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The Role Of The Three Main Characters In Supporting The Theme Of To The Lighthouse By Virginia Woolf

THE ROLE OF THE THREE MAIN CHARACTERS IN SUPPORTING THE THEME OF *TO THE LIGHTHOUSE* BY VIRGINIA WOOLF

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Abstract: Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), a brilliant English writer, has been called as a feminist, since she fought for women's rights and protested the domination of men. She might be also called as an androgynist writer, for she sometimes emphasized the harmony of men and women. *To the Lighthouse*, which was published in 1927, is her best novel of both feminism and androgyny. It is a realistic novel about a family and an elegy for people Virginia loved. Based on the strong and deep memories of her own family, she described a group of the more complex people spending holiday in a summer house on Scottish coast. It consists of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay with their eight children and assorted guests. They are going to have a visit to a nearby lighthouse. It is put off because of the weather, and takes place ten years later. From this delay of the expedition to the lighthouse, she constructed the complex tensions of family life and the conflict of male and female principles. For Virginia there is not one of kind of truth, but two. There is the truth of reason, and there is the truth of imagination. The truth of reason is pre-eminently the masculine sphere, while the truth of imagination, or intuitive, is the feminine. Together, these truths make up what she calls reality. Regarding this idea, in *To the Lighthouse*, she tries to imply a theme about the harmony by presenting male and female characters that have contradictory views and different principles. There are many characters in *To the Lighthouse*, Mr. Ramsay, Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe are supposed to be the main characters since they dominantly support the development of the events and even most of the story focuses on their actions, attitudes and thoughts. This research aims to give evidence that Mr. Ramsay, Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe are all the main characters who, with their words, thoughts and actions, relate each other to support the theme of *To the Lighthouse*.

Keywords: *characters, deductive, novel*

INTRODUCTION

Literature is simply another way we can experience the world around us through our imagination. (Jones, 1968:1) This means that by reading the works of literature we may increase our knowledge about life although we do not experience it ourselves, because like Jones says that the reading of literature is in itself an experience, we take part in what is happening. (1968: vii)

Literature is generally divided into drama, poetry and prose. All of these works are the imagination of the author which usually aims to entertain and to inform. In other words, they deal with thoughts and feelings. Since this article is concerned with the novel which is one of the prose branches, it is therefore only the novel which is talked about.

A novel contains the experience, message and hope of the author. Talking about the novel, Kenney states that a novel is decidedly not meant to be read at a single sitting, but substitutes complexity, and deals with the effect on character of the passage of time. (1966:105) Through a novel, we can observe various characteristics of human beings from its characterization, beside we can also take the message about life.

To the Lighthouse, one of the greatest literary achievements of the twentieth century, is often considered

as Virginia Woolf's most popular novel, for it sold better than any of its predecessors. It was firstly published in May 1927. She herself regarded it as the best of her books, because she realized the full potentiality of her method in it, using instruments which she had perfected in the two of her previous novels and using simpler, more straightforward language. (1992: vii)

To the lighthouse is a realistic novel about a family and an elegy for people Virginia loved, she described a group of the more complex people spending holiday in a summer house on Scottish coast. It consists of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay with their eight children and assorted guests. They are going to have a visit to a nearby lighthouse. It is put off because of the weather, and takes place ten years later. From this delay of the expedition to the lighthouse, she constructed the complex tensions of family life and the conflict of male and female principles.

Virginia recovered her past and restored the people she loved in her major novels, especially *To the Lighthouse*. The character of Leslie Stephen, her father, is completely transformed into Mr. Ramsay, and Julia Stephen, her mother, is the figure for Mrs. Ramsay, Thoby, her brother, is the model of Andrew Ramsay, and Stella Duckworth, her half sister, is the

model for Prue Ramsay. (Batchelor, 1991: 92) She herself is transformed into Lily Briscoe, one of the summer guests. (Moody, 1963: 8)

Moody states that the central characters of *To the Lighthouse* are Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe. (1963: 29) While Batchelor says that the only main character is Mrs. Ramsay. (1991: 92) On the basis of the two different statements, it is interesting to analyze and prove that the three characters (Mr. Ramsay, Mrs. Ramsay, Lily Briscoe) are all the main characters who have their own rules but they integrate one another to support the theme of the story.

There are many characters in *To the Lighthouse*, Mr. Ramsay, Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe are supposed to be main characters of the story since they dominantly support the development of the events and even most the story focuses on their actions, attitudes and thoughts. Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay have contradictory characters. Mr. Ramsay is educated, sensible, tyrannical, pretty, selfish and egotistical. As a philosopher he emphasizes the reasonable things in his life. Mrs. Ramsay is uneducated, admirable, serene, maternal, protective and generous. She sees life with her feeling only and forgets the physical facts.

Lily Briscoe is an independent young woman. She is plain but charming. She is a painter. She loves

For Virginia there is not one of kind of truth, but two. There is the truth of reason, and there is the truth of imagination. The truth of reason is pre-eminently the masculine sphere, while the truth of imagination, or intuitive, is the feminine. Together, these truths make up what she calls reality. (Blakstone, 1952: 26) Regarding this idea, it seems that she, in *To the Lighthouse*, tries to imply a theme about the harmony by presenting male and female characters that have contradictory views and different principles. views and different principles.

Mrs. Ramsay and her family. She observes the life of the Ramsays, and this is reflected in her painting. Although she is only an observer, she is involves her thoughts and her feelings in order that the problem of the story can be resolved.

The different principles of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay bring them to a conflict but at last they can solve it. They can relate and harmonize the difference, though in their own way and not in the same moment. On the other hand, Lily Briscoe who at first takes Mrs. Ramsay's side, after comprehending the relationship of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay, decides to take their harmony as the completion of her painting.

In the discussion of this article, there is a hypothesis that Mr. Ramsay, Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe are all the main characters. They, indeed, have their own characters. But with what they do, say and think, they integrate each other in order that the theme of the story can be formed. They clearly have the most important roles in the story.

The scope of study in this article is about the role of the three main characters in order to support the formation of the theme of *To the Lighthouse*. Therefore, to get the correct data and information, there are many kinds of books as general sources which are needed in the analysis and in the discussion of this article, such as the books about the criticism of the novel itself and some dictionaries.

The problem of this article is discussed clearly by using psychological knowledge to art, (1) it provides a more precise language with which to discuss the creative process, (2) it goes back to the study of the

THE THREE MAIN CHARACTERS IN THE STORY

Mr. Ramsay

Mr. Ramsay is a teacher of philosophy in a university in London. He has a wife and eight children. As a philosopher, he emphasizes the reasonable things in his life. He

lives of the authors as a means of understanding their art, (3) and it can be used to explain fictitious characters. (1962: 71-72). This approach is used in order to observe the life of Virginia Woolf which is reflected in her novel, and furthermore to analyze and comprehend the manners and attitudes of the three main characters in the story.

This article is supported by the data of a library research. While the method used is the deductive one. Sutrisno Hadi states that the principle of a deductive method is anything that is reasoned and concluded by general law to a practical case. (1987: 37) This means that the analysis of the topic is from the general point of view to the particular conclusion.

The goal of writing this article is to examine and give evidence that Mr. Ramsay, Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe are all the main characters who, with their words, thoughts and actions, relate each other to support the theme of *To the Lighthouse*.

implies his principles to his family without caring of their feelings so this makes other people dislike him. He thinks that what he says is always true. He believes in fact and does not want to play with it. That is why he teaches his children that life is difficult, that facts do not compromise what people want, that people will lose their hopes, and that people need courage and

power to suffer. These are described in the following quotation,

What he said is true. It is always true. He was incapable of untruth; never tampered with fact; Never altered a disagreeable word to suit the pleasure or convenience of any mortal being, least of all of his own children, who, sprung from his loins, should be aware from childhood that life is difficult; facts uncompromising; and the passage to that fabled land where our brightest hopes are extinguished, our frail barks founder in the darkness (here Mr. Ramsay would straighten his back and narrow his little blue eyes upon the horizon), one that needs, above all, courage, truth, and power to endure. (1992: 4)

As an educated man, Mr. Ramsay is too proud of his rationalism. He is vain, especially for the truth of his views. And he likes disparaging other people. He likes being jealous of somebody else's success, for instance, when he reads an article telling about the fame of Shakespeare. "If Shakespeare had never existed, he asked, would the world have differed much from what it is today?" (1992: 40) He vainly asks himself whether the condition of the world now or the progress of civilization depends on the existence of great men like Shakespeare. This is distasteful to him. He comments that

great men need the existence of a slave class. But he does not know why he disparages Shakespeare and protects the average people. This is possibly because he thinks himself is a failure. Though he is actually the happiest man, he has a very beautiful wife; he has eight children; he has tributes from many diverse universities. But all these are considered as nothing, for he has not done the thing he may have done,

It was true; he was for the most part happy; he had his wife; he had his children; he had promised in six weeks' time to talk "some nonsense" to the young men of Cardiff about Locke, Hume, Berkeley and the causes of the French Revolution. But this and his pleasure in it, in the phrase he made, in the ardor of youth, in his wife's beauty, in the tributes that reached him from Swansea, Cardiff, Exeter, Southampton, Kidderminster, Oxford, Cambridge---all had to be deprecated and concealed under the phrase "talking nonsense," because, in effect, he had not done the thing he might have done. (1992: 41 - 42)

Mr. Ramsay is a selfish man. He just thinks of himself and ignores outer things or little things around him. He is always uneasy about himself. He is concerned very often about his own books, wondering if

they will be read or not, if they are good or bad and what people think of him. And he will be touchy to hear people talking about the fame of the works of some distinguished writers while his own books are forgotten "... and his being so irritable with his wife and so touchy when they passed his books over as if they didn't exist at all." (1992: 111) This may be the effect of his disappointment that he is a loser who cannot reach for fame. Actually Mr. Ramsay is a man who is very brave in thought only but afraid to have his own feelings nor to face the facts of life. He has the high wish but does not have the enough strength to reach it. As Lily Briscoe says that he is a man who likes thinking how to destroy the world with his little finger. "But in her opinion one likes Mr. Ramsay all the better for thinking that if his little finger ached the whole world must come to an end." (1992: 43)

Mr. Ramsay is a fiery. He is easy to be angry with his wife and children. He likes forcing them to do what he wants and to take what he says. He is sensitive to all he thinks as absurdities and he will insist on his sensible views. One of the examples of his anger is when he says to his wife that they will not be able to go to the lighthouse the next day because the weather will be impossible for them to go, but Mr. Ramsay answers that the wind may change. This makes

him angry and he says "Damn you" to his wife, as he thinks her irrational answer can raise a false hope to the children,

The extraordinary irrationality of her remark, the folly of women's minds enraged him. He had ridden through the valley of death, been shattered and shivered; and now she flew in the face of facts, made his children hope what was utterly out of the question, in effect, told lies. He stamped his foot on the stone step. "Damn you", he said. (1992: 29)

As a father, Mr. Ramsay has a great love for his children and wants to protect them. But the way he shows it seems not to be welcomed by his children. He is considered as a cruel father. This makes his children hate him and disrespect him. They do not want to be close to him, they are closer to their mother under her protection,

But his son hated him. He hated him for coming up to them, for stopping and looking down on them; he hated him for interrupting them; he hated him for the exaltation and sublimity of his gestures; for the magnificence of his death; for his exactingness and egotism (for there he stood, commanding them to attend to him); but most of all he hated the twang and twitter of his father's emotion which

vibrating round them, disturbed the perfect simplicity and good sense of his relations with his mother. (1992: 34)

He also loves his wife very much. He is proud of her beauty. But he cannot take the ways of her taking care of and educating their children. He thinks what she gives to them can spoil them. He often makes her sad for some little quarrels when they find contradictory views between them. He is indeed an obstinate man, but sometimes he understands and admits his fault. For instance, he is sorry for their having quarreled about going to the lighthouse. He realizes that he has made her sad about that, but he can do nothing to help her,

It saddened him, and her remoteness pained him, and he felt, as he passed, that he could not protect her, and, when he reached to the hedge, he was sad. He could do nothing to help her. He must stand by and watch her. Indeed, the infernal truth was, he made things worse for her. He was irritable, he was touchy. He had lost temper over the lighthouse. (1992: 59-60)

And sometimes he tries to make her happy by pretending to notice little things he usually does not care of. For example, he pretends to admire the flowers that he actually does not. He admires them only to please his wife. (1992: 66)

That is Mr. Ramsay. Some people like him, but most dislike him. Besides his wife who surely loves and reveres him, his friend William Banks admires him as "one of those men who do their best work before they are forty". (1992: 22) Mr. Ramsay had made a book of philosophy when he was only twenty five years of age. But furthermore Banks considers Mr. Ramsay as a hypocrite, "...All the same, he rather wished Lily to agree that Ramsay was, as he said, 'a bit of hypocrite.'" (1992: 43) For his own youngest son James, Mr. Ramsay is vain, destructive, lean as a knife and selfishly monopolizing his wife's energy. "...not only with the pleasure of his disillusioning his son and casting ridicule upon his wife....but also with some secret conceit of his own accuracy of judgment." (1992: 4) While Lily Briscoe thinks that "he is petty, selfish, vain, egotistical; and spoilt; he is a tyrant; he wears Mrs Ramsay to death; he knows nothing but trifles; he loves dogs and children." (1992: 23)

Mrs. Ramsay

Mrs. Ramsay is a very beautiful woman and still captivating though she is already old. She is so serene and maternal that most people like and admire her. She has contradictory characteristics with her husband's. She sees life with her feeling only and forgets the physical facts. She

emphasizes her feeling before her thought. She and her husband have completely different views of life; they have their own truth and reality, but she always tries to understand him just the way he is and attempts to acknowledge the truth of his facts so that their differences are resolved. For instance, when they have a little quarrel about going to the lighthouse, she firstly refuses her husband's reason for their not being able to go there the next day. But finally she does not mind taking the truth what he says that the weather will not be fine the next day.

And smiling she looked out of the window and said (thinking to herself, Nothing on earth can equal this happiness) ---- "Yes, you were right. It's going to be wet tomorrow." (1992: 115)

Mrs. Ramsay never revenges whatever her husband does and says that makes her disappointed and hurt, she just thinks of it or replies it with her silence. When he says "Damn you" to her and still insists on his reason, she keeps quiet and just thinks that "To pursue truth with such astonishing lack of consideration for other people's feeling, to rend thin veils of civilization so wantonly, so brutally, was to her so horrible..." (1992: 29) She is never angry with the treatment of her husband to her. Even with her patience and warmth she consoles him when he gets

disappointment with himself. Especially when he feels that he fails, she attempts to soothe him and give sympathy that he wants,

Charles Tansley thought him the greatest metaphysician of his time, she said. But he must have more than that. He must have sympathy. He must be assured that he too lived in the heart of life; was needed, not here only, but all over the world. (1992: 35)

Mrs. Ramsay realizes the characteristics of her husband. She knows that he does not care of trifles, so she never tell him about their greenhouse roof and the expense to mend it, and she hides the other small daily things. She understands that he is so touchy, so she is afraid to tell him the truth about his books, "...that his last book was not quite his best book..." (1992: 3) But still, however good or bad he is, she has deep respect for him, admires and praises him. She loves him very much, but she never can say what she feels for him, though he begs her to tell him just for once that she loves him. That is the only thing she never can do. She just decides to acknowledge the truth of his facts and make it as an expression of her love to him. "He wanted something---wanted the thing she always found it so difficult to give him; wanted her to tell that she loved him." (1992: 114)

As a mother, of course Mrs. Ramsay loves her eight children. She cares for them too much. Though she has a servant who takes charge of them, she still watches them for their comfort. For example, when she finds her two children, Cam and James, still wide awake having a fear of the skull nailed up in the room, while she cannot put the lamp out for James cannot sleep without a light, "She quickly took her own shawl off and wound it round the skull..." (1992: 106) and then she consoles them until they fall asleep. Because of her great love, she does not want them to be grown up and then to suffer facing the difficulties of life. She thinks that they will never be so happy again when they are all grown up. She really wants to keep holding them in her arms as babies and protecting them forever. She is too possessive. And she does not care of people saying that "She was tyrannical, domineering, masterful..." (1992: 55) She always tries to keep their feeling, she does not want them disappointed. She often shields them from their father's tyranny and soothes their resentment. For instance, when her little boy James gets disappointed as his father insists that the weather will prevent their expedition to the lighthouse, she consoles him and still gives him a hope,

"Perhaps you will wake up and find the sun shining and the birds

singing," she said compassionately, smoothing the little boy's hair, for her husband, with his caustic saying that it would not be fine, had dashed his spirits she could see. This going to the light house was a passion of his, she saw, and then, as if her husband had not said enough, with his caustic saying that it would not be fine tomorrow, this odious little man went and rubbed it in all over again. "Perhaps it will be fine tomorrow," she said, smoothing his hair. (1992: 14)

That is why James considers her as a creative and life-giving figure. She is identified with a tree and fountain. "...this fountain and spray of life...like a beak of brass, barren and bare." (1992: 34)

Mrs. Ramsay has also good manners towards her social environment. She always welcomes her guests to spend the summer days in her house and invites them to have dinners with her family. Besides, she is generous. She cares of other people's sufferings and helps the poor and the sick,

..., making some little twist of the reddish brown stocking she was knitting, impatiently. If she finished it tonight, if they did go to the Lighthouse after all, it was to be given to the Lighthouse keeper

for his little boy, who was threatened with a tuberculous hip; together with a pile of old magazines, and some tobacco, indeed whatever she could find lying about,... (1992: 4)

That is Mrs. Ramsay. She is beautiful, admirable, serene, maternal, possessive, masterful and generous. She never finds any difficulty in making people like her. Her beauty and her good personality make her much loved and admired. "She had been admired. She had been loved." (1992: 38)

Lily Briscoe

Lily Briscoe is one of the Ramsay's guests. She is an independent young woman. She is plain but charming. She enjoys her life as an unmarried woman; she loves her loneliness. She thinks she has freedom against the universal law; "She liked to be alone; she liked to be herself..." (1992: 46) and she was born not to be married.

Lily is a painter. She observes the life of the Ramsays and this is reflected in her painting. She loves Mrs. Ramsay and her family. She really admires her, her beauty and her good personality. She takes her as a mirror. She thinks that looking at the personality of Mrs. Ramsay can recover her sense, her disappointment, of herself,

... Then, she remembered, she had laid her head on Mrs. Ramsay's lap and laughed and laughed and laughed, laughed almost hysterically at the thought of Mrs. Ramsay presiding with immutable calm over destinies which she completely failed to understand. There she sat, simple, serious. She had recovered her sense of her now---this was the gloves' twisted finger. But into what sanctuary had one penetrated? Lily Briscoe had looked up at last, and there was Mrs. Ramsay, unwitting entirely what had caused her laughter. (1992: 46 – 47)

Lily does not like Mr. Ramsay. She tends to disparage him. For her, he is selfish and absorbed in himself; he is a tyrannical husband who brings his wife to death. "What she disliked about him was his narrowness, his blindness..." (1992: 43) Lily compares his personality to William Bankes's, Mr. Ramsay's close friend,

...You have greatness, she continued, but Mr. Ramsay has none of it. He is petty, selfish, vain, egotistical; he is spoilt; he is a tyrant; he wears Mrs. Ramsay to death; but he has what you (she addressed Mr. Bankes) have not; a fiery unworldliness; he knows nothing about trifles; he loves dogs and his children. He has eight. You have none. (1992: 23)

Lily is resolute. Her daily attitudes show her feminism. She hates the weakness of Mrs. Ramsay under her husband's despotism. She hates the unjust treatment of him to his wife. Most of all, she hates every man looking down on woman's existence. She does not like Charles Tansley saying that a woman cannot paint and cannot write. "...and remembering how he sneered at woman, "can't paint, can't write", why should I help him to relieve himself?" (1992: 84) She is offended by his words. She does not like to be sneered

Therefore in completing her painting she remembers the mockery. She proves that she has the ability to paint. That is Lily Briscoe, a painter; an affectionate critic of Mrs. Ramsay and an observer of the Ramsays. Although she is only an observer, she involves her thoughts and her feelings in order that the problem of the story can be resolved.

THE ROLE OF THE THREE MAIN CHARACTERS IN SUPPORTING THE THEME

It is concluded based on some experts' opinions that a theme is the basic idea or meaning of the whole story which implies such a message or moral designed to incorporate the reader with the story, it is implied or asserted. And looking for theme needs a comprehending of how the element

theme itself is related to the other elements. Character as a major element has the most important role in forming the theme of a story. The theme can be concluded based on all events that happen in the story, and the events need characters as the doers.

To the Lighthouse presents a lot of conflicts and quarrels between husband and wife in a family; they have very different principles about life. But whatever it takes, they try to resolve their differences. It can be concluded that the theme of *To the Lighthouse* is that in life there must be two contradictory views between man and woman, but how bad the differences they must be related and harmonized.

It is clearly described the characteristics of the three main characters; who they are and what kind of behavior they have. They are different - their opinions, their principles - but they integrate one another in order that the theme of the story can be formed. The descriptions below prove the role of the three main characters in supporting the theme.

At the beginning of part I, "The Window", Mrs. Ramsay opens the story by saying a promises to her son, James. What she promises is a visit to the lighthouse the next day. And James who always dreams of the expedition is very glad to hear it. This is the role of Mrs. Ramsay as a mother

who tries to make what her child wishes to happen,

“Yes, of course, if it’s fine tomorrow,” said Mrs. Ramsay. “But you’ll have to be up with the lark,” she added. To her son these words conveyed an extraordinary joy, as if it were settled the expedition were bound to take place, and the wonder to which he had looked forward, for years and years it seemed, was, after a night’s darkness and a day’s sail, within touch. (1992: 3)

It is told in the precious chapter that Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay have contradictory characters, so then Mr. Ramsay says something different from what his wife says. He seems to prevent the expedition by saying that the weather will not be fine the next day. As a father he wants to teach what he believes about life to his children, that life is difficult and people have to be brave to face disappointment when facts make them lose their hopes. But whatever his reason, James cannot accept that. He hates his father and wants to “kill” him,

“But,” said his father, stopping in front of the drawing-room window, “it won’t be fine.” Had there been an axe handy, a poker, or any weapon that would have gashed a hole in his father’s breast and killed him, there and then,

James would have seized it. (1992: 42)

Knowing that James become very disappointed, Mrs. Ramsay with her maternity attempts to console him by giving him a hope that it may be fine the next day or there is still another day to go to the lighthouse. As a mother she wants to protect her son from inconvenient feelings. She does not like her husband or other people hurting her children. For instance, when Charles Tansley, one of her guests, supports what her husband says by giving meteorological information,

“It’s due west,” said the atheist Tansley, holding his bony fingers spread so that the wind blew through them, for he was sharing Mr. Ramsay’s evening walk up and down, up and down the terrace. That is to say, the wind blew from the worst possible direction for landing at the lighthouse. Yes, he did say disagreeable things, Mrs. Ramsay admitted; it was odious of him to rub this in, and make James still more disappointed; (1992: 5)

James wants to go to the lighthouse, Mrs. Ramsay agrees it but Mr. Ramsay does not. In next brings many conflict showing contradictory views between Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay, She was trying to get these tiresome stocking

finished to send to Sorley's little boy tomorrow, said Mrs. Ramsay. There wasn't the slightest possible chance that they could go to the lighthouse tomorrow, Mr. Ramsay snapped out irascibly. How did he know? she asked. The wind often changed. The extraordinary irrationality of her remarks, the folly of women's minds enraged him..... (1992: 29)

The above quotation is the description of a brief quarrel between Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay about going to the lighthouse. Though he has said that it will rain, she keeps trying to finish the stockings which she wants to give to the sick little boy of the lighthouse keeper. Once again, he insists that they have not any possibility to go there the next day, but she answers that the wind may change. He is angry to hear it. He thinks that she is very irrational, and he hates her spoiling the children, and then he says "Damn you" to his wife. Then she just says that it may be fine the next day. But her husband still insists on what he knows about the weather the next day. Finally she decides to say nothing anymore. She thinks that what he does to her-insisting her to accept his truth without caring of her feeling-is so horrible.

Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay also have different views about their children. Mrs. Ramsay loves them too

much. She does not want them to grow up, as she thinks that they will never be so happy again and they have to face the difficulties of life when they are grown up,

Why, she asked, pressing her chin on James' head, should they grow up so fast? Why should they go to school? She would have liked always to have had a baby. She was happiest carrying one in her arms. (1992: 54)

It angers Mr. Ramsay when she says to him about this. He thinks that she sees life pessimistically. "Why take such a gloomy view of life? It is not sensible." (1992: 55) But Mrs. Ramsay does not mean to be pessimistic. She just takes a look at life privately. To her life is frightful, there are many kinds of problems in it. That is why she does not want her children to grow up and to face the problems. She thinks that all she have experienced do not need to happen to them,

..., she must admit that she felt this thing that she called life terrible, hostile, and quick to pounce on you if you gave it a chance. There were the external problems: suffering; death; the poor. (1992: 55)

It is natural for a mother to say that her daughter is a beautiful girl, like Mrs. Ramsay who sees her daughter Prue as the most beautiful

one, “Prue was going to be far more beautiful than she was, said Mrs. Ramsay.” (1992: 62) But Mrs. Ramsay does not think so, “He (Mr. Ramsay) saw no trace of it, said Mrs. Ramsay.” (1992: 62) Meanwhile he hopes his son Andrew will get a scholarship, but she hopes he will not, “They disagreed always about this, but it did not matter. She liked him to believe in scholarships and he liked her to be proud of Andrew whatever he did.” (1992: 62) That is some examples of contradictory views between Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay in their married life.

The life of the Ramsay’s seems to be interesting for Lily Briscoe to observe. She is trying to make a painting about the Ramsays. She likes and admires Mrs. Ramsay, she makes that woman for an object in her painting, “It was Mrs. Ramsay reading to James, she said.” (1992: 48) Then she finds herself in a problem about the painting, she does not know how to relate two opposed masses, “It was a question, she remembered, how to connect this mass on the right with that on the left.” (1992: 49) But she does not keep painting, she stops it as she is afraid that the unity of the painting may be broken if she draws something more in it.

The lighthouse becomes identified with Mrs. Ramsay and is made an image for her vision of “something immune which shines

out”. But she responds only to the light and leaves the actual structure out of account. (Moody, 1963: 41) This means that Mrs. Ramsay sees the lighthouse with her feelings. She watches the light with fascination as if it brings her a delight. She often sits alone to see the light until she feels that she herself is the light, Often she found herself sitting and looking, sitting and looking, with her work in her hands until she became the thing she looked at-that light for example. (1992: 58)

That is why she agrees when her youngest son has a wish to go to the lighthouse, and she is upset when her husband prevents him, she cannot accept his reason why they cannot go. She is really a good wife, she realizes they are different — their minds, their feelings, What he thinks right is not always right for him. Most of her views are different from his and she often finds many contradictories between them. She never gives up on this fact -- she never stops building a better family life. With her patience and with all her ways she tries to understand him. She attempts to acknowledge his minds and accept his truths. For their quarrel about the lighthouse, finally she decides to admit and to accept his reason that they cannot go to the lighthouse because of the bad weather,

And as she looked at him she began to smile, for though she had

not said a word, he knew, of course he knew, that she loved him. He could not deny it. And smiling she looked out of the window and said (thinking to herself, Nothing on earth can equal this happiness)- “Yes, you were right. It’s going to be wet tomorrow.” She had not said it,... (1992: 115)

She agrees that the trip to the lighthouse have to be postponed because it will rain the next day. Actually this can be a surrender. It seems that she prefers to call the surrender as a triumph for she has comprehended and admitted the truth of her husband’s facts and she has made it as an expression of her love for him, furthermore it could resolve their differences, “She had not said it but he knew it. And she looked at him smiling. For she has triumphed again.” (1992: 115) This can be her last triumph in her life, because in part II “Time passes” it is told that she has already dead. “She was dead, they said; years ago, in London.” (1992: 129)

Part III “The Lighthouse” tells that the surviving Ramsay and friends come again to spend the summer in the old house ten years later — Mrs. Ramsay and the two of her children Andrew and Prue have died.

The death of Mrs. Ramsay causes the disappearance of the maternal warmth in the Ramsay—the maternal

warmth that shielded the children from their father’s anger and soothed their resentment and the maternal warmth that shielded Mr. Ramsay does not change her husband. He is still tyrannical to his children and they still hate him, too.

Mr. Ramsay wants to go to the lighthouse. He is going to send the presents that his wife used to want to give, “Then he said he had a particular reason for wanting to go to the lighthouse. His wife used to send the men things.” (1992: 145) He asks James and Cam to come with him. Although they do not want to go they cannot refuse it as he forces they,

They have been forced; they had been bidden. He had borne them down once more with his gloom and his authority, making them do his bidding, on their fine morning, come, because he wished it, carrying these parcels, to the lighthouse;... (1992: 157)

For Lily Briscoe, the death of Mrs. Ramsay influences her feeling. When she comes again to the house, she does not feel the same as she used to be there ten years before, “The house, the place, the morning, all seemed strangers to her. She had no attachment here...” (1992: 140) Then she remembers with her painting that she left as she had a problem with it. She decides to finish it,

She had never finished that picture. It had been knocking about in her mind all these years. She would paint that picture now. (1992: 141)

But she can do nothing with her painting because Mr. Ramsay always watches her. She feels inconvenient. She knows that she cannot give—sympathy. Every time he tries to approach her, she keeps away from him and does not give him a chance. She thinks that he is a man who never gives, he just takes. She does not want to be Mrs. Ramsay who used to give and give to her husband. But finally she realizes who she is. She is a forty-four-years old unmarried woman, she was wasted her time. Then despairingly she decides to surrender to him and to give him what she can,

Well though Lily in despair, letting her right hand fall at her side, it would be simpler than to have it over. Surely she could imitate from recollection the glow, the rhapsody, the self surrender she had seen on so many women's faces (on Mrs. Ramsay's for instance)... Here he was, stopped by her side. She would give him what she could. (1992: 143-144)

Finally Mr. Ramsay, James and Cam sail to the lighthouse. James and Cam very upset to be forced to come. They swear to resist his tyranny. On the way to the lighthouse,

Cam is suddenly proud of her father and she begins to love him. She says nothing as she remembers his tyranny which destroyed her childhood, while James wants to “kill” him. He wants to kill something in him—his tyranny and his authority,

That he would kill, that he would strike to the heart. Whatever he did--... that he would fight, that he would track down and stamp out—tyranny, despotism, he called it—making people do what they did not want to do, cutting off their right to speak. (1992: 175)

James remembers how his father used to prevent him to go to the lighthouse. Ten years before with his mother he liked to see the lighthouse when they were sitting on the window. He used to think that the lighthouse was “a silvery, misty-looking tower with a yellow eye that opened suddenly and softly in the evening.” (1992: 177) And now, when they are closer to the lighthouse, he sees it as it really is, a stark tower on a bare rock which is surrounded by the sea. But at the same time he perceives that both views are true.

James looked at the lighthouse. He could see the white-washed rocks; the tower, stark and straight, he could see that it was barred with black and white; he could see the windows in it; he could even see washing spread on the rocks to dry. So that was the lighthouse,

was it? No, the other was also the lighthouse. For nothing was simply one thing. The other was also the lighthouse, too. (1992: 177)

When they reach the lighthouse, Lily Briscoe who does not come with them, finishes her painting. She gives the final stroke in the painting. She draws a line in the centre which relates and harmonies the opposed masses,

With a sudden intensity, as if she saw it clear for a second, she drew a line there, in the centre. It was done; it was be finished. Yes, she thought, laying down her brush in extreme fatigue, I have had my vision. (1992: 198)

The final strokes of Lily's painting—a line drawn in the centre—is the key to the conclusion. The line suggest the lighthouse which Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay's opposed views of reality have been comprehended and related. The lighthouse relates his rational reality and her intuitive reality and admits the validity of both and also implies the necessity of both. Mr. Ramsay represents the spirit of life itself (the inward light which shines out)

From the conclusion of the story, a theme can be found. In life there must be two contradictory views and forces between man and woman. Usually, a man uses his logical

thoughts to see something, and a woman emphasizes her feelings. But, how bad the differences they must be related and harmonized. To the lighthouse shows how neither the rational views nor the intuitive one can get on without the other.

That is the theme of *To the lighthouse*. And this is suitable with the characteristic of Virginia Woolf in writing her works. She has been called an androgynist, because she puts the emphasis every time on what a man and a woman have to go give each other. (Blackstone, 1952: 31)

CONCLUSION

Mr. Ramsay is an educated man. As a philosopher he always uses his rationalism to see everything in his life. He is tyrannical, pretty, selfish and egotistical. Mrs. Ramsay is a serene and maternal woman. She is beautiful, admirable, protective, masterful and generous. She emphasizes her feeling to see something and often forgets the physical reality. Their son James wants to go to the lighthouse. Mrs. Ramsay promises him an expedition to go there, but Mr Ramsay prevents it for a reason. This is an incident that confronts Mr Ramsay, leading them to feel and express all that divides and all that unites them and to adopt two very different kinds of views of life.

They finally can resolve the problem and relate their differences although in their own ways and not in the same moment. Mrs. Ramsay comprehends and admits her husband's truth and he sails across to the lighthouse which she likes. This means that the external and internal reality must be related and brought together, though they still remain divided and different.

On the other hand Lily Briscoe, the observer of the Ramsays, is working at the problem of relating two opposed masses and resolving them into a unified image. While her

mind works at that it works also at the problem of comprehending the Ramsays. She admired Mrs. Ramsay and defends her sufferings. Having satisfied her sense of Mrs. Ramsay, she needs to comprehend Mr. Ramsay as well to get the resolution of her own problem with the painting. That is the role of Mr. Ramsay, Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe in supporting the theme. Mr. Ramsay has his own principle of life based on his mind. Mrs. Ramsay has her own view of life based on her feeling, and Lily Briscoe the observer who combines the differences in harmony.

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