

CHAPTER 1.

Introduction

Mid-life Crisis

Mid-life crisis is an experience of the middle-aged people. They undergo the various crises that help to reveal the characteristics of middle-aged people. Mid-life crisis plays the vital role to change the thoughts of the people. It works as a new pedagogy to enlighten the people's multifaceted personalities, and in novels it explores the general characteristics of middle-aged people. Thus, it helps to understand the world through the eyes of middle-aged people.

A crisis is a significant turning point which causes consternation because it presents new problems to which there are no immediate answers. And a mid-life crisis occurs when people enter the middle-age of their life. Although middle age is partly a fact of life, still more it is a state of mind. And it is a state of mind as much determined by those who regard it as by those who experience it. In this connection Brice Pitt says, "It is a condition in which the difficult question of 'who we are' is often answered by 'how others see us', and thus we may perpetuate our own myth" (*Marking the Most of Middle-age*, 3).

Middle-aged people undergo the mid-life crisis when they tend to live on their memories. A mid-life crisis is the condition when a person feels unconfident, anxious and disappointed regarding their future, which they calculate relating to their present life with their past activities. Specifically, it includes worries about the future, inability to enjoy leisure time, a feeling that health is deteriorating, a negative evaluation of work life, and a negative evaluation of marital relationship. A person feels neither their present conditions secured nor their future. The inner hollowness in the heart keeps on haunting them. As Margaret H. Hyuck defines:

A mid-life crisis is an emotional state of doubt and anxiety in which a person becomes uncomfortable with the realization that life is half way over. It commonly involves reflection on what the individual has done with their life up to that point, often with feelings that not enough was accomplished. The individual may feel boredom with their lives, jobs, or their partners, and may feel a strong desire to make changes in their areas. The condition is also called the beginning of individuation, a process of self actualization that continues on to death. (*Academic American Encyclopedia, 390*)

Mid-life Crisis: Combination of Fact and Myth.

The period of middle-age is typically marked with the physical changes (loss of reproductive capacity in women), as well as new responsibilities of caring for younger children and grandchildren, and also older parents. Also, this period of time is one in which adults take on new responsibilities at the workplace and therefore often feel a need to reappraise previous life structures with an eye to making revisions while there is still time. The term of "mid-life crisis" was originally coined by Jacques Paley (1965) who claimed that people encounter a crisis as they realize their own mortality and a change in time frame from "time since birth" to "time left to live" (Shek 130).

The research of Arnold Kruger set out to explore the presence of a mid-life crisis in middle-aged adults. His findings concluded that the idea of a mid-life crisis is revealed due to the various "Adjustment Disorders". An Adjustment Disorder is defined as "a maladaptive reaction to an identifiable psychosocial stressor or stressors" (Kruger 72). Based on this inclusive nature of this definition Kruger argues that a mid-life crisis is a chimera, that is "unreal creature of the imagination" (Kruger 75). Kruger also explores causes of society's belief in a mid-life crisis. He explains how the increased prosperity of

the North American and Western Europe white middle classes may be the source of this idea. Kruger notes that the perception of acting out a mid-life crisis goes along with the increase in leisure time to indulge in self-absorption, and this is a characteristic of a middle-aged people (Kruger 78). Other research deals with the idea of the "social clock". This cultural prescription of the right time to leave home, get a job, marry, and have children, and their retirement vary from culture to culture. For instance, in Jordan forty percent of brides are in their teens. However, this figure is only three percent in Hong Kong. In Western Europe less than ten percent of men over 65 remain in the workplace, compared to 16 percent in the United States, 36 percent in Japan, and 69 percent in Mexico (Myers 5). From those studies, we find that mid-life crisis is both a fact and myth.

An Exploration of Mid-Life Crisis in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*

Born Virginia Stephen in London, Virginia Woolf (1872-1941), wrote her masterpiece, *Mrs Dalloway* (1925). *Mrs Dalloway* is the story of a middle-aged woman, Clarissa Dalloway. In this novel, Woolf shows far greater mastery of her new technique to explore the internal split in Clarissa. It is a story about the search for 'self' or the meaning of 'self' in monotonous and superficial life of middle class Londoners.

Virginia Woolf is renowned for the depiction of the confusion and contradiction between outer world and inner self of women. On this aspect, she has presented female protagonist, Clarissa Dalloway who wants the inviolability of feminine solitude. She ponders over her life and evaluates what she has achieved so far. As she is the middle-aged woman, she undergoes the female mid-life crisis and tries to keep her best to make her own self identity. She struggles for her own spiritual freedom in her middle-age. In *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), Clarissa reveals the full mid-life characteristics. What she thinks

and does is related with the consequences brought by the mid-life crisis. This dissertation tries to explore the new world as seen through the eyes of mid-life people.

Apart from Clarissa, some female characters in several novels undergo the mid-life crisis. Some characters are able to cope with it and overcome the traumas it brings to their life. While some characters are overcome by these traumas, and thus mid-life crisis leads them to the spiritual death. Some of these characters seem to be preoccupied by 'death wish' or 'death instincts'.

Regarding the mid-life of some of the characters in the different novels, they deal with their psychotic problems and attempt to bring end to their worse marital relationship. In Anne Tyler's *Breathing Lessons* (1983), the incorrigibly optimistic wife finds a bare margin of benefit in continuing the relationship despite the husband's ruinous depressiveness. Justine Peck, the wispy seeker of the same author's *Searching for Caleb* (1976), discovers late in the marriage that it has been the right situation for her, not just one she wanted desperately for the wrong reasons when she was young. In *None to Accompany Me* (1994), Nadine Gordimer's Vera Stark, married for forty years to a man she had loved passionately finds that she needs him very much less than he needs her, and lets him learn this and slip out of her life.

Some characters in some of the novels seem to be cold with their partners. Romance, in their long marital life seems to be quite uninteresting to them. It is due to their loss of beauty and change in their hormones. Margaret Drabble's *The Middle Ground* (1980) presents a character, Kate Armstrong, who is not interested with the man who passionately loves her. She says this at the very end of the novel. The man who loves her asks:

"Do you think you will ever fall in love again, Katie?"

"I doubt it. Why should I?"

"Why should you indeed."

"I've done all that. Once or twice too often, in fact." (*qtd. in Gullette Margaret Morganroth: 259*)

Similarly, Margaret Drabble's heroine, Liz Headland, in *The Radiant Way* (1987) goes through a divorce. The same character in the sequel of this novel *A Natural Curiosity* (1988) doesn't seem to have inclination to begin a sexual life again. She congratulates herself that:

Having given up sex and contraception, her bodily existence had been of an exemplary calm and regularity. Odd to think of, almost impossible to remember, the tormenting anxieties of those earlier decades: whether one was or was not pregnant; whether or not one was bleeding irregularly; whether the pill was masking real illnesses; whether or not one's partner was losing interest, was too interested, was inadequate, was faithless. Tempestuous times. So much anxiety, about one's reproductive system. (*qtd. in Gullette Margaret Morganroth: 84*)

Mid-life crisis for some female characters is the loss of beauty. The protagonists' preoccupation with their body makes them sensitive. It's the period their beauty gradually fades away. So they all eschew the romance approach, which is to pretend aging has no negative effects. Doris Lessing's Jane Somers declares in *If the Old Could* (1984), "I saw in the looking glass this rather good looking woman, not badly made, solid rather than slim, with a face redeemed from ordinariness by the grey eyes, and the pretty silvery chunks of hair that makes people look: Is she grey, or is it a dye?" (*qtd. in Gullette Margaret Morganroth: 84*). In Margaret Drabble's *Radiant way* (1987), Alix Bowen, kissed by a married man she loves, thinks "Ridiculous. A grey haired, middle-aged woman in an apron. But she knew she was not ridiculous, it was not ridiculous;

extraordinary handsome she knew herself to be, as she stood there in Caroline's blue striped butcher's apron" (qtd. in Margaret Morganroth: 80). Middle-aged Celie, in Alice Walker's *The Colour Purple* (1987), having been told all her life that she is "ugly" sums up, "Nothing special here for nobody to live. No honey colored curly hair, no cuteness. Nothing young and fresh. My heart must be young and fresh though, it feels like it blooming blood" (qtd. in Gullette Margaret Morganroth: 80). Sixty- one year old Alice, in Barbara Kingslover's *Pigs in Heaven* (1986), observes that "Even her body is mostly changed. Her breasts are of small sound architecture and her waist is limber and strong; she feels like one of those California buildings designed for an earthquake" (qtd. in Gullette Margaret Morganroth: 81).

Some characters get the real love in their midlife. Their past beauty and present loss of beauty don't create any problems in obtaining real love. Vinnie and Celie, in *The Colour Purple* (1987), get real love for the first time in their life. Sometimes it's the best of all loves that comes then, as in *The Realms of Gold* (1975) by Margaret Drabble. In this novel, when Frances Wingate marries the love of her life, both her reasons for doing it and the prognosis for happiness are better than they were the first time around.

Fear of aging is another mid-life crisis for many female characters. Such characters try to cure the world- that part of the world that produces ageist stereotypes and mid-life misery. As Fay Weldon character says, "In the middle portion of my life...I was prepared to believe, how I wanted to believe, that I had to cure myself to cure the world. Now I believe I have to cure the world to cure myself. It is an impossible task. I am bowed down by it" (qtd. in Gullette Margaret Morganroth: 93). The safer side for such female characters is to thematize the fear of aging. Jane Somers in Doris Lessing's *Diary of a Good Neighbour* (1988) starts off as a woman who has failed her husband and her mother as they lay dying, and sets out to learn something else; how to behave like a

human being and not like a little girl. She learns to care for an old woman: initially "an old crooked witch", then a very poor, frail, dirty, smelly, sordid being of ninety; then a woman with her own stories, a present sense of self, intentions: Maudie Fowler. Initially, it's hard for Jane even to be with her feeling "so trapped"; she has to force herself to visit, help, come close, and feel empathy. By the end, as a friend, she accompanies Maudie to the hospital, holds her, helps her die. Jane Somers undergoes an initiation with complicated stages, from selfishness to empathy, from aversion to connection.

Allison Lurie's *Foreign Affairs* (1984) explores mid-life aging as a question of self-demeaning. The heroine, Vinnie Miner, in this novel is fifty-four years old, small, plain and unmarried. She tries for years to accustom herself to the idea that the rest of her life will be a mere epilogue. Here, she pities herself because of the connection. Self-pity becomes culturally the constructed disease at her mid-life. It's self-pity that prevents Vinnie from noticing that the unsuitable man who courts her is actually in love with her; prevents her from seeing that she loves him and thus prevents her from relishing the one true love affair of life. The experience slowly changes her, however; she acts unselfishly and he tells her that she is a good woman. And for the first time Vinnie almost believes him. She has one moment alone in the Park bench when she feels happy and free. After her lover dies of a heart attack, though, she can convince herself only by logic that he has loved her.

Fear of mid-life aging gives rise to the fear of isolation from the children also. In some of the novels, these heroine's children, so central for so long, are seen to need less care or even to have grown up and left home. In such a situation, it is really difficult for them to release their children. Elizabeth, the daughter of Clarissa Dalloway in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), prefers Doris Kilman to her mother as she was the tutor of Elizabeth. Clarissa fears if her daughter will be in the possession of Doris Kilman. So, she

dislikes Doris Kilman. However, in some of the novels, the heroines are still and central to their own life despite the fear of isolation from their children. Margaret Drabble in *Middle Ground* (1980) puts the heroine, Kate in a "draughty space" to begin with, but shows how her busy life engages and enriches her. By the end she holds a big ragtag party, which her almost adult children help her prepare for. She has the man in the wings to marry her; she takes in strays. She anticipates the future explicitly and says, "Anything is possible, it is all the future. Excitement fills her, excitement, joy, anticipation, apprehension. Something will happen. It is unplanned, unpredicted. Nothing binds her, nothing holds her...She hears her house living. She rises" (*qtd. in Gullette Margaret Morganroth: 95*). Nadine Gordimer's Vera Stark in *None to Accompany Me* (1994) sheds many other accumulations, responsibility for grandchildren, for a house that always felt borrowed.

Memory of youth is also one of the characteristics of mid-life women. As mid-life crisis is the state of mind, mid-life characters recollect their past youth. They frequently compare their past youth with their present lives and thus provoke the different sorts of thoughts. For the exploration of memory, the writers usually use stream of consciousness technique. Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) presents a character, Clarissa Dalloway, whose youth is explored through this technique. Her real identity is discovered when she recollects her lover and childhood friend. Clarissa undergoes the traumas when she finds her different reality, which she thinks will be according to her expectation. She chooses the safer Dalloway, a member of parliament, over the more dashing Peter Walsh, recently returned from India. She wonders if she had done the right thing in choosing the safer Richard Dalloway sacrificing the true love offered by Peter Walsh. She also wonders what her life would have been if she had taken the other path. She feels her true

being is locked up. She doesn't find a route to seek her identity. So, she defines herself by the splendid parties she gives on her husband's behalf.

In the course of her struggle amidst the mid-life crises, she faces the various turmoil. Her turmoil is basically the state of her own mind. She feels her spirit is affected due to the crises brought by her age and the crises that society has endowed for the women. Her social circumstances are also the major cause to bring crises in her mind. These crises affect her soul and Clarissa becomes just the mere puppet in the hand of patriarchal society. As the exploration of her mid-life crisis in *Mrs Dalloway*, the novel presents Clarissa's outer superficiality with the old woman's loneliness in the house opposite to her own 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.

The female protagonist, Clarissa Dalloway, besides her comfortable domestic life as a woman, yearns for an escape from it, for a space of her own and even for loneliness. This is the main conflict run throughout Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*. Clarissa wants to establish her self-identity in the society but social norms and values come before her as obstacles. *Mrs Dalloway* carries out this main theme. Besides this main theme, *Mrs Dalloway* exposes the horror of war and its adverse effects in the mind of characters. Virginia Woolf herself had seen the horror of First World War which broke out in 1914. For Virginia Woolf's sensitive soul, war was a horrible and nerve shattering experience. She was sick and weak, and then she suffered from constant fits of depression. With the outbreak of the Second World War, she ceased her will to live. On March 21, 1941, she committed suicide by drowning herself. Her desire for death can be compared with Clarissa Dalloway, who desires for death too. But Woolf victimizes Septimus Warren Smith, who is Clarissa's double, the other self of Clarissa.

Virginia Woolf underwent the crisis since her mother died. She took her life when she was just beginning her mid-life. She couldn't overcome the constant fits of depression and thus she committed suicide. Clarissa's mental anxieties, in many ways, resemble Woolf's own mental anxieties. Clarissa struggles against these crises to enrich her spiritual freedom. And Clarissa like Woolf undergoes various such crises and fails to overcome them for spiritual freedom.

Apart from these crises, Clarissa also redefines her life, which is superficially a successful one to her. But at the depth, she discovers her life is quite meaningless. She lives a life but she doesn't enjoy it. Something inner hollowness haunts her. She locks herself up alone in the room and ponders over her life. A sort of melancholia surrounds her and she desires death. Concerned about her own aging, she wrestles with the meaning of life and death. "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?" (*Mrs Dalloway*, 7). However, her desire for death is presented through Septimus Warren Smith, who is Clarissa's double. The significance of death is so prominent in *Mrs Dalloway* that it comes at the party as news. Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic theories in his book *In Civilization and Its Discontents* (1961) present the idea of death. He says, "The struggle between Eros (the drive for erotic love) and Thanatos (the appetite for death) are the two forces that dominate human decision-making and action. Without healthy outlets for our own sexual appetites, humanity would fall to war and violence, as Thanatos wins the battle"(5).

Septimus Warren Smith, the victims of horror of war, hates humanity and its false civilization. Overcome by the pretensions of human beings, he threw himself from the window to death. Actually, Clarissa has to commit suicide. But the author, exposing Clarissa's self, in the form of Septimus Warren Smith, makes her live. Clarissa Dalloway

also illustrates Woolf's inner desire for death. At the party, everything seems to be going as planned, until the unwelcome news of Smith's suicide arrives. Clarissa is furious that anyone would dare bring such bad tidings to her gathering. As the night goes on and the hours pass, she continues to think of this man and feels a strange connection to him. "She felt somehow very like him- the young man who had killed himself. She felt glad that he had done it; thrown it away" (*Mrs Dalloway*, 135). Although Mrs Dalloway does not feel any remorse for Septimus Warren Smith the man she never met, she cannot get him out of her mind because of her own preoccupation with mortality. According to Clarissa Dalloway, "Death was defiance. Death was an attempt to communicate; people feeling the impossibility of reaching the centre which, mystically, evaded them. There was an embrace in death" (*Mrs Dalloway*, 134). In this way Clarissa's own suicidal thought reveals a deep longing to defy life. Unable to grasp the meaning of existence, in death, one may refuse to play the game anymore. In this dissertation, mid-life crisis of Clarissa Dalloway along with her struggle against it will be explored to prove her as prominent mid-life female character.

Chapter 2

Mid-life Crisis: Feminist and Psychoanalytical Thinking

Mid-life crisis occurs both for men and women when they enter into middle-age. It brings various types of anxieties to their life. However, anxieties for both men and women differ due to their biological and social difference. Since the topic of this dissertation is mainly focused on the female protagonist, the idea of mid-life crisis of women will be explored through the feminist and psychoanalytical thinking. To understand the mid-life crisis of women, first of all, it is essential to understand the idea of women, their nature, their inner and outer world and their social background.

Feminists think the idea that women are by definition more nurturing, life-giving and less belligerent than men think is a very old idea that such gender distinctions are social, hence subject to change, is much more recent, fragile, and counter-intuitive and contested. The men interpret the role of women within the domestic roles, so that they can get enough space for their self-development. In the name of social norms and values, they deprive the women to get involved into their self-development.

Mid-life Crisis and Self-Conscious women in Late Victorian Period

Until the end of the nineteenth century education for most girls had one end in view- that is domesticity. During the nineteenth century, most women limited themselves to the role of good housewives and mothers. Toward the end of the century, they came to realize that such roles in their society prevented them to involve in their self-development. They gradually realized that such limited roles had brought crises in their mid-life. Thus they felt they couldn't overcome such crises and life-long they had to live in anxieties. Women rich or poor were brought up to believe that their role in life was to be wives and mothers and to serve the family. The girls were taught domestic skills such as sewing and laundry work aimed at making them good housewives and mothers. In an essay "Bread and Roses" Kathy Macafe and Myrna Wood write the status of women as "women, even including those of ruling class are oppressed as women in the sense that their real fulfillment is linked to their role as girlfriend, wife of mother" (*The Vintage Book of Feminism*,37).

After the long struggle and debate towards the end of the nineteenth century women did gain some political power with voting right and become members of local councils, schools and boarding which looks after the poor. They started to handle the important positions such as administering the country's law and working in 'elective office'. The early courageous women worked skillfully in education sector, political

sector and administrative sector. New grounds were being made for women. Politicians as well as other women were working hard to improve the opportunities for better education for women. Campaigns were held against the unfair law; woman like Florence Nightingale was opening up women's opportunity for paid employment by establishing nursing as a respectable profession. And great needs were felt for the middle class women that they must have the choice of future other than marriage. The struggle to win the vote had shown that women were not interested only in domestic or so-called frivolous matters. They were being conscious about their condition and inner urges which was different from the traditional thinking. They were being conscious about their self-development and knew that they could cope with the crises brought by their middle-age.

Many attempts were made towards equal educational opportunities for girls. These attempts provided them to join universities and work in the civil services of professions such as medicine and teaching. Because of these opportunities of further chance to enter in the medical profession as a respective job women also realized their potentialities and tried hard to apply it to make a career in different fields that was completely new for them. On the other side, social thinking about woman was same as before. Though they became educated and conscious about their conditions, they were compelled to remain as an ideal woman and perfect hostess. Hence their consciousness about their roles in the society didn't bring drastic change for their self-development. They tend to live anxious life in their middle-period. In the name of tradition, they were made scapegoat and fully incapable to face the mid-life crises boldly. Moreover, their mid-life crises made them follow the social rules and regulations. Betty Friedan in her essay "*The Feminine Mystique*" correctly explains the woman's condition, in both cases women would be the victims - "Most adjusted to their role and suffered or ignored the

problem that has no name. It can be less painful for a woman not tolerates the strange dissatisfied voice stirring within her" (*The Vintage Book of Feminism*, 61).

Patriarchal Society and Mid-life Women

From century our culture has been patriarchal culture where male has dominant position over every aspect of the word and female has to accept the secondary position assigned by patriarchy. Patriarchal society created the culture in favor of males and against females. As a result, mid-life men possess vigor to face the mid-life crises and thus they were able to face the mid-life crises boldly, whereas patriarchal culture stopped women to be bold and thus women lack the vigor to fight against their anxieties. These anxieties continue till their death, and thus they are the captives of the society. In a patriarchal culture, male defines female as they define nearly everything else. The issue is not only those men perceive women from masculine perspective, but that even the nature of socialization all member of society, including women perceive and directly or often indirectly this has had considerable impact on the structure and quality of society. As a social being, women have most frequently adopted or gained the image of the subject to those institutions, which is not their own. Women are forced to enter into a world of doll and docility, of behaving like a lady, of loving strokes for submission, quiet and gentility, of cutout dolls in wedding gowns. From the very early age women have to inhale an environment that teaches them a vision of femininity so pervasive and complete that it appears real and their own by the time they grow old wise enough and angry enough to discard it. Annett Kolodny in her essay *The New Feminist Criticism* strongly explains:

It is significant, I think, that he stories do not suggest any difficulty for the women in apprehending the men's meanings. On the one hand this simply is not relevant to either plot, and on the other hand, since in each narrative the men clearly control the public realms of discourse, it would of course

have been incumbent upon the women to learn to understand them.

Though masters need not learn the language of their slaves, the reverse is never the case: for survival's sake oppressed of subdominant group always study the nuances of meaning and gesture in those who control them. (*The Vintage Book of Feminism*, 62)

The seed planted in their infancy and constantly tended became so much a part of them that to reject it has almost the force of rejecting themselves. The constant process of the naming of women by patriarchal societies may find different expressions and may vary in intensity and effect but they almost universally recur. Although various hypotheses have been formulated ranging from the scientific to the religious and from the accepting to the vehemently opposed, the origins and causes of women's subordination have never been definitively explained. The masculine images of women and the roles that these images support are constructed so as to create a situation in many ways very convenient for men. The patriarchal definitions of femininity provide the masculine with excellent rationales for the uses to which women have been put as well as potent socio-psychological advantages. The female role of helpmate for example, following 'naturally' from the patriarchal definition of woman's nature and it provides men with tremendous privilege, power and pleasure.

Patriarchal society has exhorted women to be women, remain women and become women- which mean an ideal hostess. 'The female is a female of a certain lack of qualities' said Aristotle, 'who should regard female nature as afflicted with a natural defectiveness' (*Changing Status of Women*, 31). And St. Thomas has pronounced women to be an 'imperfect man' an 'incidental' being. This is symbolized in Genesis, in which all the thinking of human society has based where Eve is depicted as made from what Rousseau called 'a supernumerary bone' of Adam. Thus, humanity is male and male

defines woman not in herself but a relative to him, she is not regarded as an autonomous being. Women have been always defined and differentiated with references to man and not him with reference to her. She is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the subject, he is the Absolute- she is the other. In every sphere of the life the male have displayed their satisfaction in feeling that they are the lords of creation and try to prove women are secondary creatures created to serve men as hostess. As a hostess, they have to look after the family and behave according to the social customs. And they have to play the role of hostess especially at their mid-life. During this period they have to confine themselves within the room, whereas men have advantages have going outside and experience the world according to their own desire.

Role and Responsibility of Middle-aged women as Hostess

In the patriarchy order the image of women like other conceptualizations, has been male created. The judgment of good and bad, like the images themselves are male projections, resting not only on the extent to which any women meets- the specifications of her role requirements or adherence to the standards set for her, but on a particular male's needs and attitudes towards that role configuration at some moment in time. The most praised image of women in patriarchy is especially, sacred like Virgin Mary, a mother of Generations, a keeper of morality. Thus women are charged with the responsibility of maintaining human morality by keeping their own lives 'pure', by investing young with virtue and love and creating a home where it could flourish. One of the major roles especially of middle-aged women as a hostess in the society is to furnish society with a place and experiences apart from the harsh realities of outer work and government. In an essay "Bread and Roses" Kathy and Myrna Wood have written the position of woman as hostess in patriarchy:

A woman is judged as wife and mother the only role she is assigned- according to her ability to maintain stability in the family and to help her family 'adjust' to harsh realities. He therefore transmits the values of hard work and conformity to each generation of workers. It is she who forces her children to stay in school and 'behave' or who urge her husband not risk his job by standing up to boss or going on strike. And responsibility of maintaining human morality by keeping their own lives 'pure', by investing young with virtue and love, and creating a home where it could flourish. One of the major roles of women in the society as a hostess is to furnish society with a place and experiences apart from the harsh realities of work and government. (*The Vintage Book of Feminism, 136*)

The role of women as a keeper of morality in our culture is that women are trained and encouraged to develop the caring or nurturing values and aesthetic sensibilities. From infancy onwards, considerations of beauty, tenderness, warmth, compassion and love have been prescribed to be the special provinces of women. Thus society's motivation is not to make women especially human, but to make them excellent servant. The assigned role of females in patriarchy which in every society includes are playing with dolls, helping mother, getting married, having children, doing house keeping, and so on. Many of these behaviors in their turn from other role configuration, marrying for example, requires that one be a wife, which entails whole set of behaviors. Though the marriage is a social institution, it becomes a catastrophe for women. Women are suppressed in the name of social values. And this suppression in their middle period makes them feel unhappy about their married life. And thus this anxiety grows and brings negative consequences in their life.

For patriarchal society woman and hostess are synonymous term. To be an ideal woman she must be a perfect hostess. All male- identification of ideals of a woman is and ought to be completely defined and understood within their biological capacities. In patriarchy, woman's physical capacity enjoin them into two separate and often conflicting roles, that of procreator mother and sexual partner, The 'good' woman then each in a different sense is she who serves, either in the capacity of excellent mother or of excellent mistress or both. Once Montaigne commented over this situation of woman by saying- "women are not in the wrong when they decline to accept the roles laid down for them since the men make these rules without consulting them. No wonder intrigue and strife abound" (*The Vintage Book of Feminism, 17*).

However, the Mother Nature incarnates the women's most positive image in patriarchy. This lady, charged ostensibly with the care of the young, is the compliment of male power- she taken as the symbol of tenderness, fragility, love, charity, loyalty, submission and sacrifice. She should be the essence of purity, totally absorbed in the activities and qualities of caring, serene and satisfied within her role, placing the needs of her charges above her own, she busies herself with feeding other, watching other, making other happy. All this description of woman shows that women themselves are nothing; they have no identity, and wishes, brain and life. They have been forced to act as an object. In mid-life they look back their pasts but don't find any achievement in their hand except becoming a good hostess.

Motherhood and Mid-life women as Hostess

Feminists believe that motherhood is one of the most important hindrances in the way of women's freedom because women's relationship to motherhood and families associates them with the role of hostess. Women have been historically defined as a mother. Even when women have not become biologically mother, they are expected to

act as 'social mother', selflessly nurturing and caring for others. Indeed motherhood has sometimes been considered a natural aspect of women's lives and women who rejected this notion have been viewed as abnormal, deviant, less than "ideal women" have. Religious ideologies in particular reinforced the view of the women as the mother. Women in the middle period have even greater responsibility to look after their children. This is the period when their children isolate themselves from the parents. Due to the negative evaluation of marital life, even their husbands are less interested to them. And thus it's the period of turmoil for them as they find their own children quite uncaring for them. They think about their past lives and the sacrifices they made for the sake of children. Thus, they find themselves alone and in dilemma what to do next. They realize that their motherhood has not been rewarded. But in recent decades, feminist thinking has challenged the identification of women with motherhood emphasizing that not all women are mothers and some will never be mother. None the less, as with most issues, feminists, especially radical feminists from the early years of the second wave of women's movement argued that "maternity was central to women's oppression because it kept them tight to the home and economically dependent on man" (*Women in Culture*, 227).

In this regard many women from very well to do families explain their dissatisfactions over the status of women as mother in *The Vintage of Feminism* by Schnier as follows:

"The problem is always being the children's mummy or the minister's wife and never being myself." 36)

"She has no identity except as a wife and mother. She does not know who she is herself. She waits all day for husband to come at night to make her feel alive." (64)

In the same way motherhood and ambition are seen as opposing forces. More strongly expressed, a lack of ambition, sacrificial willingness to set personal ambition aside- is still the virtual proof of good mothering. That is why for many women perhaps most, motherhood versus ambitions represents the heart of the feminine dilemma but feminists are not ready to adopt this identification of female. Feminists want to show that she is a person who indeed understands she to be subject (self) not object (other), she respects both her womanhood and her humanity. She takes her direction and definition from values that are her own self- perceived qualities and goals as well as those of other women. She contributes to society that which she takes to be meaningful and does so in her own way. According to Virginia Woolf, motherhood inhibits good fortune for the girls:

Making a fortune and bearing thirteen children- no human being could stand it. Consider the fact, we said, first there are nine months the baby is born. Then the baby is born. Then there are three or four months spent in feeding the baby. After the baby is fed, there are certainly five years spent in playing with the baby. You cannot, it seems late children run about the street. People who have seen them running wild in Russia say that the sight is not pleasant one. People say too, that human nature takes its shape in the years between one and five. If Mrs. Seton, I said had been making money, what sort of memories would you have had of game. (*A Room of One's own, 14*)

Feminist Concept about Mid-life Women as Hostess

Most feminists believe that their culture is a patriarchal culture that is one organized in favor and the interests of men. Men have advantages of going outside and make their career. They have been given the autonomy of handling the important

positions, which many women have been deprived of. Women have to bear the children for the happiness of family. They have to support their husbands in every field being themselves behind the curtain. The popular saying, 'Behind the success of every man, there is the hand of a woman' also proves that they have to act as subsidiary for men's achievement. It has been very rare that the men have ever supported the women for their upliftment. In addition to these, women have to support the men during the middle-period of their life. As men are more prone to mid-life crisis, women have to support men for their mental stability becoming good wife. But mid-life women have nowhere to go. They have to handle themselves and their husbands despite they also undergo the mid-life turmoil. They do not get outlet from these turmoil, whereas men can easily escape them due to the support from every sectors. Women from the very beginning of their life lose the opportunities for their own upliftment. They don't know when their time passed working for the betterment of men. Moreover, they completely lack the opportunities to uplift them by the time they bear children. After their children's birth, they have to devote their time to rear them. And in the mid-life, they have to work as intermediary between their husbands and children. Thus, women have been treated as the machine to produce children. Her pregnancy and its pain are devalued. As Monberg says this in following paragraph quoted in Shirley Ardener's essay *'The Nature of Women in Society'*:

When a man and a woman moved together in marital alliance they (thus) lived on land belonging to the husband of the family. The Bellonese believed such an alliance to produce progeny, not by or because of the man's copulation with the woman, but because the patrilineal ancestors and the deities of the patriline were pleased with the alliance. A woman becomes pregnant because the deities and ancestors of her husband had sent her offspring. If too much time elapsed before pregnancy occurred,

the husband might invoke his ancestors or deities by uttering a short prayer asking them to send a child to his wife. Usually pregnancy occurred after this (*qtd. in Shirley Ardener, 62*).

Many aspects have been invented to marginalize women. From very beginning, they are taught to carry out the household activities and serve the guests in a polite way. In many societies, married women are not allowed to look at their mothers-in-law directly. In Mongolian society, women have to hide themselves when their husbands invite their friends to their house. As Caroline Humphrey has clarified this view in the following paragraph quoted in Shirley Ardener's *'The Nature of Women in Society'*:

When a man invites a friend to share a meal at his house, he knocks on his own door and asks with a loud voice for the women to "make the way". The women then run to hide in dark corners, leaving the courtyard free to be crossed by the stranger (*qtd. in Shirley Ardener, 32*).

Women are muted groups from the very beginning of women's history. They are not allowed to speak frankly about their internal desires. They have to play the submissive role, which the society takes it as a virtue of women. Thomas Hardy, when referring to the heroine of his novel *'Mayor of Casterbridge'*, cogently describes this situation in a following paragraph quoted in Shirley Ardener's *The Nature of Women in Society*:

The finer movement of her nature found scope in discovering to the narrow-lived ones around her, the secret of making limited opportunities enduring; which she deemed to consist in the cunning enlargement, by a species of microscopic treatment, of those minute forms of satisfaction that offer themselves to everybody not in positive pain; which, thus

handled, have much of the same inspiring effect upon life as wider interest cursorily embraced (*qtd. in Shirley Ardener, 29*).

Thus women have been marginalized in this patriarchal culture. Feminism- in its diversity is concerned with the marginalization of all women and their being relegated to a secondary position in the society. In short feminism represents on the important social, economic and aesthetic revolution of modern times. Despite their diversity, feminist generally agree that their goals are to expose patriarchal premises and resulting prejudices, to promote discovery and re-evaluation of traditional female role in the society. Elain Showalter, one of the leading feminists attacks traditional literary history that reduces female only to the position of hostess, whose main duty is to serve men. Showalter's most important contribution has been to describe social context in which women were valued for the work they could produce, the price they could bring, or the services they could render. Kathy and Myrna have rightly said in their essay *Bread and Roses* that:

A woman of any class is expected to sell herself not just her body but her entire life and her talent, interest and dreams-to a man. She is expected to give up friendships, ambitions, pleasure, and moment of time to herself in order to serve his career or his family. In return, she receives not only livelihood but also her identity, her vary right existence, for unless she is a wife of someone, or the mother of someone, a woman is nothing. (*The Vintage Book of Feminism, 130*)

But feminists are not ready to accept this definition of womanhood. They value and prize the fact of women as highly as any man. They are against the cultural image of women as incompetent, petty, irresponsible, or weak only suitable for being hostess. Feminist rejects the traditional attitudes that regard the masculine characteristics of

aggression, power and competition as good and desirable and the traditionally feminine characteristics of compassion, tenderness and compromises as weak and ridiculous. They argue that this belief and attitude regarding women are false or wrong concept based on myth, ignorance and fear.

Patriarchal definition of female as a perfect hostess is a mistaken male perspective, belief and values towards whole female existence. Patriarchal values say-reading and studying are dangerous for women, conducive as wives and helpmates. "Too much of learning", it was said would drain the essence of womanhood. Mathematics and science which are very important source of knowledge are said particularly dangerous for women because they fear that it might rob women of a meek and gentle loveliness. Politics is an arena for which women were supposed to have neither the stomach nor the wit. Such views have functions for denying women the 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 cultural image:

Despite to conform to an ideal and impossible standard, many women go to great length to manipulate and change their faces and bodies. A woman is conditioned to view her face as a mask and her 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 herself.

(Woman in Culture, 129)

The fear of women's involvement in important sectors has made the men invent several domestic works. Women are especially preferred to do handiwork such as

crochet, knitting and embroidery. This is one type of restriction imposed upon women to reduce the time of her exposure to the important sectors. In addition to this, women are diverted from the thinking of something knowledgeable. So they are supposed to handle household work since from their childhood. Becoming one's wife is the complete restriction for women as they have to act according to their husband's desires. They have no time to think over themselves. Caroline Humphrey, during her field research, discovered that young woman has little control over her use of time. She also noted that the young wife:

Was required to rise first in the morning and go to bed last at night, to be always occupied and never be seen to rest, and always to be ready to perform any task required of her. She was subject to an extraordinary number of regulations. A second range of prohibitions forbade the slightest hint of her sexuality. (*qtd. in Shirley Ardener, 17*).

The society is in the grip of the male. It is male who decides the destiny for women. They define the women from their perspectives so as to bring the advantages to their own favor. They have put the different facts about the women's biology to make them passive and meek. They have stated that the male sex drive is stronger than the female; women are described as interested in sex for procreation more than recreation. Claye and Bourne have expressed this view in *British Obstetric and Gynecological Practice*:

Femininity tends to be passive and receptive, masculinity to be more active, restless, anxious for repeated demonstration of potency, requiring worldly success and its external signs. Childbirth should be the crowning fulfillment of a woman's sexual development; her physical and psychological destinies have been achieved (*qtd. in Shirley Ardener, 169*).

Men do not think what the women really want. It's because they see the world through the eyes of father. They do not understand the emotional experiences of women. Women have to undergo the physical and emotional pain during the pregnancy and child-birth but it has been underestimated in the name of 'Childbirth Revolution'. This 'Childbirth Revolution' has been brought out by the refined technology for monitoring foetal well-being, speed up labour and pain reducing procedures. Through these procedures, men have taken the credits of producing the human species. The following extract from the article published on *Sunday Times Weekly Review* justifies this point:

Men, it seems, have finally conquered the most essentially female function of all: the reproduction of our species. Babies can now be delivered to order on a predetermined day and labour can be virtually pain free. This is the childbirth revolution. But is it the kind of revolution women really want? (*qtd. in Shirley Ardener, 171*).

Feminists believe that middle-period is the complete restrictions for women to struggle for their freedom. Family, society and child-birth become the hindrances for their freedom. These hindrances cause the vacuity in their heart. They feel they have not been doing for their own and they are far behind their real desires. And thus, they are victimized by the violent frustrations and compelled to live with these anxieties for the rest of their lives.

Mid-life as a Cultural Notion

From very beginning of the civilization, women have been treated as hostess in the society. By the time they enter the middle-age, they have to be perfect as hostess. As a hostess, they have to confine themselves within the boundary of family and social conventions. Since their health degrades in their mid-life, they cannot go out the family as they desire. Culturally, mid-life women are taken as meek creatures. Our culture

makes the mid-life as something very immobile. Thus, it has been deeply rooted in the mind of the people and they take mid-life period as something that stops them from going into the transformation stage. And for the women's condition, it is worse than the men. Hence, Women resist themselves from struggling against the mid-life crises and act according to the culture, which does not give them the freedom to lead their life towards the positive paths. They take mid-life as their hindrances of their progress as the culture has habituated them to think like that. Therefore, our cultural notion is responsible to cage the women within the four walls of the room.

Baby boys and girls are treated differently from the day they are born. From clothing and toys to the way they are spoken to and touched. Like female infants and toddlers, girls are often treated as though they are fragile and delicate than boys. Mother also communicates verbally more with their sons than their daughters. Boys are often given freedom to explore their physical environment at a younger age than are girls. The toys that parents provide for their children are also significant influences on gender-differentiated development. Boys are usually given toys like trucks, guns and building sets that encourage activity and aggression, where as girls are typically given toys like dolls and playhouses that encourage more quiet, domestic play and traits such as creativity, nurturance, and attractiveness. This kind of beginning prepares them for the separate roles as adults. Teachers also tend to encourage boys to speak more often and tolerate their noisy disruptive behaviors. Girls are expected to have attractive personalities and appearances with skilled in domestic world. These gender distinctions carry forward into occupation, as males are encouraged to find carrier involving competitiveness and achievement oriented skills, while females are encouraged into the so-called helping professions such as salesgirl, secretaries, waitress, air hostess etc. As Renzetti and Curran explain in the essay "*Cultural Construction of Gender*":

Little boys are taught independence, problem solving abilities, assertiveness and curiosity about their environment skills that are highly valued in our society. In contrast, little girls are taught dependent, passivity and domesticity- traits that our society devalues. (*Women in Culture, 16*)

Many different explanations have been given by males in support of women's secondary social status. As a feminist philosopher, Simone de Beauvoir stated "legislator, priest, philosophers, writers and scientists have striven to show that the subordinate position of women is willed in heaven and advantageous on earth. The religion invented by men reflects this wish for domination" (*The Second Sex, 16*). Women are universally subordinated to men because females are identified with nature and males are with culture. Because of this gender ideology women are relegated to home and to the roles of wives and mothers and it has remained the prevailing cultural ideals for many. Women's body and its functions place her in social roles that in turn, are considered to be at a lower order of the cultural process than men's that is a hostess. For it would seem that, as a conscious human and member of culture's argument and has reached culture's conclusion along with man. As De Beauvoir puts in:

For she, too, is an existent, she feels the urged to surpass, and project is not mere repetition but transcendence towards a different future- in her heart of hearts she finds confirmation of the masculine pretensions. She joins the man in the festival that celebrates the successes and victories of males. Her misfortune is to have been biologically destined for the repletion of life, when even in her own life does not carry within itself its reasons for being reasons that are important than life itself. (*The Second Sex, 32*)

In other words, women's consciousness- her membership as it were in culture- is evidence in part by the very fact that she accepts her own devaluation and takes culture's point of view as true- that is women as a hostess. Since, motherhood has been regarded as one of the most praised images of women she has to be involved with child oriented activities which confined her to the domestic family group. There is a concept about women that- 'women's place is in the home,' John Berge explains these images accompanying women- as they are taught from the early age (childhood) to see themselves as other sees them. Women are usually concerned about their appearances because how she appears to others and ultimately how she appears to man, is of a crucial importance for what is normally thought of as the success in her life" (*Women in Culture*, 91).

But for the modern women it is no longer possible to ignore the voice, dismiss this desperate search for their own world and identity. So many women from centuries and still have been trying to deny this dissatisfied voice within themselves in the name of society because it does not fit the pretty picture of femininity that the social exports have given them. This kind of situation creates split in the women's personality. Betty Friedan has rightly depicted the very dictum of a house wife's situation in her essay *The Feminine Mystique* that:

I have tried everything women are supposed to do- hobbies, gardening, pickling, canning, and being very social with my neighbors, joining committees, running PTA teas. I can do it all and I like it but it does not leave you anything to think about- any feeling of who you are. I never had any career ambition. I loved the kids and Bob and my home. There's no problem you can even put to. But I am desperate. I begin to feel I have no

personality. I am a server of food and a putter on pants and a bed maker.
(The Vintage Book of Feminism, 56).

This feeling is the feeling of woman, her previous ambitions are just the notions of society which she had had to adopt but at this stage, she could not resist her real self who is desperate to find out her identity.

Mid-life Crisis through Stream of Consciousness

Mid-life crisis is more the state of mind than the state of the body. It occurs when one enters the middle age. Once the people enter into this period, they begin to evaluate their lives. They think over their pasts and compare them with their present lives. Till this period, they experience several ups and downs of life. These ups and downs have very strong influence on their mind, and due to this influence of mind, they undergo the anxieties, which they have to fight against to transit for the right adjustment. Very few people are able to handle the crisis effectively, while the many people fail and the failure leads them to the different sorts of worse consequences. Actually, the people are what they think. Therefore, their thinking has to be analyzed through psychological aspects. A central issue in the lives of young adults is the anxiety and anticipation of a mid-life crisis as they enter the middle-adulthood. In the research of middle-aged men and women, Daniel Levinson argued that this transition is for many a crisis. Specifically, he argued the idea that this crisis was a time of struggle and a feeling of being struck down by life (Myers 196).

Mid-life crisis, as a fact and myth, is related with the psychology of a person. As a myth creates a strong idea of the perception of mid-life crisis, it has the deep effect on the mind of the people. The fact of mid-life crisis also haunts the people in the different stages of the life. Due to this effect, people's perception of the world and their relation to it is in accordance to it, and thus, we can notice the personalities of them. Hence, mid-life

crisis will be better clarified from the psychological point of view. Most modern writers explore the psychology of the characters through the "stream of consciousness" technique. This dissertation also explores mid-life crisis in relation to psychology through "stream of consciousness".

The term "stream of consciousness" was first coined by William James in *The Principles of Psychology* (1890). It gained popularity in the area of psychology as well as in literature. Many psychologists, individually or collectively, worked upon the nature and the process of the stream of consciousness. In the field of literature it spread like an epidemic and developed as a mode of narration. The 'stream of consciousness' as developed as a technique in literature, is the depiction of the interior world of man, where man's consciousness, sub-consciousness, and unconsciousness work. The fantasies, images, recollections, sensory perceptions, nocturnal dreams, ego, plans, and wishes take place in different levels. These intermingle in the pre-speech level, and are expressed by means of interior monologues, images, dreams and sensory perceptions.

After William James, Freud, Adler, Jung, Tolman, Dr. Wilder Penfield, and many other groups and schools of psychology experimented upon the process of the stream of consciousness. In literature the great symbolist Edourd Dujardin used the 'stream of consciousness technique' in his novel *Les Lauriers Sont Coupes* after the coinage of the term. The same technique was adopted by Henry James, James Joyce, Marcel Proust, Virginia Woolf, Dorothy Richardson, Katherine Mansfield and some other novelists of the 40s and 50s. This term was introduced into literary criticisms by May Sinclair, who in her article on Dorothy Richardson in the 'Egoist' of April 1918 wrote. "There is no drama, no situations no set scene. Nothing happens. It is just life going on and on. It is Miriam's stream of consciousness, going on and on" (Steinberg 123).

Psychological Theories: William James to Carl Gustav Jung

Man's mind is a vast sea where the ideas, feelings, thoughts, images and various types of perceptions are surging whether the man is awake or asleep. The mind is working even at the time of sound sleep. Thoughts and dreams so not move away from one's mind even if they are forgotten. They are restored at different levels of which are the stores of all crude, chaotic, oblivious and inexpressible thoughts. In order to understand the nature and the process of consciousness, we have to go through the theories of different outstanding psychologists.

William James

William James who first coined 'stream of consciousness' as a phrase has developed a very practical conception of the process of thought and consciousness. In his opinion, "Consciousness, from our natal day, is of a teeming multiplicity of objects and relations, and what we call simple sensations are results of discriminative attention, pushed often to a very high degree" (Steinberg 41).

Sensations are the first and simplest things to take up in psychology. The first thing is that the fact of thinking is to be analyzed, because sensations are the elements of thinking. "The first fact for us, then, as psychologists, is that thinking of some sort goes on" (Steinberg 42). That's why the minimum assumption of this fact is that the thought goes on.

William James gives five important characteristics about how thought goes on.

1. Every thought tends to be part of a personal consciousness.
2. Within each personal consciousness thought is always changing.
3. Within each personal consciousness thought is sensibly continuous.
4. It always appears to deal with objects independent of itself.

5. It is interested in some parts of these objects to the exclusion of others, and welcomes or rejects- chooses from among them, in a word-all the while. (Steinberg 42)

From the above five points we have come to know that the personal consciousness is always continuous and changing. On the one hand the continuity of thought is going on and it is always changing on the other. The science of the mind has come to the point to say, whether it is in the awakesness or in sleep, "Some kind of consciousness is always going on" (Steinberg 42).

There is stream, a succession of states, or waves, or fields (or whatever you please to call them), of knowledge, of feeling, of desire, of deliberation, etc. that constantly pass and repass, and that constitute our inner life. (Steinberg 43)

There are concrete and complex fields of consciousness which contain sensations of the bodies and objects around us. Past memories, distant thoughts, feelings of satisfactions and dissatisfactions, desires, emotions and determinations of the will are also combined in them.

In the explanatory level it is very difficult to say about the cause and position of our successive fields of consciousness and about the precise inner constitution. Our past experience and education determine our brain states and their special forms which are accompanied by our successive fields of consciousness.

In the field of consciousness, there are states of sensations and memories shifting to follow one another. "But around the sensation, if one considers carefully, there will always be some figure of thought or will, and around the memory some margin or penumbra of emotion or sensation" (Steinberg 44).

In the field of consciousness, "The sensations are the centre or focus, the thoughts and feelings the margin." (Steinberg 44). The focus and margin sometimes change turn by turn, and sometimes meet at one point and change places. Each field has a practical unity for its possessor.

Some psychologists call the stream of consciousness as the elementary psychic particles or atoms of 'mind stuff'. William James mentions that the same sensation of an object cannot be experienced twice or thrice. When we experience the first sensation of an object and when we try to have the same sensation once more, the past sensations have already passed and repassed. New sensations arise by then, or the same kind of sensation, not the same, can be had in the diminished degree. That is to say our mental experience of the world has already been enriched. The idea of diminishing sensation is very similar to the idea of the diminishing marginal utility.

William James gives the example of optical sensation, and says that when light is exposed to the eye sight for the first time, we have the greatest sensation of light but our sensibility gradually goes down. If we want the same sensation again, our brain should remain unmodified.

The core point of William James on consciousness is that thought belonging to personal consciousness is always moving and continuous. Continuity means two things:

That even when there is a time gap, the consciousness after it as if it belonged together with the consciousness before it, as another part of the same self. (2) That the changes from one moment to another in the quality of consciousness are never absolutely abrupt (Lal 1).

Whatever interruption or intervention there is the continuity of self and consciousness cannot be broken at all. There are no 'cracks' and 'breaks'. Even when there is no break up in the flow of consciousness, there

is slow as well as fast movement. So the movement is not in the same speed. James calls the resting places of thoughts, - 'substantive parts' and the paces of flight- 'the transitive parts'.

In James' view the regions of consciousness can be divided in five, "1. Mental activities. 2. Regions of the spirit 3. A self or ego function 4. Feeling or thought 5. Something that does not exist" (Pope and Singer 12).

In the personal consciousness thought is always changing. A feeling of 'of' 'if' 'but' 'blue' and 'cold' goes continuously dealing with the independent objects.

Jack R. Strange says that the stream according to James is a temporal one but not spatial.

Mental activities occur continuously from moment to moment. James is not concerned with the metaphysical question of a concrete place where the activities occur, as in a 'soul' or a 'mind' or a 'consciousness' (Pope and Singer 13).

James established the main stream of the American functional cognitive psychology of consciousness in which,

Consciousness is thought, which includes all the mental activities, such as feelings, imagining, reasoning, knowing, perceiving, conceiving, remembering and all the rest. Consciousness, according to him, is not a substance, nor a place, nor anything except a stream of thought that results from pure experiencing. (Pope and Singer 150).

Hence, William James's idea of 'stream of consciousness' is closely related with mid-life crisis. Mid-life crisis is the state of mind; therefore, past memory and its impression on the mind determine the personality or characteristics of people. The reflection of conscious state of mind reveals the characters of people. They perceive the

sensations from the objects and in relation to them, and thus, they leave the indelible marks on the mind of the people. And in the mid-life period, people undergo the crises which are the manifestations of the states of conscious and unconscious mind. Thus, 'stream of consciousness' helps to explore the mid-life crises and their impact upon the lives of people. It also helps to read the psychology of a person. And it's the major reason; the modern writers often deal with the mid-life crises of their prominent characters.

Henry Bergson

Bergson's theory of consciousness and the philosophy of psychological time also keep significance in the sense of understanding reality and duration of time sequence. In his essay *Understanding Reality*, he says that knowing things has two different but profound ways.

The first implies that we move round the object, the second that we enter into it. The first depends on the point of view at which we are placed and on the symbols by which we express ourselves. The second neither depends on a point of view nor relies on any symbol. The first kind of knowledge may be said to stop at the relative; the second in those cases where it is possible to attain the absolute. (Steinberg 51)

Thinking of an object in relation to other things and its circumstance come under the relative knowledge where as thinking of the structure and the mechanism of the object come under the absolute knowledge. In these talks, Bergson realizes that personal consciousness is an important thing when a writer makes his hero do, speak and act as much as he pleases, these all thing are indivisible from his personal consciousness. Bergson further admits, "Out of that indivisible feeling as from a spring, all the words,

gestures, and actions of the man would appear to me to follow naturally" (Pope and Singer 51).

In order to understand the reality, symbols and point of view are necessary but for gaining the inner knowledge they cannot help. For this fact, Bergson's relative and absolute knowledge are preferably referred.

Description, history and analysis leave me here in the relative.

Coincidence with the person himself would alone give me the absolute. It is in this sense, and in this sense only, that 'absolute' is synonymous with 'perfection'. (Steinberg 52)

It can be emphasizing that only the relative knowledge can be expressed in terms of symbols and point of view. The relative knowledge is the representation or the translation of the original as well as perfect. The absolute knowledge is infinite which moves towards the direction of endlessness:

An absolute could only be given in an intuition, whilst everything else falls within the province of analysis. By intuition is meant the kind of sympathy by which one places oneself within an object in order to coincide with what is unique in it and consequently inexpressible.

(Steinberg 53)

From this fact it has been clear that analysis is a translation; a development into symbolism and a representation taken from successive view. But intuition is something which is different. Analysis implies relative knowledge whereas intuition implies absolute knowledge. The relative understanding proceeds from the surface or axes or from outside by means of analysis, translations, symbols or the representation of the point of view. The absolute knowledge proceeds from the core to the outer surface by means of intuition. There will be no expression, translation or symbolic representation at all.

There is one reality, at least, which we all seize from within, by intuition and not by simple analysis. It is our own personality in its flowing time-our self which endures. We may sympathize intellectually with nothing else, but we certainly sympathize with our own selves. (Steinberg 53)

Bergson very interestingly compares our inner life with an unrolling coil and everybody feels that he is gradually coming to the end of the role. To live is to say to grow old. The continual rolling up like a thread on a ball is very like our past following us swelling with the present. As a result, consciousness means memory.

But actually it is neither an unrolling nor a rolling up, for these two similes evoke the idea of lines and surfaces whose parts are homogeneous and superposable on one another. (Steinberg 54)

Bergson comes ahead to say that there are no two identical moments in one's life. The second moment comes over the first. If one experiences two identical moments, there will be consciousness without memory. There are shades and states in one's life and there are a series of gradual changes, the changes are invisible and indivisible like tracing a line on a paper without stopping. If the work of tracing is stopped, it will be divisible and it won't be a matter of inner life. Even then, there is moment as well as duration in consciousness which passes from one shade to another.

Bergson's statement would be more contextual to quote, "The inner life is all this at once: variety of qualities, continuity of progress, and unity of direction. It cannot be represented by images" (Steinberg 56).

Neither concepts nor images can help a man to understand the reality of the inner life. "If a man is incapable of getting for himself the intuition of the constitutive duration of his own being, nothing will ever give it to him, concepts no more than images" (Steinberg 56).

Bergson gives a clear concept of duration in his article 'Duration'. He at first tells us about the importance and the way of existence. The existence of oneself is perceived from the intuition. To pass from one state to another by perceiving whether oneself is feeling cold or warm or hungry or sad is a kind of consciousness of existence. One is conscious of what is happening around the self, on the course of perceiving, the existence of the self is the core point of consciousness. However, there is duration in this perception. This perception is internal and profound. There are changes from state to state.

Sensations, feelings, volitions, ideas, - such as the changes into which my existence is divided and which color it turns. I change, then, without ceasing. But there is not saying enough. Change is far more radical than we are at first inclined to suppose. (Steinberg 56)

If the mental state varies, its duration will cease to flow and there will be no idea or feeling or volition. Similarly, in visualizing the perception of motionless object, the internal state remains the same and stable. There will be no change in perception. So there will be no duration at all. But the degree of vision changes from the previous one. It comes to one's memory. The memory conveys something of the past into the present. The mental state is like a time-road and the memory goes on increasing and rolling upon it like a snowball. There is some difference between the visual perception and other internal states. Some states such as sensations, feelings, desires etc. are more deeply internal than the states which come from the visual perception. But every vision or perception from the new attitude, new direction to the body or attention will have an impression of the continuous change. "The truth is that we change without ceasing, and that the state itself is nothing but change (Steinberg 57).

Whether it is passing state or anything, the transition is continuous. Even when we fix our attention to a series of separate act, we perceive separate steps, and there is only a gentle slope. It is quite unpredictable to say what things come in our mind and what things do not. Thousands of incidents come from feeling, thinking and willing. They look like discontinuous, but they are continuous indeed. Our psychic life is like a passage and the states enter into it. As soon as they enter, they begin to move in a continuous flow. "They are the beats of the drum which break forth here there in the symphony"(Steinberg 57). There is continuity as well as duration. There is a gap too.

"Now, states thus defined cannot be regarded as distinct elements. They continue each other in an endless flow" (Steinberg 57).

Any artificial separation or distinction won't be successful. It will be merely 'a formless ego'. It will rather reunite them in a flux. The flux of states can be compared with the beads of a necklace which are systematically arranged side by side. They are separate and continuous. The beads of a neck-lace are the symbols to place the clean out states side by side where there is continuity and gap too.

Duration is the continuous progress of the past which grows into the future and which swells as it advances. And as the past grows without ceasing, there is no limit to its preservation. (Steinberg 58)

To put or prove 'memory' as a faculty or a drawer or a register is a vain practice because the piling up of the past does not occur symmetrically but it goes on without relaxation. The memories are like messengers from the unconscious, and in memory our past remains present to us.

Our consciousness cannot go through the same state twice. The same incident or circumstance of the past may again come into the memory but there will arise a new moment in the history. The repeated state is superficially identical with another but that is

not the same in reality. There is no likelihood of its full likeness with another.

Consciousness is our personality.

Thus, our personality pools, grows and ripens without ceasing. Each of its moments is something new added to what was before. We may go further: it is not only something new, but something unforeseeable. (Steinberg 59)

The present state of one can be explained by the immediate previous state and action. Foreseeing purely is not possible. It is only possible from the past experiences and imaginations, or all the more from the past perceptions. The thing which is never perceived before is not foreseeable.

Bergson draws an example and says that an artist can explain the features of the model that he has made but he himself cannot accurately foresee what sort of portrait that would be like. As the portrait is modified from the influence of one's other works, "Each of our states, at the moment of its issue, modifies our personality, being indeed the new form that we are just assuming. This creation of self by self is the more complete; the more one reasons on what one does" (Steinberg 60).

The reasons cannot be explained from outside because they are different from person to person in some causes, and at the same time in some other cases they will be the same. So they should be perceived, understood and explained from inside. "Each must solve them from within, on his own account" (Steinberg 60).

In the course of finding out the meaning of 'existence' from consciousness, "We find that, for a conscious being, to exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly" (Steinberg 60).

Bergson is revolutionary philosopher and he replaces the old philosophy with his new time-philosophy. The 'non-temporal' values are replaced by the 'durational', and 'static values' are replaced by 'motion and flux.' There is a flow of reality which is

understood only by intuition and sympathy. The reality is the real duration which is 'time perceived as indivisible.' The relation of the past with the present is that the present always tends to penetrate into the past.

Bergson's philosophical time or inner time is opposite to the mechanical or clock time. It is elastic which prolongs the past into the present and future. It is one unbreakable and unified whole (Lal 6).

The inner duration or the inner time is the representation of the inner life. Moreover, it is the inner life itself which is perceived by intuition. The mental states- sensations, feelings, desires, memories and ideas build the personality. This personality is always dynamic- changing, evolving and growing. The personality is like a melody and it is the continuous melody of inner life.

Bergson in his 'creative mind' says:

The continuous melody of inner life is a melody which is going on and will go on indivisible from the beginning to the end of our conscious existence. (Lal 7).

In Bergson's opinion, memories are of two types. The involuntary memories are uncontrolled, crude and not guided by reasons. They work as the erratic way where as the voluntary memories are guided by intellect, reason and experience.

Bergson's conception is very important to understand the stream of consciousness by means of time, duration, memory, intuition and personality. In this regard, mid-life crisis can be understood in relation to them. As mid-life crisis occurs at the middle period of life, the people undergo to recollect their past deeds; they have split personalities; and they judge the other people through their slight behaviors. Their mid-life activities reflect the behaviors which give rise to the crises and these crises become responsible for their transformation which can be positive or negative.

Sigmund Freud

In his essay 'Free Association', Freud asks someone to surrender himself to free association of thoughts while keeping an idea in mind as a starting point. There is an attitude of the attention rather than the reflection. Whether it is easy or difficult, there we find the real freedom of thought. If one is asked to say something for example a number or a name, he may say something which is more arbitrary than determined. That is to say our most inner and most unconscious forces have already determined what is to be said.

By some experiments a series of random thoughts are produced. The first thought was free but the latter had a link. Freud says,

The associations to numbers chosen at random are perhaps the most convincing; they run off so quickly and proceed with such incredible certainty to a hidden goal that the effect is really staggering. (Steinberg 46)

Freud used to treat people psychologically who were mentally sick. On the course, he met a young man who was badly disturbed by the name of the girls and women. The name came to his mind so frequently that he did not actually know who they were and why they came. But it happened that they came. Freud gave him a large choice to produce one of the names in front of him. The young man said that it was 'albino' which was good and delightful song. The young man felt delighted as if he had heard the song sometime. He was charmed by the tune that he whistled. From this fact Freud came to conclusion "In the constitution of every mind, there is a feminine part. So it was the young man himself who was this 'Alien'. When the feminine part becomes active, man suffers from the tensions of the girls and women. (Steinberg 46-47).

There is a link continued and prolonged from the starting point in the unconscious level. The things are determined and they form a part of a connected whole. They depend

upon the initial idea. Mostly, whatever a man thinks, it has some connection or a link to some idea that he had had in the past. This idea of 'link' has a very important role in the history of psychoanalysis. It keeps significance the idea of stream of consciousness to show how things crop up from the very deep level. The things bubble to the stream of consciousness from the unconscious level. So the unconscious level is as fertile as to let the things sprout to the stream of consciousness.

Freud's conception of 'Free Association' delineates the way of sexuality. So psycho-analysis is very important to find the main causes of neurosis and sexual distraction. Freud was in favor of treating hysteria by means of hypnotism but later he gave it up due to some difficulties.

Freud's psychological treatment by means of 'free association' is a very practical one. In this method, the patient would tell him all his pleasant and unpleasant thoughts. So one would be able to find out the patient's ailments.

By analyzing dreams, Freud tried to find out the things which the patients have been concealing. The hidden desires and thoughts would be reflected in dream.

The analysis of dream is also very helpful to find out the cause of neurosis and sickness. Moreover, the hidden sexuality can easily be traced out from dreams. In Freud's conception our experiences come out as the visual images in dreams. They are disorderly formed in the unconscious level and the dreams present the distorted forms of our ideas in the systematic order. Some of our ideas are latent and some are manifested. That's why some ideas cannot be traced out. Some dreams are also forgotten.

There is also the process of censorship. In this connection Freud says:

Wherever there are gaps in the manifest dreams, we know that censorship is responsible; and we should go further and recognize that whatever amongst other more clearly defined elements, one appears, which is

fainter, more definite and more dubious in recollection, it is an evidence of the work of the censorship. (Lal 9)

In the inner life man has a pleasure- seeking tendency and he chooses the objects of sex which may be incestuous, may be between father and daughter or mother and son or brother and sister and so on. They all appear in distorted forms in dream.

Dreams can be analyzed by means of symbols. Male sexual objects represent the things which are erectable like dagger, knives, poles, sticks, etc. whereas women sexual feeling or genitalia appears as the thing which can contain or enclose. The things are like holes, rooms, pockets, etc. Freud says that parents appear as emperor and empress, king and queen or other exalted personages in the children's dreams. Sometimes the dream attitude is highly dutiful and sometimes the children and younger brothers and sisters are less tenderly treated.

Dreams for children are usually wish fulfillment. The children, dream for the fulfillment of their wishes that they have thought to have in reality. Sometimes the wishes are partially fulfilled in the dreams. If they are passing through some anxiety, they wake up before the fulfillment of the wish. Similarly, sometimes the very hidden thoughts are revealed in dreams. The incestuous commitment or the death wish of itself or the death of parents appears in dreams that come from the deeper and more unconscious level. Unconsciously these things are carried on from the very early life of the person.

Freud tried to treat the obsession of neurosis and hysteria. The obsession neurosis is a very dangerous disease in which the patient, on the one hand, realizes that this habit is bad but he cannot easily give it up. The firmly formed bad habits tire him out again and again however; they have been the part of his life. In order to treat these diseases all facts should be brought out from the core of the unconscious level to conscious.

Freud tried to conceptualize that consciousness is connected with the workings of the central nervous system. In his words "Consciousness is the subjective side of a part of the physical processes in the neurotic system- namely of the perceptual process." (Pope and Singer 20)

Freud thought that it is not the whole apparatus. His theory is based on the psychological parallelism consisting the elements of double aspects. In his theory 'libido' is the physical sexual energy which is different from the real physical energy, where there is no reconciliation between the two.

In Freud's theory unconsciousness plays a much more important role than consciousness. He says,

Unconsciousness is a regular inevitable phase in the processes constituting our mental activity; every mental act begins as an unconsciousness one and it may either remain so or go on developing into consciousness, according to as it meets with resistance or not. (Pope and Singer 20)

The post- hypnotic suggestions and the analysis of hysterics are the main points of Freud's experiments of the unconsciousness. The unconscious processes have pleasure-seeking principle of lust-unlust, and it wants to fulfill its needs anyway. The external reality is linked with it but the thought of reality develops in the unconscious level. It is implied by the term- 'pleasure principle' and ' reality principle'. The unconsciousness only knows that something brings pleasure and some other causes pain. Freud says,

The increase significance of the external reality heightened the significance also of the sense-organs directed towards that outer world, and of the consciousness attached to them; the later how learned to comprehend the quantities of sense in addition to the qualities of pleasure

and pain which hitherto had alone been of interest to it. (Pope and Singer 21)

In the reality principle there is not a flow of energy outward unless the object is gained. The consciousness knows it only when it is given additional psychic energy.

There is a process of censorship of the thoughts to come to the consciousness from the unconsciousness. The interior form of psyche is termed as 'Id' by Freud which is defined as 'inner instinct' also. This 'Id' consists of all the mixed desire destructiveness and sexual energy also. The sexual energy is also separately termed as 'Libido'. This 'Libido' keeps the significance in Freudian psychology.

Ego which works as a filter for the thoughts is partly conscious and partly unconscious in itself. The sex energy is much more powerful than any instinct or desires. It cannot be overwhelmed by 'ego instinct'.

This sexual energy is more powerful even than hunger and thirst. 'Libido' instinct, if replaced by the 'ego instinct' leads a man to narcissism or feeling of homosexuality. On this context Freud says:

That homosexuality relates to the sexual characteristics appear blurred so that the sexual distinction is difficult especially on an anatomical basis.

The genitals of such persons unite the male and female characteristics (hermaphroditism). In rare cases both parts of the sexual apparatus are well developed. (Lal 12)

The infantile sexuality has very peculiar characteristics. Thumb-sucking, eating and shitting up provide the children sexual pleasures. In daydreams or phantasies the sexual desires are satisfied, and the suppressed desires get chance to take place. The unconsciousness can only be represented by symptoms and symbols.

These all show how wide the inner world of the man is. So man's unconscious mental activity is also very important. The sexual instinct, which is very powerful, cannot be suppressed easily. The suppressed thoughts take place in dreams and daydreams. Committing incestuous crime is a very hidden thought. It is also revealed in dreams. The very unconscious thoughts appear in dreams as visual images in the distorted forms.

Freud, in his psychological theory, deals with the main part of 'the stream of consciousness'. Dreams, daydreams, ego sexual desires are all that take place in the conscious and unconscious level. They all come under 'the stream of consciousness'. In this regard, people's unfulfilled desires deposited in the unconscious level give rise to the anxieties. During the middle-period, they have immense such desires, and thus they are more likely to face the crises. Actually these crises to several extents are the products of unconscious state of the mind. And thus, we find the people more disturbed and in the state of neurosis. They show the activities of unconscious state in the symbolic way. Even people's behaviors in connection to mid-life crisis reflect the distorted actions and speech.

Carl Gustav Jung

In the study of psycho-analysis and stream of consciousness, the theory of Carl Gustav Jung is even more interesting and important. In the beginning he worked with Freud, but later he propounded his own theory 'Analytical Psychology'. Freud's theory mostly deals with sex and neurosis. Therefore, it is incomplete and lopsided in Jung's opinion. Jung analyses man's psychic life in the following way.

1. Ego
2. The area of consciousness
3. Sphere of personal unconsciousness
4. Sphere of collective unconsciousness (Lal 18).

In the theory of C.G. Jung the area of consciousness and unconsciousness in one's psyche is depicted. The area of consciousness is like a small island in the ocean of unconsciousness and there is 'ego' in the centre of it. Ego always tries to make a link with the outside world. Ego and consciousness are surrounded by the sphere of personal unconsciousness which is also surrounded by the sphere of collective unconsciousness. This theory deals with the existence of the total brain structure of all animals (Lal 18).

The shifting of one generation to another is simply a step in the existence of species. Further Jung says,

If it were permissible to personify the unconscious, we might call it a collective human being combining the characteristics of both sexes. Transcending youth and age, birth and death, and from having at this command a human experience of one to two million years is almost immortal. (D.K. Lal 18)

The area of collective unconsciousness deals with the emotion on the one hand and it has neuroses, psychoses, visions and hallucinations which are concealed from the day of light on the other.

According to Jung every psychic structure has thinking, feeling, intuition, and sensation.

Through thinking we seek adjustment with the external world. Through feeling we understand the world through the concepts which are agreeable and disagreeable. Through sensation, the object is perceived as it is, and the percipient mind comes to know the entire historical details, but in intuition there is a perception of things. (Lal 19)

Thinking is opposite to feeling and intuition is opposite to sensation, and sometimes they are complementary to each other. Thinking and feeling have extrovert

characters whereas sensation and intuition have introvert characters. People who are extrovert and introvert in characters feel difficulties to solve the family or other problems easily. They bear neurosis in them. C.G. Jung believes that man's unconsciousness is more or less revealed through dreams, complexes and other symptoms.

Dr. Jonalde Jacobi in his book 'The psychology of C.G. Jung' writes,

Complexes are psychological part split off from the personality, groups of psychic content isolated from consciousness functioning arbitrarily, leading thus a life of their own in the dark sphere of unconscious, whence they can at every moment hinder of further conscious act. (Lal 19).

C.G. Jung strongly believes that both consciousness and unconsciousness are revealed in dreams. Daydreams and phantasies also appear in the nocturnal dreams. But what is more important is that the unconscious is very strong in the nocturnal dream rather than conscious.

For the study of psyche mythology is important. Mythology is inculcated in one's mind which is archetypal. In this context, Jacobi supports C.G. Jung and says,

Archetypes are self portraits of the instinct in the psyche as psychological processes transformed into pictures as primal patterns of human behavior. (Lal 20-21).

The important thing is that the language of the unconscious is a picture language where archetypes appear in the symbolic form of pictures. The archetypal images of the enrooted mythology and traditional stories become the subject matter even of the collective unconscious.

Supporting the idea of C.G. Jung, Jacobi says that the creative artist,

Speaks primordial images, speaks as with a thousand tongues he grips and overpowers, and at the same time, he elevates that which it treats out of

individual and transitory into the sphere of eternal, he exalts the personal lot to the lot of man therewith he releases in us to all those helpful forces that have ever enabled humanity to rescue itself from whatever distress and to live through the longest night. (Lal 21)

We are mainly concerned with consciousness and unconsciousness in the course of dealing with the stream of consciousness. From unconsciousness to consciousness we have thinking, feeling, intuition, perception, sensation, emotion, sexual desire, ego, superiority, inferiority, phantasies, nocturnal dream, knowledge, wisdom, images, language, etc.

The area of unconsciousness is too wide. All forgotten thoughts are restored in the unconsciousness. Consciousness is a small part of unconsciousness. Jung concludes, "Consciousness is like a surface of a skin upon a vast unconscious area of unknown extent" (Pope and Singer 10).

Carl Gustav Jung's concept of 'collective unconsciousness' also helps us to understand the mid-life crisis. As mid-life crisis includes the memory of past lives, the impression of the memory remains at the unconscious level. Furthermore, the activities of the people's ancestors are also transmitted to them. Thus, these crises brought by the past deeds obviously affect the behavior of the people. This is the main reason; the mid-life people feel difficulties to cope with such crises. Since the crises result through the unconscious level, people often opt for death, and thus people are found to be track off the normal life.

Stream of Consciousness and the Inner World of Characters

Most of the modern writers want to depict the inner reality. And this inner reality exhibits the mid-life crises. Mid-life crises in relation to the inner world of the characters explore the various aspects of human deeds. Therefore, writers show the great concern to

expose the internal conflicts in the mind of characters. And this exposition of internal conflicts is more significant in mid-life. Characters' outer lives are also depicted but they are depicted with the impression of the inner lives. For them, inner real life is the real life whereas the outer life is like a drama in the montage being directed by the vast background of the inner reality. Therefore, these writers use 'stream of consciousness' technique' to depict the inner world of the characters. In the 'stream of consciousness' past merges into present and the present gets faded into the future. Every knowledge is the germ of memory and expectation of either retrospective or prospective in the sense of time. Hence to understand 'stream of consciousness', we have to understand consciousness, sub-consciousness and unconsciousness.

Consciousness

The study of consciousness is very old. In the oriental study of psychology it shows the relationship with different sorts of meditations and yoga practices. This study of consciousness also says that it is like a deep and flowing river. One who possessed more courage, patience and initiative can dive into the depth of consciousness, "Consciousness is as infinite as the universe we live in. Imagination fails to comprehend it" (Mahaprajna 41). A modern psychologist William James also says more or less the same thing.

Consciousness from our natal day is of a teeming multiplicity of objects and relations, and what we call simple sensations are results of discriminative attention, pushed of ten to a very high degree. (Steinberg 41)

He focuses on the nature of personal consciousness which is changing and is sensibly continuous. Anyway he has to convey whether it is in the awakesness or in sleep "Some kind of consciousness is always going on" (Steinberg 42).

Henri Bergson's idea is, no doubt, one step progress. He says that thinking is undoubtedly sensibly continuous like a flowing river. There is continuity but even in the continuity there is a gap. The gap is invisible and indivisible. Bergson admits, "Out of that indivisible feeling as from a spring, all the words, gesture and actions of a man would appear to me to follow naturally" (Steinberg 51).

Sigmund Freud realizes that man is a slave of thoughts. He believes in the free association of thoughts to understand the profound part of man's consciousness. In Freud's theory, sexual desire plays the most dominant role. It deals with unconsciousness rather than consciousness.

The study of C.G. Jung looks very practical and credible where he has separated 'ego' 'consciousness', and unconsciousness. There are different ranges and spheres. Ego is the centre; it is surrounded by the personal consciousness which is also surrounded by the sphere of personal unconsciousness. In the outer part there is a very vast sphere of collective unconsciousness. In this system, ego which settles in the centre sometimes drives man's personal consciousness. Consciousness itself is a small part. The unconsciousness itself is a small part. The unconsciousness has a vast periphery. Jung concludes, "Consciousness is like a surface or a skin upon a vast unconscious area of unknown extent" (Pope and Singer 10).

Sub-consciousness

C.D. Broad gives some important details of sub-consciousness under wide range of unconsciousness. The sub-consciousness is described some times by indiscriminating awareness and sometimes by literal unconsciousness (Broad 372).

The traces and disposition of the past experiences have some important relations with sub-consciousness. When we meet a person but cannot remember who he is. We seem to have met or recognized him but cannot remember at the moment where and what

type of introduction was held. This sort of indiscriminating awareness is the content of sub-consciousness.

Habits at first begin from the deliberate consciousness, but later they become a part of sub-consciousness, when they are repeated time and again. Without any deliberateness and without an effort we do them spontaneously. Consciousness cannot carry habits all the time. Then, habituated things are handled by sub-consciousness most of the time.

A moment of reading is very striking to talk about sub-consciousness. One reads the content and cannot remember what he has read. There is no co-ordination in the processes of seeing and thinking. Seeing brings the concentration and thinking brings contemplation. When there is no co-ordination between the two, it becomes the part of sub-consciousness (Broad 372). While searching things in the drawer, we focus our whole attention on some certain things, and when we are asked about other things, we cannot easily say. They may come in one's memory or may not also come. It is nothing other than man's sub-conscious state of mind.

The moment of sorrow and the moment of happiness come in the mind. The memory of sorrow is very shocking painful and striking. Where as the memory of happiness come in the mind easily, instantly and frequently. The sub-conscious state of mind clutches the moment of sorrow so strongly that it does not let it go to the state of deliberate consciousness. The last or stolen things come in one's mind frequently as the uneasy situation. One does not lose the sense of possession of it. This sort of possession is the state of sub-consciousness (Broad 377).

The sub-conscious state of mind joins present, past and future. Everything cannot be expressed in words. The excessive sorrow and excessive happiness and excessive

excitement are neither freely conscious nor freely unconscious but have the force of subconscious.

Pope and Singer include some terms like "subconscious stimuli" (142), "well below the level of consciousness" (143), "non-willed conscious states"(144), the tip-of-the tongue state"(148), "insane consciousness, free association and hypnagogic imagery"(144) "free will hypothesis" (92) all imply the subconscious state of mind.

Moreover, Steinberg quotes,"Budgen says that Joyce told him, I try to give the unspoken, unacted thoughts of people in the way they occur", and Djuna Barnes noted that Joyce said, "I have recorded, simultaneously, what a man says, sees, thinks, and what such seeing, thinking, saying does, to what you Freudians call the subconscious"(154).

The subconscious elements play the important roles in the acts of seeing, thinking, doing and visualizing.

Unconsciousness

In the study of mental events, the range of unconsciousness is very wide. C.G. Jung gives the remarkably striking description of unconsciousness. Ego and personal consciousness are surrounded by the sphere of personal unconsciousness. Everything that man hears, sees, reads or thinks is restored in the area of unconsciousness. In the deliberateness, it comes into consciousness and is carefully expressed. But there is no command over the things. We can forget them. That is to say, we cannot easily trace them out from the store of unconsciousness. Even if few forget them for the moment it won't go astray because it comes into memory someday. So it is better to have read and forgotten them not to have read at all.

Freud's conception of free association of thought and the analysis of dream mainly come under the unconscious events man's mind. The very deep feelings can suddenly be expressed without any delay by the help of unconsciousness. The most secret

feelings are usually perceived by the unconscious state of mind and are expressed in dream by means of symbols and so on.

Freud mainly tells us about 'Libido' and 'Id'. 'Libido' is the sexual instinct which cannot easily be suppressed. It may get expressed even in dreams. 'Id' is the inner instinct where settles 'ego'. 'Id' tells us the conscious side where as 'Libido' implies the state of unconsciousness.

William James' continuous flow of ideas in man's mind like a flowing river also tells us the mass of unconsciousness. Similarly, Henri Bergson's idea of gap and continuity in the flowing thoughts also crop up from the state of unconsciousness. Even when we talk of consciousness, we mean to say either the total range of consciousness including sub-consciousness and unconsciousness or we cannot separate consciousness from unconsciousness; the ideas shift from consciousness to unconsciousness and from unconsciousness to consciousness. The sub-consciousness stands at the middle. Sometimes, it works as a link and sometimes as a state of transition. When the ideas are about to be expressed they shift from unconsciousness' to sub-consciousness and consciousness. All the expressed ideas cannot be guided by the consciousness. They oscillate from unconsciousness to sub- consciousness and sub-consciousness to consciousness. The sub-conscious state takes the help of unconsciousness by using symbols, symptoms, phantasies, and different sorts of random thoughts. In the expressive level the sub-consciousness represents the unconscious state. There occurs a conflict between consciousness and sub-consciousness.

Random and careless thoughts are guided by the sub-consciousness whereas deliberate and purposeful thoughts are guided by the consciousness. Visual images, sensory perceptions and interior monologues are all the elements of this conflict. This conflict of consciousness and sub-consciousness itself is known as 'the stream of

consciousness' in psychology as well as in literature. Moreover, the portrayal of this conflict through images sensory perceptions and interior monologues is known as 'stream of consciousness' technique in literature that all psychologists and psychological writers agree.

CHAPTER 3.

Mid-life Crisis as a Spiritual Catastrophe in Mrs Dalloway

Split Personality: Clarissa's Social and Emotional World

Mrs Dalloway poses the two polar images of Clarissa's existence. Her existence lies between social and emotional world. Her mid-life crisis is the turmoil created by this social and emotional world. Her 'plunge' into the open air signifies her immersion in the whole life, represented by the ocean, when her submerged life appears benevolent 'kissing' her as it envelops her. 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 life through the window. Throughout the novel, Mrs Dalloway the window stands for 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 Bourton into the open air. How

fresh, how calm, stiller than this of course, the air was in the early morning, like the flap of a wave, the kiss of wave, chill and 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 trees with the smoke winding off them and the rocks rising and falling. (1)

These two poles of Clarissa's life are represented by Lady Bruton and Sally Seton. These two women reflect both class conflict in the society and conflict within Clarissa's life that is her emotional world and social world.

Mrs Clarissa Dalloway is a woman of a great charm, feminine delicacy, genuine, kindness and has a true concern for her friends. But because of her excessive stress on social formalities, she would sometimes make people feel ill at ease even frighten them.

Miss Kilman always criticizes Clarissa's this mannerism:

Yes, Miss Kilman stood on the landing, and wore a mackintosh, but had her reason. First, it was cheap, second, she was over forty, and did not, after all dress to please. She was poor, moreover, degradingly poor. Otherwise she would not be taking jobs from people like the Dalloways from rich people, who liked to be kind. But Mrs Dalloway had not. She had been merely condescending. She came from the most worthless of all classes- the rich, with a smattering a culture. They had expensive things everywhere, picture, carpet, lots of servants. She pitied and despised them from the bottom of her heart, as she stood on the soft carpet, looking at the old engraving of a little girl with a muff. With all this luxury going on, what hope was there for a better state of things? Instead of lying on a sofa- "My mother is resting", Elizabeth had said- she should have been in a factory, behind a counter, Mrs Dalloway and all the other fine ladies. (90)

Lady Bruton is 'fixed', 'tranced' and 'frozen' in the posture of symbolic order. In contrast, refusing traditional feminine passivity, Sally Seton is always performs some daring feat. 'She ran along the passage naked bicycled round the parapet on the terrace, smoked cigars'(26). And for that is all the frankness, boldness and courage of challenge form the bottom of her heart Clarissa loved Sally so much as a precious gift of her whole life:

She and sally felt a little behind. Then come the most exquisite moment of her whole life passing a stone urn with flowers in it. Sally stopped, picked a flower, and kissed her on the lips. The whole world might have turned upside down. The other disappeared there she was alone with Sally. And she felt that she had been given a present, wrapped up, and told just to keep it, not to look at it- a diamond something infinitely precious, wrapped up. (26)

Sally Seton, Clarissa's best friend and her ideal repudiates the aristocratic code of Lady Bruton. Worst of all, she has 'married beneath her' in the eye of the society, married a miner's son who has becomes a wealthy industrialist.

To secure the respectable place in the society Clarissa adopts Lady Burton's rigidity by being timid, hard, arrogant, prudish and inscrutable in the society. She eventually rejects Sally for marrying beneath her class and Clarissa rejects the country gentleman's misalliance:

They were talking about a man who had married his housemaid, one of the neighboring squires; he had forgotten his name. He had married his housemaid and she had been brought to Bourton to call- an awful visit it had been. She was absurdly overdressed 'like a cockatoo', Clarissa had said, imitating her, and she never stopped talking. On and on she went, on and on- Clarissa imitated her. Then somebody said- Sally Seton it was –

did it make any real difference to one's feeling to know that before they married she had had a baby? (In those days, in mixed company, it was a bold thing to say) He could see Clarissa now, turning bright pink, somehow contracting, and saying, 'Oh, I shall never be able to speak to her again! (44)

In the process of being socialized, Clarissa gives the signal for her life's direction, away from Sally, a source of vitality and passion of her inner-self, towards the deadening aristocratic society of Lady Bruton, just for the sake of her social status in the symbolic order. But with Sally Seton, there are some affinities which Clarissa can sense instinctively and care a lot of Sally opinion about her. Clarissa cannot ignore Sally throughout her life:

Clarissa always said that Lady Burton did not like her. Indeed, Lady Burton had the reputation of being more interested in politics than people, of talking like a man. Nevertheless her inquiry, 'How's Clarissa?' was known by women infallibly to be signal from a well-wisher, from an almost silent companion, whose utterances (half a dozen perhaps in the course of a lifetime) signified recognition of some feminine comradeship which went beneath masculine lunch parties and united Lady Bruton and Mrs Dalloway, who seldom met, and appeared when they did meet indifferent and even hostile, in a singular bond. (78)

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, her love for Sally Seton, the only time it was almost expressed which is her emotional world:

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 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 downstairs and feeling as she crossed the hall 'if it were now to die', 't' were now to be most happy. That was her feeling- all because she was coming down to dinner in a white frock to meet Sally Seton! (25)

Clarissa's feeling for Sally 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 and therefore for her these feelings 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 feeling in the light of her principles. The genteel background of her upbringing, its prudity, the conceptions of propriety, decorum and all the paraphernalia of social codes are so deeply inculcated in her consciousness that she unlocks her natural self only in rare moments and she let herself be and locks up her natural instinct as soon as again she has to face the world, which most of the time she has to do by being superficial, wearing the mask of perfect hostess.

Clarissa instinctively feels that she will be safe as long as she lives by the tenets of her society and this is why she adheres to them so tenaciously, holds herself upright, loves success, care for rank and society and hates frumps, fogies and failure. Thus for survival Clarissa cannot save her soul from being splited into two worlds.

Clarissa: An Inscrutable Soul

Throughout the novel Clarissa is an inscrutable personality. Her most intimate friend Peter Walsh has never had an idea of what stirs in Clarissa's soul. He only can perceive that there is something the matter with it but does not know what it is. When Peter thinks of Clarissa, he finds her 'cold' 'a prude' and inscrutable. Actually no one knows the repressed self of Clarissa in the mask of a 'Perfect hostess'. Clarissa is very possessive regarding the privacy of her soul and even Peter Walsh was not allowed to move in this private zone of Clarissa. Only Sally Seton being a close female friend of Clarissa detects that lack within Clarissa, which Clarissa desperately try to fulfill by marrying a man with a completely different taste:

What Sally Seton, felt was simply this. She had owed Clarissa an enormous amount. They had been friends, not acquaintances, friends, and she still saw Clarissa all in white going about the house with her hands full of flowers- to this day tobacco plants made her think of Bourton. But- did Peter understand? She had charm, she had extraordinary charm. But to be frank (and she felt that Peter was an old friend, a real friend- did absent matter? Did distance matter? She had often wanted to write to him, but torn it up, yet felt he understood, for people understand without thing being said. To be quite frank, then how could Clarissa have done it? Married Richard Dalloway? A sportsman, a man who cared only for dogs. Literally, when he came into the room he smelt of the stables. And then all this? She waved her hand. (137)

Clarissa thinks that marriage is always a catastrophe, but she knew that the social code demanded that she should marry. Without marriage she can have no place in the society. In this sense Clarissa takes marriage as the means of self-protection:

It was protective, on her side, sprang from a sense of being in league together, a presentiment of some thing that was bound to part them (they spoke of marriage always as a catastrophe), which led to this chivalry, this protective feeling which was much more on her side than Sally's. (25)

Clarissa married Richard because he could give the freedom that Clarissa needs. And Clarissa hopes that she could make her own identity in her freedom. It was the best way for her to avoid the desire for death. Her marriage is not her choice. It was the demand of the society. So she couldn't totally reject patriarchy. She knew if she does so, it would be a mistake on her side and can create the existential problem. Thus, she has to choose one catastrophe 'marriage' to avoid another catastrophe 'death'.

Clarissa ignored the love of Peter Walsh and accepted Richard just for the sake of her privacy of soul which she knew Richard could only give. She knew Peter was more demanding than Richard and thus he was more possessive which is not acceptable for Clarissa. She thinks, 'For in marriage a little license, a little independence there must be which again, in Clarissa's case is much more necessary than in others. Which achieved after marriage'(6)

Clarissa has a great self- respect and she is ready to live by repressing her emotions, by giving up all pleasure, love and sentiment but cannot live loosing her self- respect, even in front of her husband:

And there is a 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.(88)

Yet Mrs Dalloway feels herself misnamed within 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 the green linoleum and a tap dripping. There was emptiness about the heart of life, an attic room. Women must put off their rich apparel. At midday they must disrobe. She pierced the pincushion and laid her feathered below hat on the bed. The sheets were clean, tight stretched in a broad white bound form 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 a virginity preserved through childbirth which clung to her like a sheet. (23)

With the pass of time Clarissa compelled to change her notion that sharply contrasts with her early thinking. But adopting this social notion, Clarissa cannot satisfy her soul because these mature notion is superficial, imposed by the society not natural and spontaneous. She always takes her present situation as a compromise for survival:

Lovely in girlhood, suddenly there came a moment- for example on the river beneath the woods at Cliewenden- when, through some contraction of this cold spirit, she had failed them. And then at Constantinople, and again and again. She could see what she lacked. It was not beauty, it was not

mind. It was something central which permeated, something warm which broke up surfaces and rippled the cold contact of man and woman or of women together. For that she could dimly perceived. She resented it, had a scruple picked up. Heaven knows where, or as she felt, sent by nature (who is invariably wise). Yet she could not resist sometime yielding to the charm of a woman, not a girl, a woman confessing, as to her they often did, some scrape, some folly. And whether it was pit, or their beauty, or that she was older, or some accident- like a faint scent, or a violin next door. She did undoubtedly then feels what men felt. Only for a moment, but it was enough. 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 it s thin skin and gushed and poured with an extra ordinary alleviation over the cracks and sores. (23)

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 and outcaste from the respectable circle of the society. Being a social woman Clarissa also accepts this notion:

That was a 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 nerves to fiddle- string. Yes. (45)

In this way Peter also praises her social grace though, he hates her as a middle-aged woman, working as hostess which Clarissa thinks will be her means to expose her identity among the people in the party.

Death of the Soul

Virginia Woolf saw people as having a dual existence, as outer, public life of conventional activity and an inner private life of secret zone. Each person has an inner world of images, memories, meanings, private feelings' and secret thought and unconscious desire. These hidden depths and this underlying reality will receive many contradictory interpretations in Virginia Woolf's works. In her novel *Mrs Dalloway*, this is what she has succeeded in doing. Woolf has discovered new techniques for rendering the inner world of her characters. The narration of this novel jumps backward and forwards between the story of Clarissa's party and the story of Septimus's death. Though they do not know each other till the end, the middle-aged woman and the obscure manic young man are in a sense the same person that is Septimus Warren Smith is Clarissa's double, her inner self, her essence.

The two opposing forces we have in the novel are on the one hand the force of life as it manifests itself in the nature of the individual, and on the other the force of the 'sense of proportion' based on 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 not her fault that was not her inborn instinct it was the society which made her woman, that Peter hates but he knows the fact behind it:

He hadn't blame her for 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 do- the death of her soul. (44)

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 that is why they mean so much to her. In fact her social activities, the lunches, dinner, parties, tattle and all trivia that accompany her is a way of life spells death to the soul to all the finer faculties.

Septimus shares Clarissa's vacillation between her own world and withdrawal towards social world. His 'plunge' through the window like hers, represents a triumph over the fear that would keep both of them on the safe side of the window. When Clarissa heard about his suicide of Septimus by throwing himself 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, but she has been sufficiently protected, especially by her husband Richard Dalloway, symbol of social code. Clarissa had escaped by accepting the social notion of Richard, Dr. Holmes and Lady Bruton. But the young man had killed himself:

Then (she had felt it only this morning) there was the terror, the overwhelming incapacity, one parents giving it into one's hand, this life, to be lived to the end, to be walked with serenely, there was in the depths of her heart an awful fear. Even now, quite often if Richard had not been there reading. The Times, so that she could crouch like a bird and gradually revive, send roaring up that immeasurable delight, rubbing stick

to stick, one thing with another, she must have perished. She had escaped.

But that young man had killed himself. (134)

Paradoxically, Clarissa feels her survival as somehow her disaster and her disgrace. Clarissa thinks, 'she had schemed, she had pilfered'(33). She was never wholly admirable. This Clarissa accepts her own failure at the end.

Yet at the same time, on the other side 'she felt somehow very like Septimus- the young man who had killed himself. She felt somehow very like Septimus- the young man who had killed himself. She felt glad that he had done it, thrown it away while she went on living- this is moment of perceived similarity and spiritual substitution between Clarissa and Septimus. Peter had a memory of Clarissa coming downstairs in a white dress and had a vision of Clarissa 'falling dead where she stood in her drawing room'. But it is Septimus who in a sense dies at that time. But Peter's vision is true, with Septimus's death all Clarissa's essence also died leaving her like a mere ghost of a respectable woman. In this connection, Clarissa and Septimus are not separate and individualized characters, but opposite phases of an idea of life itself. They are 'one and the same person'.

Actually, Clarissa does not want to kill her essence and by different means she tries to save it but society does not allow her to live with her essence as a woman. For the sake of 'society' that is 'human nature', she has to kill her essence, sacrifice herself for the community where she lives. Sally, being her most intimate friend, inspiration of life to save her from the havoc of society and thinks:

To carry off Clarissa, to save her from the Hughes and Dalloways and all the other 'perfect gentlemen' who would 'stifle her soul' (she wrote realms of poetry in those days), make a mere hostess of her, encourage her worldliness.' But one must do Clarissa justices. (56)

Thus, at the end of her struggle Clarissa has to lose her soul, though physically she is leading a prosperous life.

Clarissa: Quest for Her Own Identity within Male

Clarissa as a woman tries her best to create her own female world without breaking away from traditional notion of woman's decency. In real sense, she is a practical woman just a radical thinker as Septimus. Clarissa is very much aware of her marginalized position as a woman in the patriarchal society. But she cannot dare to go beyond these social norms for the creation of her own world. Instead, she wants to erase all social boundaries by remaining within the same boundaries created by male.

Before marriage, Clarissa had an interest in nature, in literature, in politics. She had even read Shelly, Morris, Huxley and Tyndall, but after marriage and becoming Mrs Dalloway in London at the centre of the social swirl. She has put an end to all this interests. Marriage for Clarissa is a process of socialization and assimilation with the norms of patriarchal society. And she knowingly does all this because she wants to enjoy life:

She enjoyed life immensely. It was her nature to enjoy (though, goodness only knows, she had her reserves, it was a mere sketch, he often felt, that even he, after all these years, could make of Clarissa). Anyhow there was no bitterness in her, none of that sense of moral virtue which is so repulsive in good women. She enjoyed practically everything. If you walked with her in Hyde Park, now it was a bed of tulips, now a child in a perambulator, now some absurd little drama she made up on the spur of the moment. (Very likely she would have talked to those lovers, if she had thought them unhappy). She had a sense of comedy that was really exquisite, but she needed people, always people to bring it out, with the

inevitable result that she frittered her time away, lunching, dining, giving these incessant parties of hers, talking nonsense, saying things she didn't mean, blunting the edge of her mind, losing her discrimination. (58)

Clarissa is a skeptic, she is not surprised or afraid of her lady like position, and has come to consider life the whole thing as 'a bad joke'. In this bitter situation also what sustain her charm is the fact that in spite of her thought about life being a bad joke and her suppressed self, 'there is no bitterness in her'. Clarissa thinks it is the price paid for respectable life and accepts the whole system as it is:

Oddly enough, she was one of the most thorough going skeptics he had ever met, and possibly (this was the theory he used to make up to account for her, so transparent in some ways, so inscrutable in others). Possibly she said herself, as we are a doomed race, chained to a sinking ship, as the whole thing is a bad joke, let us, at any rate, do our part, mitigate the sufferings of our fellow- prisoners, be as decent as we possibly can. Those ruffians, the Gods, shan't have it all their own way- her notion being that the gods, who never lost a chance of hurting thwarting and spoiling human lives, were seriously put out if, all the same, you behaved like a lady. That phase came directly after Sylvia's death- that horrible affair. To see your own sister killed by a falling tree before your very eyes, a girl too on the verge of life, the most gifted of them, Clarissa always said, was enough to turn one bitter. Later she wasn't so positive, perhaps, she thought there were no gods, no one was to blame, and so she evolved this atheist's religion of doing well for the sake of goodness. (58)

Clarissa rejection of Peter Walsh's proposal of marriage is a rejection of male authority over female. In giving up Peter, Clarissa renounced the passionate intimacy he

would have demanded. Though she loves Peter truly, she leaves him for the sake of her positions in the society which, she gains after her marriage with Richard Dalloway. In this sense, Clarissa is very practical woman, who sacrifices her emotion, pleasure and even love for her own identity. But emotionally she always had a sense of guilt and sometime, somewhere in her life feels regression on the choice of marriage with Richard Dalloway. She still cares for Peter's views, want him to think well of her and was grieved when she heard about his marriage. And that news wound her feminine pride badly:

All in a clap it come over her, if I had married him this gaiety would have been mine al day! It was all over for her. The sheer was stretched and the bed narrow. She had gone up into the tower alone and left the blackberrying in the snow. The door had shut, and there among the dust of fallen plaster and the litter of bird's nest how distant the view had looked, and the sound came thin and chill (once one with Hill, she remembered), and Richard, Richard! she cried, as a sleeper in the night starts and stretches a hand in the dark for help. Lurching with Lady Bruton, it came back to her. He has left me, I am alone for ever, she thought, folding her hand upon her knee. (34)

Clarissa will tolerate a relationship with a man like Richard, who is less demanding and plays a purely protective role for her. Marriage with Richard is a kind of compromise with world on the one hand and at the same time on the other, the only means to fulfill her inner urge to be the subject in the society. In short it is a marriage to palliate insufficiency within her. Peter Walsh can understand this situation easily when he saw Richard Dalloway:

And then half way through dinner he made himself look across at Clarissa for the first time. She was talking to a young man on her right. He had a

sudden revelation. 'She will marry that man', he said to himself. He didn't even know his name. For of course it was that afternoon, that Dalloway had come over, and Clarissa called him 'wickham', that was the beginning of it all. Somebody had brought him over and Clarissa got his name wrong. She introduced him to everybody as wickham. At last he said 'my name is Dalloway! - That was his first view of Richard- a fair young man, rather awkward, sitting on a deckchair, and blurting out 'my name is Dalloway! He was a prey to revelations at that time. This one – that she would marry Dalloway- was blinding- overwhelming at the moment. There was as sort of- how could he put it? - A sort of ease in her manner to him, something maternal, something gentle. They were talking about politics. All throughout dinner he tried to hear what they were saying. (45-46)

From the very beginning of their friendship Peter Walsh was aware of Clarissa's ambitious nature, and used to say:

It was the state of the world that interested him, Wagner, Pope's poetry, people's characters. How they argued! She would marry a Prime Minister and stand at the top of a staircase, the perfect hostess he called her (she had cried over it in her bedroom), she had the making of the perfect hostess, he said. (6)

Clarissa is not ready to give up her self- respect and freedom to others in any cost even to her husband. She knew instinctively that the mild Richard would be safer than the passionate and demanding Peter Walsh. She did not mind Richard's 'second class' brain because she knew he would not make demand on her. Peter wanted the whole of her and

that is what for Clarissa was 'intolerable' and could not marry him. When Richard comes in holding flowers, Clarissa thinks:

And there is a dignity in people, a solitude, even between husband and wife a gulf and that one must respect, thought Clarissa, watching him open the door, for one would not part with it oneself, or take it, against his will, from one's husband, without losing one's independence, one's self-respect- something after all, priceless. (88)

Clarissa manages to convert even Peter into a protective spirit while he is away but when he appears near to her, he changes from defender to invader and Clarissa reacts to his entrance with the excessive indignation and his interruption always provokes her. Peter's pocketknife is a phallic symbol incorporating the threat Clarissa attaches to sex, as well as an emblem of his habitual behavior towards her breaking into her privacy, lacerating her with criticism, and ripping open the civilized surface of life that protects her from emotion:

For Heaven's sake, leave your knife alone! she cried to herself in irrepressible irritation, it was his silly unconventionality, his weakness, his lack of the ghost of a notion what anyone else was feeling that annoyed, he had always annoyed her, and now at his age, how silly! (34)

But Clarissa always keeps herself ready armed with a needle, which she swindles defensively to avoid the emotional confrontation Peter demands:

But I too, she thought, and taking up her needle, summoned, like a Queen whose guards have fallen asleep and left her unprotected (she had been quite taken aback by his visit- it had upset her) do that anyone can stroll in and have a look at her where she lies with the brambles curving over her, summoned to her help the things she did, the things she liked, her

husband, Elizabeth, her self, in short, which Peter hardly knew now, all to come about he and beat off the enemy. (32)

Mid-life Crisis: A Spiritual Catastrophe

According to Sue Shellenberger, women's mid-life crises are more serious than men's to begin with family events or problems. It includes a divorce or parent's death to an extramarital affair. Apart from this, marriage, work, parenting bears crises in the life of middle-aged women. These crises shape the course of their lives which they want to lead in other way. Here I feel Shellenberger's concept about female mid-life crisis reveals the turmoil of Clarissa in her middle-age.

Clarissa, the protagonist of the novel, faces mid-life crisis, as her self development. She chooses Richard Dalloway as her husband with an expectation that she would get freedom to develop her own identity. And it is the reason she kicks out the love of Peter Walsh, whom she thinks as more demanding and possessive than Richard. Due to his over possessiveness, Clarissa, thinks, she won't achieve her goal if she chooses him. She becomes aware of the fact that she may have to suppress her desires to fulfill Peter's demands. But her thinking goes just opposite in her mid-life when she feels that it was wrong in her side to suppress her feminine virtues. Her failure to make a balance between her social and emotional world makes her spiritually dead.

Clarissa, though, superficially thinks her married life good; she becomes jealous of the woman who married Peter Walsh. She ignores Peter Walsh's love and marries Richard for the fulfillment of her own desires. But as she is going to organize the party late that evening, she thinks of a woman who married Peter. She doesn't like that woman as her love for Peter Walsh was still in the core of her heart:

For in marriage a little license, a little independence there must between people living together day in day out in the same house; which Richard

gave her, and she him. But with the Peter everything had to be shared; everything gone into. And it was intolerable, and when it came to that scene in the little garden by the fountain, she had to break with him or they would have been destroyed both of them ruined, she was convinced; though she had borne about with her for years like an arrow sticking in her heart the grief, the anguish; and then the horror of the moment when someone told her at a concert that he had married a woman met on the boat going to India! Never should she forget all that! Cold, heartless, prude he called her. Never could she understand how he cared. But those Indian Women did presumably-silly, pretty, flimsy nincompoops. (6)

Clarissa thinks her marriage as a catastrophe. She recalls her past how she rejected Peter Walsh, who feels his whole world ruined. He tries his best to make Clarissa return to him. But it was of no use as Clarissa was already determined to choose another path choosing Richard.

She did not move. 'Tell me the truth, tell me the truth,' he kept on saying. He felt as if his forehead would burst. She seemed contracted, petrified. She did not move. 'Tell me the truth,' he repeated, when suddenly that old man Brietkopf popped his head in carrying The Times; stared at them; gaped; and went away. They neither of them moved. 'Tell me the truth,' he repeated. He felt that he was grinding against something physically hard; she was unyielding. She was like iron, like flint, rigid up the backbone. And when she said, 'It's no use. It's no use. This is the end'-after he had spoken for hours it seemed, with the tears running down his cheeks- it was as if she had hit him the face. She turned, she left him, and she went away. (48)

Peter Walsh, who was heart- broken, thinks Clarissa was cold and cruel. Though he settled his unhappy marriage, he couldn't forget Clarissa. The picture of Clarissa, keeps on coming to his mind. Then, comes Clarissa's bitter words as the rejection of his love. And thus, he makes conclusion about women that they fail to understand the passion of men:

That was what tortured him that was what came over him when he saw Clarissa so calm, so cold, so intent on her dress or whatever it was; realizing what she might have spared him, what she thought, shutting his pocket-knife, don't know what passion is. They don't know the meaning of it to men. Clarissa was as cold as an icicle. (60)

Clarissa is lucky in a sense that she gets loving husband, Richard, who doesn't interfere in Clarissa's privacy. He knows that Clarissa and Peter passionately love each other, but still he marries Clarissa. Clarissa, in other hand, though loves her husband; she doesn't share her sufferings with him. Their married life doesn't seem to be happy due to Clarissa's nature. Anyway, Richard thinks of her. He thinks about her happiness. He wants to give her a present and express his love to her during the party.

For he never gave Clarissa presents, except a bracelet two or three years ago, which had not been a success. She never wore it. It pained him to remember that she never wore it. And as a single spider's thread after wavering here and there attaches itself to the point of a leaf, so Richard's mind, recovering from its lethargy, set now on his wife, Clarissa, whom Peter Walsh had loved so passionately; and Richard had had a sudden vision of her there at luncheon; of himself and Clarissa: of their life together; and he drew the tray of old jewels towards him, and taking up first this brooch, then that ring, 'How much is that? He asked, but doubted

his own taste. He wanted to open the drawing-room door and come in holding out something; a present for Clarissa. (84)

Richard wants to convey Clarissa that he loves her more than Peter Walsh. Sometimes before, he had become jealous of Peter. But he became happy when Clarissa says she is right in marrying him. Richard knows that Clarissa wants a support which he definitely provides her:

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-humouredly, considering the problem of the female vagrants; 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 jealous of Peter Walsh; jealous of him and Clarissa. But she had often said to him that she had been right not to marry Peter Walsh; which, knowing Clarissa was obviously true; she wanted support. Not that she was weak; but she wanted support. (85)

He was happy though he feels Clarissa doesn't love him as much as a wife should love. He takes his life as a miracle marrying Clarissa:

It was a great age in which to have lived. Indeed, his own life was a miracle; let him make no mistake about it; here he was, in the prime of life, walking to his house in Westminster to tell Clarissa that he loved her. Happiness is this, he thought. (86)

He gives the flowers to Clarissa but fails to express his love which he had thought to express in many words:

For with overpowering directness and dignity the clock struck three; and she heard nothing else; but the door handle slipped round and in came

Richard! What a surprise! In came Richard, holding out flowers. She had failed him, once at Constantinople; and Lady Bruton, whose lunch parties were said to be extraordinary amusing, had not asked her. He was holding out flowers- roses, red and white roses. (But he could not bring himself to say he loved her; not in so many words.) (86)

But Clarissa understands the feeling of Richard Dalloway. She readily accepts his love:

But how lovely, she said, taking his flowers. She understood; she understood without his speaking; his Clarissa. She put them in vases on the mantelpiece. How lovely they looked! She said. And was it amusing? She asked. (86)

But Clarissa entangles with the thought of Peter Walsh's back to England. She is desperate if he will arrive at her party or not. Her past passionate love undermines the love of Richard who had come a long way to say he loves his wife. Clarissa feels her party will be empty in the absence of Peter Walsh:

It all looked so empty. All the chairs were against the wall. What had they been doing? Oh, it was for the part; she had had him. And he was going to get divorce; and he was in love with some woman out there. And he hadn't changed in the slightest. (87)

Clarissa feels she had done wrong choosing Richard. She feels if she has committed mistake rejecting Peter. She feels 'And it came over me "I might have married you" (87).

Clarissa thinks about Richard and Peter and their love for her. Though she organizes party on the behalf of her husband, she feels her party would be quite empty without Peter. She ponders over Peter's choosing the wrong woman. Actually, it is not her

sympathy toward Peter but jealousy with that woman. The jealousy which she unknowingly raises in her heart:

Peter always in love, always in love with the wrong woman? What's your love? She might say to him. And she knew his answer; how it is the most important thing in the world and no woman possibly understood it. Very well. But could any man understand what she meant either? About life? She could not imagine Peter or Richard taking the trouble to give a party for no reason whatever. (89)

She feels her life a queer when she relates her life with Richard and Peter. She continuously thinks how their existence has affected her life. But she feels their offerings of love quite meaningless, a waste:

But to go deeper, beneath what people said in her own mind now, what did it mean to her, this thing she called life? Oh, it was very queer. Here was so and so in South Kensington; someone up in Bayswater; and somebody else, say, in Mayfair. And she felt quite continuously a sense of their existence; and she felt what a waste; and she felt what a pity; and she felt if only they could be brought together; so she did it. And it was an offering; to combine, to create; but to whom? (89)

Clarissa's dual existence for Richard and Peter passes without her own self development. She could have done some significant work to make her identity. But her life in the grip of male chauvinism passes without actual achievement. She lacks the knowledge of History and Geography. In this sense, she feels her life is meaningless:

She muddled Armenians and Turks; loved success; hated discomfort; must be liked; talked oceans of nonsense: and to this day, ask her what the Equator was, and she did not know. (89)

Clarissa's failure to achieve her own identity makes her feel the desire for death. She feels emptiness in her heart. She feels her life is habituated to the repeated things. It makes her feel frustration and somewhere deep in her heart she opts for death:

All the same, that one day should follow another; Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday; that one should wake up in the morning; see the sky; walk in the park; meet Hugh Whitbread; then suddenly came Peter; then these roses; it was enough. After that how unbelievable death was! - That it must end; and no one in the whole world would know how she had loved it all; how, every instant. (89)

Clarissa's relation to Peter and Richard bear no fruit to her. To exist in the society, she tries to balance her social and emotional world. She couldn't dare to reject the patriarchal society. As she is a married woman and the woman of the middle- age, she has the responsibility to look after her daughter, Elizabeth. She fears if her daughter will be in the grip of Doris Kilman, a religious Christian Woman. For this Very reason she hates Doris Kilman. She hates Doris so much that even Elizabeth doesn't like to see them together. So Elizabeth makes pretension to escape their togetherness:

Elizabeth she had forgotten her gloves. That was because Miss Kilman and her mother hated each other. She could not bear to see them together. She ran upstairs to find her gloves. (91)

Clarissa knows that she has a cold war with Doris Kilman. She also knows that Kilman is trying to get victory over her by taking her daughter away:

Clarissa was really shocked. This Christian- this woman! This woman had taken her daughter from her! She in touch with invisible presences! Heavy, ugly, commonplace, without kindness or grace, she knows the meaning of life! (91)

Clarissa fails to separate Kilman and Elizabeth; she feels it is her defeat that she couldn't bring Elizabeth in her grip. Her motherhood is struck by Kilman's possession over her daughter. In the verge of beginning of her party, Kilman takes away her daughter, but she couldn't do anything. Anyway, she reminds them of her party tonight:

With a sudden impulse, with a violent anguish, for this woman was taking her daughter from her, Clarissa leant over the banisters and cried out, 'Remember the party! Remember our party tonight!' (92)

Clarissa hates both love and religion. It is through religion that Kilman tries to possess the soul of Elizabeth. Possession of soul by some means is the matter of hatred for Clarissa. Clarissa in one hand doesn't have any means or stand to prove her significant existence. In the other hand, Kilman has at least the support of religion in her life to prove her significant existence. Clarissa wants the privacy of soul, the soul which shouldn't be bothered by any means:

Love and religion! thought Clarissa, going back into the drawing room, tingling over. How detestable they are! For now that the body of Miss Kilman was not before her, it overwhelmed her- the idea/ The cruelest things in the world, she thought, seeing them clumsy, hot, domineering, hypocritical, eavesdropping, jealous, infinitely cruel and unscrupulous, dressed in mackintosh coat, on the landing; love and religion. Had she ever tried to convert anyone herself? Did she not wish everybody merely to be themselves? And she watched out of the window the old lady opposite climbing upstairs. Let her climb upstairs if she wanted to; let her stop; then let her, as Clarissa had often seen her, gain her bedroom, part her curtains, and disappear again into the background. Somehow one respected that- that old woman looking out of the window, quite

unconscious that she was being watched. There was solemn in it- but love and religion would destroy that, whatever it was, the privacy of the soul.

The odious Kilman would destroy it. (92)

Love for Clarissa is another hindrance for the privacy of soul. The love of Peter Walsh is a waste for her. That love which demands much more from Clarissa who doesn't want to waste a life in the grip of that love. She also hates Peter Walsh's love as he involves with another woman. For Clarissa, such love destroys everything:

Love destroyed too. Everything that was fine, everything that was true went. Take Peter Walsh now. There was a man, charming, clever, with ideas about everything. If you wanted to know about Pope, say, or Addison, or just to talk nonsense, what people were like, what things meant, Peter knew better than anyone. It was Peter who had helped her; Peter who had lent her books. But look at the women he loved- vulgar, trivial, and commonplace. Think of Peter in love- he came to see her after all these years, and what did he talk about? Himself. Horrible passion! she thought, thinking of Kilman and her Elizabeth walking to the Army and Navy Stores. (93)

Clarissa desires privacy of soul so much that she identifies herself with the woman looking outside the window. That old woman is not hindered by any means. She moves here and there in her room. In this regard, Peter's love and Kilman's religion is the hindrance only. They do not bring any solution:

She was forced, so Clarissa imagined but that sound, to move, to go – but where? Clarissa tried to follow her as she turned and disappeared, and could still just see her white cap moving at the back of the bedroom. She was still there moving about at the other end of the room. Why creeds and

prayers and mackintoshes? When, thought Clarissa, that's the miracle, that's the mystery; that old lady, she meant, whom she could see going from chest of drawers to dressing-table. She could still see her. And the supreme mystery which Kilman might say she had solved, or Peter might say he had solved, but Clarissa didn't believe either of them had the ghost of an idea of solving, was simply this: here was one room; there another. Did religion solve that, or love? (93)

Clarissa, though undermines the love of Peter Walsh, she feels it has made deep space in her heart. She wonders she couldn't forget that love even in her middle-age. She begins to make hypothesis how she would have changed her world if she had married him:

She was upset by his visit. She had felt a great deal; had for a moment, when she kissed his hand, regretted, envied him even, remembered possibly something he had said- how they would change the world if she married him perhaps; whereas, it was this; it was middle age; it was mediocrity; then forced herself with her indomitable vitality to put all that aside, there being in her a thread of life which for toughness, endurance, power to overcome obstacles and carry her triumphantly though he had never known the like of. (113)

But Clarissa wants gathering. So she organizes the party with a hope that she could make herself known among the people. Every person has their goal. Doris Kilman has religion; Richard has his duty but for herself nothing. Thus, organizing party is the means for her to expose herself. But she always feels, her self is absent in the party. She is completely hollow inside:

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 felt 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 stairs. Every time she gave a party she had this feeling of being something not herself, and that everyone was unreal in one way; much more real in 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, things that needed an effort; possible to go much deeper. But not for her; not yet anyhow. (124).

Women by nature are showy. They want to expose their beauty to the people. Perhaps they think this is their way to conquer others. Clarissa is also no exception. Organizing party is her objective to expose her beauty. Moreover, prime minister is going to visit her party:

And now Clarissa escorted her prime minister down the room, prancing, sparkling, with the stateliness of her grey hair. She wore earrings, and a silver-green mermaid's dress. Lolloping on the waves and braiding her tresses she seemed, having that gift still; to be; to exist; to sum it all up in the moment as she passed; turned, caught her scarf in some other woman's dress, unhitched it, laughed, all with the most perfect ease and air of a creature floating in its element.(126)

But her aging fades away her beauty. She just welcomes her guests and interacts with them:

But age had brushed her; even as mermaid might behold in her glass the setting sun on some very clear evening over the waves. There was a breath of tenderness; her severity, her prudery, her woodenness were all warmed through now, and she had about her as she said goodbye to the thick gold-laced man who was doing his best, and good luck to him, to look important, and inexpressible dignity; an exquisite cordiality; as if she wished the whole world well, and must now, being on the very verge and rim of things, take her leave. So she made him think. (126)

Anyway, Clarissa has interest on art. Other incoming people in her party praise her for her love of art:

That was the bond between them, and Hutton (a very bad poet) always felt that Mrs Dalloway was far the best of the great ladies who took an interest in an art. It was odd how strict she was. About music she was purely impersonal. (128)

Clarissa enjoys the compliments from the various people in her party. So, she welcomes them. After all she loves society:

It is angelic- it is delicious of you to have come!' she said. She loved Lords; she loved youth, and Nancy, dressed at enormous expense by the greatest artists in Paris, stood there looking as if her body had merely put forth, of its own accord, a green frill. (129)

Clarissa loves her childhood friend Sally Seton. She doesn't like Sally marrying a bald man. She feels it was a bond that leads to death. Thus her identification of her own desire for death counts Sally also:

And Clarissa remembered having to persuade her not to denounce him at family prayers- which she was capable of doing with her daring, her

recklessness, her melodramatic love of being the centre of everything and creating scenes, and it was bound, Clarissa used to think, to end in some awful tragedy; her death; her martyrdom; instead of which she had married, quite unexpectedly, a bald man with a large buttonhole who owned, it was said, cotton mills at Manchester. And she had five boys!
(132)

Death is so strong for Clarissa that she thinks it's only the means to get rid of all troubles. And coincidentally the news of Septimus's death arrives at her party. Though she is annoyed to hear the news of the death, she feels satisfactory in her heart because of her own affiliation with death. She feels Septimus got rid of from these worldly troubles:

What business had the Bradshaws to talk of death at her party? A young man had killed himself. And they talked of it at her 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 had flashed the ground; through him, blundering, bruising, went the rusty spikes. There he lay with a thud, thud, thud in his brain, and then a suffocation of blackness. So she saw it. But why had he done it? And the Bradshaws talked of it at her party. (133)

However, she feels pleased to hear that news because of her own affiliation to death. She feels Septimus had got rid of the troubles of life:

This he had preserved. Death was defiance. Death was an attempt to communicate, people feeling the impossibility of reaching the centre which, mystically, evaded them; closeness drew apart; rapture faded; one was alone. There was an embrace in death. (134)

Clarissa gets profound happiness in her heart when she hears the news of Septimus's death though she was annoyed to hear it. She feels that she has achieved death in the form of Septimus who has accomplished her desire. Thus her strong identification of death makes her feel glad in her heart:

The young man killed himself; but she did not pity him, with the clock striking the hour, one, two, three, she did not pity him, with all this going on. There! The old lady had put out her light! The whole house was dark now with this going on, she repeated, and the words came to her, fear no more the heat of the sun. She must go back to them. But what an extraordinary night! She felt somehow very like him- the young man who had killed himself. She felt glad that he had done it; thrown it away while they went on living. (135)

Thus, with Septimus's death, Clarissa also died spiritually. In this regard, Septimus is Clarissa's double, another self of Clarissa. Though she lives physically, her soul is dead. She lives but with the emptiness around her. Her frustrations in her heart make her inscrutable soul:

It ended in a transcendental theory which, with her horror of death, allowed her to believe, or say that she believed, that since our apparitions, the part of us which appears, are so momentary compared with the other, the unseen part of us, which spreads wide, the unseen might survive, be recovered somehow attached to this person or that, or even haunting certain places, after death. (111)

Thus, Clarissa represses her 'self' to adjust in the society wearing the mask of perfect hostess. And she feels that the essence to live is useless. Hence she lives with social frivolities making her soul dead

CHAPTER 4

Conclusion: Mid-life Crisis Leads to Spiritual Death of Clarissa

Clarissa Dalloway, in the novel *Mrs Dalloway*, is characterized by the deadness of soul. The deadness of soul is brought by the mid-life crisis. As mid-life crisis includes feeling of emptiness, isolation from children, memory of the past youth, unhappy marriage, inability to enjoy leisure time, sophisticated social norms and values, Clarissa undergoes all these crises in her middle-age. All these crises leave more or less deep impression on the mind of people. Therefore, the people are psychologically affected. They exhibit the behaviors in accordance with their psychological effect. And Virginia Woolf, in this regard, is keen to explore the psychological aspects of her characters, especially of her female characters. Clarissa in this connection exhibits the behaviors which show that she is a typical female mid-life character.

The whole novel is the depiction of inner reality of Clarissa Dalloway. We find her involvement in outer world. She struggles hard to adapt herself to her outer world. But her inner reality frequently tussles with her outer reality, and thus she has a feeling of spiritual vacuity. The feeling of spiritual vacuity comes because of her failure to make balance between these two worlds.

As a middle-aged woman, with a grown up daughter, she has an immense zest for life. She has the capacity to enjoy life and this is a significant aspect of her character. She has divine vitality and gives frequent parties. She likes to visit people, to lunch with them to, and to meet them and invite them. She loves to bring people together, and loves to hear them talking. She's a sense of comedy that was really exquisite, but she needed people, always people, always to bring it out, with the inevitable result that she frittered

her time away, lunching, dining, giving those incessant parties of hers, talking nonsense, saying things she didn't mean, blunting the edge of her mind, losing her discrimination.

Giving parties is one way for her to be adapted in the society. But she feels and realizes that hosting parties is only the way for her to forget her emptiness. Her life lacks purpose and direction. She loves life, considers it good and enjoyable, but her life is aimless without meaning and significance. She is, therefore, often dissatisfied and unhappy. She has no cause and ideal. Doris Kilman has such an ideal - service of god, William Bradshaw has such an ideal- the sense of proportion, the crowds of people moving through the London street have such an ideal- the king, their greatness and glory, even her husband, Richard has an ideal, a purpose- the care of the poor and the suffering. But Clarissa has no such ideal, no such cause to direct, guide and impart form and meaning to her existence. She gives parties and brings people together, but she doesn't know why.

Clarissa, sometimes, thinks about her love with Peter Walsh, who loved her before she married Richard. Though she married Richard, she has always loved Peter and she still loves him. This love of Peter Walsh is a part and parcel of her being, the one experience which has left indelible marks on her soul. Whenever, she thinks of the past, she thinks of Peter Walsh. Her agitation is uncontrollable, when Peter comes to her unexpectedly after a long absence in India. She couldn't control her emotions for Peter and goes to the extent of kissing him. She has a vivid recollection of every one of his movements and gestures, and a hundred details of the days they had passed together at Bourton. She did not marry him and the refusal caused her intense spiritual anguish because Peter was too possessive. She feels if she had married Peter, he would have possessed her soul, and not allowed her that independence, the spiritual privacy, that 'attic room', which she craved for, and which Richard allows her. Thus she sacrifices her

female virtue for the sake of her spiritual privacy. This gives her the intense pain in her heart.

Clarissa's zest for life, her vitality, is reflected in her sense of beauty. She loves the fine June morning, the beauty of nature, trees, flowers, birds, a bright sunny day, and even the shops of London and the traffic that moves along the London streets. It is her sense of beauty that makes her hate all that is ugly. It is one of the reasons she hates Doris Kilman in her green mackintosh and umbrella. Miss Kilman symbolizes for her all that is ugly and repulsive in nature and the world of man. Her hatred of Miss Kilman causes her almost a physical pain.

Her hatred for Kilman is the cause of her daughter's intimacy with her, because she feels that Doris is taking away the love and affection of her daughter from her. She does not like her beautiful daughter in such intimate contact with coarse, vulgar woman. She feels extreme pain in her heart when she finds her daughter detached from her due to Kilman. Especially in the middle-age, every woman wants their child in their grip. But it was not in Clarissa's favor. Kilman's religion possesses the soul of her daughter, Elizabeth. This is the reason she prefers loneliness and isolation from her parents. Therefore, Clarissa shudders at the name of love and religion.

Clarissa feels the deadness of her spirit when she feels that she lacks the knowledge. Her deadness of spirit increases due to her womanliness. It is due to womanliness she is incapable to retain or distinguish between facts. There was a time when she liked to discuss politics, and poetry, and literature, and the outside world counted much with her. But gradually and increasingly she has undergone, "deadness of soul". She increasingly frittered away her energies in social trivialities, has lost her taste for books, has made no efforts at a deeper understanding of life, and so that now she cannot distinguish between, "Richard's Armenians or Albanians". There is certain

vagueness, certain muddle-headedness about her minds: they are all indifferent to fact.

Society always demands the essential womanliness in women. Therefore, they are supposed to take the good care of their husband and children. Though Peter's love is central fact to Clarissa's life, she is also a loving wife and affectionate mother. She loves her husband and is faithful to him both in her actions and thoughts. She loves him and it is a pleasure for her to accept a present from him. She loves him and admires him because he is practical and successful and because he allows her that 'spiritual privacy', which she regards priceless. It is for his sake that she gives parties, and tries to please people who might be useful to him. She is equally proud of her daughter and introduces her to Peter Walsh. Despite these, she feels some sort of emptiness in her heart. As Sally Seton, her childhood friend, and she take marriage as a catastrophe, she feels unhappy with her married life. This feeling comes to her when she thinks that she has lost her identity working for the happiness of her husband and her daughter only.

Clarissa is wearing the mask of 'perfect hostess' so as to ascertain her existence. But she feels it is the symbol of insincerity, the triviality, the hypocrisy of upper class social life. She is referred to as 'a prude', cold and hard, as having something priggish about her. These are the qualities of the world she moves in, they are but the reflections of its social snobbery, frivolity and conventionality. Thus, Clarissa feels her existence in the society is meaningless.

Clarissa's anxieties about her existence make her opt for death. But she didn't die. Septimus Warren Smith, a shell-shocked neurotic, dies in place of her. He is Clarissa's double in the sense that he is the objectification of the deadness of her soul. Together, they constitute a terrible indictment of the materialistic society in which they live and move, and which causes the 'the death of the soul.'

All these crises in the middle-period of Clarissa's life make her spiritually dead. She exalts appearances, honor, achievement, civilization but lacks depth of feeling and understanding. Her life, as that of the world she moves in, is lived on a superficial plane. She is painfully conscious of her own spiritual sterility, of the lack of purpose and direction in her life. And she turns to social triviality and frivolity- she gives incessant parties in order to forget her spiritual emptiness for the time being. She is compelled to live with her repressed 'self' for the superficial notion of the society. Thus, with her failure to make the balance between her inner and outer world, Clarissa concludes her life spiritually though she lives physically.

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