

VIRGINIA WOOLF'UN *DENİZFENERİ* ESERİNDE PARÇALARIN BİRLEŞTİRİLMESİ

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Öz

19. yüzyılın sonlarında ortaya çıkıp 20. yüzyılın başlarında etkisini keskin bir şekilde gösteren Modernizm, önceki tüm akımları etkisiz hale getirdi. Yeni bir bakış açısını edebiyata, kültüre, politikaya sunan bu akım, geçmişi reddetti ve özgün bir çerçevede yeniliği destekledi. Edebiyatta da yeniliğe kapı araladı. Hem içerik hem de şekil olarak edebi eserler farklı bir tarzda kaleme alındı. Eski geleneğin örnekleri olan basit, yüzeysel, tek tip eserler yerine; daha deneysel, doğrusal olmayan anlatılar, karakterlerin iç dünyasının incelendiği eserler ön plana çıktı. Bilinç akışı, metin içi parçalamalar, derin bir kötümserlik, okuyucuyu metne dahil etme gibi kavramlar, edebiyatın önemli ayrıntıları haline dönüştü ki yazarlar, bu özellikleri kullanarak hem yaşadıkları dönemi, hem de kendi ruhsal hayatlarını eserlere yansıtmaya çalıştılar. 20. yüzyılın başında ortaya çıkan ve tüm dünyayı derinden etkileyen Birinci Dünya Savaşı edebiyatı da şekillendirdi. Savaşa tanıklık eden yazarlar konularını savaştan almaya ve savaşın yıkıcı etkilerini anlatmaya başladılar. Bu yazarlardan birisi de modern edebiyatın öncülerinden Virginia Woolftur. Çalkantılı bir hayat geçiren Woolf'un yaşadığı psikolojik rahatsızlıklar, aynı zamanda dönemin getirdiği kaos, temalarının ve düşünce biçimlerinin üzerinde çok derin etkiler bırakmıştır. Kaleme aldığı günlükler, denemeler, romanlar dönemin izlerini taşır. Buna ek olarak iç dünyasının karmaşıklığını da eserlerinde usta bir şekilde yansıtır. Bilinç akışı tekniği, karakterlerin iç dünyasının analizini ve parçalara ayırma tekniğini göz alıcı şekilde kullanan Woolf, olay örgüsünü bu şekilde sunar. 1927'de yazdığı *To the Lighthouse* (*Deniz Feneri*) eseri modern edebiyatın yapı taşlarından birisidir. Kitabı oluşturan üç bölüm vardır; bunlar *The Window*, *Time Passes* ve *The Lighthouse*'dur. Eserde dikkat çeken unsurlardan birisi karakterler ve olaylar arasındaki zıtlıklar, uyumsuzluklar ve parçalanmalardır. Romanın ve karakterlerin ayrışmalarının önemli bir niteliği olan parçalara bölme, Virginia Woolf tarafından baskın şekilde anlatılır. Woolf bütünlük kavramıyla olay ve karakterlerin parçalanmasının üstesinden gelmeye çalışır. Temel olarak, bu makalenin amacı, Woolf'un romandaki karakterler ve olaylar yoluyla bütünlüğü sağlamak için parçalara ayrılmış öğeleri nasıl bir araya getirdiğini tartışmaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Virginia Woolf, *Denizfeneri*, biraraya getirme, parçalara ayırma, Modernizm.

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INTEGRATION OF FRAGMENTATIONS IN VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *TO THE LIGHTHOUSE*

Abstract

Modernism, which emerged in the late 19th century and took effect sharply in the early 20th century, radically breaks with all previous movements. This movement, offering a new perspective on literature, culture, and politics, rejected the past and supported novelty in an original context. Additionally, it opened the door to novelty in literature. Literary works were written in a different style, both in content and form. More experimental, non-linear narratives and works examining the inner world of the characters came to the fore instead of simple, superficial, standardized works which were examples of the old tradition. Concepts such as stream of consciousness, fragmentations, deep pessimism, and involving the reader in the text became important tenets of literature through which, the authors tried to reflect both the period they lived in and their own spiritual lives in the works. The First World War, which broke out in the second decade of the 20th century and profoundly affected the whole world, shaped literature as well. Writers who witnessed the war began to take their subject matters from the war and describe the war's devastating effects. One of these writers is Virginia Woolf, a pioneer of modern literature. The psychological disorders and a turbulent life experienced by Woolf as well as the chaos of the period had a deep impact on her themes and modes of thinking. The diaries, essays, and novels she wrote bear the traces of the period. In addition, she masterfully reflects the complexity of her inner world in the works she penned. Making use of the stream of consciousness technique, characters' inner world, and fragmentation magnificently, Woolf constructs the plot in this regard. Her work *To the Lighthouse*, written in 1927, is one of the cornerstones of modern literature. There are three parts that make up the book: *The Window*, *Time Passes*, and *The Lighthouse*. What stand out as striking elements in the work are the contrasts, inconsistencies, disagreements, and fragmentations among the characters and the events. Fragmentation- a striking aspect of the novel and dissolution of the characters- is heavily touched by Virginia Woolf. Woolf strives to overcome the fragmentation of the events and characters through the concept of integration. Basically, the purpose of this article is to argue how Woolf integrates the fragmented elements to achieve a sense of unity with reference to the characters and events in the novel.

Keywords: Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, integration, fragmentation, Modernism.

Introduction

Being one of the most prominent modernist authors of the twentieth century, Virginia Woolf has touched on many subject matters by utilising avant-garde literary artistic techniques which made her a distinguished British author. Along with James Joyce, E. M. Forster, D. H. Lawrence, and T.S. Eliot, she revealed what the world went through and the individual's chaotic state of mind. Her novel *To the Lighthouse* is regarded as a substantial example of modern novelfiction which bears the deep traces of the period it was written. "The result sense of curtailment and fragmentation in the progress of history" (Stevenson, 1993, 43) as well as "the general human condition in the 1920s" (Penda, 2018:58) affected Woolf's writing style and themes. Strikingly, the war's inflictions and deep consequences caused Woolf to take on more pessimistic subject matters to show what she personally lived as well as how the world was undergoing chaotic sufferings. It is no surprise that *To the Lighthouse* reveals "the death and decay in the years of the First World War," (Stevenson, 1993:53) and Woolf pens on the sufferings by using literary techniques which helped her manifest what she wanted to call out. Woolf divides her book into three parts as a reference to fragmentations which she masterfully resolves by bringing out integration and reconciliation. Woolf "renews her efforts to achieve a form of representation" (Gillies, 1996:120) which may be called as a representation of integration coming out of fragmentations; moreover, the more she "focuses on the nature of characters" (Gillies, 1996:120) the more it becomes evident that "the barrier between the subject and object" (Gillies, 1996:120) is overcome by the appearance of integration and reconciliation. Essentially, she makes use of breaks, fragments, chaos, and "plays with the narrative sequence" (Gillies, 1996:120) in addition to the characters' minds to create confusions. However, the reader is likely to see the elimination of the confusion and fragments because Woolf gradually but effectually creates the moment or the scene where an integration is achieved, exemplified as "the actual voyage to the lighthouse is the important thing, for it is here that James, Calm, and Mr. Ramsay experience their own individual moments of being." (Gillies, 1996:122) Even though the reader comes across many fragmentations, "wholeness is glimpsed... waiting to be grasped by the writer" (Lloyd, 2005:159) who manages to hold and reflect this wholeness in the three sections of the book. It can be argued that Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* "functions through the constant shifting of viewpoints" (Uhlmann, 2011:30) causing fragmentations and breaks among events and characters, yet Woolf manages to bring out integrations and reconciliations out of the divisions. Basically, it works out to describe a situation with its opposite, this is true in literature as well. The hidden fact is more overtly reflected by explicit situations or actions, that's why Woolf "purposely uses fragmentation and an outwardly loose structure" (Penda, 2018:58) to grasp the integration and wholeness. While she "is experimenting with rendering the effects of entropy" (Sumner, 2000:73) we witness the artistic creation of integrity and order by some means or other through the author's ability to bring out juxtapositions.

Integration of Fragmentations

To the Lighthouse has three parts, and it incepts with *The Window* which gives the reader dissolve of fragmentations by means of integrations. It is apparent that some characters achieve and dissolve the fragments. The first chapter's most significant character is Mrs. Ramsay. Woolf depicts her as a mediator who finds conciliation among people who are aloof; Woolf gives her the duty to bring people together. Mrs Ramsay creates integration in herself, so "her fragmentary existence- as she ordinarily feels it to be- is enveloped in fullness of being." (Stewart, 1977: 378) And also, her marriage with Mr. Ramsay is integration itself. Both Mr. Ramsay and she are in need of each other to maintain their lives and for their world to continue "...his wife and son, together... They needed his protection; he gave it them," (Woolf, 2013:42) so their being together reveals the integration created by a sense of family although dissesuses are available. They achive the integration as a man and woman. Although Mr. Ramsay stands as the authoritative power, he is one of the parts of the marriage. As a good metaphysician, he has achieved greatly, but he wants more and is doubtful about the legacy of his studies and he aims to create an integration between his studies; thus, he likens his studies to the alphabet which is a pile of integration. Mr. Ramsay has the belief that he has accomplished by the letter "Q" and he has great ambition to reach "Z" to complete the wholeness of the alphabet: "Z is only reached once by one man in a generation." (Woolf, 2013:42) The Ramsays form the integration as a couple. They achieve the integration with their eight children: "Eight children. To feed eight

children...” (Woolf, 2013:29) Mr. Ramsay talks about their children as “... the Kings and Queens of England; Cam the Wicked, James the Ruthless, Andrew the Just, Prue the Fair.”(Woolf, 2013:30)When James, the youngest boy, has the desire to see the lighthouse, Mr. Ramsay reacts and rejects his intention:“But, it won’t be fine,” (Woolf, 2013:10) James gets upset and regards him as a barrier, Mr. Ramsay can be regarded as a violator of integration in the eye of James: “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.”(Woolf, 2013:10). Yet, it is Mrs. Ramsay who finds reconciliation between Mr. Ramsay and James. She keeps James’s sense of hopefulness regarding the future: “Perhaps you will wake up and find the sun shining and the birds singing.”(Woolf, 2013:22) Mrs. Ramsay’s intention is not only to keep reconciliation between them, she also contributes those who are in need of her and her help which reflects her position as an individual to create integration and dissolve fragmentations: “the reddish brown stocking she was knitting... was to be given to the Lighthouse keeper for his little boy, who was threatened with a tuberculous hip.”(Woolf, 2013:10).

We see an old goat’s skull on the wall. Cam, Mrs. Ramsay’s youngest daughter; James, her youngest son; quarrel about it: “Cam wide awake, and James wide awake quarreling.” (Woolf, 2013:128). So as to keep Cam calm, Mrs. Ramsay states: “But think, Cam, it is only an old pig.... But Cam thought it was a horrid thing.” (Woolf, 2013: 128). To end the tension, she finds a solution and satisfies them: “We will cover it up.” (Woolf, 2013:128-29). As to James, she indicates: “No, not tomorrow, she said, but soon, she promised him; the next fine day. She covered him up.” (Woolf, 2013:129). Once more it is the duty of Mrs. Ramsay to bring out the integration of her children and to abolish the possibility of dissolution. To praise her mother Prue hints: “That’s my mother...she felt, as if there were only one person like that in the world; her mother.”(Woolf, 2013:130).

Another instance of integration is the dinner party which Woolf reveals the examples of integration by means of Mrs. Ramsay to the reader. She dissolves the fragments which causes disconnections among the guests. Mrs Ramsay recognizes that: “Nothing seemed to have merged. They all sat separate.” (Woolf, 2013:97). Because at the party “she feels the need to create cohesion” (Levy, 2006: 53) she tries to bring them together. As the owner of the party she is “recognized as the center around whom all the activities of the family revolve.” (Pederson, 1958:585). Her most significant aim is to bring people together and for this dinner party, too, Mrs. Ramsay wonders why single men do not tend to get into marriage through which integration is achieved. She muses on Bankes: “William Bankes had no wife and no children and dined alone in lodgings...and in pity for him.” (Woolf, 2013:98). Despite the fact that Mrs. Ramsay thinks Lily Briscoe and Bankes match each other and intends to bring them together, Bankes wanted “only to be alone...The truth was that he did not enjoy family life.” (Woolf, 2013:103). On the other hand, Lily as an “independent, non-maternal, and creative individual” can stand alone (Andrews, 2004:336) and she “mentally refuses marriage, escaping.” (Viola, 2000:281). Lily has made her decision: “...she need not marry...she need not undergo that degradation.” (Woolf, 2013:116). Mrs. Ramsay encourages love by talking about the merit of marriage life and struggles to realize marriage for single people. She pursues to create integrity out of fragments because to her, a person can be completed by another person, so she brings man and woman together to reach the sense of integration. And of course it is the power and skill of Mrs. Ramsay that enables the creation of integrity on which people find a comfort to feel love and sympathy to each other, two of whom are Paul and Minta. She pays importance to the concept of wholeness that when she comes across the pronoun “we” used by Paul, she attributes it to their integration: “We went back to look for Minta’s brooch,”...“We”...itwas the first time he had said we. We did this.” (Woolf, 2013:114). When it is time to light the candles, the candlelight provides the members of party a sense of integration both physically and mentally: “Now all the candles were lit up, and the faces on both sides of the table were brought nearer by the candlelight, and composed.” (Woolf, 2013:111) As an example of integration, the party breaks and eliminates the fragments: “...they were all conscious of making a party together...; had their common cause against that fluidity out there.” (Woolf, 2013:111).

As Mrs. Ramsay symbolizes the key of integration, when she is removed, the unity will be missing. With the tragic death of Mrs. Ramsay, the established integration seems to be destroyed in the summer house and all the people seem to go their own ways. In *Time Passes* section, Woolf “envisages at the novel’s

inception as a narrow corridor joining two blocks...as if leading from one fictional place to another," (Minogue,1997:161) and people, things, appear nowhere, the house seems as if it was broken into pieces: "Not only was furniture confounded; there was scarcely anything left of body or mind by which one could say, This is he or This is she.." (Woolf, 2013:144). The house "was left; was deserted" (Woolf, 2013:159) and it was the duty of Mrs. McNab to recover fragments, establish a balance between them through the cleaning, and recovery process, she "...had stood in the wash-tub, grinding it with boots that had crunched the shingle, came as directed to open all windows, and dust the bedrooms."(Woolf, 2013:149). Woolf authorises Mrs. McNab to bring the pieces together and form the integration at home. Mrs. McNab stands as the figure to dissolve the present fragments of the home, preparing it for inhabitation of the people.

In the last part, *Lighthouse*, it is as if a new order commences through Mr. Ramsay, his children, and Lily. The integration and reconciliation start with the journey to the lighthouse. It is Mr. Ramsay who "reminded them that they were going to the lighthouse tomorrow." (Woolf, 2013:173) It was an expedition that had been planned ten years ago: "...they were going to the lighthouse... They should have gone already."(Woolf, 2013:169) On the boat: "Mr Ramsay was sitting with Cam and James." (Woolf, 2013:186). Cam may not have been there or Mr. Ramsay may have prevented her from accompanying them. This fact manifests the completion of family integration. When we take the family as a component of integration, it is easy to see the family's members are together and fragmentations have disappeared. Although once his father told James: "It will rain... You won't be able to go to the Lighthouse," (Woolf, 2013:212) now he was before the Lighthouse which: "Now, James looked at it... So that was the Lighthouse, was it?" (Woolf, 2013:212). Although this quotation implies a fragmentation in James's mind as he had imagined a more different thing than he saw now, the lighthouse functions as the mediator of integration and reconciliation between him and Mr. Ramsay. Meanwhile, Cam's and James's dislike against their father slowly turn into love and content, a father-and-son-daughter reconciliation is accomplished.

As to Lily Briscoe who "opposes the logical but arid and sterile male principle" (Blotner,1956:550) she makes use of her art and succeeds a vision so as to create her individual existence. She aims not to dissolve what she has believed, thought and argued. It can be stated that "Lily's search for unity among disparate, warring elements of subject and object, self and others" (Stewart,1977: 85) is completed with her art. She starts and eventually completes her painting which is a brilliant example of integration and wholeness in her lonely life. Lily starts her painting, brings fragments together, and forms a unity out of scattered pieces. What she creates becomes a complete unity. The unity refers to the completion of the painting as well as the self identity which gives her emotion of accomplishment and euphoria. She creates the sense of integration through her art: "...yes, with all its greens and blues, its lines running up and across, its attempt at something." (Woolf, 2013:237). She follows the integration of beauty and order in life that she looks for to express in her art; she "completes the rite, her invocation of Mrs. Ramsay, her transformation of herself." (Barr, 1993:143). Though her sense of integration was once damaged by the death of Mrs Ramsay, she now dissolves the fragments and embraces the wholeness by her art.

Conclusion

As the central character of the first part, Mrs Ramsay is deduced to be the creator of the integration throughout the first part of the plot. People find themselves connected to each other, and there happens integration and reconciliation thanks to her power and skill. She comes up both as a woman of generosity, benevolent, and as an organiser who brings people together. By doing so, she eliminates the fragmentations in human relations and events present with the people and events. James's hope and optimism is preserved through Mrs. Ramsay in spite of the fact that she knows the impossibility of his desire to occur. She has the goal to bring people together, marry them, and complete the breaks and fragments. Her attitude does not vary depending on whom she is concerned. As she aims to create integration, she mostly avoids disconnections and conflicts. She brings the characters together and generates a sense of integrity as much as possible. The second part, *Time Passes* is constructed on a number of fragments, yet Woolf presents Mrs. McNab to prepare the desolate house for the integration of the fragments. The cleaning and restoration process at home establish the necessary background for the family to come together and keep the consolidation. On that account, the last part, *Lighthouse* achieves the integration. Mr. Ramsay's transformation and taking his

children to the lighthouse strengthen family ties, and fragments within the family are integrated. Lily Briscoe, too, achieves what she insistently pursues and through her painting, she masterfully brings and shapes colours, portraits together, and after all reaches the integration in her mind and life scope.

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