultural studies, Çankaya University.



Prof. Dr. Mehmet YAZICI
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Art.



Prof. Dr. Aysu Aryel ERDEN
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.



Lect. Dr. Bülent AKAT
Supervisor

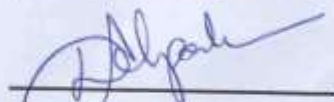
Examination Date: **28.11.2014**

Examining Committee Members

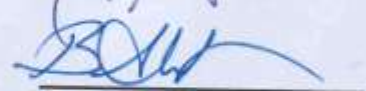
Prof. Dr. Aysu Aryel ERDEN (Çankaya Univ.)



Assist. Prof. Dr. Dürrin Alpakın
MARTINEZ CARO (ODTÜ)



Lect. Dr. Bülent AKAT (Çankaya Univ.)

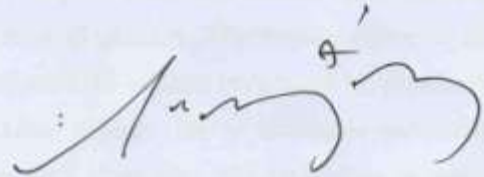


STATEMENT OF NON-PLAGIARISM

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last Name : Nimetullah ALDEMİR

Signature :



Date : 28.11.2014

ABSTRACT

Nimetullah ALDEMİR

M.A, Department of English Literature and Cultural Studies

Supervisor : Lect. Dr. Bülent AKAT

Nov.2014,54 Pages

Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* and Jeanette Winterson's *Written on the Body* are two masterpieces in feminist movement of which the former initiated the First Feminist Phase and the latter put an end to the current gender problem. Both being influential figures of their times, Virginia Woolf advises equal treatment for both sexes, that is only for male and female, while Jeanette Winterson proposes the deconstruction of all genders. The transformation in the theory of gender problem gained speed with the notions introduced by prominent gender theorists like Helene Cixous, Luce Irigaray, Elaine Showalter and Judith Butler. Referring to those theorists and their ideologies, this study aims to mirror the evolution that has taken place during all feminist phases and in what ways the discourses and theories evolved. For that purpose, both *A Room of One's Own* and *Written on the Body* have been analysed in depth to articulate the previous and current debates about the gender dilemma. In this vein, it can be articulated that the momentum of feminist movements has shifted from social rights and equality to more individual themes like reconstructing identity and gender.

Key Words: Feminism, Gender Identity, Virginia Woolf, Jeanette Winterson, Genderlessness, Un-gendered Narrator

ÖZ

Nimetullah ALDEMİR

M.A, İngiliz Edebiyatı ve Kültürel Çalışmalar

Danışman : Dr. Bülent AKAT

Kasım. 2014,54Sayfa

İlk Feminist Akımı'nın başlangıcı olarak kabul edilen Virginia Woolf'un Kendine Ait Bir Oda adlı kitabı ile bugünkü cinsiyet sorununa son noktayı koyan Jeannette Winterson'ın Bedene Yazılmış adlı kitabı feminist harekette iki temel başyapıt olarak görülmektedir. Buldukları çağın iki etkin yazarı olarak, Woolf erkek ve kadın olarak her iki cinse eşit haklar önerirken, Winterson bütün cinsiyetlerin yıkımını öne sürmüştür. Cinsiyet problemi teorilerindeki bu değişim, Helene Cixous, Luce Irigaray, Elaine Showalter ve Judith Butler gibi başlıca toplumsal cinsiyet kuramcıları ve onların görüşleriyle hız kazanmıştır. Bu kuramcı ve düşüncelerine atıfta bulunarak, bu çalışmanın amacı tüm feminist akımlarda gözlenen evrimin hangi söylem ve kuramlarla geliştiğini göstermektir. Bu amaçla, hem Kendine Ait Bir Oda hem de Bedene Yazılmış adlı kitaplar, geçmiş ve günümüzdeki toplumsal cinsiyet ile ilgili ikilemlere ışık tutmak için derinlemesine analiz edilmiştir. Bu doğrultuda söylenebilir ki, feminist hareketlerin itici gücü, toplumsal hak ve eşitlikten kimlik ve cinsiyetin yeniden inşası gibi daha bireysel temalara kaymıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler : Feminizm, Cinsiyet Kimliği, Virginia Woolf, Jeanette Winterson, Cinsiyetsizlik, Cinsiyetsiz Aktarıcı

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my advisor Dr. Bülent AKAT, I am extremely grateful and indebted to him for his expert, sincere and valuable guidance and encouragement extended to me. I also would like to thank my committee members Professor Aysu Aryel ERDEN and Assist. Prof. Dr. Dürrin Alpakın MARTINEZ CARO, without their persistent help and guidance this thesis would not have been possible.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to Dr. Mustafa KIRCA for raising awareness on gender roles and thus pulling me to such a distinctive scope.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Sayfa No

STATEMENT OF NON-PLAGIARISM	ii
ABSTRACT	iv
ÖZ	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTERS:	
I. GENDER IN EVOLUTION: THE COURSE OF FEMINIST MOVEMENT AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND.....	4
The ‘First’ Awakening.....	6
Second Wave Feminisim	9
The Post-Structuralist Interpretation of Women: The Third Wave Feminism .	12
II. HE LITERARY EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN: A ROOM OF ONE’S OWN	21
III. THE POSTMODERN COMMAND OF GENDER: THE UN- GENDERED	37
CONCLUSION	49
REFERENCES	51
CURRICULUM VITAE	54

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to explore the evolution of feminist movement in a historical perspective through an analysis of the works of two major feminist writers Virginia Woolf and Jeanette Winterson. Within this context, two prominent works, *A Room of One's Own* by Woolf and *Written on the Body* by Winterson will be delved thoroughly via comparing the ideologies and discourses of their periods.

It is obvious that, these two writers represent the two ends of the feminist theory while the former stands for the accepted, pure, fair and plain side of the movement, the latter presents the outcast, complex, obscure and marginal bit of the feminist movement.

Raised in middle-class family, Virginia Woolf, contrary to the female figures described in her artwork *A Room of One's Own*, had a decent chance of accessing education and literature due to a higher family status compared to the other women of the time. Woolf was a rare example in female literature that could yield literary pieces both on social and financial issues of women at an age when, even, the thought of women literacy was out of question. Therefore, her contribution to feminist literature with *A Room of One's Own* can be seen as the zero line of the women movement.

Jeannette Winterson, on the other hand, is the representative of a terminus in feminist movement in that she propounds the demolition of all genders and thus identities and comes up with the notion of genderless identity. Known to be a lesbian, Winterson, in contrast to Woolf, who is rather indifferent to any other marginal identity, offers a living purified from the constructed identities.

The feminist movement started out with equal treatment of sexes has transformed into an approach based on the rejection of any gender discrimination. In order to gain an insight into the transformation of the gender theory over the course of history, it is essential to provide the theoretical bases of the ideology that began with proto-feminists, developed with suffragists and culminated with queer theorists.

Therefore, in the first chapter entitled “Gender in Evolution: The Course of Feminist Movement and Theoretical Background”, the theories put forward in the course of movement will be illustrated in the chronological order of events. The chapter will encompass the progress of the feminist theory with tiny touches on the influential figures of feminism like Helene Cixous, Luce Irigaray, Elaine Showalter and Judith Butler. While referring to these feminists, the base of almost every feminist, Sigmund Freud and his Psychoanalysis, will be addressed, as well.

In the second chapter entitled “The Literary Emancipation of Women: A Room of One’s Own”, the women issue in the First Wave of Feminism will be explored through the vision of Virginia Woolf. The debates on the ways of discrimination for women, the statelessness of women in social, cultural and political arena, and the formulas to get around these obstacles will also be verbalized to provide an insight of the concerns of the time. Further, Woolf’s artwork will be assayed broadly to back up her ideology via motifs and metaphors she utilized.

The third chapter entitled “The Postmodern Command of Gender: The Un-Gendered” will target the latest inscription of gender issue or the issue of genderless-ness. Upon uttering a few words on the ‘theory of queer’, the chapter will focalize on the intellections that gave birth to theory of queer and un-gendered.

Jeanette Winterson's *Written on the Body* will be probed thereupon to illustrate the present stage of the gender trouble.

Eventually, in the conclusion part, the disputes and discourses of the two writers will be disclosed briefly to manifest the maturation of feminist issue to identity issue wrapping up the arguments accounted in the chapters.

CHAPTER I

GENDER IN EVOLUTION: THE COURSE OF FEMINIST MOVEMENT AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

It is time to effect a revolution in female manners - time to restore to them their lost dignity - and make them, as a part of the human species, labour by reforming themselves to reform the world. It is time to separate unchangeable morals from local manners.” (Wollstonecraft, 1833, p. 47)

It would not have been foreseen in 1792, when Mary Wollstonecraft first spoke out the need for a revolution in the social status of women, that the quest for a reform would still carry on today. The rights that we take for granted today, that is, the right to vote, to own a property, to inherit, to keep and borrow money, to divorce, to keep custody of children, to join cases in court or to become educated have become a painful path for women. Known as the “mother of feminism” or “the first feminist”, Mary Wollstonecraft was the first to seek a way out of the entrapped case of women. She suggested the essentiality of the education for women, preliminarily. Therefore, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* by Mary Wollstonecraft is reputed as the first treatise in an attempt to awake the silent or silenced mass, women. The understandings that women are incapable of reason and that they should not be given the chance to be educated were the main arguments in Wollstonecraft’s *Vindication*. She tackles that the government does not establish an equal opportunity for women to access knowledge and education and furthermore puts a great emphasis on the prejudice that women are limited to their duties at home. Obviously, Wollstonecraft was not unfair to undertake the mission in search for a revolution as it was not long ago when Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the influential Enlightenment Age philosopher,

although contributed to a world-wide intellectual progress, was confining women to housework and suggesting that the only duty of women is to raise, to educate and look after men. In his famous book *Émile, or On Education*, Rousseau makes the most controversial commentary which still draws reaction from the feminist theorists. Rousseau proposes in the book that:

A woman's education must therefore be planned in the relation to man. To be pleasing in his sight, to win his respect and love, to train him in childhood, to tend him in manhood, to counsel and console, to make his life pleasant and happy, these are the duties of woman for all time, and this is what she should be thought while she is young. The further we depart from this principle, the further we shall be from our goal, and all our precepts will fail to secure her happiness of our own. (Rousseau, 2007, p. 342)

Surely, Rousseau's account was applicable at the time that the book was written which means the societal structure was appropriate for such an understanding. It was seen by the patriarchy that the current status of woman, if carried on, would distress the happiness of men. Therefore, it would be irrational to educate them and set them apart from their living space, house. Even more, women should be trained, from earlier ages, to comply with what fathers and husbands say so that they can serve better to their masters. Evidently, even the instance of a working woman was a utopia back then, let alone an educated one. When looked at closely, the perception that women are born to live for the sake of men faced no change even almost a century later, as understood from the lines of well-known English satirist Edwin Abbott Abbott:

Since women are deficient in reason but abundant in emotion, they ought no longer to be treated as rational, nor receive any mental education... Among women, we use language implying the utmost deference for their sex; and they fully believe that the Chief Circle Himself is not more devoutly adored by us than they are; but behind their backs they are both regarded and spoken of -- as being little better than "mindless organisms".(Abbott, 1885, p. 80)

It has become clear that almost a century after Rousseau's lines that women should not be educated, Abbot's definition of women as "mindless organisms" reveals the fact that no progress was made in hundred years and the

state of women that is, the “statelessness” of women became worse. Therefore, it is hardly possible to speak of an improvement in social context for women till the nineteenth century. Beginning with idea of earning the right to vote for women, the feminist movement updated its goals successively in the course of time. These goals have drawn a virtual time line through periods, which are now called “the waves”. One of the recent sociology books summarizes the ideologies behind these waves as follows:

“... the first wave of feminism focused on official, political inequalities and fought for women’s suffrage. In the 1960’s, second wave feminism, also known as the women’s liberation movement, turned its attention to a broader range of inequalities, including those in the workplace, the family, and reproductive rights. Currently, a third wave of feminism is criticizing the fact that the first two waves of feminism were dominated by white women from advanced capitalist societies” (Sociology, 2013, p. 142)

However, despite the clear explanation of the waves above, there has happened quite a lot in these “wave” periods:

The ‘First’ Awakening

Coined first by Marsha Lear in 1968, ‘First Wave Feminism’ refers to the women rights movement taking place during the 19th and 20th century. The desire for the improvement for a better equality standard in the status of women has carried on for hundreds of years. Women, in the first wave, were after a fair deal with men in social and political realm not only for suffrage (votes for women) but also for as diverse cases as education, the right to work, to divorce, to earn money and to have the right to decide whether to make any children or not, that is the right to own their very own bodies.

Up to early 19th century, women had no legal status under law, they were seen as civilly non-existent in social, cultural and political environment. They were forced to marry and have children; otherwise they would remain as legal minors constitutionally, as women did not have the right to own premises or to be employed. They were not allowed to sign a contract with employers because they had to leave their jobs in order to get married since it was under men's will to provide them with a financial security. In addition to the heavy workload at workplaces, women were exposed to even heavier burden at home by being forced to look after their children and husbands. As argued in *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of Women in World History*:

“...married women in the home remained economically dependent on their spouses; in general, despite their proportion in national or workplace populations, women in the workforce continued to be responsible for more home and family care than were men, they earned less pay than their male counterparts, and they remained underrepresented in the leadership of business and industry.”(Smith, 2008, p. 187)

Towards the end of the 19th century, the curse of inequality was still apparent in every sector of life. The common conception on women's humanly rights was accounted explicitly by one of the most famous writers of mid-nineteenth century, John Todd: “Some have tried to become semi-men by putting on the Bloomer dress. It is this: woman, robed and folded in her long dress, is beautiful. She walks gracefully. ... If she attempts to run, the charm is gone. . . . (Todd, 1867, p. 16). Apparently, women's duties and the limits of these duties were still confined to the will of men, and women should not attempt to amend these codes. Women were supposed to stick to the ‘cult of domesticity’, and any actions like speech, demonstration, protest would seem un-ladylike and thus would be disrespectful.

However, women activists did not give up fighting for the equal rights and were not just seeking a freedom for themselves. They correlated their status with that of slaves and sought the ways to abolish slavery. Those activists were called ‘abolitionists’. Seeing “their own subjugation as a form of slavery, the emerging women's movement was deeply sympathetic to the cause of abolishing

slavery”.(Rohde, 2009, p. 24). In 1848 in New York City, the first official step was taken at Seneca Falls Convention, known as the first ‘women rights convention’. Famous activists and abolitionists Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott pioneered in acquiring the social, moral and political rights for women, particularly the right to vote.

The political advancements in the Women’s Rights and Women’s Suffrage Movements bore the fruits and framed a literary path in female writing. After a long period of searching for the inalienable rights, women, now, began to question the most valuable right of their identity, the right to voice themselves. A year after granting the right to vote for women in Britain, the publication of Virginia Woolf’s “A Room of One’s Own” in 1929, which will be broadly considered in Chapter 2, made a breakthrough in the feminine literary course which is seen as “central to the framing of many of the major theoretical developments in literary critical engagements with feminism”(Goldman, 2006, p. 132). Woolf presents some prominent points about women that have resulted in their failure in social and literary agenda. Woolf biases her challenges firstly on the conception that women lack the intellectual thought that can yield successful writings. She asserts that the reasons of women’s lack of success is not because they lack talent, but because they bear the extreme burden of looking after children together with some other social disadvantages like deprivation of education, financial dependence on men, and the lack of a personal ‘room of their own’. She argues that women would have the strength to stand as full potential writers, as long as they are provided with a personal space and financial independence. Yet, the argument that women should start ‘womanly writings’, namely writing about themselves is a fatal point in “A Room of One’s Own”, since it is the same ideology that frames the feminist literary criticism in the all waves of feminism. Woolf suggests: “it is fatal for anyone who writes to think of their sex”

The First Wave Feminism, although began with the argument of granting political and social rights for women, reached its climax with Virginia Woolf,

who aroused the awareness of a womanly writing. The oppression of women in literature and the methods to annihilate this patriarchal despotism have become, henceforward, the main concern of post-first wave feminists.

Second Wave Feminism

As for 1960s, the old feminism of equal rights has given its way to the new feminism of liberation. Although, old feminism that is the “first wave feminism” was both individualist and reformist, the new one was more collective one and revolutionary. The Second Wave Feminism was rather a process of consciousness rising among not only women but also men since they were asked to regard women thereafter as “other”. The concept of “other” is explicated in Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* as follow:

To emancipate woman is to refuse to confine her to the relations she bears to man, not to deny them to her; let her have her independent existence and she will continue none the less to exist for him also: mutually recognising each other as subject, each will yet remain for the other an other. (Rossi, 1973, p. 704)

Above lines from the *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir can be said to epitomize the main argument behind the new phase of the feminism. Beauvoir was strongly against the perception of women in the society that was defined by men. She challenged mostly with the biological determinism that was forming a fixed characteristic of women. By uttering her famous phrase in the beginning of the second chapter of her book *The Second Sex*: “One is not born but rather becomes a woman” Beauvoir attacks the patriarchal definition of women and suggests the current description of women that they are better in their divine nature, is another way of enslaving women into men’s own order. In the book,

Beauvoir, like most of the latter feminists, denounces Sigmund Freud's argument that, beginning from their birth, envy men since they possess the penis. Beauvoir attacks this premise as she argues what the women envy is not the anatomical superiority of men but rather the social privileges and power they enjoy. Similarly, Beauvoir's account about any issues that are 'personal' to women, are at the same time 'political'. From this point of view, gender inequality problems were taken up to a more collective issue that would build up a common sense among women to get together in social cases. In the meanwhile, second wave feminists broadened the inequality to all other issues bred up by the notion of inequality. On one hand, the dominant issues were sexuality and reproductive rights in this phase while on the other feminists tried to associate the subjugation of women with broader issues like capitalism, heterosexuality, patriarchy and women's duties as mothers and wife. Therefore, in the second wave, the feminist movement received a huge support from all the women in society regardless of their age, sex and race.

Certainly, the issue of feminism and the defence of women rights were a relay race and whoever found her or his position at the stage, asked for more to take a step further in the phase of equal rights movement. And every subsequent step was getting harsher with the feminine discourse. With influence of French Simone de Beauvoir, a new leader emerged in America and resurrected the notion of equal rights for women that had been deceased since Seneca Falls Convention in 1848. Founder and the first president of the "National Organization of Woman" (NOW) in 1966, Betty Friedan and NOW campaigned for 1967 Executive order of affirmative action granted to blacks to be given to women, as well.

Having written the critical book *The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan voiced the unhappy state of housewives by clarifying "the problem that has no name" so far. In the first chapter of the book, Friedan condemns men's indifference toward women's problems and their habit of trivializing women's problems to health and boredom. Friedan strives to find out the problem that has no name as follow:

Just what was this problem that has no name? What were the words women used when they tried to express it? Sometimes a woman would say 'I feel empty somehow... incomplete.' Or she would say, 'I feel as if I don't exist.' ... But the desperate tone in these women's voices, and the look in their eyes, was the same as the tone and the look of other women, who were sure they had no problem, even though they did have a strange feeling of desperation.(Friedan, Fermaglich, & Fine, 2013, p. 21)

Another point that Betty Friedan find as vulgarized and perverted is the impression of domesticized women constructed on the inferences of Sigmund Freud. Friedan suggests "the shield behind which the Americans shelter for not consenting women as equal as men comes from the absurd assessment of Freud and his own life". (Shukla, 2007, p. 32). She, although acknowledging Freud's accomplishments in psychoanalysis, goes on to say that his insights on sexual differences are concentrated on the cultural norms rather than common sense. Friedan maintains that Freud's thoughts about women might be valid for his very own time, but they are not applicable now as women have relatively revolutionised themselves since the Victorian period. What Freud expected was a stereotype of woman that confines herself to the inactivity at home, content to serve her father and husband, bear children and be happy with this life. That was the feminine nature of women. However, despite all the passivity of women, Freud suggests, they still envy and should envy men because of lacking the enacting organ, the phallus. This feeling is coined as the 'penis envy' in Freudian psychoanalysis. Betty Friedan, once more, rejects this feeling or concept as she claims it to be used as another tactic to enslave woman and defence the biologic inferiority of her to men.

The motive force of woman's personality, in Freud's theory, was her envy of the penis, which causes her to feel as much depreciated in her own eyes 'as in the eyes of the boy, and later perhaps of the man', and leads in normal femininity, to the wish for the penis of her husband, a wish that is never really fulfilled until she possesses a penis through giving birth to a son. In short, she is merely an *hommemanque*, a man with something missing. ..The castration complex and penis envy concepts, two of the most basic ideas in his whole thinking, are postulated on the assumption that women are biologically inferior to men.(Friedan et al., 2013, p. ch.5)

Beginning with the second phase of feminism, Freud's premise in psychoanalysis like penis envy has been the standing point of criticism for most of the feminists. His centralizing the phallus as a sign of superiority and power, while on the other hand, taking women as special as a love lady and a caregiver has kept the theorists busy so far. To deconstruct Freud's theories, feminists attempted prove that the gender differences Freud suggests are the outcomes of a patriarchal tradition "in which the woman is to stay gentle and sweet, removed from the toils and corruptions of the world; the husband is to be the bread-winner, household-head and, in such circles, to a certain degree, educator."(Mitchell, 2000, p. 321)

The feminist movement started in quest for inalienable rights, carried on with the demand of "a room of her own", found its orbit with Freud and his dogmatic theories. Although, "the renaissance of the feminist movement in the 1906s ignited a controversy about Freud's theory and treatment of women." and "...psychoanalysis contributed significantly toward emancipation women from existing repressive Victorian sexual morality"(Slipp, 1995, p. 14), the feminine movement concentrated mostly on the deconstruction of Freudian theories in the Third Wave Feminism, as well.

The Post-Structuralist Interpretation of Women: The Third Wave Feminism

Just after women came to discuss the literary failure that they had experienced, they began to descend to the crux of the problem to identify it initially. Women, in the wave, reckoned that the biases of the so called inferiority and disability of women had inspired from the psychoanalytical notions propounded by Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan. Although Freud's theories

faced a strong criticism from the second wave feminists, female writers continued to attack on the psychoanalysis approach taken further by Jacques Lacan's seeing "phallus" as the signifier which made him be accused of phallogocentric. Therefore, Lacan's phallus centred discourse has been a powerful influence and a protest for feminist literary critics.

According to Lacan, Freud's taking the phallus at the centre of the universe and women's envy for being deprived of penis and men's fear of castration are valid phenomena, for the phallus itself is a sign of power to whomever it belongs. The idea is well conveyed by Elizabeth Grosz:

"The Freudian / Lacanian framework is more problematic and less plausible in describing the 'corresponding' processes of oedipalization for the girl. ... For her the Oedipus complex involves no rewards, no authority, no compensation for her abandonment of the mother; rather, it entails her acceptance of her subordination. In her 'recognition' of her narcissistic inadequacy, the girl abandons the mother as a love-object, and focuses her libidinal drives on the father, now recognized as 'properly' phallic. The girl has quickly learned that she does not have the phallus, nor the power it signifies. She comes to accept, not without resistance, her social designated role as subordinate to the possessor of the phallus, and through her acceptance, she comes to occupy the passive, dependent position expected of women in patriarchy. Crucial to her subsequent development is the question of who has the phallus, and who is the phallus. (E. Grosz, 1990, p. 19)

In fact, as seen above, what Lacan does is to put the phallus (male organ) to the centre of the universe by attributing it the speciality of being a signifier toward other signifier or a system of signifiers. Lacan articulates that all the passages that the child, whether boy or girl, goes through are concentrated and thus characterized by possessing or lacking the phallus. Although he does not make a clear distinction on male or female, Lacan grounds each step in human experience on the existence of phallus. This approach is the focal point that drives reaction from both feminists and constructivists since it imposes the phallogocentrism.

The opposition to the Freudian/Lacanian premise of phallus centred identity is a great issue in Judith Gardiner's "On Female Identity and Writing by Women", too, as the invisible or unidentified state of women constitutes the base of Gardiner's argument on women oppression. Gardiner is strictly against the fact that women have been judged upon their physical lacks without knowing their ability to think, create in other fields. By condemning Freudian premise of phallus-centrism, she, then, explains the differences in the formation period of women and men. She asserts that the formation of women is progressive unlike the static formation of male identity in which the identification is restrained merely to the presence of phallus. She states that the identity formation of female is positive while the male formation is negative. In order to support his theory on why the female formation of the self is more positive than male one, Gardiner asserts that the male identity starts to shape, at first, by differentiation from his first caretaker, mother. The boy is affected negatively when he realizes that he is different. He has to achieve the role of his father to end the process of formation of identity. Therefore, boy's formation mostly occurs in conflict which is negative. Whereas, in a girl's case, it is much different as the formation of the self does not cease abruptly but rather the process is a progressive one which does not end and requires the girl to take over the duties of her mother with whom she begins life in a symbiotic merger.

To encourage a "woman-marked literature", Gardiner aims to terminate the dispiritedness of women about having a voice in the patriarchal world. She strives to prove that the women are in a more advantageous position and that they should, from now, write more. The ambition of a "marked language" is apparent in Cixous's writings, too. Helene Cixous is more concerned on the belief that "women must write herself : must write about women and bring women to writing.., Woman must put herself into text – into the world and into history- by her own movement".(Cixous, Cohen, & Cohen, 1976, p. 875)Cixous alerts the women community about the necessity for a womanly writing and that their existence in the world of literature ought to be visible through their own principles

and language due to the fact that there hasn't been a woman language in writings because of the oppression women have faced so far:

It is well known that the number of women writers (while having increased very slightly from the nineteenth century on) has always been ridiculously small. This is a useless and deceptive fact unless from their species of female writers we do not first deduct the immense majority whose workmanship is in no way different from male writing, and which either obscures women or reproduces the classic representations of women (as sensitive-intuitive-dreamy, etc.) (Cixous et al., 1976, p. 878)

Cixous, like her preceding colleagues, based her arguments mainly on the theories established by the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud. She was particularly critical about Freud's analysis on the development of sexual identity of both boys and girls and his premise of concluded gender roles through the theory of Oedipus complex.

Being a close contemporary to Jacques Derrida, Helene Cixous uses the most scientific pattern to deduce the constructed situation of women and how the position men and women have been assigned so far. Through deconstruction, Cixous merges Freud's focus on "phallus" and with Derrida's "logocentrism" creating new term "phallogocentrism" to explicate the hierarchy set up to give the only right to men putting his phallus to the centre.

The challenge between the binary oppositions is a main argument in Cixous' writings, as well. She states that the challenge between men and women resembles the battle between day-night, activity-passivity. As there is always a winner among those oppositions, women are always at the loser or inferior side. Therefore, just like her state at the time of an intercourse, she is passive in the society, too. From this thesis, Cixous reaches the deduction that this state of women passivity led to a hatred from women toward women themselves which is provoked by men:

Men have committed the greatest crime against women. Insidiously, violently, they have led them to hate women, to be their own enemies, to mobilize their immense strength against themselves, to be the executants

of their virile needs. They have made for women an antinarcissism! A narcissism which loves itself only to be loved for what women haven't got! They have constructed the infamous logic of antilove.(Cixous et al., 1976, p. 878)

“Woman and Madness: The Critical Phallacy” by Shoshana Felman is a great piece of literature which uncovers the “phallacy” or literally “fallacy” that the society has been in since the period that the matter of inferiority or superiority was determined by the existence of an organ: the “phallus”. Felman, in the text, blames the long hibernation of women in the field of writing and praises the attempts to give a voice to women. She underlines the necessity of a women way of writing by which they can have a unique style and their own identity in literature. For her, the oppression of women should be taken beyond the social level as they are oppressed in literature and culture, as well. She, furthermore, condemns those who perceives and interprets every occasion in a masculine way of thinking and labelling it thereby. She gives the example of a short story by Honore Balzac “Adieu”. Felman condemns the fact that the comments on the story are centred solely around the thought and reason of the masculine character, while the actual story is about a mad woman.

For Shoshana Felman, the sole way to get rid of the chains of the patriarch that have used to bind women is to teach them to flee from the patriarchal norms with their norms and by going mad. She alleges that the social limits set by men are similar to the mind limits set to border the mentality of women. For this reason, to free themselves from the actual limits women must free themselves from the mind limits at first. Felman, like Cixous, is critical with the use of binary oppositions in favour of men, goes on to say:

“It is nonetheless striking that the dichotomy Reason/Madness, as well as Speech/Silence, exactly coincides in this text with the dichotomy Men/Women. Women as such are associated both with madness and with silence, whereas men are identified with prerogatives of discourse and of reason. In fact, men appear not only as the possessors, but also as the dispensers, of reason, which they can at will mete out to-or take away from- others.” (Warhol & Herndl, 1997, p. 15)

Luce Irigaray, on the other hand, approaches the condition of women in social order from a more biological way of thinking. Irigaray, once more, believes that the social inferiority of women is caused by her static state during the sexual intercourse. Her detailed explanation about why and how women should prioritize her own sexual and therefore social pleasures is justified through her criticism against the unfair treatment of women by the patriarchs. Irigaray also censures the fact that a woman is seen as both inferior in the society and a conciliator, at the same time, who always more or less makes everything all right, who nourishes and who stands up against separation.

The phase of feminist criticism, starting at the end of second wave in search for a position in a male-centred literary world, has shifted to a discrete angle with Elaine Showalter who, rejecting imitation and protest, supported a more cultural perspective in feminist criticism rather than the traditional one that was a result of both biological and psychoanalytical premises. Showalter, therefore, coined the term “gynocritics” to define the new path that the feminist criticism will follow. To describe “gynocriticism” she says:

In contrast to an angry or loving fixation on male literature, the program of gynocritics is to construct a female framework for the analysis of women’s literature, to develop new models based on the study of female experience, rather than to adapt male models and theories. Gynocritics begins at the point when we free ourselves from the linear absolutes of male literary history, stop trying to fit women between the lines of the male tradition, and focus instead on the newly visible world of female culture. (Eagleton, 2011, p. 224)

In the definition of “gynocriticism”, Elaine Showalter’s not using the words “feminist or feminism” is perhaps an influence of her suggestion to divide the history of women’s literature into three phases in which the highest phase is called “female literature”. Showalter describes the first phase of women literature history as “Feminine” in which “women wrote in an effort to equal the intellectual achievements of the male culture, and internalized its assumptions about female nature”.(Jeffries, 1994, p. 67) The second phase is “Feminist” at which women were against the values and principles that were set by men and at which they

demanded autonomy to have the same rights and values as the men. The third and the most revolutionary phase is the “Female” phase which shifts all that done about women literature to a completely distinct approach to feminine writing. Showalter argues that in the Female phase, woman discovers herself and rather than rejecting or imitating the male writing standards, she creates new forms and techniques independently and uses these as the source of criticism and writing.

The understanding of female identity that was taking woman as a universal persona and all women in the world have similar setbacks and concerns remained the same till 1990s. Judith Butler, considered by many theorists as the most influential feminist theorist today, wrote her provocative book *Gender Trouble*. In the book, Butler is a strong critique of the notion of universal woman or man. She is critical about having a fixed social, cultural or political identity. For Butler, a human being can always travel between identities or sexes: she or he can be a gay, a lesbian, a man, a woman, a Jew or an American sometimes or she or he can be all at the same time. She proposed the intersection of gender with social, political or cultural factors like ethnicity, class, religion, race and sexuality which controvert the problematizing the existence of a common female identity. For this reason, to acknowledge someone as women does not reveal all the qualities she has and does not only mean she is a woman. Furthermore, she tackles, the gender cannot constitute acts but performances designate gender roles. Heading from this argument, Butler coins her renowned theory of “performativity”. For her:

If gender attributes, however, are not expressive but performative, then these attributes effectively constitute the identity they are said to express or reveal. The distinction between expression and performativeness is crucial. If gender attributes and acts, the various ways in which a body shows or produces its cultural signification, are performative, then there is no preexisting identity by which an act or attribute might be measured; there would be no true or false, real or distorted acts of gender, and the postulation of a true gender identity would be revealed as a regulatory fiction. That gender reality is created through sustained social performances means that the very notions of an essential sex and a true or abiding masculinity or femininity are also constituted as part of the strategy that conceals gender’s performative character and the performative possibilities for proliferating gender configurations outside

the restricting frames of masculinist domination and compulsory heterosexuality.(Butler, 1999, p. 180)

According to Butler, the socially constructed codes to define women and the actions of women demanded from the society does not present reality therefore they are false and illusion. She gives the famous quote by Simone de Beavouir ‘one is not born but becomes a woman’ to extend her theory how our conceptions are governed by the conventions. And thus, “To be female is, according to that distinction, a facticity which has no meaning, but to be a woman is to have become a woman, to compel the body to conform to an historical idea of ‘woman’, to induce the body to become a cultural sign, to materialize oneself in obedience to an historically delimited possibility, and to do this as a sustained and repeated corporeal project.” (Butler, 1988, p. 522) Butler cites the ideologies that the social world pushes us to do and how we incorporate with these conventions. . Butler argues that, although these codes are not real and fictious, by embodying these fictions, we, men or women, realize them by our performances and annihilate their artificiality. As a result, these artificial constructs have real and concrete consequences on our life. Through the premise that gender is constituted socially and thus is not real, Butler takes the argument further by claiming that there is no gender, at all. She goes on to maintain that “there is no original or primary gender that drag imitates, but gender is a kind of imitation for which there is no original; in and consequence of the imitation itself”. (The lesbian and gay studies reader, 1993, p. 313) Once more, butler suggests the performatively constituted version of gender which is first defined by birth with sex and second constructed socially.

Butler, following the subversion of gender identity, carries on putting forward her thesis of proliferation of identities. She contends the ‘theory of queer’ that represents the flow of identities not depending the essentialist notions of heterosexuality or homosexuality pre-set by cultural norms. The queer theory challenges the understanding of gender shifted by social and historical boundaries and naturalized rules of sexes. The famous gender theorist pictures the queer theory as follows:

...queer does not name some natural kind or refer to some determinate object; it acquires its meaning from its oppositional relation to the norm. Queer is by definition whatever is at odds with normal, the legitimate, the dominant. There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers. It is an identity without an essence. Queer... a positionality that is not restricted to lesbians and gay men but is in fact available to anyone who is or who feels marginalized..."(Halperin, 1997, p. 62)

For sure, the theory of queer and the subversion of identity influenced the successors of the gender theorists and introduced a new pathway for them. Being one of the third wave feminists and queer theorists, Jeanette Winterson has carried one step further and contributed the triviality of gender identity by using the term 'ungendered'. As Winterson suggests all of her works are about boundaries that define us like gender and sense of self. (Jeanette Winterson). The book *Written on the Body* and Winterson's outlooks on gender and the 'ungendered' will be re-considered and developed more broadly in the 3. Chapter.

CHAPTER II

THE LITERARY EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN: A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN

“...woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction”(Woolf, 1977, p. 7)

The above opening line by Virginia Woolf from her masterpiece *A Room of One's Own* is taken as the first way of women's literal awakening by most of critics in that, the book it is the first book that gave thought on presenting solutions to the absence of feminine writing. Before the book was written, as mentioned in the first chapter, almost all feminists were putting emphasis on the need for social and political rights of women. Woolf has attributed a separate mission to the women and proposed the necessity of their existence in the field of literature, as well. For her, the fact women does not have money and a personal room, “leaves the great problem of the true nature of woman and the true nature of fiction unsolved”(Woolf, 1977, p. 8)

Virginia Woolf feels forced and responsible for giving voice the issue of women and fiction. Although she suggests that there is need to make some amends in the status of women, she admits that “there is a great burden upon her shoulders which she has long pondered to express, however what she is to describe has no existence”(Woolf, 1977, p. 8). Woolf states that she will discuss a problem which does not actually exists, as the patriarchs of that time did not consider that there is anything unresolved so far regarding females.

It is obvious that, till Virginia Woolf, not a single person had the courage to speak neither of the literal existence of women nor the existence of such a problem. Woolf, herself by saying that what she is going to describe has no existence, means, ironically, that there has not been a struggle to detect such kind of trouble. Of course, Woolf approaches the issue quite cautiously not withdraw any negative reaction from the patriarch leader at the time by stating that “when a subject is highly controversial one cannot tell the truth” (Woolf, 1977, p. 8) therefore, although what she says may be mostly lies there are some facts between the lines. By the help of binary oppositions like facts and lies, thoughts and feelings, facts and fictions, Woolf asserts that sometimes fiction may contain more truths than the facts that we know. Because, the facts that we believe, are based on the historical and theoretical background defined by the male centred society. And all these pre-defined roles thus, present the assumption of natural inferiority of women to men. Woolf alleges: -‘I’ is only a convenient term for somebody who has no real being. ... it is not a matter of any importance” -that it matters little whether to name the subject of the issue as Mary Beton, Mary Seton, Mary Carmichael, since what matters is the fact that they are all women. Woolf goes further to declare that “the collar of women and fiction” has been subjected to all kinds of prejudices and passions which discourages her even to mention the case. (Woolf, 1977, p. 8)

Virginia Woolf carries on to dramatize her argument by giving the example of one of her experiences trying to get into a library in the fictitious city of Oxbridge and running across to a library guard.

...I found myself walking with extreme rapidity across a grass plot. Instantly a man’s figure rose to intercept me. ...His face expressed horror and indignation. Instinct rather than reason came to my help, he was a Beadle; I was a woman. ...Only the Fellows and Scholars are allowed here; the gravel is the place for me. ...The only charge I could bring against the Fellows and Scholars of whatever the college might happen to be was that in protection of their turf, which has been rolled for 300 years in succession they had sent my little fish into hiding(Woolf, 1977, p. 10)

The icons of grass and gravel are of great importance in the lines of Woolf, as they symbolize the hardness of the paths that have been allocated for each of the sex. The fact that women are not allowed walk on the grass stands for the symbolical stony way which women have long been forced to take in the course of demanding their god given rights. Whereas, men have the right to step on the grass and take the softer way to their goals. The grass walkway, on the other hand, represents the smooth path that has been a natural belonging of men since the beginning of history. Woolf, by presenting the symbolic terms of grass and gravel, paraphrases the dilemma of the equality in that there happens separate and harder access to the same human rights and goals for different sexes. Furthermore, the 'hidden fish' symbol that Woolf mentions at the end of quote represents women that have been constraint by oppression to raise their heads and rebel against codes set by the patriarchy.

The library rule that "ladies are only admitted to the library if accompanied by a Fellow of the College or furnished with a letter of introduction" demonstrates how still women are not seen as independents human beings and whatever they intend to do must be in the name or in the favour of their husbands (Woolf, 1977, p. 12). For sure, Woolf disputes the applications of the society that banned women to access the knowledge and civilization by locking the treasures of the science and literature behind the gates which only men can trespass. Woolf's main argument, by giving the example of the library is to:

"represent the structures of inclusion and exclusion as fundamental to patriarchal society and its treatment of women. ... Woolf's narrator finds herself repeatedly 'locked out' excluded from chapel, library and the turf of the college quadrangle. Not only is her way physically barred, but these barriers interrupt the free flow of her thoughts, prohibiting her from 'trespassing' on the grounds of intellect and imagination held to be the proper preserve of the male sex (Sellers, 2010, p. 150)

Virginia Woolf, in *A Room of One's Own*, condemns the social current that hands in the privileges hold by the male ancestors to their male children. She states, she "has no doubt that one is the descendant, the other legitimate heir of the

other”(Woolf, 1977, p. 16). What Woolf criticizes is, more strictly, the intellectual tradition of conveying power through the descendants of similar sex, male.

The figure of cat, which was made to hide itself in the former lines, exists in the course of book once more. The line in the book: “if things had been a little different from what they were, one would not have seen, presumably, a cat without a tail”(Woolf, 1977, p. 16), represents the status of women in the way how they have been left half or uncompleted in terms of the intellect. Although the cat is quite an interesting animal and it doesn’t seem vital whether to have a tail or not, it doesn’t change the fact that the cat was born with it. Similarly, women, even if they do not possess the natural rights, now, like to write, to work or to exist independently due to social conventions; they actually hold the right to have these birth-rights.

The tailless cat, while represents the silenced women on one hand, may stands for the mutilated women on the other. As known, Virginia Woolf has been strongly influenced by the psychoanalytic theories of Sigmund Freud. The castrated cat in *A Room of One’s Own*, “parodies the Freudian construction of sexual difference as a question of castration”(Abel, 1989, p. 19). Woolf intends to testify the primitivity of the understanding that women should be castrated of their freedoms on the basis of lacking the phallus, to which the power of voice has been attributed. Woolf’s censure of the premise of the castration by the symbolic tailless cat still draws prestigious support from the present critics:

“The lost tail, made known by its stumpy remnant, not only represents our broken tradition, the buried or stolen tales of women who lie behind us in history. It also signifies the cut off voice or amputated tongue: what we still find it hard to recover and to say in ourselves. We are not castrated. We are not less, lack, loss. Yet we feel like thieves and criminals when we speak, because we know that the force used to take it away still threatens us as we struggle to win it back. Woolf meets this threat with her own carefully fabricated tale”(Higgins & Silver, 2013, p. 38)

For Woolf, fiction has got a great relation with the facts therefore the truer the facts are the better the fiction is. The fictitious story of Oxbridge and the library

demonstrates how the great sums of money has been reserved for the education of boys and how, when women taken into consideration, “every penny which could be scraped together was set aside for building, and the amenities had to be postponed” (Woolf, 1977, p. 25). Woolf also criticizes that although women work harder and more than men they are hardly able to collect “two thousand pounds together, and as much as they could do to get thirty thousand pounds, they burst out in scorn at the reprehensible poverty of their sex”(Woolf, 1977, p. 25).

Certainly, despite her criticism of the equal pay for both sexes, Woolf goes further to exemplify classical conditioning that women find themselves into when the patriarch’s desire is in power. As a strong opponent of Freud and his doctrines, Woolf once more refers to Freud’s experiment on dogs and likens women’s inclination of acting in the order of men who are “sure that the dog will move directly the bulb is pressed”(Woolf, 1977, p. 26).

It seems quite a strange point that women admit their unquestionable obedience to men with no hesitation. The reason of this obedience is, of course, the set rules of the patriarchy. As remarked:

“By constricting the feminine role in society and fostering dependency, helplessness, and emotionality, women were unconsciously induced into expressing these unacceptable feeling for men. In turn, men could condemn women as being inferior for having these undesirable qualities. Because this process occurred at an unconscious level, men did not have to take responsibility for having placed women into a position of dependency in society. “(Slipp, 1995, p. 48)

By articulating the foundations of women’s obedience to men, Woolf interconnects the term poetry with poverty. She explains that the Western Society through the positions that situate men and women gives the privileges to possess money thus the power to men. Therefore, “the position of artist has been gendered in Western culture, since only men have had the power and the money and the security necessary for the production of art”(Michael, 1996, p. 65). Has the woman gone into business or became a manufacturer and left two or three hundred thousand pounds to her daughters, the new age “women could have been

sitting at ease and their the subject of our talk might have been archaeology, botany, anthropology, physics, the nature of the atom, mathematics, astronomy, relativity, geography”, Woolf concedes (Woolf, 1977, p. 26).

It is a well-known fact, from the beginning of civilization, that wealth, that is money, does bring power to its holders. And this system was well analysed by Woolf in that, it was obvious that the entrapment of women, their silence and unworthiness is fed by lacking power, money. This weakness of women in all types is an outcome of, as Woolf suggests in the book, the tradition that women cannot work, own property and money. For Woolf, if only the grand mothers or mothers of then women could “learn the great art of making money and had left their, like their fathers and their grandfathers before them, to found fellowships and lectureships and prizes and scholarships appropriated to the use of their own sex”(Woolf, 1977, p. 26), the women would not have been in such a state of emptiness nowadays.

Woolf’s criticism of the unequal treatment of sexes even in monetary system of the governments is indeed a legitimate account of unevenness among the citizens. In the early twentieth century, working of women would seem very uncommon both culturally and legally. Furthermore, even if a women works, her wage would be spent according to the husband’s wisdom, as she was not allowed to own money. Therefore, the women would not bother to get involved with monetary issues and would say “I had better leave it to my husband”(Woolf, 1977, p. 28).

Apparently, the point Woolf tries reach is the emancipation of womanly writing by deconstructing the biases of the patriarchy defining the limits of the women’s mind. She goes further to say that the “safety and prosperity of the primary sex, which male, served for the literary eligibility of men, while the insecurity and poverty of the second sex, female, restricted the literary creativity of women, nourished by the traditions.” Woolf asks the question “What effect has poverty on fiction” to deepen the problematique of women literature(Woolf, 1977, p. 2).

Women's engagements in cultural and intellectual matters are at the core of Woolf's discussion throughout her work. The speaker of Woolf's essay questions why "the learned" and "the prejudiced" still insists on archaic arguments in the books found in the British museum:

But one needed answers, not questions; and an answer was only to be had by consulting the learned and the unprejudiced, who have removed themselves above the strife of tongue and the confusion of body and issued the result of their reasoning and research in books which 'are to be found in the British Museum (Woolf, 1977, p. 2)

Woolf's implications about the old fashioned learned class's approach to intellectual issues in the quotation above indicates her impasse when one discusses the relationships between women and intellectual world. The author's quest for a better understanding world from the point of view of a female character forces her to argue the truth about placing emphasis on the "second sex's" pursuits: "thus I set out in the pursuit of truth" (Woolf, 1977, p. 30)

It is a well-known fact that books written by female authors in the first half of the 20th century were far less than their male colleagues. Woolf recurrently brings into question this fact largely due to her professional and intellectual skills. She revives a question that is pivotal to women's role and struggle for writing, producing and reflecting her intellectual world. This is best crystallized with Woolf own words:

Have you any notion of how many books are written about women in the course of one year? Have you any notion how many are written by men? Are you aware that you are, perhaps, the most discussed animal in the universe (Woolf, 1977, p. 31)

The feeling that women are treated unrighteous in terms of equality of opportunity is discussed as well as women's positions as scientists in Woolf's time. To Woolf, women are subordinate to men; men can use women as literary artefact in their works or studies. So, the passive state of women persists even if they are more qualified than men they cannot have what they deserve as they do not have a phallus. Man can obtain a status just because he is not a woman. The

complex problem of state or statelessness of women again surfaces to denote women's struggle to put across themselves:

Sex and its nature might well attract doctors and biologists; but what was surprising and difficult of explanation was the fact that sex — woman, that is to say — also attracts agreeable essayists, light-fingered novelists, young men who have taken the M.A. degree; men who have taken no degree; men who have no apparent qualification save that they are not women(Woolf, 1977, p. 32)

The survey about lack of writings by women continues Woolf delves into consciousness of women; she has a sarcastic tone and complains about inequalities between men and women. One more time Woolf overturns the conventional understandings about state-less-ness of woman in the society:

Women do not write books about men — a fact that I could not help welcoming with relief, for if I had first to read all that men have written about women, then all that women have written about men, the aloe that flowers once in a hundred years would flower twice before I could set pen to paper(Woolf, 1977, p. 32)

Professions that are associated with men that are ascribed to men are hard to reach for women. To get a job related to the use of intellect, like journalist or professor, a woman has to wait till she demonstrates that she is no less qualified for intellectual pursuits. The state or statelessness of woman is closely related to the array of professions she can choose. This is why Woolf dramatizes women's frustrations about this:

Professors, schoolmasters, sociologists, clergymen, novelists, essayists, journalists, men who had no qualification save that they were not women, chased my simple and single question — Why are some women poor? — until it became fifty questions; until the fifty questions leapt frantically into midstream and were carried away(Woolf, 1977, p. 33)

Woolf is not just a figure of woman right defender, she has her own technique of narrating, stream of consciousness at times marks her way of telling a story or describing the mental state of a character. Here, Woolf does not neglect

the role of narrative that makes her storytelling unique. Nor does she ignore her main subject, women and her intellectual quests:

Condition in Middle Ages of,
Habits in the Fiji Islands of,
Worshipped as goddesses by,
Weaker in moral sense than,
Idealism of,
Greater conscientiousness of,
South Sea Islanders, age of puberty among,
Attractiveness of,
Offered as sacrifice to,
Small size of brain of,
Profounder sub-consciousness of,
Less hair on the body of,
Mental, moral and physical inferiority of,
Love of children of,
Greater length of life of,
Weaker muscles of, ...(Woolf, 1977, p. 34)

Humiliations, implicitly or explicitly, target women by people that marked the history, Woolf is sensitive to this throughout her extended essay “Most women have no character at all. Napoleon thought them incapable. Goethe honoured them; Mussolini despises them”(Woolf, 1977, p. 35)

Woolf’s references and allusions to intellectual figures of her time marks her writing in another way, that is, she uses the irony as an instrument: “Had he been laughed at, to adopt the Freudian theory, in his cradle by a pretty girl?”(Woolf, 1977, p. 36)

Woolf’s exploration of woman’s status and statelessness goes on, she does not suggest substantial conclusion about the differences between men and women.

To some critiques, the scope of what Woolf is attempting to accomplish in *A Room of One's Own* is limited. She does not struggle to explain the differences between men and women thoroughly. She believes that the differences exist, and that one must recognize them in order to write a more integrated fiction. She wants women avoid using men's style in their writing; she thinks that would be imitation. Later in the essay, she elaborates the similarities and differences between two sexes. Woolf definitely places emphasis on differences between women and men, and she says that these differences are significant. Still, her idea is that women have not had enough opportunities to develop their intellectual skills; they have had no financial power, the privacy, or conventions. Only a few women writers have become competent artists. Woolf's essay is limited by narrowly being defined and it as an attempt to explain the differences mentioned. Woolf's purpose is actually a bit different: she appreciates the differences between the genders, and surveys in her book why, if there are so many differences, women have not developed their own style in the domain of fiction and other writings.

That is one argument that has some shortcomings, one may claim that Woolf's attempt to reveal differences between sexes occupies no pivotal room in her essay and her scope of writing is broader. Nevertheless, Woman's autonomy in fiction is an all-pervasive subject for Woolf.

Woman's status and statelessness are observed in ideological domain and language as well as fictional realm. Woolf's critical essay was created at a time when she was working on other literary Works like *Orlando*. Due to the Great Depression the question of women and fiction was kept in the background. Virginia Woolf was aware of the disconnection between the crisis in the world and the theme of her study. When we look at the suffrage movement before the Great War, the question of feminism at the time Woolf was writing her essay did not withdraw much public interest. It was much later, during the second wave of feminism that the problem of Women and female writing became an important concern (Zwerdling, 1986, p. 243). In 1928, women won the right to vote and also gained the right to study at higher education institutions. In *A Room of One's*

Own there is the interplay of ideology and language which share certain affinities in Woolf's essay and the relation between theme and style also causes controversy in Woolf criticism. This study also focuses on language and ideology in Woolf's essay to some extent.

Woolf's ideological exploration of inequalities between two sexes is reflected and ironically criticized throughout the essay. A male professor's empathy with a woman seems to be impossible because the academic, intellectual and social world is shaped by man's ideology and world-view:

Possibly when the professor insisted a little too emphatically upon the inferiority of women, he was concerned not with their inferiority, but with his own superiority. That was what he was protecting rather hot-headedly and with too much emphasis, because it was a jewel to him of the rarest price(Woolf, 1977, p. 40)

In Woolf's essay ideology, language and fiction go hand in hand. The play of narrative and logic is seen. It breaks many of the conventions that are common in her time. Why does Virginia Woolf engage in such matters? Why does she adopt this method? The reason is that she wants to transform predominantly masculine, conventional understanding radically to weaken its authority. There is another reason for her engagements; her fiction comes out of some comprehensive investigations about what literature should be. Her ideas about writing are analysed in this text, to some extent in an indirect way. Understanding these ideas enables the reader to see how she can focus on writing in a more efficient way. When she does not talk about what she thinks, she shows them: "She is doing more than trying to keep the reader interested with some ornamented descriptions. She is manifesting in her essay what she appreciates most about writing and expressing ideas on women and fiction"(Levenback, 1999, p. 115)

Though the problems Woolf tackles in her essay are closely related to historical ones, her main involvement in the book is literary rather than historical, though she does not seem to argue about her method of writing. She talks about

Jane Austen's phrases, how material issues have impact on writers, some statements about the structure of the novel and with her own words: "fiction is like a spider's web"(Woolf, 1977, p. 47). These themes exist in her work in a concealed form. In some cases, Woolf speaks more directly about the aims and methods of writing. In one of her remarkable essays, "Modern Fiction," she says that it is Life that good writing must seek and capture it one way or another. She writes: Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; but a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end(Barrett & Cramer, 1997, p. 287). Life is like the sea, it is always changing, yet always remaining the same. Wandering around this sea is the aim of writing for her, but this alone does not explain her use of the subjective approach in telling her impressions, in her own work (Barrett & Cramer, 1997, p. 183)

In *A Room of One's Own*, we encounter a very interesting definition of the novel: "It is a structure leaving a shape on the mind's eye, built now in squares, now pagoda shaped, now throwing out wings and arcades, now solidly compact and domed like the Cathedral of Saint Sophia at Constantinople" (Woolf, 1977, p. 78). This description inspires reader to search for patterns and structures in Woolf's text. Here, Woolf's engagement with fictional surfaces. The definition of novel from the point of view of woman writer is discussed. Woman's autonomy in the fictional realm becomes the ideological basis for Woolf.

Literary works have polysemic nature, that is to say, they are open to several interpretations. Also, there exist several layers of narration and storytelling in Woolf's essay. One aspect or layer of Woolf's narration is closely linked to woman's status in the society. In *A Room of One's Own* the narrator explicitly demonstrates her anger and interest by showing the place and status of women in history and she also focuses on the unfair position of women in the modern world.

It is also worth to mention that Woolf had relatively a higher position in the Victorian society and to some; she belonged to upper middle class. Because of her unique middle class status and as a woman from a wealthy family Woolf had the

opportunity of having time for creativity and was not pushed to do housework contrary to many women's situation at that time. Woolf had the chance of witnessing and joining in debates about different social and political subjects that were associated with the public problems. Woolf developed her critical understanding of literature and society by exchanging thoughts with her environment, particularly those in the Bloomsbury Group. However, that does not mean Woolf ignored the problems of women belonging to lower segments of society, as she puts it in her essay:

It was still the exception for women of the upper and middle class to choose their own husbands, and when the husband had been assigned, he was lord and master, so far at least as law and custom could make him (Woolf, 1977, p. 48)

Woolf's idea on the economic independence and the fact that a woman should have a room of one's own to obtain intellectual autonomy seems to leave out some women; especially working class women in the English society in Woolf's time. To understand thoroughly how Woolf does not focus on working class women extensively in her efforts for women's liberation, a brief view on the middle class woman and the working class woman at the time when *A Room of One's Own* was published can be put forward. The environment Woolf was grown up is usually related to the industrialization and urbanization of England. The middle class brings to the mind the class below the aristocracy but above the working class. The middle class pays attention to merit instead of privilege (Zwerdling, 1986, p. 210). That is to say, gender, sex and woman's status is also closely related to class and class relations. Economic status of women is important here, women's psychological and cultural suppression is probably the result of economic dependency. The money is a vital element of intellectual engagements and creative processes. This is why it is important to determine Woolf's ideas on financial independence. To be able to write, women ought to cross many obstacles such as gaining the proper education, proper space, and most importantly, money. The material autonomy is of prime importance in determining the position of the female writers. Indeed, 'A Room' as shown in the title represents privacy, this privacy means the independence from the patriarch and

to be free. Woman's position as a writer or, to be more specific, a novelist can only be achieved when her freedom and intellectual position are guaranteed.

It is impossible for the female to create freely and independently in an isolated room without any consideration of the external influence. The masculine system requires women to be domestic while men are expected to be creator, discoverer and inventor. Women in the context should face masculine influence and on the other hand find a way out for female's emancipation. History is full of examples concerning women's indignation against their position in the society

Here is Lady Winchelsea, for example, I thought, taking down her poems. She was born in the year 1661; she was noble both by birth and by marriage; she was childless; she wrote poetry, and one has only to open her poetry to find her bursting out in indignation against the position of women(Woolf, 1977, p. 64)

Woolf goes on in her essay to discuss how males at that time were responsible for the internal image of women characters in literature. She sees that males were in a position that allowed them to define the role of women in society. Women are portrayed as "angels at home" here; woman is portrayed by men as a person who has no mind or wish of her own. Instead, she is just an instrument to sympathize with the minds and wishes of others. By implication, it is evident that the proper milieu of writing is not available for women(Sellers, 2010, p. 112)hence the failure to write properly and adequately. However, some pioneers in the field of woman rights and feminism should be evoked like the case and struggle of one of the first novelists of English literature AphraBehn:

All women together ought to let flowers fall upon the tomb of AphraBehn, which is, most scandalously but rather appropriately, in Westminster Abbey, for it was she who earned them the right to speak their minds(Woolf, 1977, p. 72)

AphraBehn is an important figure but when Woolf turns her attention to fiction written by women she sees that female authorship in the English novel does not have a strong tradition. In the earlier times of English novel the predominance role of male writers discourages female writers to be autonomous

and prevents them to achieve their full artistic potential. Woolf mentions that even talented authors like Jane Austen had to confront patriarchy. All these exemplify the historical conditions of female authorship. Woolf suggests a challenge against the patriarchal order with wit and irony.

Woolf's feminism does not mean denying the differences between men and women. She believes each sex should discover and construct his/her own identity and gain self-consciousness:

It would be a thousand pities if women wrote like men, or lived like men, or looked like men, for if two sexes are quite inadequate, considering the vastness and variety of the world, how should we manage with one only(Woolf, 1977, p. 95)

A man who does not grasp female identity or a woman who does not understand male identity is doomed to fail in terms of creating a literary work. Man and woman should respect their own rooms, privacy and intellectual quests. Only with mutual understanding women can construct a fair status in the society. Thus, she states a mind that is purely masculine or purely feminine cannot create. An original creation can only be tested by binary oppositions like men and women.

Woolf's approach to men and their accomplishments is not like many other feminists who despise those accomplishments. Woolf emphasizes that women should also have the opportunity to accomplish what men do. Opposites, to Woolf, can bring about a fruitful union and artistic creation. A collaboration is needed for creation:

Some collaboration has to take place in the mind between the woman and the man before the art of creation can be accomplished. Some marriage of opposites has to be consummated(Woolf, 1977, p. 112)

Money, private space and some free time, this is what women needed to be active creators of their own writing. In the historical context, women did not have these as they lacked power. Writing poetry and to be acknowledged as a

man/woman of letter one always should find money to make living. Woolf's emphasis, this is why, is continuous:

And women have always been poor, not for two hundred years merely, but from the beginning of time. Women have had less intellectual freedom than the sons of Athenian slaves. Women, then, have not had a dog's chance of writing poetry. That is why I have laid so much stress on money and a room of one's own(Woolf, 1977, p. 116)

The self-realization and identity or status construction for women seems to be a long and complicated process. Women need courage and autonomy to establish a society in which woman has a status.

If we have the habit of freedom and the courage to write exactly what we think; if we escape a little from the common sitting-room and see human beings not always in their relation to each other but in relation to reality; and the sky(Woolf, 1977, p. 122).

Woolf's construction of woman as a subject in the society has historical, literary, economic and sociological aspects. In a sense, her essay has an interdisciplinary structure and encapsulates not just stereotypical feminist characters. Instead, she formulates a feminism which navigates in the uncanny waters of a patriarchal society.

CHAPTER III

THE POSTMODERN COMMAND OF GENDER: THE UN-GENDERED

The peak in the disparity between class, age, race, ethnicity, sex etc., leaves a valid explanation for the groundwork of the chase for an equal manner of living, especially since the nineteenth century. The postmodern art and literature, as questioned the philosophies left over from the Enlightenment period, sought to install ambiguous identities into the society, giving a start with shattering the gender identity. The discourses to divide the human body into two groups, men and women, have been the focus of censure for centering the bodily differences in the categorization of human beings. The feminist sociologists, particularly in the Third Wave of Feminism, have supported the idea that the gender identity is constructed through social pressures and therefore the society itself is gendered. This gendered social order is integrated to all of the social units of the system which as a result composes a culturally gendered treatment of sexes. Judith Lorber, a well-known gender deconstructionist, suggests that gender is the primary source of status in the gendered societies:

From the social construction perspective, gender is a society's division of people into differentiated categories of women and men. Gender operates at one and the same time as an individual social status, a relational factor, an organizational process, and a system-level social institution. Each level supports and maintains the others, but- and his is the crucial aspect of block of social orders, it gets built into organizations, floods interactions and relationships, and is a major social identity for individuals. (Lorber & Moore, 2002, p. 4)

Gender, being criteria for social status, is challenged by most of the gender theorists, as well as Jeannette Winterson. It has become obvious that the gender

distinctions between male and female cannot regulate our practices in thought and action any more, as the inequality in the social intercourse has reached to immeasurable points. Appeared in 1992, *Written on the Body*, created a confusion among the thinkers for its extraordinary use of language and narrative. The use of an unnamed and un-gendered narrator puzzled the critics and reviewers whether the narrator is a male, female, transsexual or a lesbian: “When I saw you two years ago I thought you were the most beautiful creature male or female I had ever seen.”(Winterson, 2013, p. 91)

The necessity to minimize the superiority of one gender and the inferiority of the other is what mostly problematized in Winterson’s *Written on the Body*. While asserting that the world of binary oppositions is behind, Winterson suggests that the gender differences should no longer be seen as a determiner in social dealings. To do this, to indicate the triviality of gender and vitality of gender indifference, Winterson uses an un-gendered narrator to emphasize the superiority of relationship that is love, over sexual differences.

Winterson un-declares the gender of the narrator to dismantle the fixed ranges of gender ideologies that feeds the discrimination among sexes. She, instead, recommends a fluid and transitive concept of multiple identities that can destroy the socially or cultural identified bodies. For her, gender is a flexible and changing concept rather than a fixed part of identity. That is to say gender is not a pivotal element of our identity but it is constructed by the values of different times and cultures. Therefore, it is absolute that Winterson chases after a moving or changing identity instead of a stable one that entraps the body into the social boundaries. And these social borders are not originated by nature but are the results of a socio-historical tradition as Grosz puts it:

... the body image cannot be simply and unequivocally identified with the sensations provided by a purely anatomical body. The body image is as much a function of the subject’s psychology and sociohistorical context as of anatomy. The limits or borders of the body image are not fixed by nature or confined to the anatomical ‘container,’ the skin. The body image is extremely fluid and dynamic; its borders, edged, and contours are

‘osmotic’ – they have the remarkable power of incorporating and expelling outside and inside in an ongoing interchange.(E. A. Grosz, 1994, p. 79)

Apart from the use of un-gendered narrator as a destroyer of boundaries, Winterson aims to build bridges between the readers who can look from a queer perspective and who do not. Winterson points out the reasons of her ambition in using such fluid character in an interview with Mark Marvel:

For years, gay people have been expected to absorb comfort, strength, illumination, education from the mainstream world. And they have done this by a process of fancy footwork, not minding that the models have been overwhelmingly heterosexual. What hasn't happened yet is the heterosexual world learning to do the same kind of sharp dancing, learning from the gay community.(Winterson, 1990)

With *Written on the Body*, Winterson offers a chance of deviation to both her reader and humanity in the heterosexual realm. Winterson does that by forcing the reader to use their imagination by not giving a clue of neither the narrator's physical description nor his/her gender. She leaves it to the reader to make the designation of the gender of the narrator. The reader is pushed to see the body of the narrator as female, male, transgendered, hermaphroditic, or from any other identity. It is obvious that Winterson does value the power of imagination over reality. As she suggests in one of her essays: “The reality of the imagination leaves out nothing. It is the most complete reality that we can know. Imagination takes in the world of sense experience, and rather than trading it for a words of symbols, delights in it for what it is.”(Winterson, 1996, p. 150)

The sense of imagination is what orients the narrative. A nightmarish vision by the narrator gives the sense of entrapment to the reader. At times, we do not have much to do in inextricable situations. The narrator's imagination combines the anxiety and an existential look for understanding the world. The imagery is striking, parts of body, feet, arms, eyes, are used to intensify the relationship between body and our conflicts. The passage below appeals to all senses by evoking mixed feelings:

Two hundred miles from the surface of the earth there is no gravity. The laws of motion are suspended. You could turn somersaults slowly slowly, weight into weightlessness, nowhere to fall. As you lay on your back paddling in space you might notice your feet had fled your head. You are stretching slowly slowly, getting longer, your joints are slipping away from their usual places. There is no connection between your shoulder and your arm. You will break up bone by bone, fractured from who you are, you are drifting away now, the centre cannot hold. Where am I? There is nothing here I recognise. This isn't the world I know, the little ship I've trimmed and rigged. What is this slow-motion space, my arm moving up and down up and down like a parody of Mussolini? Who is this man with the revolving eyes, his mouth opening like a gas chamber, his words acrid, vile, in my throat and nostrils? The room stinks. The air is bad. He's poisoning me and I can't get away. My feet don't obey me. Where is the familiar ballast of my life? I am fighting helplessly without hope. I grapple but[...]

It is, now, known that Winterson acknowledge the virtual and imaginative world more than the real world. She affirms the superiority of the imaginative world by saying: "Imagination's coin, the infinitely flexible metal of the Muse, metal of the moon, in rounded structure offers new universes, primary worlds, that substantially confront the pretences of notional life."(Winterson, 1996, p. 142)

She supposes that the current life that we live is nothing but a series of virtual events. Based on the whole theme in the novel, it would not be harsh to say that the narrator, therefore Winterson vicariously, is longing for a life which is purified from the taboos and social roles. This idea becomes more evident when she says "We were in a Virtual world where the only taboo was real life".(Winterson, 2013, p. 106)

The freedom in the narrative is professionally conveyed to the content and message of the novel. Winterson's ambition of bodies free of identities can easily be observed through the novel. Although, the term queer novel is relatively a newly coined one, it is possible to say that this novel could fall into the category of "the queer genre" as this term transcends the established ideas about sex and gender. The supporters of queer identifies 'queerness' as the failure to fit precisely within a category in which surely all persons at some time or other find themselves discomfited by the bounds of the categories that ostensibly contain

their identities.”(Turner, 2000, p. 8) Michael Foucault expresses this new way of life as follows:

A way of life can be shared among individuals of different ages, status, and social activity. It can yield intense relations not resembling those that are institutionalized. It seems to me that a way of life can yield a culture and an ethics. To be "gay," I think, is not to identify with the psychological traits and the visible masks of the homosexual but to try and define and develop a way of life. (Foucault, Rabinow, & Hurley, 1997, p. 138)

The queer is a sphere where all the hierarchies, regardless of whether cultural, moral or religious, are rebutted to establish new paths for the outcast, unusual and alternative voices. Winterson is among the proponents of the idea that everything is determined by culture. Together with her contemporaries, Winterson believed that “Things don’t change, they’re not like the seasons moving on a diurnal round. People change things.” (Winterson, 2013, p. 61)Hence:

...the body itself has a history: that is, cultural understandings of bodily processes, including sexuality, that shape the way people experience their own bodies have changed over time. And because the experience of “homosexuals” or “heterosexuals” or even “men” or “women” differs so widely from culture to culture or between classes within one culture, these are simply categories that have no physical basis.(Wiesner-Hanks, 2005, p. 4)

To trivialize the gender bound characters and its perception as a determiner of essentiality, Winterson utilizes from the love motif as a central element. As the name suggest love and object of love are written on one’s body. Even though love brings about sufferance and disappointment, it is not possible to avoid it. Expressing love by body instead of language evokes a form of resistance to conventional definitions of love and relationship. In *Written on the Body*, The non-gendered narrator that falls in love with a married woman makes the issue of gender in a relationship unimportant. By doing so, Winterson, in a sense, affirms the bisexuality and undermines the notion of gender. She, herself, admits on that her use of a de-gendered narrator is intended to highlight love by undermining gender divisions:

I mean, for me a love story is a love story. I don't care what the genders are if it's powerful enough. And I don't think that love should be a gender-bound operation. It's probably one of the few things in life that rises above all those kinds of oppositions-black and white, male and female, homosexual and heterosexual. When people fall in love they experience the same kind of tremors, fears, a rush of blood to the head. [. . .] And fiction recognizes this.(Winterson, 1990)

The persona in the novel herself/himself is well aware of the fact that s/he has to remain loyal to social codes although she is in a deep inner conflict whether to have Louise for his/her passions or abandon the beloved for the sake of social conventions:“Louise was the woman I wanted even if I couldn't have her”(Winterson, 2013, p. 67). Further, despite her suffering for Louise, the speaker follows some other idiosyncratic passions like having Jacqueline in hand. These passions are those that the narrator had “come to know that for holidays, not homecoming.”

The conflicts and tensions narrator reflects weave together the problems of disease, fear, romanticized love and absence. The relationships are now based on non-conventional forms, love on absence and loss dominates the discourse of narrator by bringing together Louise's absence and the discourse of melancholy. Winterson suggests a way that melancholy and fear become the leitmotifs of a love story:

You said, ‘Why do I frighten you?’ Frighten me? Yes you do frighten me. You act as though we will be together for ever. You act as though there is infinite pleasure and time without end. How can I know that? My experience has been that time always ends. In theory you are right, the quantum physicists are right, the romantics and the religious are right. Time without end. In practice we both wear a watch. If I rush at this relationship it's because I fear for it. I fear you have a door I cannot see and that any minute now the door will open and you'll be gone. Then what? Then what as I bang the walls like the Inquisition searching for a saint? Where will I find the secret passage? For me it'll just be the same four walls.(Winterson, 2013, p. 19)

Louise's return is manifested in a disturbing way. This indicates her vulnerability and malignant disease. The novel reflects cruelty in a sense while on the surface it has an opulent appearance. An abstract, invisible thing is reified

through writing on a body. Boundaries and desire can be inscribed on a vulnerable body. The characters need to find a way to overcome those boundaries. In this novel, the boundary is a disease. The inscription of an unusual love lies on the bodies of protagonists. The narrator's love for Louise is beyond the boundaries of the man in the street would feel. Passionate love expressed with an exaggerated style demonstrates the degree of narrator's indulgence for an object of desire:

I didn't only want Louise's flesh, I wanted her bones, her blood, her tissues, the sinews that bound her together. I would have held her to me though time had stripped away the tones and textures of her skin. I could have held her for a thousand years until the skeleton itself rubbed away to dust. (Winterson, 2013, p. 55)

Long time has been passed since Freud made his famous deductions on psychoanalysis, particularly about castration and penis envy. Although, Freudian notions have drawn reaction from almost all feminist theorists, Winterson is, even today, among those writers trying to build her arguments to deconstruct the gender understanding on Freudian ideology. The abuse women in art, although is a cliché in female literature, has once been touched upon in *Written on the Body*. The representation of female nudity has always attracted interest of scholars or thinkers focusing on the ethical perspective of this issue. Male and canonical painters like Renoir are never questioned about exploiting their models. These models are abused and exploited. The narrator questions the problem of female nudity in art from an ethical point of view:

We went to the Louvre to see a Renoir exhibition. Inge wore her guerilla cap and boots in case she should be mistaken for a tourist. She justified her ticket price as 'political research'. 'Look at those nudes,' she said, although I needed no urging. 'Bodies everywhere, naked, abused, exposed. Do you know how much those models were paid? Hardly the price of a baguette. I should rip the canvases from their frames and go to prison crying "Vive la resistance"' (Winterson, 2013, p. 23)

During their visit at the Louvre, Inge's question of 'Don't you know that Renoir claimed he painted with his penis?' to the narrator screens how Winterson is still loyal to the traditional feminist cornerstones, which is the struggle of decentralization of phallus. The problem of castration occupies the discussions

related to gender in many ways. Although the concept of castration suggested by Freud faced a great deal of criticism from feminist circles starting from Woolf, it still marks the gender problem to this day: “Wouldn’t impending castration followed by certain death be enough to cause a normal man to wipe his dick and run for it” (Winterson, 2013, p. 24)

It is clear that Winterson is still stuck with the notions of Freud and his impact on the Feminist ideology. Apparently, she does not solely criticize the Freudian theory; specifically its relation to castration, Winterson also overturns this concept to construct her own notion of sexuality by asserting the possibility of existence of humankind in a genderless body.

For sure, it would have been impossible for a feminist theorist to refer to the social politics that has confined women to the social constructs. Winterson, through the narrator, touches upon with a humorous approach to the politics of gender. Here, the discussion is reflected from the toilet. Why men’s toilets are liberal places? Probably, Winterson means that men are relatively less obedient and conformist to the social regulations while women are expected to be less liberal in this regard:

My job was to go into the urinals wearing one of Inge’s stockings over my head. That in itself might not have attracted much attention, men’s toilets are fairly liberal places, but then I had to warn the row of guys that they were in danger of having their balls blown off unless they left at once.(Winterson, 2013, p. 24)

Inge’s reaction to urinals is far more strict and she suggests the “urinal is a symbol of patriarchy and must be destroyed”(Winterson, 2013, p. 24). The hatred for the urinals again it has a metaphoric meaning representing the freedom of males in public. Men don’t have to find somewhere secret to pee while women should. In the following sections of the book, the narrator experiences a complete opposite situation while searching for a please for the toilet. She remarks: “I went to pee behind a bush. Why in the middle of the night, in the middle of nowhere, one still seeks out a bush is another of life’s mysteries” (Winterson, 2013, p. 189)

Evidently, Winterson strives to mention another mean of inequality even in a situation that is very humanly. Society puts boundaries and secrecy to the organs of women while publicizing and centralizing the penis of the men.

For example, the sexual conventions in the society do not tolerate a threesome, but the characters in the novel are open minded in that sense. Ménage a trois is seen in some other novels before Winterson but within the genre of “serious novel” it is not common to come up such types of relationship. Winterson and her narrator do not confine themselves in sex: “At first it didn’t matter. We got on well as a threesome. Louise was kind to Jacqueline and never tried to come between us even as a friend”(Winterson, 2013, p. 31)

The irony of Winterson is all-pervasive throughout the novel; women are, in general, associated with professions without status like secretary and receptionist. The narrator presents the reader this:

She forbade me to telephone her. She said that telephones were for Receptionists, that is, women without status. I said, fine, I’ll write. Wrong, she said. The Postal Service was run by despots who exploited non-union labour. What were we to do? I didn’t want to live in Holland. She didn’t want to live in London. How could we communicate?(Winterson, 2013, p. 25)

Religious sources have enduring impact in literary works; Winterson’s novel is no exclusion of this. Reference to Christ about adultery within a contemporary context implies the narrator’s interest in religion and its permeating influence:

I used to think that Christ was wrong, impossibly hard, when he said that to imagine committing adultery was just as bad as doing it. But now, standing here in this familiar unviolated space, I have already altered my world and Jacqueline’s world for ever. She doesn’t know this yet. She doesn’t know that there is today a revision of the map. That the territory she thought was hers has been annexed. You never give away your heart; you lend it from time to time. If it were not so how could we take it back without asking.(Winterson, 2013, p. 41)

One can easily comprehend that, Winterson's war is not only against the social norms but she also despises the religious norms and its enforcements over humans. But, she seems to be right to attack on the religious codes as the social norms are based on religious myths, since for her "Religion is somewhere between fear and sex and God is obsessed"(Winterson, 2007, p. 74) The view of women, especially in Adam and Eve story, is presented to be a sinner, therefore the faulty and deficient sex, while man is shown as the all-knower and superior one.

"Written on the Body is a journey of self-discovery made through the metaphors of desire and disease"(Winterson, 2014)It evokes certain images and sounds. It has an erotic aspect; it charms, attracts and agitates the reader. What can be written on a body, on a woman's body? The experiences of a body in search of an identity free of labels and social constraints marks the compelling novel by Winterson:

Written on the body is a secret code only visible in certain lights; the accumulations of a lifetime gather there. In places the palimpsest is so heavily worked that the letters feel like braille. I like to keep my body rolled up away from prying eyes. Never unfold too much, tell the whole story. I didn't know that Louise would have reading hands. She has translated me into her own book(Winterson, 2014)

This narrative, on the other hand, tackles pleasure and pain felt when one is in love. The love story is descriptive and captivating for reader. She stresses the fact that the mankind value things when they lose them. So is true for love. The narrator is anything but a female, gender has no importance. Yet, love persist its importance regardless of gender. Once you neglect it, the magic is lost. The unnamed narrator struggles to keep the love ignited:

What then kills love? Only this: Neglect. Not to see you when you stand before me. Not to think of you in the little things. Not to make the road wide for you, the table spread for you. To choose you out of habit not desire, to pass the flower seller without a thought. To leave the dishes unwashed, the bed unmade, to ignore you in the mornings, make use of you at night. To crave another while pecking your cheek. To say your

name without hearing it, to assume it is mine to call.(Winterson, 2013, p. 189)

No doubt that *Written on the Body* is book written on love and desire. However, the tiny clues in the book within the narrative and the unfamiliar use of characters presents a huge difference from the contemporary novels. Therefore, the book, as much as being a fiction, does include slices from the life itself. Winterson dwells more upon the historical, thus constructed definitions of being. The zoetic portrayal of human manners and their background that brought forth these manners are the parameters questioned in most of her works, indeed. Winterson's objective in most of her works is to debate the traditions bygone and continuing presently. In one of the interviews with her on *Written on the Body*, she confesses that fact as follow:

All of my books are about boundaries and desire – the boundaries we should try to cross, like fear and class and skin-colour and expectation, and the boundaries that seem to define us, such as our sense of self, our gender. Disease, especially a disease like cancer or aids, breaks down the boundaries of the immune system and forces a new self on us that we often don't recognise. Our territory is eaten away. We are parcelled out into healthy areas and metastasised areas. Parts of us are still whole, too much has been invaded”(Winterson, 2014)

The disease, that is the cancer, that Louise is experiencing, while is a metaphor on one hand, is a method for breaking the boundaries on the other. It is a metaphor in that the cancer deteriorates the immune system which, as Winterson states, stands for the social system. Louise's cancer spirits her passions and desire to leave apart the conventions and follow her instincts with the narrator. The use of disease motif, on the other side, is introduced by the writer to prove how one is forced to abide by the social regulations even at the cost of his/her life. Winterson struggles to demonstrate the severity of getting rid of the conventions while she tries to induce the reader that it does worth a life to live for passion and desire. Further in the book, the narrator expresses his/her wish choose without any religious or social constraint: “Destiny is a worrying concept. I don't want to be fated, I want to choose”

Winterson, being a non-conformist, challenges the historical interpretations for she does not consider the history intangible. She confirms that she likes to play with past as the past is fluid and is open to change: “All of my work, including *Oranges*, manipulates history. The past is not sacred. The past is not static. There are a few facts we can rely on – dates, places, people, but the rest is interpretation and imagination. I like that freedom.”

The freedom that Winterson mentions happens to be another controlling element in the novel. The narrator, during his/her dialogues with Louise, keeps saying that s/he is fed up with looking for compromises. The societal control that the narrator is pushed to be under is what s/he is aiming to escape from. The author wishes to spread the idea that the concept of true freedom does not only stand for the freedom among people within society, but it also is the freedom of choice and act that exists within the inner-self, which eventually will lead an entirely free body both in society and in the individual.

This freedom of identification regardless of constructs brings about the theory of queer. Queer theory challenges the sexual identities and hierarchies rather the sexuality itself. Thus, it aims to find the answers for issues of which identity or gender a free body would choose, is this choice relevant or has to be relevant with the conventions, is the gender choice a criteria for holding the power? But, further, the main question of the queer theory is: Are the genders only allowed to be consisted of the sexual binary oppositions that is male and female or should there be a multiple and fluid selection identities?

The demand for the transitive sexual identity elucidates the course of feminist movement that began to seek for equal treatment of genders as male and female, ended up ignoring all fixed identities and suggesting instable and multiple sexualities. Unlike the dictated norms of heteronormativity, the queer suggests a multiplicity of sexuality that is not bounded to stationary and rigid definitions of society which is historically and discursively bodied. Consequently, the conception of queer sexuality implicates floating, unsteady, indefinite understanding of gender.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the process of problematization of gender initiated with the subversion of women on both the cultural and intellectual realm in Woolf's time has become more visible and transformed into a genderless form with Winterson. The question of gender, at first, was scrutinized on the basis of equality, status, social and legal rights, which nowadays have turned into a subject of ideology and identity. The current feminist or precisely gender issue focuses more on all kinds of identities instead of mere female identity. This has brought about a more comprehensive ideological tool for observing the societal setting in which the premise of 'womanness' is shaped.

The in-depth analysis of *A Room of One's Own* in the 2nd Chapter illuminates the disputes in feminist ideology and what were the foundations for the question of sexual equality. It is explicit that the main concerns of the first or proto feminists were focalised around equity of sexes in social, political and discursive arena. Virginia Woolf and her contemporaries were in search for equal opportunities with men, which were a fair and simple demand for humankind.

Yet, the issue of sexuality, in the long run, has transformed into a far complicated state with the involvement of 'gender' and 'conventions' into the issue. The feminist movement that quested equal rights, shifted to the new understanding that women are superior to men indeed with the theories of influential Third Wave Feminists like Helene Cixious, SoshanaFelman, LuceIrigaray and Elaine Showalter. Those feminists have taken the issue of sexual un-equity to a step further by suggesting the necessity to exist in literature for the existence in the social world. Their main argument was to deconstruct the

Freudian traditions on sexual identity and to construct a female identity that is free from all the patriarchal chains which bind women to the household.

However, it was Judith Butler that who first introduced that a person should be defined and identified according to his/her actions. With the theory of 'performativity', Butler relocated gender trouble to where it is meant to be. After the theory, all related discussions on gender identity have come out to be persons' performances in defining them. Further, she has submitted the fluid and multiple identities to the movement by offering a plenitudeness in belonging to an identity. Therefore Butler, I would say, has contributed a keystone to the issue of gender identity.

Finally, Jeannette Winterson has taken the gender problem to the last and to-day phase. She proposes that both the sexuality and gender are constructed by society and therefore every identity should be ignored and the individual his/herself should decide whether to hold one or more identities. So, all the genders and identities were refused by Winterson as they all are social constructs.

As a result, the problem of gender and identity which started with search for equal rights for both sexes from Virginia Woolf has shifted to be a problem of existence of the gender itself with Jeannette Winterson.

REFERENCES

- Abbott, E. A. (1885). *Flatland*: Roberts brothers.
- Abel, E. (1989). *Virginia Woolf and the Fictions of Psychoanalysis*: University of Chicago Press.
- Barrett, E., & Cramer, P. (1997). *Virginia Woolf: Lesbian Readings*: New York University Press.
- Butler, J. (1988). Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory. *Theatre Journal*, 40(4), 519-531. doi: 10.2307/3207893
- Butler, J. (1999). *Gender Trouble : Tenth Anniversary Edition*. London, GBR: Routledge.
- Cixous, H., Cohen, K., & Cohen, P. (1976). The Laugh of the Medusa. *Signs*, 1(4), 875-893. doi: 10.2307/3173239
- Eagleton, M. (2011). *Feminist Literary Theory: A Reader*: John Wiley & Sons.
- Foucault, M., Rabinow, P., & Hurley, R. (1997). *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*: New Press.
- Friedan, B., Fermaglich, K. L., & Fine, L. M. (2013). *The Feminine Mystique*: W.W. Norton & Company, Incorporated.
- Goldman, J. (2006). *The Cambridge Introduction to Virginia Woolf*: Cambridge University Press.
- Grosz, E. (1990). *Jacques Lacan : A Feminist Introduction*. Florence, KY, USA: Routledge.
- Grosz, E. A. (1994). *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*: Indiana University Press.
- Halperin, D. M. (1997). *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography*: OUP USA.
- Higgins, L. A., & Silver, L. A. H. B. R. (2013). *Rape and Representation*: Columbia University Press.
- Jeffries, G. M. (1994). *Feminine Feminists: Cultural Practices in Italy*: University of Minnesota Press.

- The lesbian and gay studies reader.* (1993). New York: New York : Routledge.
- Levenback, K. L. (1999). *Virginia Woolf and the Great War*: Syracuse University Press.
- Lorber, J., & Moore, L. J. (2002). *Gender and the Social Construction of Illness*: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Michael, M. C. (1996). *Feminism and the Postmodern Impulse: Post-World War II Fiction*: State University of New York Press.
- Mitchell, J. (2000). *Psychoanalysis and Feminism: A Radical Reassessment of Freudian Psychoanalysis, with a New Introduction by the Author*: Basic Books.
- Rohde, S. F. (2009). *Freedom of Assembly*: Facts On File, Incorporated.
- Rossi, A. S. (1973). *The Feminist Papers: From Adams to de Beauvoir*: Northeastern University Press.
- Rousseau, J. J. (2007). *Emile, Or on Education*: NuVision Publications.
- Sellers, S. (2010). *The Cambridge Companion to Virginia Woolf*: Cambridge University Press.
- Shukla, B. A. (2007). *American Feminists : A Critical Study*. Jaipur, IND: Global Media.
- Slipp, S. (1995). *The Freudian Mystique: Freud, Women, and Feminism*: New York University Press.
- Smith, B. G. (2008). *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Women in World History: 4 Volume Set*: Oxford University Press, USA.
- Sociology.* (2013). Boundless Learning, Incorporated.
- Todd, J. (1867). *Woman's Rights*.
- Turner, W. B. (2000). *A Genealogy of Queer Theory*: Temple University Press.
- Warhol, R. R., & Herndl, D. P. (1997). *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*: Rutgers University Press.
- Wiesner-Hanks, M. (2005). *Christianity and Sexuality in the Early Modern World: Regulating Desire, Reforming Practice*: Taylor & Francis.
- Winterson, J. (1990). Winterson: Trust me. I'm telling you stories. In M. Marvel (Ed.), (pp. 165-168).

- Winterson, J. (1996). *Art Objects: Essays on Ecstasy and Effrontery*: Vintage.
- Winterson, J. (2007). *The Passion*: Grove/Atlantic, Incorporated.
- Winterson, J. (2013). *Written on the Body*: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.
- Winterson, J. (2014). *Written on the Body*. Retrieved 10.06.2014, 2014, from <http://www.jeanettewinterson.com/book/written-on-the-body/>
- Wollstonecraft, M. (1833). *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: With Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects. With a Biographical Sketch of the Author*: A. J. Matsell.
- Woolf, V. (1977). *A room of one's own*. London: Grafton.
- Zwerdling, A. (1986). *Virginia Woolf and the Real World*: University of California Press.

CURRICULUM VITAE

KİŞİSEL BİLGİLER

Soyisim, İsim :Aldemir, Nimetullah

Uyruđu :T.C.

Dođum Yeri ve Tarihi :Aralık, 01.08.1985

Medeni Hali :Evli

Telefen Numarası :0542 500 0465

E-posta :ygtaldrm@gmail.com

EĐİTİM

Derece	Kurum	Mezuniyet Yılı
Lisans	Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Amerikan Kültürü ve Edebiyatı	2010
Lise	Ađrı Naci Gökçe Yabancı Dil Ađırlıklı Lisesi	2004

İŐ DENEYİMİ

Yıl	Yer	Pozisyon
2012-Halen	Ađrı	İngilizce Okutmanı, Erasmus Koordinatörü

YABANCI DİL

İyi Seviyede İngilizce (KPDS:97; TOEFL CBT: 250)