

VIRGINIA WOOLF

Life

Virginia Woolf was born in London in 1882 from a rich family.

His father was an editor of the English Dictionary of National Biography; her mother was a sensitive woman and she belonged to the aristocratic world.

Virginia was the third of four children.

The father tells her enchanting adventure stories and recite poetry.

The paradise of Virginia was Tolland House in Cornwall, her family went there every summer.

Virginia loves the ocean, the sound of the waves , the ebb and flow of the tides.

But this happy period was short.

In fact Virginia 's mother died and her father sold it.

When Virginia was thirteen , she suffered from depression for her mother.

In these years she read for long hours in her father's library and began writing articles and essays.

In 1904 her father died and she attempted the suicide by taking drugs.

The other children abandoned their house at Hyde Park Gate and settled in Bloomsbury.

This was a circle of intellectuals, that was an expression of the new tendencies of the first half of the twentieth century.

They were intellectually free and open minded, and refined in art and literature.

In this period Virginia also worked as a volunteer in the movement for woman's suffrage, and she always felt the subordinate position of woman in society to be an injustice.

In 1917 the Woolfs founded the Hogarth Press, which was to publish most of Virginia's works.

She had recurrent mental stability. When she was alone, she was overcome by anxiety and insecurity , by terror at the brevity of life.

The Second World War increased her terror and she decided to put an end to her life.

She drowned herself in the river Ouse in 1941.

Features and Themes

In 1924 Virginia Woolf delivered a lecture entitled "*Mr Bennet and Mrs Brown*" , where she claimed the basis of good fiction lay and launched an attack on the Edwardians.

"Moment of being"

Moment of being is a moment of utmost intensity , a moment of perception, a moment where all became important for the writer.

Technique

Following Joyce in England and Proust in France, Virginia Woolf abandoned the traditional technique.

She eliminated traditional plot and direct dialogues, turning to an interior monologue.

The narrator must tell the story with objectivity without the interventions.

Use of the time

The mind has a process of its own, which obviously need different methods of narration.

Woolf tried to compress these mental processes into time units of the fleeting instant for the restful time sequence of days, months and years.

"To The Lighthouse" = *Al Faro*

This novel is divided in three parts. The first part tells about the Ramsay family on holiday. There are eight children and a little group of intellectual guests.

The central figure is Mrs Ramsay, she has promised her son James to let him go on a trip to the lighthouse, but the trip does not take place owing to bad weather.

The second part covers a span of ten years, where Mrs Ramsay, her daughter and her son Andrew died.

The third part is set in one day, ten years later.

The Ramsays return to the old house. Everything is change , only the lighthouse is still the same.

Structure and symbolism

This work is rich in symbolism and imagery. The lighthouse and the journey are the alternation of light and darkness, the transition from innocence to experience.

The structure is symbolical, she wants obtain a sort of mix.

The treatment of the time is emphasized.