A MODERNIST READING OF HENRIK IBSEN’S A DOLL’S HOUSE AND GEORGE BERNARD SHAW’S MRS WARREN’S PROFESSION

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Abstract
Henrik Ibsen’s A Doll’s House and George Bernard Shaw’s Mrs Warren’s Profession, are notable works of great literatures, this is not in the sense of perceived beauty but for their ability to attract serious attention. Aristotle has warned us that the artwork is something more philosophical and worthy of serious attention. Literature reviews on the work have been able to uncover layers of meaning in the work. Some also have been able to locate the work within a literary convention, like ‘postmodernism’, and all of that. The paper under discourse is preoccupied to read both texts in the framework of modernism, exposing the conventionalities of modernity located in the work, like the questioning of authority and the final departure of some characters like Nora in A Doll’s House and Vivie in Mrs Warren’s Profession. It is so that we are able to also establish departure as forming a pattern of structuration in modernist plays.

Keywords: Modernism, Structuration, Questioning, Convention, Departure

Introduction
Within the tradition of literary criticism, the crux of the matter has always been the interlocking of what Benjamin Andrew calls ‘the specificity of interpretation and the object of interpretation itself’ (Art, Mimesis and the Avant-Garde 6). The matter before us deals with a discourse with a forceful presence on the traditional model. The two texts that are objects of interpretation are texts in so far as the term textuality is part of their constitution. It might be true to say that the characters in the texts are on a journey to self-illumination. This is plausible if both texts are readable using modernism, where there is a departure from all traditional laws and authority. In A Doll’s House, there are readings that lodge the text into the well of feminism. It is for them more to say, a finished work of feminist vision, with a promising future for the female folks. However, it is possible to find characters on a journey, which we have identified as modernity, or leading to modernity. This heralds for both texts as modernist texts. Like Mrs Warren’s Profession, A Doll’s House has received readings from critics who have given the text another kind of identity. Some of them have assigned the text a responsibility. Somehow, it appears that the work of art is, though unsuspectingly, aware of this responsibility, as A Doll’s House and Mrs Warren’s Profession have both proven through some critics’ reading, works that re-inaugurate the already lost footing of women in a male dominated world.

In any of such case, we hold both George Bernard Shaw and Henrik Ibsen responsible for such yielding intentionality. It is as Frye might put it as the artist who ‘assists the work of his society by framing workable hypothesis, initiating human action and thought in such a way as to suggest realisable modes of both’ (qtd in Akwanya 113). This will bring to the forefront what Akwanya says that every mythic form is ‘perceived under the aspect of hope or fear’ (Verbal Structures 104). That may be the case of both works, maybe the perception of hope or even fear which modernity provides. But we have a dire need which underpins also the being of the work of art; we have taken a formal cause for the work as far as the reading is concerned, and this launches the work into a modality. This modality is thought.

Modernism perhaps will have to make its serious demands on the literary tradition, evolving a way of taking into account the work of art. Though, modernism remains not in the discipline of literary criticism, it has found a home here too. At first, going through Foucault, modernism separates itself from the classical age, where it could have been possible for the work to be in paradigmatic relationship with other discourses, like history, newspaper articles, sports reporting and all of that where horizontality applies. In such a case,
we have 'the ideologene of the sign' (Kristeva). But, we learn that in modernism, literature regains itself as a being. It is not Shaw nor Ibsen that hands thought to us, as we read from 'The Thinker as Poet' that 'we never come to thought/ it comes to us' (Heidegger 6). Again we hold strongly what Barthes says that 'writing is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin' (Image-Music-Text 142). What we have is a work that is a 'modern figure, a product of our society' (142).

The attachments given to these texts have made them subject to critical investigation. A rereading of these texts concerns the paper at hand, that is not to say that this kind of reading passes a final verdict that is if there is any such association with regard to the literary work, it is rather a rendering heard, what is churned over as a murmur (Foucault) or something overheard (Mill).

Furthermore, it is important for us to realize the projections of modernist art, an art that idealizes something else, other than our own reality, simply put in words of T. S. Eliot as 'a dissociation of sensibility.' Barthes will tell us that 'for him (the modernist author), for us too, it is language which speaks, not the author' (143). It is on this note that modernist works distinguish itself from realist works. Akwanya in Verbal Structures, posits that:

in modernist literature, we are dealing with language which is quite unlike the one that linguistics treats of, we are dealing with a particular language whose peculiar mode of being is "literary". Essential it is that this language is intransitive, this is the radical difference with realist language which must mediate knowledge, and is almost without a substance of its own, being entirely transparent. (82-83)

In this light we have a language which does not attempt to transfer action to a recipient; also, it does not mediate knowledge either. It is self-sufficient like the system in Axiomatic semantics, 'for self-contained set of features with a common purport' (Hervey qtd in Akwanya 59). Therefore our business is to study the work as a coherent work, adequate for study on the basis of its own right.

Also, modernism in another sense is perceived as that which exists 'in the form of a desire to wipe out whatever came earlier, in the hope of reaching a last point that could called a true' (De Man 488). In so far as both texts are concerned, we encounter such sequence where there is interrogation of history, also the past. We will discover how far these characters, Nora and Vivie have been able to question their past, with its logic also, as this is provided by authorities in their lives. The fundamental thing for them also is illumination, as Foucault would say that 'in the modern world, knowledge of oneself constitutes the fundamental principle' (Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth 228).

In this paper, we will look at both texts in specificity of modernism, in order to identify the recreation of language, as distinct from the 'exact' language of realism, language which creates another kind of reality different from our own reality; we also see what Akwanya calls 'the world's far side', where sequences are far removed from human reality ('The World's Far Side' 93). Again, in such discovery, we will follow departure as forming a pattern of structuration in modernist drama.

**Reviewing Readings of Both Texts**

Noorbakhsh Hooti and Pouria Torkamahen in their essay, "Henrik Ibsen's A Doll's House: A Postmodernist Study", claim to explore the elements of postmodernism in the text, contrasting it with modernism. First, they assert that:

many will quickly reach a consensus that the major thrust of this play has something to do with gender relations in modern society and offers us, in the actions of the heroine, a vision of the need for a new found freedom for women and a suffocating society governed wholly by unsympathetic men. It is frequently argued that the play's theme is not women's right or emancipation but rather the need of every individual to find out the kind of person he or she really is and strive to become that person. (1103)

This kind of interpretation brings to our notice that the reading to be undertaken by this project is a novel one which springs from another angle. Therefore, the traditional view of this drama is first punctured, so that the acclaimed feminist thrust in the text is flawed by both essayists. It is also in this regard that these writers do not perceive Nora as the heroine with new found freedom, but that the play presupposes self-discovery. Furthermore, the essay runs through the elements that make the play a postmodernist text. One of the identified elements being irony. We read again that "throughout the play, irony is manifested distinctly between Nora and Torvald, the two main characters of the play, with Torvald being the character whose knowledge is insufficient" (1105). According to them, this element is fundamental in postmodernist works, for by it, truth is covered and the story becomes more interesting. So, we are held bound to wait upon the uncovering of the final truth, whether Torvald will be emancipated of his ignorance. This kind of view about irony aligns with Akwanya's view that "irony remains viable as a means of achieving understanding" (6).
But we know that unlike what they have pointed out that irony is an element of postmodernist, Akwanya views it as a "constitutive element of all art" (6). What we can see in Hooti and Torkamahen is an attempt to restore the work to its place.

Further up in their discussion of situational irony, we learn that Torvald’s "sanctimonious character" is in question so that "both the audience and Nora know that it will never happen, but Helmer does not and somehow turns out to be contradictory to what Torvald thought". The proposition that we do not believe Helmer when he says that ‘I have often wished that you might be threatened by some great danger, so that I might risk my life’s blood, and everything, for your sake’, is a fallacious guess, because we are only sure that he will not do it at the end of the play. Somehow, this contradicts the already established reading of postmodernism by the writers, in that the truth could not have been covered and at the same be at the reader’s forecourt.

In a bid to still dismiss the work, A Doll’s House, as a modernist text, Hooti and Torkamahen say that:

In general, postmodernists believe in different modes of thought, different interpretations of narrations and disbelief, query and suspicion in all sorts of meta-narrative, in order to prove a free and cognizant self; however modernism is the exact belief in all the established, proved and orthodox meta-narrative. (1106)

That postmodernist believe in different modes is a matter of interest but that modernism does not is another one. Thus, these modes of thought are realized through conflict which they make us see in Nora, as in internal conflict, “it ensues an irritating chaos in her subconscious part of her mind which is too strenuous to deal with, although she believed (sic) that what she did was right. This is the initial dilemma that the postmodern features creates for its follower” (1107). This is to say as if conflict is not discovered in other works that are not postmodernist. But we also know that conflict is a possibility in literary works. For these writers, Nora is a postmodern heroine who challenges the status quo.

It is noticeable that Nora ignores the rules of the modern world once more by selecting what she thinks is right. In spite of the fact that she has never done anything extraordinary out of her ordinary life with Torvald, but this postmodern tendency finally wins over her thoughts and emotions. It is rather difficult to tell apart what both writers call postmodernism from modernism itself. However, the most important point raised by them is that postmodernism is a movement, a radical one, which has interrupted thought and history to evolve a new mode of being. They conclude their essay by saying that:

As a matter of fact, A Doll’s House is not about the prevalent notion of feminism or the insufferable domination of men in a modernist world of 19th Century, but it emphasizes the absolute right of each individual, no matter single or married, to abscond from multitude of restricting rules of the modern world to find his or her right in the postmodern world where each individual is deemed as a respectful society by itself and to find the freedom which is summarized in choosing what you truly believe in. (1109)

Therefore, it is the belief of both writers that the postmodernist writer has a message which he wishes or sends to us, bringing to discourse, freedom of individuals which might have been constrained by modern system rules. For them, Nora is not a feminist model but an emancipated postmodern heroine.

Despite the argument raised by Hooti and Torkamahen in their essay reviewed above where the feminist thrust is obviously denied, Andrew Finch and Park-Finch in their own essay ‘A Post-Feminist, Evolutionist Reading of Henrik Ibsen’s A Doll’s House’, think otherwise, so that it is possible to recover the feminine voice, speaking vehemently in the text. First, they acknowledge the feminist thrust of the play which is laid bare, so that one sees the text first from a feminist point of view disregarding what Hooti and Torkamahen have raised in their essay. Also, we see that the character of Nora is not praiseworthy as Hooti and Torkamahen want us to believe, we are told that:

Nora as an individual who was born into a strict hierarchical society and who adapted to that society by devising survival strategies such as flattery, deception and denial. Rather than praising Nora as a martyr for womankind or condemning her as a selfish hysteria, this way of understanding her situation and that of the other characters sees them all as interacting with and adapting to their environments in ways which aim to achieve the basic evolutionary needs of survival, reproduction, parenting and kinship, and group living (1).

Therefore, they assert that neither can Nora be praised as a postmodernist hero nor can she be condemned as selfish hysteria. What they offer to us in this essay is another way of looking at the characters, which involves interrogating their interactions amongst themselves and their environment. In the essay, we learn that some critics like Gail Finney “points out that A Doll’s House was enthusiastically welcomed by feminist thinkers in Norway and throughout Europe” and further says that “in closing the door on her husband and children,
Nora opened the way to the turn-of-the-century women's movement" (4). This kind of reading like the one we have seen previously, already establish the fact of transitivity of the text. The crux of the matter for Andrew Finch and Park-Finch is the level of interaction between the characters, their evolutionary needs and consequently on the character of Nora, her personality in relation to other characters.

Again, in an essay by Joan Templeton, ‘The Doll House Backlash: Criticism, Feminism and Ibsen,’ we see another kind of reading of the text. She also ultimately weighs against any reading that disavows the text's feminist thrust. Unlike R. M. Adams who insists that the text though represents a woman imbued with the idea of becoming, but believes that it rather "proposes nothing categorical about women becoming; in fact its real theme has nothing to do with the sexes" (416). Templeton argues otherwise: she wishes to slam the judgment gavel on those of them like Adams. We read that "The a priori dismissal of women's rights as the subject of A Doll's House is a gentlemanly backlash, a refusal to acknowledge the existence of a tiresome reality" (29). Templeton's claim is at the heart of matter for existentialism. That the refusal is as a result of one not concerning oneself to existential conditions, as if what is unnoticed is laid bare on the text. Her opinion differs remarkably from other writers reviewed, who dismisses Nora as a failure. She says that "anyone who claims that Ibsen thought of Nora as a silly; hysterical, or selfish woman is either ignoring or misrepresenting the truth" (34). Again the question of misreading a text comes to us again. Some critics might have taken that for granted what the text or the author now wishes to do with his work. Even Ibsen is part of the argument. Templeton brings into her essay what Ibsen feels about his work. We read that "Everything that I have written is ultimately connected with what I have lived through, even if I have not lived it myself. Every new work has served me as emancipation and catharsis; for none of us can escape the responsibility and guilt of the (sic) society to which we belong, (38). Ibsen here renders himself a suspect, a tool in the hands of society which demands him to construct what he perceives in his world. Several analyses of this text, except for few seem to reveal the feminist tendency. Do we now say that Ibsen must have lived in the times when feminism was in vogue, or is it that he is one of them?

In Abdul et al, we have that the text deals again with "the painful lives of the middle class women in a society ruled by patriarchal laws" (624). This obviously returns us to what Ibsen says. If we take both of them to be correct, then the work returns back to the realist fold. Abdul et al still in their essay The Use of Symbolic Language in Ibsen's A Doll's House: A Feminist Perspective, read the play in a profound manner, though with feminism as a specificity of interpretation. For them, everything else holds women in bondage, inclusively language. They point out some of the lexemes used by Helmer to objectify Nora. We read:

"My", "little" and "lark" all connote to the patriarchal concepts associated with woman. "My" refers to the sense of possession very much the part and parcel of male gender. A Doll's House is replete with hundreds of such lexemes and phrases where Nora is treated as possession by Torvald Helmer. (625).

They go ahead to give analysis of the listed lexeme, so that we have "little" referred as "something or someone of very tiny, diminutive, miniature and specially the one who can never be self-sufficient and always depend on others for existence" (626). To end their reading, they insist that "when Nora leaves the Helmer House, she once again rejects the (sic) society, its roles, its associated symbols and above all it can be termed a journey back to nature which takes both genders on equal terms, where semiotic and symbolic co-relate" (628). The fact that Nora returns back to nature will counter Andrew Finch and Park-Finch reading of her as a failure. However, the point of departure seems to them a return to the fold of freedom. Unsuspectingly, critics have read this great work in a manner unknown to the writer. Silvia Ortin in 'A Doll's: A Victorian or a Present Day Toy?', maintains that A Doll's House brings to light "the change in the marriage of Nora and Torvald Helmer, from the typical Victorian "happy" family headed by a male breadwinner to the new woman that Nora turns to be when she leaves her family in search of her identity" (1). This reading too is a unique one in that it draws the already attached thematic preoccupation of Caribbean Literature, where the quest for identity is profound, to European Literature.

Well, one can disagree with the notion or argument of these writers, because the reading of this kind does not question the being of the text, the work of art gives rise to thought endlessly according to Hegel. The issue of success in relation to the characters show that they are perceptual from the readers or critics’ corner, for one cannot dismiss Nora's success as long as being a homemaker is not what serves as her actuality.

Also, we see that in 'Ambivalence towards the New Woman in the Plays of George Bernard Shaw,' emphasis is on the new woman which is obviously different from the ordinary woman or the ancient woman. It is first pointed out that the focus of the essay will be on how Shaw uses Mrs Warren and Vivie to caricature the New Woman. Therefore, the writer points out that Shaw undoubtedly portrays the New Woman in
comparative manner between the mother and daughter, being separated by morals or expectations of society. Of course any reader could have seen. Ollevier says that "the first impression the reader receives about Mrs Warren is that of a typical mother who wants her child to behave well in her absence, and who attempts to arrange her daughter's life without consulting her" (20). This New Women as discussed by Ollevier "want to challenge the prevalent beliefs about femininity by dressing in more masculine and simple way: they thus do not resemble the stereotypical ideal of female beauty and virtue either" (21).

Furthermore, she goes ahead to say that Mrs Warren although one would have seen her advancing towards being a New Woman by two factors. First, owing to "the fact that she made a career for herself, just like her sister, can actually link her up with the New Woman who aspires after professional career". It would have been possible for Mrs Warren to be seen as a New Woman since she attains financial freedom. What is more, Ollevier says that "she dares to oppose men, she says what she thinks, however vulgar it may be" (22). These are possibilities that make her a New Woman. In another paragraph, Ollevier identifies her ability to exercise power over men. But one of the factors that withdraw her from being a New Woman is that "she attaches great importance to respectability and to fulfilling...societal ideal"(24). This Ollevier points out, invariably, places her under the whims of society. Also, "the fact that Mrs Warren suddenly wants to be a good mother to her daughter makes it impossible to link her with the New Woman, as some repudiate motherhood to avoid having to occupy themselves with the bearing and raising of children" (Powell cited in Ollevier n.pag).

Therefore, Mrs Warren ultimately fails to be a New Woman. Also in Vivie Warren, we see a possibility of a New Woman, as the writer says that "not only her knowledge and her dedication to a profession associates her with the New Woman, but also her appearance and behaviour" (28). Also, we read again in Ollevier that in Act IV, she repeats that "she is not interested in men or in romance" (30). This identifies her with the New Women, possibly like Nora of A Doll’s House, who are ready to abandon their relationship with men or romance. But in the conclusion of Ollevier, there is the difficulty in telling if Vivie Warren is truly a New Woman in that "she seems to be conventional to a certain extent" (35). According to Ollevier, she has given all to studying mathematics, just like her mother chose vice over virtue to escape poverty. The fact that she uncritically focuses on “working and making money in a capitalist and sexist economy entails her resemblance to her mother” (35). We can say from Ollevier that the idea of a New Woman in George Bernard Shaw’s Mrs Warren Profession creates some kind of ambivalence so that one cannot say whether Mrs Warren or Vivie is linked to the New Woman. While it is possible to see Vivie attached to the New Woman to some extent, for Mrs Warren several odds are against her. In any case it will be fair to say that the New Woman is just a mere possibility in the text.

However, other critics like Yasemen Kiris do not dismiss the character of Mrs Warren outright, like some does dismiss her as a bad model. Kiris brings her personality to light in her thesis, ‘The Sacrifice of a Mother in George Bernard Shaw’s Mrs Warrens Profession’. She notes that the work creates a sympathetic portrayal of a former prostitute because of her poverty-stricken condition which leads women to prostitution (1). But her focus is most slightly on Mrs Warren which has been given second to Vivie, her daughter. Kiris mentions in her essay that "Shaw depicted a battle royal between a mother and daughter” (2). She further says that Shaw’s aim is to criticize the hypocrisy of society in which these prostitutes live, since the harsh conditions of society set them into looking for a means of survival. Her thesis looks at “how a prostitute mother exerts herself for her daughter and to prepare her a better education and better quality of life” (3).

Again, in the work of Semir Susic, ‘Beyond Good and Evil: An Essay on the Combination of Ideas and Aesthetics in George Bernard Shaw’s Mrs Warren’s Profession’. The writer uncovers the literary aesthetics interplay with politics and the consequences. For Susic, the play is engaging, truly committed and also transitive. The purpose which calls the work into being is sufficient for the day, which is to mediate the dynamism of prostitution. What is more, the writer goes ahead to say that the play is unable to pass a clear verdict in "terms of "simplification of good and evil" (2). Therefore, in another sense, the play does bring into light the mechanism of prostitution in the light to mediate morals, but fails. We see further in Susic that the play rather questions conventionality, unveils social hypocrisy and attempts to disillusion the reader or viewer. There is somewhat a hope that the play educates the reader, at least by uncovering some hidden knowledge. It also has modernist undertone according to Susic in that it questions conventionality. Also, we see the ability of the play to follow up the realist movement as it gives us what is on the surface (5), what Susic calls "economic realism". She also points out that Vivie in the play typifies an unconventional lady, with an unconventional behaviour, in contrast to Praed the conventional gentleman. As we see later on that:

The meeting between Praed and Vivie is a meeting between the conventional and the modern, the cliche and the unexpected. Here we find two opposite ideas of womanly behaviour. Praed’s idea of
the woman becomes in contrast to the actual behaviour of Vivie an obsolete and old-fashioned one. When she tells him of how hard she has to study mathematics at Cambridge he exclaims. (14)

In this regard, we see the equivalent of the unconventional as the modern against the conventional. In fact, we regard Susic unconventional as what Ollevier calls the New Woman which is contrary to Praed's ideal. Therefore, she makes her own choice by creating the circumstances. Susic argues that Vivie's self-assertion brings the individual's level of conscious towards "disillusionment".

Ouahiba Temouh will be different as she puts the work in the hands of the writer unlike what Barthes warns us that "the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author" (148). The association of the text with the author is most fundamental in all humanist criticism. Temouh says that "Shaw discusses the woman question from a socialist perspective basing his analysis on his conviction that equality between the sexes is an essential component of socialism" (58). This undoubtedly, like other critics have done, puts the words of the text in the mouth of the writer, so that we take the writer for what he says. Her reading points to Marxist perspective of the text which draws attention to society, where women are seen as the proletarians in the hands of the male folks, the bourgeoisie.

Having looked at the essays on the works under study, the ambivalence of the New Woman and the Unconventional woman, the Marxist perspective and the saving mother, it is as if the play according these critics seem to be preoccupied in with representing the dynamism of female character. But we know that there is more to these women, especially as it concerns modernity, this claim will serve for the crux of the matter which for the study to be undertaken in this research, thereby uncovering the elements of modernism which are found in the work.

Theoretical Perspective on Modernism

The word modernist took its name from the mother term ‘modernism’ bearing upon itself as that which has all the elements of modernism. This has been seen as a period, a movement and a system of thought. It could be timed from 1890-1930, or from 1902 to the present or a timeless one (The Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms). Some scholars have argued that modernism cannot be accurately dated but will be seen as a movement that started in first-half of Twentieth century.

Terry Barrett has argued in his 'Modernism and Postmodernism: An Overview with Art Examples,' that:

modernism emerged amidst the social and political revolution sweeping Europe... Their art no longer needed to glorify the wealthy individuals and powerful institutions of church and state that had previously commissioned their painting and sculptures. Because it was not likely that their art would flourish in the new capitalist art market, artists felt free to experiment and made highly personal art. Their slogan of the era "Art for the sake of art", is apt. (20)

Again we have that modernism "means the ruffling of the realistic surface of literature by underlying forces; the disturbance may arise though, from logics solely aesthetic or highly social" (TRDLT). This definition draws our attention to several levels of argument which this movement underpins. First, we are meant to see the "surface of literature" ruffled, or say its realistic face. By this, we are sure that the surface of literature had been realistic at some point in time. It might as well interest us to put into questioning this realistic surface towards a bid to decipher the need of the manhandling. When we enquire in the confines of realist literature, we see literature of realism, "where things are seen no longer as themselves, but as something else, they relate to in a way which cannot be intercepted and laid bare" (Akwanya, Verbal Structures 247). Thus, we say that modernism has identified a need, which is to relocate things back to themselves or say in the right sense, to perceive things the way they are. Akwanya in another context in Verbal Structures points out that "under realism, all general statement was an effect of language and language could support quite dissimilar general statements, as long as thought which justifies each could be arranged in such a way as to preserve a logical structure" (81).

Again we learn that "textuality as a defining criterion category of the modernist work requires first and foremost that the work be self-contained without any points of correlation with the real world, where moral, social, religious and political codes hold sway. The characters and their situations are wholly textual" (272). So, the emergence of modernism is as a result of the need to break away from the stifling nature of realism. We read from Michel Foucault that:

literature becomes progressively more differentiated from the discourse of ideas, and encloses itself with radical intransitivity; it becomes detached from all values that were able to keep it in general circulation during the classical age (taste, pleasure, naturalness, truth), and creates within its own space everything that will ensure a ludicrous denial of them (the scandalous, the ugly, the impossible); it breaks with the whole definitions ….it addresses itself to itself as a writing
subjectivity; or seeks to re-apprehend the essence of all literature in the movement that brought it into being; and thus all its threads converge upon the finest of points – singular, instantaneous, and yet absolutely universal upon the simple act of writing. (The Order of Things 300)

In Foucault's term, 'the scandalous, the impossible and the ugly' (300) are all possibilities in the modernist works. This is so because language is radically intransitive. It not a mediator of knowledge. It becomes a thing in itself. Literature too becomes not a thing that seeks to satisfy naturalness, truth, taste and pleasure but truth itself. The cause of this movement might as well go along with what Immanuel Kant in his answer to the question calls "Enlightenment". He says that "enlightenment is man's emergence from self-incurred immaturity"(1). Thus, these characters have encountered Frye's 'adult situation' by chance and it becomes necessary that they seek illumination against set history or laws. Damon Franke in Modernist Heresies says that "the questioning of the nature of tradition and orthodoxy (what exactly was the old wine) engendered the rise of various heresies as alternative options and led to large scale repercussions in the modernist reinvention of tradition" (2).

Also, this radical movement of thought finds its way into literature which opposes realism, so that we read from Akwanya's Verbal Structures that:

modernism tends to work against all the qualities whereby literary works render themselves appropriate, such qualities are probability, transparency, belief in its own values and in the power of its own perception or analysis. By this means, the work is able to have a backward reference to the 'outside facts', and simultaneously to intend in the direction of the audience; that is to say, by these means it achieves transitivity. (89)

Because of this, we can no longer base interpretation on the textual one since it transfers or refers to the outside. We are then given an opportunity to locate its significance in the material world. We also place so much confidence on the ability of language to represent objects in material world. But with the inception of modernism, this bond is broken; we have the opposite value, radical intransitivity whereby the world created by the text denotes Fredric Jameson a 'strategy of containment' (Akwanya, 'The World's Far Side' 93), where objects live in most exclusive and determined ways unknown to the human world. It is in this regard that characters like Nora of A Doll's House and Vivie of Mrs Warren's Profession, lose confidence in the world, history and system of values which society enforces on them. They decide to search for truth in themselves; that is if truth exists.

Therefore, with modernism, art becomes itself. It is no longer another thing which can be seen as an imitation. It is also in this light that its truth claims are validated within it, or within tradition. It is not to say that modernism seeks to undermine realism but that modernism is borne out of the "awareness that the definitions of reality become increasingly complex and problematic" (628).

Furthermore, when one looks at modernist texts, their structure, we nevertheless encounter a new text. It is said that "it is in modernist literature that departure, undoubtedly as articulation of human actions, first takes place as a figure of structuration" (Akwanya, Discourse Analysis 229). We see this movement against the second and third essence of culture – the group and society (Eliot). The individual who happens to be the least among the three essences of culture resolves to depart from his or her kinship. He does so not to fire up a quarrel, though it is nevertheless unavoidable, but for the sake of individuation, he retires to himself against the call for collective endeavour. Also, Terry Barrett promises that "the rallying flags of modernity are freedom and the individual" (17). Having said this, modernism, ultimately questions the present which is as a result of decline, proximity of a new age or improvement or arrival of a promised last days (Foucault). For modernism, this requires a philosophical dismantling of the way we use our reason against previous norms.

Ambiguity is one of the concerns of modernism. This ambiguity alters truth and punctures the law of contradiction which states that "the same attribute cannot at the same time both belong and not belong to the same subject in the same respect" (Lobner, Understanding Semantics 59). This also goes against the principle of polarity which states that "in a given CoU (context of utterance) with a given reading, a declarative sentence is either true or false" (Lobner 60). This having been said, the modernist art can only be validated on its ground. Universal laws in material world becomes insufficient to validate it. Therefore, the modernist text cannot help or "save us", again being found wanting in truth. Damon Franke again says that "in effect, the modernists deployed evolutionary theory and the idea of an ever-becoming world for their own pious purposes" (6).

Thus far, we have been able to discuss modernist ethos. This will further continue in the rest of the paper as we study or interpret the primary texts in the light of modernism as a specificity of interpretation. Therefore, we have chosen the path discovered by Michel Foucault and Akwanya, as modernism remains fundamentally a discourse of thought, which focuses on that language whose ‘mode of being is literary’
(Foucault 300), with the questioning of authorities and the climatic departure that remains a form or a pattern of structuration.

Textual Reading of Both Texts
In the first Act of the play, we meet a character Nora that appears to be ignorant and relies solely on her husband in most things. This will be validated temporarily, as other scenes may disagree with such presupposition. During her discussion with Helmer, we hear her say, "spendthrift- I know. Let us do as you suggest, Torvald and then I shall have time to think what I am most in want of. That is a very sensible plan, isn't it?" (6). This is a character who Kant would regard as being under immaturity. Kant in his words defines immaturity as "the inability to use one's own understanding without the guidance of another" (1). Nora, under such condition is unfit to make decisions of her own, she needs guidance from Helmer who provides one for her. It is also in this regard that it becomes obligatory for one who is less intelligent to be conquered and forced to do the right thing (Carlyle, Past and Present n.pag). For democracy, as in freedom, is better only if there is a mature sensibility in men, as Carlyle puts it. Thus, Nora Torvald, the child, the doll will be controllable under clear reasons to which she apparently has no objections. Again, in a discussion with Helmer, we read:

Nora: It’s a shame to say that I do really save all I can.
Helmer: (laughing) That's very true, - all you can. But you can't save anything! ( 6)

We see language at work which weaves around the characters so that there is exchange of usage, borrowing of words, too. Helmer uses Nora's words to explain out his point. It is also in this regard we encounter the language of modernist text, which is self-sufficient and self-contained. What is perceptible is that Helmer claims to be aware of Nora's capability in saving money. Nora on her own part is aware of all that she can save. In fact, Helmer is a figure of authority for Nora, so that both his suggestions and wishes are sanctions which Nora must operate within. In this regard, it will be imperative to note that Helmer represents society and tradition, which Nora must be subject to. Altogether, Nora is not ignorant of her position in the scheme of things, a doll for play. We read:

Nora: I should not think of going against your wishes.
Helmer: No, I am sure of that, besides, you gave your word. (6)

Helmer's perception of Nora also attests to this position. He will not in any way expect any act of insubordination from Nora. It will be in this regard that we investigate the wealth of Helmer's knowledge. Also, it could be that Nora's inability to think of going against Helmer's wishes is given by the fact that she is a doll, which is lifeless and incapable of thinking, except by another means, perhaps through the aid of a guardian. But this perception of Nora is ultimately denied by the conversation between Nora and Mrs Linde concerning helping Mrs Linde to get a job at the bank. She says that "just leave it to me, I will broach the subject very cleverly I will think of something that will please him very much. It will make me so happy to be of some use to you" (13).

At once, we are surprised by this saying. Can we dare call Nora a doll and incapable of anything? But all this is given by the language of the text which by all means is ambiguous. In the words of Nora, Helmer must listen to her. Also, she asserts that she can handle the situation. By all means, Nora at this point becomes the one who manipulates Helmer. We can follow this language at a distance, because of its nature. We can only depend on the givens of this language at all times without seeking for adequation. I'm sure that feminists did not notice the words of Nora which assure Mrs Linde of her control of Helmer. Or may we then say that Nora is only interested in controlling this situation because it makes her happy. In any case, we may say that Helmer's control over Nora is because it brings so much happiness to Nora. Another thing with the character of Nora is that she seems to forget what society demands of her. In a dialogue concerning the loan she got, we learn that:

Mrs Linde: No, a wife cannot borrow without her husband's consent.
Nora (tossing her head): Oh, if it is a wife who has any head for business – a wife who has the wit to be a little bit clever. (14-15)

Mrs Linde is a custodian of tradition. She reminds Nora of her boundaries as a wife. Need we believe that Nora is unaware of her limitations? This will be a difficult one, since for Nora there are conditions for that kind of rule. Following Nora's argument, the rule will adjust for one with a head for business and the wit to be a little bit clever. For her, the law is for one who lacks the head or the intelligence for business; the law is for those under the confines of immaturity; the law is there to guide them in using their understanding until they seek enlightenment. Mrs Linde is not comfortable with the breach of societal laws, especially when she finally learns of what Nora has done. We read:

Mrs Linde: Listen to me, Nora dear. Haven't you been a little bit imprudent?
Nora (sits up straight): Is it imprudent to save your husband’s life? (15)
This question is not just for Mrs Linde alone, but for the statute of authority which defines things for individuals. For Nora, there is no hard attachment of one signifier to the word ‘imprudent’, or it has become impossible to pin it to a particular context. Nora will no longer depend on the language of society which gives meaning to things to favour its laws. She instead, goes ahead with her own understanding of signs which does not see saving one’s husband’s life as been imprudent. She says, “he said I was thoughtless, and that it was his duty as my husband not to indulge me in my whims and caprices— as I believe he called them. Very well, I thought you must be saved - and that was how I came to devise a way out of the difficulty” (15). Nora will beat our examination, for if in her words we find a reality. It is a reality where Helmer is relieved of the burden of thinking. Nora takes up the responsibility. She thinks Helmer must be saved, though it is against the law and against Helmer. Helmer becomes under self-incurred immaturity (Kant), in need of a guide towards salvation. Akwanya puts it that the language of modernist drama depends on probability which differs from the view of older drama. This is realisable by the actions of the characters which is altogether inconsistent.

It will be curious for Ibsen to comment on the human situation of the text in such a manner as to draw up a connection between the text as A. Finch and Park-Finch believe. Ibsen says that "a woman cannot be herself in modern society. It’s an exclusively, with laws made by men and with prosecutors and judges who access feminine conduct from a masculine standpoint. (Meyer quoted in Finch n.pag). This kind of statement undermines the reading of the text. It is not as if the author creates this thing, but language. In another sense, Ibsen is said to represent the sympathetic women of modern society, giving them no hope. Well that has been denied by the language of the text where hope for them is not altogether elusive. We might as well forget the author and question language. Just as Barthes says that “For him, for us too, it is language which speaks, not the author; to write is, through a prerequisite impersonality (not at all to be confused with the castrating objectivity of the realist novelist), to reach that point where only language acts, performs, and not ‘me’” (143). This opens suggestions for us, as regards being led by the author in the interpretation of the text, for the author wears away his identity to become another person, which is the reader. Further on, Barthes tells us of the necessity of ‘distancing’, which remains a prerequisite for the birth of the modern text. We read from him again that ‘classic criticism has never paid any attention to the reader; for it, the writer is the only person in literature’ (Image-Music-Text 148). Thus, he establishes that “the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author” (148). This places the author again in another bipolar relationship with the reader. Here, we also see a presence-absence dichotomy. If we must approach a text as readers, the author must die at this cost. If he exists, he dissolves into a reader, ready to perceive the text from a distance, at least as a modern critic. Coming home to the text, we look again at Nora and her perceptions by other characters, like Mrs Linde, when she says “listen to me, Nora. You are still very like a child in many things, and I am other than you in many ways and have a little more experience let me tell you this - you are out to make an end of it with Doctor Rank” (36).

What Mrs Linde doesn’t understand is that her little Nora, who is a child, no longer exists. Rather we find Mrs Linde in a lack, for her perceptions are wrong. It is her language against Nora which must be deciphered through some signs which the text provides in the cause of the events. These are signs which flashes on us. For us to know the extent of the necessity that holds thought in this regard is important, as modern critics. Akwanya reminds us that, "flashes of insight are endless and it is often as if the work exists for the symbol, as if it is generated by this symbol. Hence, in modernist drama, it usually unfolds in the climatic scene, where its functioning is integral” (237). It is altogether inevitable to regard the character of Nora to bear the symbolic, neither is it avoidable to see language in that light. But it is that both are held in such a manner that one exists for the other. Any attempt to explain the text in terms of deciphering it will be problematic, not to mention that the text is problematic too. But it is in the nature of the text to be so. We read in Akwanya again that, "from the seventeenth century onwards, explanation is never certain until it isolates the single significant fact by means of which all the events can be arranged in a chain, the linear pattern being the sign of the relationship of solidarity understood to hold among the individual events” (226). This gives us the opposite value in comparing realist text with the modernist text. It will be a dubious affair anyway, but we are reminded that “in the ancient text we are dealing with pattern of explanation which are parallel and never meet, in the modernist text, it is with interlocking patterns which nevertheless fail to resolve into a unified discourse”(Akwanya 226).

This brings to our notice that the events are interlocked, held by internal necessity. It will not be likely to take this to mean that each part is synonymous with the other, rather each contradicts, continues the thought raised by the other. The characters awareness are not left behind in this regard. We know of their experiential knowledge to be false only after a contradictory event surfaces or in the words of Foucault, their
confessional interpretation of themselves. Hence, it will be a thing of wonder during Helmer's encountering of Frye's adult situation. We read:

What a horrible awakening. All these eight years she who was my joy and pride - a hypocrite, a liar - worse, worse - a criminal! The unuttered ugliness of it all! - For shame! For shame (Nora is silent and looks steadily at him. He stops in front of her). I ought to have suspected that something of the sort would happen. I ought to have foreseen it. All your father's want of principle - be silent! - all your father's want of principle has come out in you. No religion, no morality, no sense of duty - How I am punished for having winked at what he did! Hold it for your sake, and this is how you repay me. (70)

As Akwanya says that "hence, the search for knowledge and understanding drives all before it in A Doll's House, including marriage and family", for Helmer, this knowledge and understanding swing into action not having been called Helmer's surprise, and therefore questions what history can make of the present. But during the reversal, when Helmer learns of Kroogstad decision to withdraw his case, also apologising for having put up the letter in the first instance, Helmer becomes overwhelmed with joy. But Nora isn't. Rather she calls for a discussion. Now, she too is aware of who Helmer is. She says "that is just it, you have never understood me. I have been greatly wronged, Torvald - first by papa and then by you"(74). This obviously indicts Helmer and Nora's father as the past that must be given up. Nora is after all informed of her need to acquire understanding, the understanding of herself. All that she thinks, knows and believes crumbles.

She practically tells Helmer that she is not the man to educate her. She is willing to take off her present world to another world. Helmer tries to deter her with the so-called ideal, he says "to desert your home, your husband and your children! And you don't consider what people will say"(76). Helmer is interested in what people say, he is governed by such authorities. But Nora is not governed by such. This justifies the saying that "for modernism involves the questioning of authority, all the traditional figures of authority, according to Josipovici, but also the authority of reality. Of facts" (Akwanya, Discourse Analysis 232). So, for Nora, the traditional figures of authority remains her home, husband and children, including also, her most sacred duties. She rather says that "I have other duties", which she calls "duties to myself", Helmer is surprised by that, so he says "Before all else, you are a wife and a mother"(75). This is a bid to remind Nora, in case she has forgotten, her personality. However, Nora refutes him by saying that:

I don't believe that any longer. I believe that before all else I am a reasonable human being, just as you are - or, at all events, that I must try and become one. I know quite well, Torvald, that most people would think you right, and that views of that kind are to be found in books; but I can no longer content myself with what most people say or with what is found in books I must think over things for myself and get to understand them. (76)

It is here that we perceive of Nora's departure for self illumination, for history no longer holds her, because she no longer trusts it. Her present understanding shatters her previous view of her duties. The sacred duties are no longer hers. What settles the matter for Nora is the investigation of truth and to know who is right, the world or she. It is worthy to note that "if we identify the sequence of A Doll's House as departure, it is because we see the entire set of actions from the opening to the final confrontation between Nora and Helmer as internally connected and leading up to a final crisis, the departure itself" (Akwanya 229).

This departure constitutes the essence of existence for the existentialist philosophers. It is the search for knowledge which Nora engages in, the truth about existence. So, are we not right to say that departure as a structure of modernist text echoes the fact of man's quest for truth, the task for which Nora must take up to discover things for herself.

Mrs Warren's Profession has been read or viewed according to our literature review in so many light, but not to mention that none has taken a keen modernist study of the work. This work will display the loss of individuals whose encounter with illumination brings a fundamental change in their lives, especially the mother and daughter. First, in the discussion between Vivie and Praed, we see that the young lady is made to replace her awareness with another one. Vivie learns of her mother's visit from Praed, which she perceives to be unlikely; she thinks it to be out of place because of what she calls "arrangements that concerns me"(27). Her awareness of her present is at the moment not an infantile. She regrets that her opinions have been unnoticed by her mother who makes arrangements that concerns her without telling her. Vivie without mixing her words, promises to take up that action in a bid to surprise her mother. In her further conversation with Praed, she cancels her identity by her speech. This is noticeable when Praed says "dear me! I'm so glad your mother hasn't spoilt you!"(30). She inquires of what he means by that and Praed replies that "well, in making you too unconventional"(30). Conventionality is the thing that the modern person worries over. Modernity, according to De Man, questions conventionality in most fundamental way. The previously held beliefs are refuted by modernity. If we take Vivie by her previous comment where she demands that her
mother should consult her before making arrangements, here, Vivie is a woman who wishes to be responsible for herself, to take charge. But when she notices a perception of unconventionality of her character by Praed, she withdraws with a pathetic tone, by saying that, "Oh! Have I been behaving unconventionally"(30). Her tone presents us with someone whose state of affairs agrees with the conventional at least before strangers. This incidence introduces to us the language of modernist text that dares not to be exact, the sort of realist language, where the immediately perceptible is given to us. It is immediately perceptible only because we recognize the relationship the object of description has with the material world. Secondly, we see the logicality of the sequence, with one cause following an effect. But we see that language recovers itself and defiles logicality. That is why, as previously said, ambiguity is a constitutive element of modernist literature.

At every time we notice that the text escapes all sayings. Vivie's language cancels attempts to be immediately perceptible. Maybe we can agree with Praed, when he says that "things are improving. Do you know, I have been in a positive state of excitement about meeting you ever since your magnificent achievements at Cambridge: a thing unheard of in my days"(31). What we notice is that there is a transformation from the "promised days"(Foucault). This transformation brings into focus "a thing unheard of". Praed undoubtedly suspects an arrival of a new age, modernity. In Kant essay, 'Enlightenment', knowledge is the chief thing. According to Foucault in Ethics:Subjectivity and Truth, "in the modern world knowledge of oneself constitutes the fundamental principle"(228). Vivie makes a confessional interpretation of herself, that "I'm a more ignorant barbarian than any woman could possibly be who hadn't gone in for tripods"(31). That she compares herself with a barbarian is sympathetic of her, but quickly, she reminds Praed again that "now you know the sort of perfectly splendid modern young lady. I am. How do you think I shall get on with my mother?"(33). Vivie is one inconsistent character or do we hold her language responsible for this inconsistency. But it is for language to escape all saying. Vivie is aware of her state as a perfectly splendid modern young lady. She concludes with a question. Her question is rather rhetorical, since there is no possible answer. Praed tries to explain it out and fails. That Vivie finds it difficult in getting on with her mother is as a result of unheard of things that comes with this new age. Vivie's mother represents an age that is past and is struggling to cope with modernism, Praed too. In these characters we encounter a unification of the opposites, which Frnake calls ['heretic synthesis']. The question is to what extent can this synthesis be operational. We further see the impending crisis target, what Praed calls 'her ideal' or better put by Vivie 'her ideal of me'. We do expect the past to hold out a model for the new age. Nevertheless, it is possible that the old wine will be turned into the new bottle (Franke).

Though, Vivie is seemingly aware of herself, she is at loss with her mother's presence. We read where she warns Praed that, 'don't suppose anything, Mr Praed. I hardly know my mother...But don't imagine I know anything about my mother. I know far less than you do'(33). Vivie also warns us, just as she warns Praed never to suspect anything. We are expected to allow the text to unfold by itself with every newness of incidence. The beckoning is for Praed not to take it for granted that a daughter may not know her mother so well. Her confessional statement will put her out of context when she tells Praed that, 'I shall win because I want nothing but my fare to London to start there to-morrow earning my own living by devilling for Honoria. Besides, I have no mysteries to keep up; and it seems she has. I shall use that advantage over her if necessary."(34). What we see in the world of this text is complex reality, where characters speak in complex manner. It will not go well with common sensibility or social dynamics for Vivie who claims no adequate knowledge of her mother to insinuate that she can win over her because of some promising situations. Do we then say that she is altogether ignorant of herself? That will be cancelled by Praed who warns Mrs Warren about Vivie. He says, 'you see she has really distinguished herself; I'm not sure, from what I have seen of her, that she is not older than any of us' and also goes on to advise Mrs Warren that 'only that Vivie is a grown woman. Pray, Kitty, treat her with every respect!'(36). It is only permissible that Mrs Warren recognizes that Vivie is a grown up, distinguished and older than Praed. Mrs Warren and old Crofts. That she is distinguished is because she is a splendid modern young lady, which implicates that some respects should be accorded to her. But, Mrs Warren is uncomfortable with this kind of development. She is confronted with the newness of the age, and is rather overwhelmed by the promises of a synthesis movement. Her loss is that she is unable to recognize the arrival of modernity, so also is Rev. Sam, who is reminded by Frank that, 'she is a third wrangler. Ever so intellectual. Took a higher degree than you did; so why should she go to hear you preach'(40). Frank reminds the Reverend that Vivie's disposition makes it impossible for him to preach to her, but should also be the other way round. Even Frank too, represents to us one of the radical offshoots of modernism. His dissociation from tradition is radical, he tells his father that, 'I don't care a rap about that'(41), while his father maintains that 'but I do, Sir'(41). It is obvious that the Reverend is caught up with tradition and convention in most helpless way. It is more or less a closed situation for him. He says 'take warning by your father's follies, Sir, and don't make them an excuse for your own'(41–42).
Frank's handling of the matter, by way of reply should remind the Reverend that what is obtainable in his age is not obtainable in the modern world. Frank as earlier noted in this analysis, redeems to modern age its power of independence of tradition. He asks his father that 'but has your boy's conduct ever been influenced by your reasons?'. This is another rhetorical question with an already implicated answer. We rather see the similitude of convenientia existing between Frank and Vivie, which Foucault in his *The Order of Things* says that, 'those things are convenient which come sufficiently close to one another to be in juxtaposition; their edges touch, their fringes intermingle; the extremity of the one also denotes the beginning of the other. In this way, movement, influences, passions and properties too, are communicated" (18). We see that the closeness of both characters presupposes a touch effect of their qualities. Just like Foucault says that the extremity of the one also precedes the beginning of the other, we see that Vivie's extremity denotes Frank's beginning. We see the thing that denotes their closeness as love and modernity. In one of their conversation, Frank advises 'let us talk learnedly; Miss Warren: do you know that all the most advanced thinkers are agreed that half the diseases of modern civilization are due to starvation of the affections of the young' (50). This starvation is due to the handwork of old tradition which is still present in modern age, which is represented by Mrs Warren, Crofts and Rev. Sam. However, it is upon Vivie and Frank to question and default the authority of tradition. Vivie, in a conversation with her mother says, 'do you think my way of life would suit you? I doubt it', she goes ahead to tell her that 'has it really occurred to you, mother, that I have a way of life like other people?' (54). That Vivie's way of life will not suit her mother holds out the presence of change. Also, that Vivie has a way of life like other people is a statement which should remind Mrs Warren that Vivie like other young person like Frank, has a way of life that will not suit an elderly woman. When Mrs Warren enquires from her what sort of woman she is, she says 'the sort the world is mostly made of' (56). This leaves Mrs Warren as the one with little knowledge about her world. The fundamental thing about this text is that at every point in time, one character claims a superior knowledge of the world and subsequently invites the other ones to learn from this supreme knowledge. This, also relates to the fact that Vivie learns of her mother in a better way. She informs Frank that 'today I know my mother better than you do' (67). Vivie like we have always seen her is always ready to update her status quo. She claims knowledge of her mother, having been illuminated. Can we place her statement in the initial conversation with Praed where she promises to win over her mother in the argument. But the situational irony claims her victory. The mystery which should have been a source of power to her becomes the power which displaces her winning status. Better still, there is an extent we can argue that she wins over presently in the argument, in that she uncovers the mystery which Praed is not aware of. But when she encounters Crofts, her knowledge becomes inadequate. Here we see that modernity will have to synthesize old tradition with its present to emerge the one with a complete knowledge for an action. She bids Frank goodbye after her complex awareness. She takes departure from her traditional society. She, like Nora Torvald of *A Doll's House*, questions previously held beliefs.

For Vivie, her previous relationships are no longer cared for in her new world. She tells Frank and Praed of the two subjects which she does not want to hear of. She says that 'one of them[to Frank] is love's young dream in any shape or form! the other[to Praed] is the romance and beauty of life...I must be treated as a woman of business, permanently single [to Frank] and permanently unromantic[to Praed]' (81). Her present situation ultimately denies her of any other kind of intimate relationship or enjoyment. She prefers the glory of her business. In another discussion with Praed and Frank, she informs them of their lack in knowledge, she says that, 'then neither of you know anything. Your guesses are innocence itself compared with the truth' (82). Their guess being innocent is as a result of their need of illumination. She refers them a knowledge, she says that, 'then neither of you know anything. Your guesses are innocence itself compared with the truth' (82). Their guess being innocent is as a result of their need of illumination. She refers them a
control of the new form of thought. This marks the dissociation of the realist endeavour of representing the immediately perceptible. We also see the firm stand of modernity, present in Vivie. The work of synthesizing the old with the new is only possible for a new thought process to be born. This new form is one that is a non-conformist. Mrs Warren just like Helmer reminds Vivie of her duty as a daughter. It will be noticeable that in the two understudied texts, traditional figures like Helmer and Mrs Warren always use social weapons like social identity and duty to cage their targets. But like Nora, Vivie rejects such attempt to win her by such cheap instrument. She says 'my duty as a daughter! I thought we should come to that presently. Now once for all, mother you want a daughter and Frank wants a wife. I don't want a mother; and I don't want a husband'(90). Here, we encounter individuation as one of the fundamental principle of modernity. This as Terry Barrett says in his essay is as a result of the man centeredness in modernist text. Vivie rejects all conventional weapons to cage her. She wills to be on her own, without a mother and a husband. She tells her mother the wrack of their apartness, which is 'you are conventional woman at heart. That is why I am bidding you goodbye now. I am right'(91). Further, Mrs Warren perceives that it is her money that Vivie wants to get rid of. but Vivie tells her otherwise that, 'No, right to get rid of you? I should be a fool not to. Isn't that so?'(91). The last two statements of the text are 'goodbye' and 'goodbye Frank'. This gives the text its final place as a modernist text. We also see that while sympathy as a similitude brings Mrs Warren, Crofts, Praed and Rev. Sam together, that antipathy separates them from Frank and Vivie.

Thus far, we have seen the workings of modernism as a system of thought, which is entirely different from the traditional way of doing things. In Mrs Warren's Profession, Vivie has gained courage to depart from her affiliations, her mother and her lover Frank. She wishes to recall back herself since all that hold her previously with her mother and Frank has been shattered into pieces, leaving the piece of her own life for her. Modernity questions traditional thinking as we have seen, it is more heretic to attempt the merger of the two modes of thoughts except by forming something new. Mrs Warren just like Helmer fails her attempt to cage Vivie who is in pursuit of a new way of life, different from the conventional. Vivie, like Nora has taken into exile for the sake of independence.

Conclusion
Thus far, we have been running along the parameters of literary criticism, interpretation of text, the object of our interpretation being a literary work. We have done so in the light of modernism as a system of thought, as a specificity of interpretation.

With modernism there is total dissociation of the text from the material world of humans, whereby there is no attempt for the text to refer one to the external world. Language of the literary text thus, becomes self-reflective, the language which is not transitive. At most, we take the text as a system, 'for a self-contained set of features with a common purport' (Hervey quoted in Akwanya 59). All within the text are held by internal necessity. In modernist text, we identified departure as the vital force that structures the sequence of the text though identifiable at the end.

Finally, in both primary texts, we have seen the elements of modernism from the questioning of authorities, the historical language that is radically intransitive, and the ambiguity of language too. Both texts have similarly and varyingly yielded to the specificity of modernism. We have seen the sequences leading to departure or exile as a result of the characters, Nora and Vivie questioning of their present (Foucault). The modern persons in the texts, in a bid to seek truth and meaning of their life decide to unbelong from their society, also restraining themselves from laws, belief systems and traditions previously held. This begins with questioning as we have in Heidegger’s Being and Time, that 'every question is a seeking. Every seeking takes its direction beforehand from that is sought' (3), and we have been able to lay claim that this seeking begins with a departure.
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