THE CONCEPT OF WOMEN'S FREEDOM IN THE WORKS OF VIRGINIA WOOLF (BASED ON THE EXAMPLE OF "MRS. DALLOWAY" AND "A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN")

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Abstract

This article analyzes the gender aspect in Virginia Woolf's works Mrs. Dalloway and A Room of One's Own . Key elements of the writer's feminist concept are considered, including the problem of women's social and intellectual dependence, the limitations of their rights and opportunities in a patriarchal society. Particular attention is paid to the artistic images of Clarissa Dalloway , Elizabeth, Miss Kilman , as well as male characters, through which gender stereotypes and power asymmetries are revealed. The use of the "stream of consciousness" method as a means of conveying the inner world of the heroines and their psychological experiences is analyzed. It is concluded that Woolf is creating a new type of female character - independent, thinking, and striving for spiritual freedom. The significance of the idea of a "room of one's own" as a symbol of a woman's creative and personal independence is emphasized.

Keywords

Virginia Woolf , Mrs. Dalloway , A Room of One's Own , gender, feminism, female image

Abstract

Ushbu maqolada Virjiniya Vulfning "Dalloway xonim va o'z xonasi" asaridagi gender nuqtai nazari tahlil qilinadi. Yozuvchining feministik konsepsiyasining asosiy elementlari, jumladan, ayollarning ijtimoiy va intellektual qaramligi muammosi va patriarxal jamiyatda ularning cheklangan huquq va imkoniyatlari ko'rib chiqiladi. Klarissa Dalloway, Elizabeth, Miss Kilman va erkak qahramonlarning badiiy tasvirlariga alohida e'tibor qaratiladi, ular orqali gender stereotiplari va kuch assimetriyalari ochib beriladi. Qahramonlarning ichki dunyosi va ularning psixologik tajribalarini yetkazish vositasi sifatida "ong oqimi" usulidan foydalanish tahlil qilinadi. Vulf mustaqil, o'ychan va ma'naviy erkinlikka intiladigan yangi turdagi ayol xarakterini shakllantirayotgani haqida xulosa chiqariladi. Ayolning ijodiy va shaxsiy mustaqilligi ramzi sifatida "o'z xonasi" g'oyasining ahamiyati ta'kidlanadi.

Kalit so'zlar

Virjiniya Vulf, Dalloway xonim, O'z xonasi, gender, feminizm, ayol obrazi

Аннотация

В статье анализируются особенности гендерного аспекта в произведениях Вирджиния Вулф — Миссис Дэллоуэй и Собственная комната. Рассматриваются ключевые элементы феминистской концепции писательницы, включая проблему социальной и интеллектуальной зависимости женщин, ограниченность их прав и возможностей в патриархальном обществе. Особое внимание уделяется художественным образам Клариссы Дэллоуэй, Элизабет, мисс Килман, а также мужским персонажам, через которых раскрываются гендерные стереотипы и асимметрия власти. Анализируется использование метода «потока сознания» как средства передачи внутреннего мира героинь и их психологических переживаний. Делается вывод о том, что Вулф формирует

новый тип женского образа — самостоятельного, мыслящего и стремящегося к духовной свободе. Подчеркивается значимость идеи «собственной комнаты» как символа творческой и личной независимости женщины.

Ключевые слова

Вирджиния Вулф, Миссис Дэллоуэй, Собственная комната, гендер, феминизм, женский образ

Introduction. Virginia Woolf's work is characterized by a desire for experimentation: she employed the "stream of consciousness" method in her works. As a result, her novels lack a clear plot, and the locations of events are difficult to pinpoint. The lyricism and style of her novels merge in a surprising way, thereby leading to readers perceiving visual images in Woolf's novels. The "stream of consciousness" method helps the writer create truly incredible characters and reveal their individual traits [10, 11]. Each image created is part of a larger phenomenon. And the source of these virtuoso images is a woman—the writer herself—who possessed a keen mind and was able to express her other self [13].

The social aspect included men working, voting, and studying. Men were considered to be the pillars of society and the contributors. Virginia Woolf made every effort to encourage women to delve into their own consciousness, analyze their role in society and the role they occupied alongside men. In analyzing literary works, Virginia Woolf was convinced that it was impossible to distinguish between male and female styles, or between male and female novels. Events from Virginia Woolf's life directly influenced the creation of her heroines [12]. As a feminist, in her novels she elevated women and expressed hostility toward male superiority. Having a deep psychological connection with her sister Vanessa, Woolf realized the value of female friendship, which helped her resist male society. In Virginia Woolf's time, women were deprived of freedom of choice. Seeing such injustice, the writer sought to create an ideal female character possessing a sense of justice, unity, and fighting for her rights. In the novel "A Room of One's Own," V. Woolf emphasizes: "All these centuries, woman has reflected man as a mirror, doubling his personality" [14, 15]. In this context, women are endowed with such a character trait as the ability to unmistakably determine the direction of the flow of social life. The female characters created by V. Woolf embody the entire era in which they live. Virginia Woolf analyzed the problem of women's adaptation in society. In the novel "A Room of One's Own," the writer, while in the library, tries to find the truth: "Where is the beginning?", "Why do men drink wine and women water?", "Why does one sex prosper and the other is poor?", "What is the influence of poverty on literary creativity?", "What is needed to write a literary work?" [14, 15]. In order to get answers to these questions, W. Wolfe refers to works about women created by men. Among such books costs Note "Women and Fiction" and "Women and What They Are Like." Virginia Woolf often wondered why men wrote books about women that contained numerous prejudices about the role of women in society [8]. Male writers never addressed the issues of female education or women's worldviews. All these shortcomings indicated that works dedicated to women had little to do with reality.

Having analyzed and studied a huge number of books about women, Virginia Woolf realized that hundreds of thousands of men create female characters in literature, yet men cannot understand the female soul, mood, and thoughts. The female soul remains a mystery to men [3].

In her works, Virginia Woolf repeatedly raised the question of the existence of the female soul. And she came to a twofold conclusion: particularly callous people assert that women lack souls. Woolf calls such people truly ignorant and savages. On the other hand, there are men who exalt women to the rank of saints. In other words, women were considered ideal, sacred, and worshiped. It is a well-known fact that there were tribes that worshiped women, considering them holy.

However, examining works of fiction written by men about women, V. Woolf was disappointed to realize that there was absolutely no truth in such works [4]. In her most striking works from a feminist perspective, "Mrs. Dalloway " and "A Room of One's Own," V. Woolf writes that men are completely unaware of the inner world of women; men's judgments are based on established gender stereotypes of the time. However, the most incomprehensible fact for the writer is that men do not seek to analyze women's worldviews in order to better know and understand the female soul. Thus, male characters in V. Woolf's novels appear indifferent and selfish in relation to society. V. Woolf studied men's literary works in detail and came to the conclusion that women were depicted as more stupid than men, and men were masters of their women, who decided all issues for them. Women did not have equal rights with men to vote, own property—they did not have "a room of their own." Therefore, the writer decided that her female characters would have nothing in common with the images of women described by men. Woolf's heroines were broad-minded, expressing their feelings and souls. Woolf showed that women are not objects or decorations in a man's home, but independent and self-sufficient individuals. Virginia Woolf's novel "A Room of One's Own" contains the fundamental tenets of feminism. In this work, the writer calls for women to have the right to vote, education, and the right to own property. Woolf believed that true representatives of literary creativity should share a common aspiration. In "A Room of One's Own," Woolf noted that works of art cannot be created by a single person. Art is created by an entire society, which accumulates the experience of each person year after year, and then the author, analyzing all this information, transforms this experience into her work. Thus, experience, reflected in literary work, symbolizes the soul of each person. The desire for independence and self-reliance was more important than personal happiness and was dictated by a society hostile to women: men humiliated and treated them with contempt. This is precisely the kind of hero that Woolf created in Peter. Peter believed he had every right to dictate to the protagonist, Clarissa, what she should do and how she should behave. Clarissa fears that if she marries a man like Peter, her independence will be a distant dream—Peter will constantly pressure and belittle her. To avoid this fate, Clarissa agrees to marry Richard. Woolf thus wanted to convey to her readers that in marriage, a man and a woman must be able to accommodate each other and make concessions. The hero, presented as Richard, possessed these qualities, and therefore resonated with Clarissa. He offered Clarissa freedom of choice and freedom of movement and did not attempt to impose established gender stereotypes on her. Peter, on the other hand, would spy on her every move, depriving her of her independence and freedom. The protagonist fears that Peter, despite everything, attracts her. This prevents her from revealing her soul and thoughts to him. Clarissa experiences a dual feeling of attraction: awe and fear. Woolf portrays Peter as a poet and a unique person. He sees and senses the heroine's character, can discern hypocrisy, and hates it. Peter is well versed in politics and is no stranger to the world's problems. Peter enjoys reading the poetry of Alexander Pope, strives to understand the different characters of people, and analyze their negative and positive qualities. In this way, Woolf describes what society should be like and what a man should be, according to representatives of the feminist movement. As for the protagonist, Woolf creates the image of an ordinary, unremarkable girl. The writer points out that Clarissa lacked deep knowledge and was not distinguished by a sharp mind. The lack of access to education left a direct imprint on the character's personality – Clarissa spoke no foreign languages, had little knowledge of the history of her native country or the world at large, and was not instilled with a love of reading. However, Woolf demonstrates that despite her lack of any outward talents, Clarissa still possessed one distinctive trait – she understood and empathized with people. Nevertheless, in describing Clarissa's marriage to Richard, Virginia Woolf sought to demonstrate that marriage does not always mean happiness and mutual support. The writer shows that the heroine realized her mistake when she agreed to marry Richard. Clarissa realized that marriage would not bring her the independence she cherished, and this realization tormented her for many years. Clarissa's

character lacks emotionality and the desire to share her feelings with others. Readers are left with a conflicting feeling – at times, they feel no pity for the protagonist. This lack of emotion (so uncharacteristic for women, according to gender stereotypes) repels men. Clarissa tries to escape her loneliness by participating in community life, social events, and idle chatter with acquaintances. She understands and accepts that she and her husband have different interests. Richard is preoccupied with politics, paying less attention to his wife—all of this causes Clarissa pain. Woolf demonstrates that even if a marriage is initially considered successful, the idyll can eventually end, the mutual understanding between the spouses disappears, and only the habit of living together, continuing to play socially prescribed gender roles, remains. Summarizing the information analyzed above, it should be noted that Woolf depicts women as victims of patriarchal norms, lacking rights. Meanwhile, she presents men as masters of life, dictating rules of conduct for women—thus, Woolf portrays men in a negative light. Virginia Woolf, drawing on her feminist views, called for the exclusion from society of what was so important and vital to men. She was referring to the desire for power and competition. The author insisted on the enormous importance of female friendship, describing the boundless freedom and support that was manifested in female friendship.

In her novel "Mrs. Dalloway, " Virginia Woolf sought to encourage women to explore their inner worlds more deeply. According to Woolf, female friendship can help combat patriarchy.

In her youth, Clarissa needed female companionship. V. Woolf describes this situation as follows: “True, there was something else here, something she did not quite understand and did not need, from which nature (which is always right) protected her; but when some woman, not a girl, but a woman, poured herself out to her, said something to her, often even some nonsense, she suddenly fell under her charm. Because of sympathy, or because of her beauty, or because she herself was older, or simply because of chance - some distant smell, a violin behind the wall (it is amazing how sounds sometimes act), but suddenly she understood what a man would probably feel” [1, 2, 15]. The novel describes another character who arouses interest among readers - this is Miss Kilman . In herself, she is a very interesting person who opposes herself to the whole world, but at the same time goes to church so as not to try to get even with everyone around her. She believes that religion can replace everything for her, especially helping her overcome her depression. Miss Kilman not only initiates various ideas, she cannot be called malicious, but she is definitely cruel to Clarissa. By trying to somehow belittle Clarissa, she thereby displays humiliation towards the entire society, which, in her opinion, seems to be unaware of her own experiences and poverty. She displays a dislike for Clarissa, as she attributes her to the consequences of the then-existing patriarchy in society, considering it the source of her suffering. The man's heartless and merciless, at times even hostile, attitude towards Clarissa can be seen in the following lines, where he says that he would like to crush her, try to take possession of her soul, make her cry, humiliate her, only then would Miss Kilman feel better. It is precisely because of such thoughts that she tries to suppress her femininity, trying to dress and act like a man, displaying coldness and ruthlessness. This is precisely the manifestation of another masculine symbol, namely, the male position and outlook that women can only dream of. Trying to match their appearance and be like them, women believe they can claim the same male place in society. Woolf explores the character and role of the feminist in various ways in the novel. Elizabeth Dalloway , a heroine who is unlike the average woman, is portrayed . She is a highly ambitious careerist, striving to become the best in her field, doing everything possible to achieve this. A career as a doctor or a farmer, or even the opportunity to realize herself in Parliament – these are her choices. However, her relatives are unwilling to help her in this, and Clarissa is deeply worried, perplexed, and extremely surprised by her daughter's decision. Elizabeth faces a choice: what's more important, the simple and limited world of her mother, Clarissa, or the male world, where men rule, a world for which they must fight. It is precisely

these complex choices that, we believe, shape the image and the makings of a completely different woman, one capable of resisting and competing with men. Clarissa may desire to change in her heart, but she is unable to do so because she cannot escape her habitual worldview. Reflecting on what has already happened, she constantly experiences negative emotions, believing it is her punishment and a kind of curse to watch someone "drown in darkness" while she stands by in shame. This heroine is presented as a very wealthy woman leading a joyful and carefree life; she is neither evil nor kind, but she also finds little satisfaction in her life. She has not established herself as a person, she lives only in dreams and fantasies, constantly under the influence of someone else's ideas and thoughts, in particular under the influence of the views of William Morris, she is constantly on the verge of madness from uncertainty and doubts, in particular, in relation to her friend Sally, for whom she felt a feeling of love [7]. Despite the complete provision of Clarissa, she is very anxious and unsure of everything, thinking that she is lost or even confused in this life, feeling a threat in every day. To summarize, it can be said that the image created by Clarissa manifests itself in the form of a woman who is very objective in relation to everyone, very generous, sensitive to the suffering of others, but at the same time is an inferior person who did not influence anyone in high society, as a result, it can be concluded that she is a paradoxically contradictory heroine. Perceiving her as a heroine, one experiences dual feelings: on the one hand, disapproving of her actions, deeds, and even thoughts, on the other, not feeling anything negative towards her [6]. The image of "Peter" is the image of a man who has a choice. This expresses the contrast between his life and the life of Miss Dalloway . Consequently, Peter says that a divorce from his wife is approaching and he wants to marry a second time, while Clarissa herself thinks that if she had once accepted his proposal, she would therefore be happier now. She does not think "about divorce" as such, which would help her find freedom and happiness. But Peter uses precisely this "instrument", gets divorced and marries a new woman - he has the opportunity to choose, which distinguishes any man - a free man who is not burdened by the condemnation of society. Richard Dalloway is, therefore, the image of a man who is married, has a special position in the family - he has no obligations to anyone. He respects neither his wife's wishes nor her feelings, and is even indifferent. He buys a beautiful bouquet of white and red roses and, as a result, wants to tell his wife how he feels when he gets home. But he always fails to bring himself to do so. Although Clarissa is already perfectly happy, the bouquet is further proof of this, and Peter has visited her. What more could one want? And here again the image of a woman appreciating what she has appears [5].

For Virginia Woolf, this biased attitude is expressed in the aesthetically undesirable component of her creative work and the inevitable consequence of the climate in which her contemporaries lived, struggling and challenging the limitations of the lives prescribed to them. The image of such women was also perpetuated by representatives of the male gender in literary works. Virginia Woolf emphasized in an essay that this representation traditionally takes the form of a mirror image of the position of women in real life: "The most inspired words, the deepest thoughts fly from her lips; in real life she hardly read or wrote, being her husband's legal property" [2, 14]. An analysis of Virginia Woolf's works showed that for the writer, a woman is a symbol, and not simply a living creature. She is a symbol of the human soul, a symbol of independence and torment. Women in Virginia Woolf's era were deprived of free choice. The struggle of such women for their own rights, their dedication, unanimity, and sense of justice are embodied in Woolf's iconic female character. The image of men in Woolf's works is described briefly because of the frequent references to women, their worries, and tragedies. The cause of these worries and tragedies, as well as women's misfortunes, in these works is men. His attitude is disrespectful or indifferent, and even the image of a man in love in "Mrs. Dalloway " is expressed through his advice, uncertainty, or illness, as, for example, in the depiction of Lucretia Smith and Septimus in the final passage, when she makes a hat for her friend. Her husband, temporarily returning to his former self, helps her with "advice." Regarding the essay "A Room

of One's Own," we note that the image of women is synonymous with sacrifice and limitation. The man is a "dictator" and an egotist who doesn't understand what a woman needs or what she's thinking. In these two cases, for V. Woolf, the image of the woman is a "plus," and the image of the man is a "minus."

Conclusion. This analysis of Virginia Woolf's works reveals that gender issues occupy a central place in her work. In the novel "Mrs. Dalloway" and the essay "A Room of One's Own," the author consistently reveals the contradictory position of women in society, where they simultaneously serve as objects of idealization and social restriction. Woolf's female characters are multifaceted and internally conflicted: they strive for self-realization but encounter barriers conditioned by the gender norms of the era.

The writer demonstrates that a lack of education, economic independence, and voting rights hinder a woman's full development. At the same time, through her heroines, she affirms the value of inner peace, emotional depth, and empathy as essential characteristics of human nature. Male characters, by contrast, often embody power, rationality, and social privilege, highlighting gender inequality. Thus, Woolf's work not only reflects the realities of her time but also shapes a new philosophy of female identity based on ideas of freedom, equality, and creative self-realization. Her works remain relevant in the contemporary context, continuing to influence the development of gender studies and literary criticism.

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