

ABSTRACT

Human self keeps literature alive. Since the time immemorial, the concept of human self has always been embedded on the canvas of world literature. Many literary giants have tried to explore the true nature of human self in their own peculiar styles; Virginia Woolf is one of them. This dissertation intends to explore Virginia Woolf's philosophy and the rationale, which forms her vision of human self. The point of contention is that Virginia Woolf visualizes human self in the continuity of the tradition to 'know thyself' and depicts it through her peculiar style in the literary genre of novel.

Woolf's vision of human self is purely her own. Human self, for her, is not a static entity rather it is in flux. She glorifies the importance of relationships in knowing the self. To her, every relationship implies definition of self by other and vice versa. She seeks to exhibit the reality, which is behind the material; the things that matter are the spiritual ones; and she has endeavoured to grasp this ultimate truth.

Woolf's vision of Human self defines the pattern of her novels. She employs stream of consciousness to render the thoughts 'as they fall' upon the mind. In her vision, these unstructured, chaotic thoughts become the purest moments of being. Her work impregnates with the excitement of moral and psychological insights. She invoke reality, 'trueness to life' through her experiment of exploring the self.

The movement of this study follows the pattern of discussion and analysis. In Chapter I, I begin with a brief survey of the definition of self as deemed by different philosophers and by Virginia Woolf herself. Chapter II asserts how memory helped in solidifying Virginia Woolf's own personal self and her concept of human self in general. Chapter III focuses on the non-homogeneity of self. Chapter IV explores the impossibility to define the exact nature of human self and its relation with other selves. The focus of Chapter V is the unpredictability of fixing the essence of self.

This study is a research based on primary (text of the novels) and secondary (criticism on the novels) sources, using analytical research design. The text of Woolf's three novels titled *Mrs Dalloway*, *To The Lighthouse* and *The Waves* are analyzed for the purpose.