

## Chapter: I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Virginia Woolf: Life and Works

Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) was a major twentieth century modern novelist, critic and essayists. She was born as Virginia Stephen in London, the daughter of Sir Leslie Stephen, a literary critic and renowned biographer of his time. Quentin Bell in *Virginia Woolf: A Biography* says, "Her childhood days were full of happiness and prosperity until the tragic death of her mother in 1895, from which she could not recover throughout of her life"(112). Among the four Stephen children, Virginia was the boldest, the most passionate and most drawn to their father. She grew up surrounded by books and had good fortune to be born into that small but powerful class which made much intellectual gift in literary field. Virginia Woolf was educated at home by her parents and by tutors in the classics. When her mother died she was only thirteen and her father took up her education. "Most widely she educated herself by self-study in her father's magnificent library developing an independent literary taste, learning Greek and meeting her father's intellectual friends, including Hardy, Stevenson, Ruskin and John Morley"(115). Though her reading was a random without any pre-planned course and guidance, it was absolutely directed by her appetite. Moreover, she always regretted for not having been allowed to have university education like her brothers and used to say that she had had no education.

"Virginia woolf's early life was darkened by a series of deaths in her immediate family, especially by the unexpected and premature death of her mother, her half sister Stella and her brother Thoby, who were very close to her"(118). That tragedy left an unrecoverable mark in her memory and made her mentally frail and disturbed throughout her whole life. And her, fiction and life were complementary. She transformed people whom she loved into figures in her writing. There were, of course, other influences from

literature and history, but her life was her main source of her writings. She turned early tragedies, discoveries and moments of bliss into art. Mrs Ramsay and Lily Briscoe in *To the Light House* resemble her mother and sister, Stella. Thus Virginia Woolf's mind is essentially a poet's mind though she chose fiction for her medium to express her feelings.

In her time the spirit of time was already in the state of flux. Not only was there a philosophical shifting but also change had disseminated on all the levels from the historical to the personal. And slowly but surely she had become one of the most influential modernist novelists heralding radically a new tradition in the domain of fiction. John Bennet opines " If she believed that the traditional novelists had only depicted the outer physical world not the inner complexities"(John Bennet *Virginia Woolf: Her Art as a Novelist*, 56). Through her writing she tried to depict the individual psyche and inner complexities. And no doubt Woolf was largely interested in depicting the mental action of the character than the physical. The material occurrences such as death or change of fortune were less important for her than the changes they brought in the consciousness of her characters. For that reason she had breakdown from conventional forms of fiction like Conrad, Joyce and other modernists. Woolf always tries to capture the inner 'self' of human nature, the conflicting forces within a single character which creates a kind of split in one's personality and she had got triumph over this new sphere by inventing a totally new technique known as 'stream of consciousness' in her fictions. Her novels *To the Light House*, *Mrs Dalloway*, and *The Wave*, marked 'high modernism' in the history of entire English literature and catapulted her to the zenith with inevitable public recognition that she rightly deserved. Indeed she is famous for her newness in the range of theme and experimentation in form. Woolf strongly argued that novels are not rooted in a preconceived plan or the method but in hidden parts of their author's own life. And she rightly thinks books are the flowers or fruits stuck here and there on trees, which have

roots deep down in the earth of our earliest life and of our first experiences. She strongly denies the idea that the novels are born of a method.

After the death of her father in 1904, she left her family home Hyde Park Gate and moved to the new place which later became central to the activities of Bloomsbury group of intellectuals, which included Lytton Strachey, MacCarthy, Bell, E.M. Foster and Bertrand Russell. Woolf was the cynosure of this group. This circle of artists was applied interested in the esoteric aspect of literature and art. But whatever Bloomsbury meant to others, for Woolf, it was a revolt against Hyde Park Gate's patriarchal domination, which made home intolerable for her. For her Bloomsbury friends were important not only for their thought of art and literature but also for an atmosphere of mental freedom. Thus, for Woolf it was a shift from male dominated environment to space of her own. However, Woolf's idea of freedom was straightforward and practical- a small income of one's own and 'a room of one's own' that meant just enough money and privacy to free the mind. But after getting all these things that she needed for physical survival, Woolf always nurtured a mystical feeling and preoccupation and desperately tried to solve it throughout her life. Regarding this feeling she wrote: 'I enjoy almost everything. Yet I have some restless searcher in me, why is there not a discovery in life? Some thing one may lay hands on and say 'this is it? [. . .] What is it? And shall I die before i find it? (*A writer's Diary*86).

With the upheavals of the feminist movement in 1960s, Woolf labored considerably to give it a solid shape and became one of the most remarkable figures in this domain. Her contribution to feminist criticism has been widely recognized since then. She undertook many voluntary works for women and had participated various movements and was actively involved in the women's co-operative Guide. Her *A Rooms of One's Own* (1929) and *The Three Guineas* (1938) are impassioned pleas for women's education and financial equality with men. And her persistent refusal of many academic honors offered

to her by the universities also indicates her perennial resentment at the patronizing way in which the universities continued to treat women. She thinks that women have failed to distinguish themselves because law which controls their income sources and horrible domestic life, has swallowed their privacy. In such condition to become what they really want means not only a break from family circle but also with accepted notions of womanliness and decency. She struggled against the restricted and shuttered life of the women where they were forced to relinquish language and trained to be silent. Woolf has not only showed her concern against the physical enclosure and restriction but also that included ignorance and the habitual silencing of feelings.

In her novel, *Mrs Dalloway*, Woolf has presented the contrast of Clarissa's outer superficiality with the old woman's loneliness in the house opposite to her house that represents a woman's space, a room of one's own, independent of male domination and Clarissa's self desire to secure this female space in herself.

Thus, many female characters in Woolf's novels, besides their comfortable domestic life as a woman are dominated by patriarchal society. And their life is alienated and this alienated life leads to loneliness which results in madness. This is the main conflict run throughout Woolf's writings. They want to establish their self-identity in the society but social norms and values come before them as obstacles. This is the main theme of her fourth novels *Mrs. Dalloway*, which has been selected for the present research study.

*Mrs Dalloway* is a story of a middle-aged woman Clarissa Dalloway, who is a wife of M.P Richard Dalloway from an aristocratic family with every kind of material wealth, she appears as a respected lady and an ideal hostess of the society. In this novel, Woolf shows far greater mastery of her technique to explore the internal split in the female characters. This present study is an attempt to shed the light on the problems of the female

characters, which they are bound to face. Their main problem is existential anguish caused by social superficiality. They can neither completely give up the social code nor can adopt it happily because of their feminine conscience. Clarissa's double Septimus vicariously represents the risk of the total rejection of patriarchal law and perishes but Clarissa survives by submitting herself to the social code. But paradoxically she feels her survival as somehow her disaster. In Woolf's original plan, Clarissa was herself to die in the end of the novel. The invention of Septimus is thus a defensive 'splitting' whereby Clarissa's most dangerous impulses are projected in him who can die for her. He is a surrogate for Clarissa, committing suicide on behalf of her. Hence for Clarissa to behave 'like a lady', as society's eyes is a caution for survival.

Clarissa in *Mrs. Dalloway* is "always conscious of the lack of something central and important in her"(Hermione 34). This lack is the maternal body, which she must repress to exist in the society. Because of this denial of the maternity and her body "there is an emptiness about the heart of her life, an attic room, to which she austere withdraws 'like a nun"(Diaches 33). The novel stresses this withdrawal from the body in several ways. Clarissa had grown very white since her illness. She is the "mere ghost of a woman" (Diaches 44). Thus, at the end, Clarissa gets transformed into an object. The most positive representative of the body in the novel is Sally Seton, who confidently asserts herself as a woman "as if she could say anything, do anything and appears bold enough to argue that her sex should have the vote"(Diaches 55). That is something that made Clarissa fall in love with her in girlhood but Clarissa's disappointment, the novels arch rebel also at the end becomes a sober conformist of the society by being 'Lady Rossister'.

Female characters want to revolt against the suffocating tradition where women are being treated as commodity. But they cannot dare to negate it totally because if they do so there arises the question of their existence. Another instance of women repression is the

repression of Clarissa's mother throughout the novel her father is always prominent in her memory. And due to all these evidences female's mind cannot think freely and the outcome of this is madness. These are the main points in the novel around which this study aims to move around. To analyze the novel and to understand the female emotional situation feminist theory will be applied as a tool. The study will be based on the activities and actions of protagonist, Clarissa. In addition to this other characters relevant to clarify the hypothesis will also be studied.

With the end of Edwardian era and the upheavals of the First World War, it seemed to many novelists that a settled point of view, chronological continuity and fixed identities were no longer valid and the traditional literary forms had ceased to be adequate for their needs. Virginia Woolf was one of the most remarkable figures in this 'modernist movement'. More than any other novelist of the period, she combined a theoretical analysis of the requirements for modern fiction with a continuing attempt in every new work to match her perception of reality with its appropriate form. And she became one of the most successful modernist novelists to attract many critics to ponder over her works. Critics commonly emphasize on the newness of her art and novels written by her have become great enigma for them. Virginia Woolf was impelled by her own 'vision of life' to emphasize the fluidity of human personality rather than its fixity. She perceived the variety of impression made by one person on the people around her/him and her/his own ever-changing consciousness of the surrounding world. A.D.Moody, in his book titled *Mrs Dalloway as Comedy*, opines:

Here end is to achieve an ordered wholeness in the individual life, and to project that order into the decadence and disintegration of her worked, in sort, to recreate her society and its culture in the image of the complete human person. The full meaning of her preoccupation

with the inner life of the individual is that she sees that life to be inseparable from the life of the society and civilization, and to be, moreover, its vital center- both, that which creates them and which they exist to serve. (112)

In Moody's view Mrs. Clarissa's individual life is inseparable from her societal life.

J.Hillis Miller like other critics emphasizes on the newness of Woolf's art.

According to him, the elements which make her act new are:

"her dissolution of traditional limits of plot and character, her attention to minutiae of the mind and to apparently insignificant details of external world, her pulverization of experience into a multitude of fragmentary particles each without apparent connection to the others, her dissolution of the usual" (176).

Thus, Miller focuses on the newness of plot and character in Woolf's work.

David Daiches once wrote about Virginia Woolf that she would not wait for the critic, come alone and explain what she is writings and why she is writing. As a theorist and biographer, she has written many remarkable books on different subjects.

Commenting on the Edwardian novelists' materialistic point of view she wrote in her essay

"Mrs. Brown and Mr.Bennet":

Mr.Bennet has never once looked at Mr. Brown in her corner. There she sits in the corner of the carriage that is traveling not from Richmond to Waterloo but from one age of English literature to another, for Mrs. Brown is eternal, Mrs. Brown changes only on the surface, it is the novelist who get in and out – there she sits and not one of the Edwardian has so much as looked at her. They have looked very powerful searching and sympathetically out of the window at

factories at utopian even at the decoration and upholstery of the carriage, but never at life, never at human nature [ . . . ] for those conventions are ruin and those tools are death. (103-4)

No doubt as David Daiches remarked besides a novelist Woolf was a critic, theorist and biographer too. As a critic, she has written destructive criticism on the Edwardian novelists like Wells, Bennett and Galsworthy and labeled them as 'materialists'.

Her own concept of reality of the same scene of the carriage would be as she writes in her book *Modern Fiction*:

Examine for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives a myriad impressions- trivial fantastic, evanescent or engraved with the sharpness of steel. From all sides they come incessant shower of innumerable atoms, and they fall, as they shape themselves into the life or Monday or Tuesday, the accent falls differently from the old, the moment of importance came not here but there, so that if the writer were a free man not a slave, if he could write what he chose, not what he must, if he could base his work upon his feelings and not upon conventions, there would be no plot, no comedy, no love, no love interest or catastrophe in the accepted style[... ]life is not a series of gig lamps, symmetrically arranged, but a luminous halo, a semitransparent to the end.(187-8)

In this way Virginia Woolf has submitted her theory of fiction, the will to discover and record life as it feels to those who live it and it was the originating cause of Woolf's rejection of existing convention. Along with other many novels, *Mrs. Dalloway*, her fourth novel also embodies this vision and conforms to her idea in almost every respect. Because



of her newness in techniques and treatment of theme, it had received numerous criticisms on its different aspects since its publication in 1995

E.M. Foster described *Mrs. Dalloway* as an expression of "her genius in its fullness"(56). For him Virginia Woolf is "delicate and subtle artist in words who upheld aesthetically and spiritual values in a brutal materialist age"(*Modern Fiction* 12). Reality for her was different.

David Daiches explains this tendency in his book entitled *The Novel and the Modern World* in the passage below:

In Woolf more than in any other English novelist the writer of fiction faces squarely the problem of break down of a public sense of significance and its consequence for the novel. A novelist who could ask 'what is meant by reality? And reply, 'it would seem to be very erratic', very undependable – now to be found in a dusty road, now in a daffodil in the sun, she saw an aspect of the modern, problem with remarkable clarity, and consciously developed a view of fictional art which, enable her to deal with it [. . .]quality' is the word to use here, for Mrs.Woolf was concerned less with projecting any given view of what is significant in experience that with than with the sort of thing, the moods, institutions, blending of memories, sudden awareness of the symbolic in the real that suggests how the inner life is really lively. (187)

Here Daiches focuses on Woolf's use of symbols in her novels including *Mrs. Dalloway*.

Afore mentioned critics do not fail to notice Woolf's originality. As a literary innovator of modern fiction, she wanted to deploy a fluid technique that would render inner experience and capture the essence of the impressionable 'self'. For her even the

change from life to death can be less significant than the mutations of one person's consciousness into the differing responses to the meaning of his or her personality left in the consciousness of others after her or she had died. Mrs. Dalloway, reflecting on what death might mean, speculates that perhaps in death she would become 'part of people she has never met, being laid out in mist between that people she knew best like a mist between on their branches as she had seen the tree the mist, but it spread ever so far, her life, herself' (187).

Just one year after the publication of Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, E.M Forster wrote an essay in *The Criterion* concentrating himself on the technical aspect of *Mrs Dalloway*. In Forsters' judgment, Virginia Woolf was an innovator and she was the only writer of genius who was trying to use new technique. Except James Joyce, all the others were so-called innovators. According to Forster, innovation for an earlier writer was like placing the portrait in the art gallery facing windows and each window overlooking scenes from earlier ones. Pictures vary, windows vary but the gallery remains the same and no man feels newness while pacing along the gallery. Forster describes what Woolf did to bring newness in her writing like this:

Virginia Woolf would do away with the sense of pacing. The picture and the window may remain –indeed the portrait must remain- but she wants to destroy the gallery in which they are embedded and in its place build –build what? Something more rhythmical. *Jacob's Room* suggests a spiral whirling down to a point, *Mrs Dalloway* a cathedral.  
(286)

In this way, Foster focuses on Woolf's innovation in her style and content.

Discussing the structure of *Mrs Dalloway* in his book *The Structure of the Novel*, Edwin Muir describes the work of James Joyce and Mrs. Woolf as being descriptive rather

than dramatic. Their vision is on scenes, not of sequence. He finds the structure of *Mrs Dalloway* spatial and the relation between characters horizontal.

After the development of feminist theory in 1969, critics have been more inclined to interpret Woolf's text by using feminist theory. As an essayist she is best-known for her feminist writing *A Room of one's Own* and *Three Guineas* where she overtly discusses the situation of woman writes throughout modern history. Critics tend to associate her novel with her novel *A Room of One's Own*, which according to them is a plea for female aesthetic. Elaine Showalter's *A Literature of Their Own* became the foundation stone for feminist critics. Since then, the novels of Woolf have been interpreted as novels of woman's experience.

From J.H Roberts's view, it is clear that Clarissa's position in the society is just a kind of illusion for her as well as for the society. All her thoughts and impulses are projected on Septimus who can freely revolt against society on Clarissa's behalf. There is tension and polarity between these two 'selves' in the novel. So Clarissa's life in the society is virtually a non-life:

What she loved was this, here, now in front of her, that fat lady in the cab. Did it matter then, she asked herself, walking towards Bond Street, did it matter that she must inevitably cease completely, all this must go on without her, did she resent it, or did it not become consoling to believe that death ended absolutely but somehow in the streets of London, on the ebb and flow of things here, there, she survives, Peter survived in each other [. . .] (*Mrs Dalloway* 11)

Thus, Mrs. Dalloway is a living image of the surface of the society Woolf was concerned with, according to Moody. At the same time she is criticism of her society. Only in the attic of her house we get a glimpse of the 'attic' in her personality where her true being is

locked up. It is the place that her consciousness opens into depth and she has a moment of vision, moment of her true self. In this way, Clarissa Dalloway in a sense is mentally ill due to patriarchal social norms and values.

## **Chapter II**

### **Discussion of Theoretical Tool: Feminism**

Feminism is a doctrine related on the images and ideas advocating women's rights for the equality of sexes, identity, and freedom. Feminism tries to redefine women's activities works and goals from feminist perspectives. It seeks to liberate women from the sub-ordination to men and to reconstruct society in such a way that is fully inclusive of women's desires and purposes. It demands for equal rights and opportunities for women in a political, economic, physiological, social, and economic and aesthetic canons of modern times. It is relevant to see some definitions regarding feminism in order to arrive at the basic clear-cut concept of the term.

The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology defines feminism as "a doctrine suggesting that women are systematically disadvantaged in modern society and advocating equal opportunities for men and women" (27). E. Peter defines feminism as a perspective that seeks to eliminate the subordination, oppression, inequalities and injustices women suffer because of their sexes. In the same way, Adrienne Rich, a contemporary American poet, describes feminism as "the place where in the most natural, organic way subjective and politics has to come together". (196)

More recently feminism has been defined not simply as a particular framework set of ideas or social analysis or from of critical questioning around a focus on women and powers but also as representing a specific way of experiences.

Thus it is clear that all feminists call for changes in social, economic, political or cultural order to reduce and eventually overcome this discrimination against women. The bottom line of all this subordination is the lack of freedom. Of course, several theorists, writers and scholars have underlined this issue from varied perspectives.

M.H. Abrams, in his *Glossary of Literary Terms*, mentions some issues indicated in feminism which are briefly mentioned below:

Western society is pervasively patriarchal, male-centered and controlled and conducted so as to subordinate women to men all cultural domains: familial, religious, political, economics, social, legal, and artistic. What is feminine and what is masculine are merely the cultural constructs generated by the omnipresent patriarchal biases of our civilization.

Patriarchal ideology pervades those writings, which have been considered great literature. Most of them are thus male characters; Oedipus, Ulysess, Hamlet, Tom Jones, and so on. Female characters are given marginal and subordinate roles, represented as complementary in opposition to masculine desires. (56)

Patriarchal definition of female is a mistaken male perspective, belief and values towards whole female existence. Patriarchal values say- reading and studying are dangerous for women. It was said that learning was dangerous for women because they fear that it might rob women of a meek and gentle loveliness.

Politics is an arena for which women are supposed to have neither the stomach nor wit. Such views have function for denying women education, tools, and power to sustain them independently and to direct the society towards new thinking. Jean Kilbourne, in the essay "*Creating Artificiality*", explains the predicament of the women by the name of culture image:

Desperate to conform to an ideal and impossible standard, many women go to great length to manipulate and change their faces and bodies. A women is conditioned to view their face as a mask and their body as an object, as things separate from and more important than her real self,

constant in need of alteration, improvement, disguise. She is made to feel dissatisfied with and ashamed of herself, whether she tries to achieve 'The Look' or not. Objectified constantly by others she learns to objectify her.

(129)

When we trace out the women's subjection to men, we find that they are subjugated from the beginning of human creation and civilization. Adam's first wife, Lilith objected the domination of her husband and demanded equal rights and she left him. She challenged the patriarchal marriage and preferred punishment from the Gods. In the Bible, Jesus Christ's attitude toward women is also guided by biasness.

In many historical and mythical incidents, male authority subordinates females. In male constructed fictions, women are named either as witches or mad. It becomes clear when we examine some characters of some literary pieces.

In Shakespeare's *Mackbeth*, Lady Mackbeth is considered to be monster while Mackbeth as a noble. Similarly, in *Hamlet* madness of Hamlet is gloriously universal while Ophelia just pathetic. The subordination of the female characters causes the structure of male dominated model of the society. However some of mythical figures like Gargons, Medusa and Circe are the powerful females having extraordinary power and creativity. They are simply the women who seek their own identity.

In the seventeenth century New England, we find dogmatic history of Puritanism, which subordinated the women too much. In the nineteenth and twentieth century women had to come across various challenges as the writer in the society. Feminism became a dominant approach in the literature only in the late 19th century. It had, however, two centuries struggle for the recognition of the women's cultural roles and achievement. The campaign was earlier started formally through the writing of Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of the Women* (1792).

Wollstonecraft, as a liberal feminist, claims for the political and social rights of the women and goes beyond of strictly patriarchal society. She advocates that mind does not know sex and blames that society views women in the role of convenient, domestic slaves and alluring mistress by denying their economic independence and encouraging them to docile and attentive to their looks to the exclusion of all else.

The 17th, 18th and 19th century women writers were afraid to write something about their own experiences and the ideas thinking that they might be considered mad women for their audacity. But in the course of time, when women become more conscious of their right they tried to prove themselves equally powerful as male writers.

Twentieth century major feminist writers like Virginia Woolf had made a great contribution in the field of feminist theories with their major famous works. Woolf in her *A Room of her Own* (1928) explains how women are imprisoned within their domestic premises and are stopped from trying the pen. The social and economic obstacles extended before them always obstructed the women's creativity. She believed that these obstacles often stood as headraces before their literary goals. In her another essay "*The Ideal of the Angle in the House*" she calls for women to be sympathetic oneself and pure. She says that men for their own use made their literary genres only. The novel gives women workable space and even then the form her to be worked for its own new purpose expressing the female body.

Throughout these early centuries the difficulties of most women were that circumstances rarely provided them with opportunities to prove their worth. The structure of society discourages them to expose their creativity and intellectual skill for the development of the mankind. Women spent most of their life within four walls bearing and rearing children. This not only consumed their creativity time but also weakened their health. Women are described as "weaker sex" but 'weakens' increasingly becomes a



quality to be prized. Women are praised for being more delicate and more pure than the men- but that of course meant they needed a man to look after them and 'protect' them for the burden of such responsibilities as owning property and other intellectual works. This concept about women compelled them to play the role of housewife within the domestic sphere.

Women's works in the home were unpaid and so began not to be counted as 'real' work in the eyes of males but as their duties towards their family and society. Middle class women were not meant to work at all. Their husbands went out into the world of business and politics while they stayed at home increasing cut off from everything outside the family and household. And in the name of protection they were protected from responsibilities such as voting and owning property.

Because of social structure the very beginning of the social history, the concept of the society about women was born as secondary to male. Women were expected to stay at home and confine themselves to domestic duties and social graces- playing music and decorating themselves for men. In a sense they were satisfied with their secondary object like position in the family. One of the philosophers of the age of Rousseau said in *Changing status of women* as quoted by Olivia Bennet, that women are inferior to men and out to be weak and passive. According to her, her main duties are "to please men, to be useful to them, to win their love and respect [ . . . ] These are women's duties in all ages and that are what they should be taught from childhood on" (26). These lines evoke the contemporary concept of society about women, which they followed without any question and never tried to challenge.

Females are even dominated at the level of language use. Several feminists from America, France, and Britain have drawn attention to the philosophical linguistic and practical problems of people's use of language. The linguistic feminist tend not only to

discover to sexism in language but also to attack the sexiest aspects in the language where they found oppressive aspect of women. Some go to the extent of willing to introduce feminist language system. Carolyn Burke writes about the French feminists intention of finding and using an appropriate female language. They advocate a revolutionary languish, an oral break from the dictatorship of patriarchal speech. Shosana Felman finds the challenge of women today in "reinventing language, to speak not only against but also outside of the specular phallogocentric structure (David Lodge 340)." Robert Graves believes that women's language existed in the prehistorical time when matriarchy was overthrown by patriarchy along with the beginning of historic era. Women's language went underground. Travelers and missionaries reported women's language among American Indians, African and Asian in 17th and 18th centuries. Yet there is no evidence of genderlect spoken by the female population in a society, which differs significantly from the dominant language.

The task of feminist criticism is to concentrate on women's access to language in the lexical range from which words can be selected on the ideological and cultural determinants of expressions. The main problem lies in the fact that women have been denied the full or circumlocution (341). Showalter refers to Woolf as saying that women ought to express mind and body, ought to fight to open and extend it. Women's literature is said to be haunted by the ghosts of repressed language and until those ghosts are erotized women would never feel a sense of relief. Language seems to have paralyzed their gesture, including their verbal gestures. As adults they no longer have any mobility. Feminism is a way of discovering forgotten, misrecognized gestures and also verbal gestures other than those of mothering.

In the sense, Elaine Showalter introduces the term gynocritics as a programme of rebuilding women's position as literary writers and readers in order to ensure their

independence from andocentric culture. The programme of gynocritics is to construct a female framework for the analysis of women's literature to develop new models based on the study of female experience rather than to adopt male model and theories. It aims to develop a female sub-culture including not only the ascribed status and the internalized constructs of femininity, but also the occupations, interactions, and consciousness of women. Gynocritics must take into account the different velocities and curves of political, social, and personal histories in determining women's literary choices and carriers (1228). Its subject includes the psychodynamics of female creativity, linguistics and the problem of a female language; the trajectory of the individual or collective female literary carrier; a literary theory and a course, studies of particular writers and works. K.K. Ruthven cites Showalter as defining Gynocritics : "It is a concern with women as writers the history, styles, themes, genres and stresses of writing by women, the psychodynamics of female creativity, the trajectory of the individual or collective female carrier, and the evolution and laws of female literary tradition." (94)

Judith Kegan Gardiner surveys that gynocritics emerged into a form as feminist critics have approached writing by women with an abiding commitment to discover what makes women's writing different from men's and tendency to feel that some significant differences do exist. Gynocritics find recurrent imagery and distinctive content in writing by women, for example, imagery of confinement and unsentimental descriptions of childcare. The other main explanation of female difference posits a 'female' consciousness' that produces styles and structures innately different from these of the 'masculine mind'.

Gynocritics is even aware to occupy an area including linguistics that is defined from the point of view of women. Ruthven mentions that feminist linguistics shows that language is specifically women's prison and linguistically speaking women are doubly disadvantaged in being prisoners in the prison house of language. They strongly agree

with Robin Lakoff since it contains patterns of weakness and uncertainty, focuses on the trivial, the Frivolous, the unserious and stresses personal emotional responses. Anne Balsamo, in her *Feminism for the Incurably Informed*, points out the fact that women participation in traditionally male dominated technical and professional field including the physical and natural sciences, engineering, mathematics, military services astronomy is not only minimal, organized but also forlorn. Autumn Stanely argues that women were excluded from technology and were enlisted in the job of food preparation, nursing, and infant care and menstruation technology. Sociological studies of the gendered aspect of computer employment focus on the de-skilling and displacement of female clerical workers in different industries. God is now masculine in most, if not all, langue, so in sun, in countries where moon is important, it is masculine in gender. Necessity signifies a duty or an order established by one sex, one genre. Two distinct modes of Gynocritics are:

1- Women as readers: It is concerned with the feminist as reader and it offers feminist reading of texts which considers the images and stereotypes of women in literature, the omission and misconceptions about women in criticism and women- as- sign in semiotic systems. It can be a liberating intellectual act. (333)

2- Women as Writers: Its subjects are the history styles, themes, genres, and structures of the writings by women; the psychodynamics of female creativity, the trajectory of the individual or collective female carrier and the evaluation of the laws of female literary tradition.

Gilbert and Gubar present a dilemma of women writers in a male centric authorship and make a clear position of the women writers who are squandering without fixity. The women poet has an anxiety of authorship- a radical fear that she cannot create; the fears that she cannot fight a male precursor on 'his' terms and win. Her battle is not against his reading of her. "The women writer is a victimized by the interiorized and

'alternative' psychology of women under patriarchy (qtd. in Adam 1237). Gilbert and Gubar observe the psychosexual problem of female writers who feel disturbed, distrusted and insecure since they have derived the literary genius from the stern literary 'fathers' of patriarchy in comparison to the male tradition of strong, father son combat described by Bloom as "Anxiety of Influence" (qtd. in Adam 1235).

The contemporary female writers can exclude the energy from the struggle their 18th and 19th century fore-mothers did in isolation. Women suffer from mental illness because of the patriarchal socialization since they are likely to experience their education in docility, submissiveness, selfishness as in some sense of sickening. Those early female writers undertook a terribly difficult path to overcome the 'anxiety of authorship' to repudiate the prescriptions as to recover and remember the lost fore mothers who could help them find their distinctive female power (*Critical Theory* 1242). Their focal thesis lies in creating a space for women literature or creating a sub culture unaffected by males and attacking male ego and in struggling against the effects of socialization.

In the history of feminism we can find two trends of feminist named as:

1- Liberal feminism and

2- Radical feminism

Liberal and Radical feminism are distinguished in terms of their intensity of demand and the arrogance. While alongside them, other branches of feminists have developed with their affiliation to certain theoretical background such as political feminism, Marxist/ Socialist feminism, Psychoanalytic, French feminism, Post- modernist/ Post-structural feminism, Post-colonial feminism and so on.

Liberal feminism is a moderate or mainstream face of feminism that explains women's position in the society. It addresses the problems of unequal rights or artificial barriers to women's participation in the public world, beyond the family and household. It shows a

critical concern with the value of individual autonomy and freedom from supposedly unwarranted restriction by others. Public citizenship and attainment of equality with men in the public arena are central to liberal feminism. It does not perceive the sexes to be at war or dismiss that which has been associated with men. Unlike Radical feminist, they emphasize on reformation of society rather than revolutionary changes. Naomic Wolf who represents this school directly rejects strategies that might be less acceptable to mainstream women and men and dismissed critical and revolutionary agendas. Liberal feminism draws on 'welfare liberalism' though it started as form of liberal political thought influenced by writers such as J.S. Mill. They put forward their agenda as collective responsibility for the formation and development of liberal society, which supports equal opportunity between sexes.

Radical feminism appeared in Elaine Showalter's reinterpretation of gender studies and got nourished by her followers. It has been established as a feminist literary criticism, an extreme rebellious stream that appears as hostile to patriarchy unlike liberal feminism. It offers a real challenge to rejection to the liberal orientation towards the public world of men. It gives a positive value to womanhood rather than supporting a notion of assimilating into arenas of activity associated with social order dominated by men. Chris Beasley reports Johnson as defining it as "one of the basic tenets of radical feminism in that any women has with any man" (*Beasley* 54). It encourages some degree of separatism from men because it recommends putting demand in literature an expression of female sexuality, which will burst through the bonds of male logic with a poetic power that defines the tyranny of logo-centric meaning. Besides sexual oppression, radical feminists often view other forms of power for example, unequal power relations with capitalism as derived from patriarchy. This approach seeks to bring about radical changes in the social configuration in which the position of women is not only redefined but also re-established

as a respectable and important, commonly suggesting the position of man in a position of power relation to all women and possibly same man. They have a strong interest in recovering or discovering positive elements in feminism asserting in essence that it is good to be a woman and to form bonds with other women. Elizabeth Grosz calls it a feminism of difference. Radical feminism usually presents a historically continuous clear cut difference between man and woman. This theory generally advocates a revolutionary model of social change. The agenda of radical feminist writings is to counter women's supposedly natural, biological inferiority and subordination within patriarchal society by asserting their individuality at least equal status in relation to men.

Feminism has always been concerned with the problem of women in patriarchal society. Simone de Beauvoir, in her *The Second Sex* has established by arguing that man defines the human, not woman. The woman is not born as woman; woman is woman, which is just a gender concept. She attacks the patriarchal concept of women and she consistently rejects domesticity and conventional female roles. She argues that the most important obstacle to women's freedom is not her biology but, or the political and legal constraints placed upon her, or even her economic situation, rather it is the whole process by which female is manufactured in society. In her celebrated phrases 'One is not born but rather becomes a woman' (*Second Sex*, 297), and her discussion of the ways in which girls are forced into certain paths and denied expression of their full humanity led her to an examination of the experiences of girls and women that included discussion of hitherto taboo areas of female life such as menstruation and sexuality.

In *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir argues both that women can achieve such freedom and responsibilities as well and that historically it had been denied to them. Here it is the concept of the 'other' that provides her with a starting point. Further she says that sex was her all important, as for most of human history man has successfully relegated

women to the status of permanent other, excluded from the realm of true humanity, never unequal and so never a threat: "She is denied and differentiated with references to man and he with reference to her: She is the incidental, the inessential as to opposed to the essential. He is a subject; he is the absolute - she is the other (*Second Sex*, 16).She goes against all this male domination of male dominated society and believes that changes in education, culture, and morality would bring woman as equal to male's position.

The above mentioned feminist discourse helps us generate and justify women's position in the male dominated society and analyze how the characters and especially the female characters of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* suffer from madness. The cause of their madness is due to the lack of freedom i.e. females confinement in patriarchal society. In other words, they are destined to go through mental breakdown because of the confinement inside home and the outcome of this domination is madness.



### Chapter III

#### **Feminist Interpretation of Madness: A Study of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*.**

Mrs. Dalloway is a story of middle-aged woman Clarissa Dalloway. She is the wife of Richard Dalloway from aristocratic family with every kind of material wealth; a respected lady as an ideal hostess of the society. In this novel Virginia Woolf shows far greater mastery of her technique to explore the initial split in the female characters. This present study is an attempt to shed the light on the problems of the female characters, which they are bound to face in the male chauvinistic society and the result of such domination of patriarchal society upon the females. The main problem is the existential anguish, which leads to the mental illness or breakdown by the cause of social superficiality of male domination. They neither completely give up the social code nor adopt it happily because of their feminine conscience. If they break the social code, an output of so-called patriarchal norms takes them as a mad. They are sane if they adopt the so-called patriarchal norms as they are. But they are taken as the mad who try to destroy the social norms established by the male dominated society. Here, in the text the female characters undergoes to the madness due to the suffocation and the social conduct made by the patriarchal norms such as social, physical, psychological and psychiatrically. Due to which they are mentally suffocated which leads to mental illness or madness.

The first page of the Novel poses the two polar images of Clarissa's existence. Her 'plunge' into the open air signifies her immersion in the whole life, represented by the ocean, because she cannot live totally in the present. She escapes from the present to escape from the patriarchal norms where she is living. But the opposite emotion, the fear of "something awful about to happen" holds her back. A dread of life's dangers leads her to take refuge within the house, separated from the wholeness of her life by the window.

Throughout the book, the window stands for the separation and the ocean for the totality of existence:

What a lark! What a plunge! For so it had always seemed to her when, with a little squeak of the hinges, which she could hear now, she had burst open the French windows and plunged at the Bourton into the open air. How fresh, how clam, stiller than this of course, the air was in the early morning, like the flap of the wave, the kiss of the wave, chill and the sharp and yet solemn, feeling as she did, standing there at the open window, that something awful was about to happen, looking at the flowers, at the tress with the smoke winding off them and the rocks rising and falling. (3)

It shows there are two sorts of conflict Clarissa has to go through. Lady Bruton and Sally Seton represent these two polar of the Clarissa's life. These two women reflect both class conflict in the society and conflict within the Clarissa's life i.e. her emotional world and social world.

Clarissa lives with a great suppression by repressing her emotions, by giving up all pleasure, love and sentiment but cannot live losing her self-respect, even in the front of her husband, which may be a revolt to save her soul:

And there is dignity in people, a solitude, even between husband and wife a gulf, and that one must respect, though Clarissa, watching him open the door, for one would not part with it oneself, or take it, against his will, from ones husband, without losing one's independence, one's self-respect-something after all priceless. (156)

Richard Dalloway never loves his wife from his inner heart. But he takes flowers to impress his wife when he knew that Peter is back. He is jealous of him and Clarissa: "But

he wanted to come in holding something. Flowers? Yes, flowers, since he did not trust in gold; any number of flowers, roses, orchids, to celebrate what was, reckoning things as you will, an event" (102).

On the other, Clarissa cannot totally reject patriarchy, She knows if she does so it would be a grievous mistake on her side and can create this existential problem. Thus she has to choose one catastrophe "mirage" to avoid another catastrophe i.e. "death". In this sense he looks like liberal feminist contrary to her doppelganger, which is radical feminist:

Bearing his flowers like a weapon, Richard Dalloway approached her, intent he passed her, still there was time for a spark between them-she laughed at the sight of him, he smiled good humorously, considering the problem of the female vagrant, not that they would ever speak. But he would tell Clarissa that he loved her, in so many words. He had once upon a time been jealously true, she wanted support. Not that she is weak, but wanted support. (152)

But as a husband she didn't choose Peter Walsh because he is more demanding than Richard that is not acceptable for Clarissa. She thinks "that in marriage a little license, a little independence that must be which again, in Clarissa's case is much more necessary than in others. Which achieved after marriage" (112).

Yet Mrs. Dalloway feels him misnamed with her culture. Because of this situation there is emptiness about the heart of her life, an attic room, which can be seen in her attitude but in front of others she appears inscrutable:

Like a nun withdrawing, or a child exploring a tower, she went, upstairs, paused at the window, and came to the bathroom. There was green linoleum and a tap dripping. There was emptiness about the heart of life, an attic. Women must put off their rich apparel. At midday they

must disrobe. She pierced the pincushion and laid her feathered bellow hat on the bed. The sheets were clean, tight stretched in a broad white bound from side to side. Narrower and narrower would her bed be. The candle was half burnt down and she had read deep in Baron Marbolt's memoir. She had read late at night of the retreat from Moscow. For the House sat so long that Richard insisted, after her illness, that she must sleep undisturbed. And really she preferred to read of the retreat from Moscow. He knew it. So the room was an attic, the bed narrow and lying there reading, for she slept badly, she could not dispel virginity preserved through childbirth, which to her like a sheet. (39)

This extract shows that Clarissa is seen as a 'mad woman in the attic' by her husband.

As time passes Clarissa compelled to change her notion that sharply contrasts with her early thinking. But adopting this social notion, Clarissa cannot satisfy her soul because this mature notion is superficially imposed by the society. She always takes her present situation as a compromise for survival:

Lovely is girlhood; suddenly there came a moment –for example on the river beneath the woods at Clievenden-when, through some Constantinople, and again and again. She could see what she lacked. It was not beauty, it would not mind. It was something central which permeated, something warm that broke up surfaces and rippled the cold contact of the man and woman, or of women together. For that she could dimly perceive [. . .]. It was a sudden revelation, a tinge like a bush which one tried to check and then, as it spread, one yielded to its expansion, and rushed to the farthest verge and there quivered felt the world come closer, swollen with some astonishing significance,

some pressure of rapture, which split its thin skin and gushed and poured with an extra ordinary alleviation over the cracks and sores. Then, for the moment, she had seen an illumination, a mach burning in a crocus, an inner meaning almost expressed. But the close withdrew, the hard softened. It was over-the moment. Againt such moments (with women too there contrasted as she laid her hat down) the bed and baron Marbat and the candle half-burnt. Lying awake, the floor created, the lit house was suddenly darkened, and if she raised her head she could just hear the click of the handle released as gently as possible by Richard, who slipped upstairs in his socks and then, as often as not, dropped his hot-water bottle and swore! How was she laughed! (39-40)

This abstract shows the life that Clarissa passed with her friends where she used to be very happy in the past. She has the nostalgia for her peasant past spent with her friends before marriage.

Inscrutability is something that is taken as women's virtue, charm and ornaments. Women cannot express themselves freely and openly; they are not free to express their emotions in front of others frankly. If they do so they are taken as mad or outcasted from the respectable circle of the society. Being a social woman Clarissa also accepts this notion:

That was devilish part of her- this coldness, this woodenness, something very profound in her, which he had felt again this morning talking to her, an impenetrability. Yet Heaven knows he loved her. She had some queer power of fiddling on one's nerves, turning one's nerve to fiddle-string, yes. (79)

This indicates the confusion in Clarissa regarding whether she should challenge them or accept them as they are.

Only in her attic can Clarissa let herself truly be Clarissa that is or in other words eliminates momentarily the censor that keeps the real Clarissa repressed. Instinctively, she evokes in the attic:

The strange, of her feeling, on looking back, was the purity, the integrity, of her feeling for Sally. It was not like one's feeling for a man. It was completely disinterested, and besides, it had a quality which could remember standing in her bedroom and at the top of the house holding, the hot water can in her hands and saying aloud, 'she is beneath this roof...She is beneath this roof! No, the words meant absolutely nothing to her now. She could not even get an echo of her old emotion. But she could remember going cold with excitement...and dressing, and going downstairs and feeling as she crossed the hall 'if it were now to die', it were now to be most happy. That was her feeling –all because she was coming down to dinner in the white frock to meet Sally Seton! (44)

This shows the real picture of the Clarissa which patriarchal society is unable to identify agony inside her. Though she has a desire to fulfill her sexual desire with her friend Sally Seton. She has to repress it due to heterosexual patriarchal values. Repression of her lesbian sexual instinct is one of the causes of her mental breakdown.

Clarissa's feeling of Sally Seton seemed to her 'pure'. Nor does she see anything wrong in her feeling for women when she thinks about them in her attic. These feelings spring from her innermost nature are right, so right in fact that for the fleeting moment she let herself yield to them. And they obliterate all the principles she maintains in her life,

outside the attic. She never consciously examines these feelings in the light of her principles. The genteel background of her upbringing, its prudery, the conceptions of propriety, decorum and all the paraphernalia of social codes are so deeply ingrained in her consciousness that she unlocks her natural self only in a rare moment and she lets herself be and locks up her natural instinct as soon as again she has to face the world, which most of her soul from being spitted into two worlds.

Throughout the whole novel, Clarissa's mother is curiously repressed though; her father is always present in her behaviors and manner. Clarissa has to repress her feelings, conceal her mother within herself to be successful in the patriarchal world:

Dear Clarissa"! Exclaimed Mrs Hilbery. She looked tonight, she said, so like her mother as she first saw her walking in a garden in a gray hat. And really Clarissa's eyes filled with tears. Her mother, walking in a garden! But alas, she must go. (154)

At the party, when a woman talked about Clarissa's mother, Clarissa's eyes filled with tears, but this brief return to her mother also cancelled with the duty of female in patriarchy.

The pinnacle of Clarissa Dalloway comes when the Prime Minister himself chooses to be her guest. This is the moment for which Clarissa had sacrificed all her emotions, love and pleasure:

Indeed, Clarissa felt, the Prime Minister had been good to come. And, walking down the room with him, with Sally there Peter there and Richard very pleased, with all those people rather inclined, perhaps, to envy, she had felt that intoxication of the moment, that dilatation of the nerves of the heart itself till it seemed to quiver, steeped, upright. (128)

But this moment of extreme intoxication of pleasure and achievement follows the feeling of hollowness and nothingness. Now Clarissa has become a lifeless piece of wood, spiritually barren.

Her identity at this stage has been submerged in the role of hostess. She cannot remember what she looks like and she does not think and feel as herself, but as someone looking at Clarissa as a mentally ill- result of male chauvinism:

And yet for her own part, it was too much of an effort. She was not enjoying it. It was too much like being- just anybody standing there anybody could do it, yet this anybody she did a little admire, couldn't help feeling that she had, anyhow made this happen, that it marked a stage, this post that she herself to have become, for oddly enough she had quite forgotten what she looked like, but felt herself a stake driven in at the top of her stair. Every time she gave a party she had a feeling of being something not herself, and that everyone was unreal in one way, much more real another. It was, she thought, partly their clothes, partly being taken out of their ordinary ways, partly the background, it was possible to say things you couldn't say anyhow else, thing that needed an efforts possible to go much deeper but not for her, nor yet anyhow. (123-34)

Here, Clarissa knows her real identity in the society.

Personally, embodying the perfection of social grace, at the end Clarissa becomes a lifeless woman figure respected and adored by all, but she herself cannot feel this triumph anymore because spiritually she already dead in the process of being centre of attraction:

Yes, but after all it was other people felt, that, for, though she loved it tingle and sting, still these semblance, these triumphs (dear old Peter,



for example, thinking her so brilliant), had a hollowness, at arm's length they were, not in her heart and it might be that she was frowning old, but they satisfied her no longer as they used, and suddenly as she saw the Prime Minister go down the stairs [...] (135-36)

Thus, to reject her triumph with Prime Minister is to deny her old values, Clarissa quickly puts her rejection of society's standards into the action by throwing the amenities to the wind, rejoicing to play the wooden hostess greeting her guest at the top of the staircase. She leaves the intensified life of the party for the solitude death.

### **Septimus as the doppelganger of Clarissa:**

Woolf has used Mrs. Clarissa as the doppelganger, the alternative persona, the darker, more internal personality compared to Clarissa's very social and singular outlook. Septimus, portrays a side of Clarissa's personality that becomes absorbed by fear and broken down by society that has failed to survive to war. The doubling portrays the polarity of the self and exposes the positive-negative relationship inherent in humanity. It also illustrates the opposite phases of the ideal of life.

Septimus is a victim of patriarchy. He had left the home as a boy and educated himself in public libraries. Actually his growth is a process of breaking away from the mother and assimilation to the locus of the father. He works with capitalism, for a firm of auctioneer, values and estate agent and finally goes to war in which he developed manliness. Septimus shares Clarissa's vacillation between her own world and withdrawal i.e.: towards social world. His 'plunge' through the window like hers represents a triumph over the fear that would keep with both of them on the safe side of window. When Clarissa heard about the suicide of Septimus, by throwing herself from the window, in her party, she identified herself with Septimus. She feels, Septimus has in a sense died in her place. For she had felt the same terror of life:

A young man had killed himself. And they talked of it at the party- the Bradshaws talked of death. He had killed himself-but how? Always her body went through it, when she was told, first, suddenly, of an accident; her dress flamed, her body burnt. He had thrown himself from a window. Up that flashed the ground; through him, blundering, bruising, went the rusty spikes. There he lay with a thud, thud in his brain, and then a suffocation of blackness, so she see it. But why had he done it? And the Bradshaws talked of it as at her party. (163)

Virginia Woolf saw people as having a dual existence, as outer, public life of conventional activities and in an inner private life of secret zone. Each person has an inner of images, memories, meanings, private feelings and secret thought and unconsciousness desire. These hidden depths and this underlying reality will receive many contradictory interpretations in Virginia Woolf's work, which actually is never known by the patriarchal society. In her novel, Mrs. Dalloway, this is what she had succeeded in doing. Woolf has discovered new techniques for rendering the inner world of her character. The narration of this novel jumps backward and forwards between the story of Clarissa's party and the story of Septimus death. This indicates the loss of consciousness of the characters due to the suffocation of female in male dominated society. The societified lady and the obscure manic young men are in a sense the same person that is Septimus Smith in Clarissa's double, her inner self, her essence.

The two opposing forces we have in the novel are in the one hand the force of life as it manifests itself in the nature of the individual, and on the other force of the 'sense of proportion' based on the dogma and arbitrariness and the far-reaching implications, this may have. Both Clarissa and Septimus are imprisoned souls prevented from free development and full expression by the society of which they are members. Peter Walsh

can notice this tendency within Clarissa, but that was her fault that was the society, which made her woman, that Peter hates but he knows the fact behind it:

He hadn't blame her minding the fact, since in those days a girl brought up as she was knew nothing, but it was her manner that annoyed him, timid, hard, arrogant, prudish. The death of the soul? He had said that instinctively, ticketing the moment used to death- the death of her soul. (77)

This shows the death of the soul, i.e., essence of Clarissa because of the prevention from the development and free expression in the society. Clarissa's real gifts are her vitality, her instinct, and her intuition. If she had been able to exercise this freely and naturally, all her other abilities and interests would have developed too. As this is not given to her, she devotes her talents and creative energies to an excessive pre-occupation with her parties and social formalities and this is why they mean so much to her. (In fact her social activities, the lunches, dinner, parties, tattle and all trivia that accompanying her is a way of life spells death to the soul and to all the finer faculties). In this pre-occupation leads her to mental illness that is why she uses to throw parties, dinner, tattle and all trivia to get relief from her mental breakdown.

But Septimus, as a radical feminist rejects all these consequences. He cannot see any beauty on the earth but only cruel crowd and heartless existence of so-called human being around him. And he knows very well that all these are due to the social superficiality, which suppressed his natural instincts and restricted his feelings:

He looked at people outside, happy they seemed, collecting in the middle of the street, shouting, laughing, and squabbling over nothing. But he could not taste, he could not feel. In the teashop among tables and chitterlings waiters the appalling fear come over him-he could not

feel. He could add up his bill, his brain was perfect; it must be the fault of the world then that he could not feel. (144)

This abstract shows the absurdity in the male dominated society which is crowded and with men who are shouting, laughing for nothing.

He totally refuses to acknowledge the society and invokes a Shakespearean loathing of “the sordidity of the mouth and the belly”. He rejects his wife’s wish to have a son like a son, she must Septimus”; she said (116). Thus the refusal to procreate is also a refusal of the symbolic order. Septimus refuses to take the final step into patriarchy by becoming a father himself. He doesn’t want to continue this social system by becoming him father of a son:

One cannot bring children into a world like this. One cannot perpetrate suffering, or increase the breed of these lustful animals who have no lasting emotions but only whims and vanities, eddying them now this way now that. (116)

Septimus wishes to retrieve the maternal, which the name of the father forbids. With the breakdown of the symbolic and the return of the repressed ‘semiotic’, that is unorganized, pre-linguistic, flux of the movement and jester, Septimus loses the capacity for communication though, he knew very well that communication is everything in the world. Life without communication is impossible, ‘communication is health, communication is happiness. Communication, he muttered’ (24). His talking to himself, hearing voices which do not exist, hearing birds sign in Greek all are regarded abnormal behavior into the eyes of the society. But for Septimus, communication as the exchange of the sign made possible only within the symbolic order through the split in the subject, which is established by the intervention of phallus in the unity with the mother in the means of social restriction for the free expression of the soul. The society, the name-of –the-father,

upholds does not alone. It drives a wedge between subject and the maternal body, signifier and signified. And any person who tries to bring this consciousness into the surface runs the great risk to put her or himself in the position to survive in the society. That was what Septimus has become mad due to the patriarchal law and perishes from the world.

As described by Kristeva, between the original love for the mother and the patriarchal repression of this love in the social order-rational order, no one can express the real feeling and emotions freely. And madness is the result, which created the confused situation, and barriers one has to embrace death.

Septimus could not tolerate the intervention and unwanted social burden imposed upon him and dies by jumping from the window. This is extreme point of patriarchal domination.

Septimus's mental illness is undoubtedly the outcome of male-controlled medical treatment system. Dr. Holmes, seen as the symbol of the evil nature of the man. He and Bradshaw represent the figure of conversion and proportion detailed by Virginia Woolf. In their attempt, to separate to smooth over Septim's' very real problems and ultimately; to separate him from the life connection he still holds, the physicians force Septimus to his death. Insanity, in the eyes of Woolf's is very near to death:

Holmes and Bradshaw liked that sort of thing. (He sat on the still.) But he would wait till very last moment. He did not want to die. Life is good. The sun is hot. Only human beings? Coming down the staircase opposite an old man stopped and starred at him. Holmes was at the door. 'I'll give it you!' he cried, and flung himself vigorously, violently down on the Mrs Filmer's area railings. 'The coward!' cried Dr. Holmes, bursting the door open. (132)

It shows that Dr. Holmes is the main agent to force Septimus to commit suicide. The symbolic resonance of the imitation death is imposed on women by the rest cure and the Victorian mourning ritual hold true not only for Virginia Woolf, but for many other patients as well. Feminist critics have found the rest cure to be a form of Victorian moral medicine, which enforced the doctor's domination over rebellious women.

Woolf explores the debilitating effects feminizing and medicalizing grief that leave Septimus any legitimate means to express his sorrows. She reveals on her introduction to the modern library edition of the novel that Septimus "is invented to be Clarissa's double" (36). One of the ways to interpret the Doppelgänger is to see the Septimus and Clarissa as mourners and potential patients for rest cure. From this perspective Clarissa represents sane bereavement.

Sir William Bradshaw and Holmes want to disturb the life of Septimus. The only aid offered him as a rest cure is a private institution where he would be separated from his wife and subject to the doctor's disciplinary gaze, a much less congenial prospect. Having established the cause of Septimus's trauma, Woolf satirizes the obtuseness of the medical profession in the figure of Dr. Holmes, a general practitioner, and Bradshaw, the Harley Street nerve specialist. "They fail to find the cause of his misery; in fact they discourage him for thinking about him at all" (137). Which makes it clear that the rest cure relies upon the principles of control and that the physician functions as a moral agent—a byproduct of so-called male oriented society. From the portrayal of the rest cure which harms as an instrument of repression to Septimus. In this regard, Holmes and Bradshaw are the agents of patriarchal treatment system:

He was certain directly he saw the man; it was a case of extreme gravity. It was a case of complete breakdown—complete physical and nervous breakdown, with every symptom in an advanced stage, he

ascertained in two or three minutes (Writing answers to questions, murmured discreetly, on a pink card). (134)

Due to the loneliness and routine life of Mrs. Dalloway she cannot think more of herself which leads to the mental breakdown. In this loneliness she thoroughly observed herself which she never done before. And in doing this she found a different kind of satisfaction, it was really fascinating which was totally different from the joy that she had been feeling being a perfect socialized woman- a hostess among the laughing and shouting crowd. Now Clarissa fully understood the meaning of Septimus, a young man killing himself throwing from the window. This mental breakdown is an output of male-dominated medical treatment. He frequently gets mental torture, which makes ill then the recovery that ultimately leads to suicide.

## **Chapter- IV**

### **Conclusion**

Clarissa Dalloway, in the novel *Mrs. Dalloway*, is imprisoned within her social circle by her own consciousness. She is something more than an image of British ruling class. Moreover, she comes to embody Virginia Woolf's criticism of the life of that class. Though outwardly Clarissa is very attractive, brilliant and satisfied, her inadequacy, a grave insistence upon the dissipation and death of her spirit in glittering triviality, is the reality of her existence. Clarissa Dalloway has to offer only a sharp awareness of the surface of her world and its people. She is living as image of the surface of the society. Mrs. Dalloway, by the name, is the marginalized character, who is prevented from natural growth in the superficial world of man.

Mrs. Dalloway's society, in the novel, represents the patriarchal society. For Woolf, as for Freud, unconscious drives and desires constantly exert a pressure on our conscious thought and action. Indeed Septimus can be seen as a parallel to Mrs. Dalloway, who herself steers clear of the threatening gulf of madness only at the price of repressing her passions and desire, becoming a cold but brilliant woman highly admired in patriarchal society. Madness, suicide, and coldness imply the price paid for non-recognizing the presence of otherness with the unitary self. In this way, Woolf discloses the dangers of the invasions of unconscious pulsions within a person as well as the price paid by that person maintaining a precarious balance between an overestimation of the so-called 'feminine' madness and precipitate the reflection of the values of the symbolic order. This is the inevitable destiny of woman like Clarissa in the male made society.

Clarissa Dalloway, the protagonist of this novel, has every talent that a person is endowed by nature. But she is compelled to get her all potentialities confined within the sphere of



domesticity that she vainly tries to fulfill by organizing the party. However, the most telling aspect is that she cannot get answer that for whom and for what that party has been organized so far. As Kristeva's theory of feminism insists that woman should persist in challenging the notion of domination of the patriarchal society by remaining within the same notion, not breaking away from the prevailing notion of the society.

Clarissa wants to rule over the society as a woman. She wants people to praise her and respect for her. She wants to stand on the top of the social order as a female to whom society despises as a weaker sex and her status just as a lower servant like work, that has a value in the society, which she realizes her position in the end of the novel.

The novel is guided by Mrs. Dalloway's feelings and thoughts which often suggest that they are typical of her society. She persists ideologies of her class to be seen but she herself is not appropriate for the society. Defined by class and gender, she is out of her own consciousness or society.

Though outwardly Clarissa is leading a prosperous life but inwardly her life is full of the regrets and frustrations of awareness of the sheltered nature of her own experience and even, glimmering, an awareness of her own oppression. Clarissa is the victim of her own society. This is most powerfully represented by her doppelganger, Septimus Warren Smith. Being the female Clarissa is peripheral in making any important decision. Females are removed from the center because they are regarded as weaker than males. But Clarissa in her natural light of her feminist conscience is very different from what she appears in the light of social dogma. In her attic of her house, we get a glimpse of her true self. She locks herself up most the time to be able to face the world. Her attic is the only place where she lets herself truly be Clarissa, that is, she can eliminate real Clarissa repressed behind the mask of patriarchal domination. Due to self repression, She feels the lack of

identity and belongingness. Like a fly trapped in a cobweb of a spider, she is also trapped and pressed beneath the burden of social-superficial notion of patriarchy.

At the party, when Clarissa hears the news of Septimus' suicide, she identifies herself with him. Thus, at the pinnacle of the novel, Clarissa feels the hollowness of her existence. With the death of Septimus all the essence, vitality and spirit of Clarissa also vanishes leaving her empty from inside. Septimus, her doppelganger, becomes mad, due to the patriarchal system of treatment. The royal agents of patriarchal treatment, Dr. Holmes and Sir William Bradshaw, enforce him to jump up from the window. From the mental disorder, he makes up the way to suicide, an outcome of patriarchal domination. Influenced by her thoughts on Septimus, Clarissa senses that people like Bradshaw, Dr. Holmes, and her husband Richard Dalloway, the enforcers of the status quo, make life intolerable with all their demands that people shut up their feelings in support of ideal vision that is ultimately hollow and hypocritical. For the first time in her life Clarissa is aware of the stifling effect of social conventions.

Clarissa interprets Septimus' suicide as defiant response to the society that tried to keep him quiet and hidden. Due to the sensibilities of the patriarchal notions, Clarissa has been compelled to repress her natural inclination, her wish to have a free space of her own, just like the old lady opposite to her house whose presence throughout her life Clarissa avoids to acknowledge. But at the end of the novel, she comes to realize her position in the patriarchal society where the female like herself is destined to surrender her happiness for the happiness of her family and society.

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