

**Virginia Woolf: Authority of Authorship in High Modernism with
reference to Mrs. Dalloway**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled Virginia Woolf: Authority of Authorship in High Modernism with Reference to Mrs. Dalloway is a record of first hand research work done by me during the period of my study in the year 2016-2017 and that this dissertation has not formed the basis for the award of any other Degree, Diploma, Associate ship, Fellowship, or other similar title.

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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the dissertation entitled Virginia Woolf: Authority of Authorship in High Modernism with Reference to Mrs. Dalloway by Sunita Chettri for the award of M.A. degree is a record of research work done by the candidate under my supervision during the period of her study (2016-2017) and that the dissertation has not formed the basis for the award of any other Degree, Diploma, Associate ship, Fellowship or other similar title and that this dissertation represents independent work on the part of the candidate.

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ABSTRACT

Modernism gives a new way of ideas and impression to know the world at the time when it has appeared after the horrific scenario of World War I. Emergence of modernism has brought huge changes in every field so has tried to shape the new world. It rejects the past artistic conventions in literature. The writers like T.S Eliot, James Joyce, Ezra Pound and Virginia Woolf are considered to be a central figure of modernism. Virginia Woolf is the prominent figure of modernism; she is mostly famous for her features of Self- referential which is basic to modernism. Woolf was novelist as well as a professional literary critic. In Mrs. Dalloway, Virginia Woolf uses the features of modernism. The writer speaks about the inner self and consciousness of Clarissa Dalloway. So, in this way, the novel is studied from the perspective of psychological theory and sociological theory to search the deeper meaning in the novel. The novel is far from the traditional sense of action, plot, sub- plots as Woolf uses her new style of writing in the novel.

Keywords: Modernism, consciousness, self- referential, psychological, sociological.

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Virginia Woolf: Authority of Authorship in High Modernism with Reference to Mrs. Dalloway

INTRODUCTION

Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) was one of the best known English novelist, playwright, biographer and feminist. She was born in a highly cultured and educated family in London, her father Sir Leslie Stephen was a well-known critic, historian, scholar and author of a huge number of critical, historical and philosophical essays. The influence of her eminent father is remarkable. It was from him that she takes interest and develop intense love for literature. Woolf was a creative writer and with each of her new novel the style also changed, defining and designing the literary tenets of Modernism. Her letters and memories expose previews of Woolf at the middle of English literary principles during the Bloomsburg era. she started her literary career in 1905 hence, she began to write and analyze critical reviews in the Times Literary Supplement and few other publications.

Virginia's struggle to grow into a writer was made more challenging by dominant beliefs about the dealing of mental disorder. In lay terms, Virginia suffered periodically from a type of manic- depressive illness. In the thirty years between Virginia's marriage and her death in 1941 she wrote fifteen books, this was an amazing achievement for somebody who was plagued by mental illness. Throughout her life time she was haunted by psychological instability that she had no control over and concluded her life in the form of committing suicide, her mind even though plagued with disagreeable memories of the past and at times in a state of senselessness was perhaps the most fascinating part about her.

Woolf's some of the most important novels are: *The Voyage Out* was published in 1915 and the second one *Night and Day* came out in 1919, both the novels are largely traditional in technique. Some of her other major works includes *Jacob's Room* (1922), *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) and *To the Lighthouse* (1928), these novels clearly reveal that she was coming of age as a novelist. Certain features of this novel give a clear indication that she was on her way to adopt the Stream of consciousness method.

Virginia Woolf novels usually talks about the women life and female characters not enjoying life. For instance, in her novels, *Mrs. Dalloway*, *Jacob's Room* and *To the Lighthouse*, in these novels the main character are women and they always seem to be longing for the past and gazing into the future that looks less bright. In every novel of Woolf, we feel that she is placing herself in the shoes of her characters. In *Mrs. Dalloway* we find the same situation where the main character is women i.e. Clarissa Dalloway who is questioning where she is at in life. Clarissa is bored with life and questioning whether she would have been better off marrying Peter Walsh instead of Richard Dalloway.

Woolf's best known nonfiction works, *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and *Three Guineas* (1938) observe the complications that woman playwrights and intellectuals confronted because of men and women unequal legalized and financial power in society and education. In *A Room of One's Own* Woolf observe the work of earlier women playwrights and looks forward for the time when women will be free from any oppression and poverty. Woolf is well thought to be a foremost modernizer in the English language, she investigated with Stream of Consciousness technique, essential psychosomatic as well as sensitive motives of characters in her works. After world war II Woolf's was shattered and her status was declined but with the growth of Feminist Criticism in 1970s her position has been re- established.

Woolf uniqueness as a fiction writer have a tendency to obscure her significant strength she is arguably the major lyrical novelist in the English language. Her novels are highly

experimental, a narrative, frequently monotonous and commonplace is rejected sometimes almost softened in the character's sympathetic consciousness. Woolf has often been credited with stream of consciousness writing together with her modernist contemporaries like James Joyce and Joseph Conrad.

Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) centres on the hard work of Clarissa Dalloway a middle- aged woman to organize a party even as her life is paralleled with that of Septimus Warren Smith, a working- class veteran who has returned from the First World War bearing deep Psychological scars.

Mrs. Dalloway is a novel that is hypothesized around modernism, it can be noted that the author uses the modernist technique to create the literature, to narrate, to deliver themes to the novel and its background. The author also tries to break the ideas that were in such a manner never seen before World War I. In the aftermath of the war the worlds shift, with the world, literature and modalities of literacy forms also change which in turn gets reflected in *Mrs. Dalloway* which undergoes changes documenting a woman's life.

This dissertation proposes to place its central concern within the understanding of time. The authority of authorship becomes visible when we begin to explore our prominent characters and their treatment of temporal boundaries vis a vis Virginia Woolf's novelistic endeavors that sharpen and broaden over time.

Bernard Blackstone has given his important views on the time factor of *Mrs. Dalloway* that it is an experiment with time, he says: There are three kinds of time. First, it is the "mechanical or clock- time" measured by the clocks, Secondly, the psychological time or the inner time. Thirdly it is the historic time. (Blackstone 3). Woolf's writing bear to the ways in which time begins to assume unprecedented significance.

Mrs. Dalloway was firstly to be called 'The Hours' as its working title. In 1998 Michael Cunningham's novel *The Hours* was published drawing out the significance of the time yet again years after the original draft of Woolf came upon the scene. Time plays an important role in the novel as title itself is *The Hours*, along with time Mrs. Dalloway also play an important part. Cunningham has used Woolf's novel as a source of motivation. In first chapter we find the conception of psychological time and how it is important in Modernism; In second chapter this concept is explore and applied in the work of Virginia Woolf. It also explores the methods or the skills that Woolf uses in her novel *Mrs. Dalloway* and which is also followed by Cunningham's novel *The Hours* in order to demonstrate parallels and dissimilarities between *Mrs. Dalloway* and *The Hours*. Mrs. Dalloway narrates the events of one particular day in June 1923. The title itself indicates that time play an important role. Woolf was experimenting with the notion of time. The sequence of events of the day is firmly followed. It is highlighted by common situations to the striking of clocks, which permits the reader to time almost any events objectively or exactly so there is no summary. All the events are open in conversation or in the consciousness of a character.

The main exemption to this attempt to directly repeat a day as seen by numerous people at diverse times is that there are flashbacks. A fact about the past of the characters is frequently given by their own memoirs, probably awakened by sights, senses and meetings. The novel clearly talks about time and about the effect of time on the responsiveness of the present and an effort to find original method of representing the flow of time. In a novel the action is incomplete temporarily to a particular day in the life of its chief character, especially to a particular place London and expressively to the dealings of Mrs. Dalloway the character with a few other people. As the action is existing in the main through the minds of these few persons, and as the mind ranges without limitation of time and space. The novel is mainly concerned about the character's past life rather than present of its particular day which

steadily moves towards the long held promise of a party, as a result the narration does not take place in a chronological order, sometimes it talk about present and sometimes it take back to past there is much backward and forward movement also known as flashback technique.

Virginia Woolf broke the traditional chronological narration as the treatment of time is an important issue in her fiction. Especially the writers of Modernism were influenced by Henry Bergson's concepts of time. Woolf's as one of the modern writer was strongly influenced by this concept. Woolf supported Henry Bergson's concept of "duree" (2): the flowing of life that never subsists, with birth, growth, death, the changing of the season's progress in an unceasing, mechanical rhythm. But she gave her own understanding of "double-nature of time" (3) as proposed by Bergson. In *Time and Free Will* (1888) Bergson had come up with two different concepts of time. Historical time which is exterior and linear was measured in terms of the spatial distance travelled by a pendulum or the hands of a clock, and psychological time which is interior and subjective was measured by the relative emotional strength of a moment. Time, according to Henry James is:

That side of the novelist's effort- the side of most difficulty and thereby of most dignity- which consists in giving the sense of duration, of the lapse and accumulation of time. This is altogether to my view the stiffest problem that the artist in fiction has to tackle. (349).

In Woolf's novel *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), we discover from the main characters of the novel Septimus Smith and Clarissa Dalloway that their present moment is evoking the past memories and the past time which is effecting their present condition. These both characters are somehow interlinked to each other in a way. In the novel each character is seen as a result of various experiences that he or she went through. Clarissa rejection to marriage proposal of Peter Walsh is the result of all her later thought and action, similarly the effect of war and experience influenced the present situation of the character Septimus.

Woolf wrote in her article *Modern Fiction* (1919): “She regarded Modernism as an improvement to the style of writing of the previous epoch. Modern writers put emphasis on the spirit in their fiction whereas traditional writers are regarded as Materialistic and are concerned with the body.” (21-49).

The novel *Mrs. Dalloway* is structured through time rather than chapters. In the novel Clarissa Dalloway is organizing a party which she has to throw in the evening as already mentioned above. We find various parts of the plot in novel. Like Septimus who suffers from psychological illness and his wife is taking care of him and also the Peter Walsh visiting his first love Clarissa after coming back from India. There are other various parts of plot which are interlinked with each other through time and space.

Virginia Woolf as she is a modern writer and uses one of the major techniques in her writing i.e. Stream of Consciousness. It is also known as Interior Monologue a dramatic technique it is happening within the mind of individual, this technique is used by various modern writers in their work, and the main point is to reflect the soul or psyche of the character. Woolf not only shows mirror to the reality of society but also the picture of people’s mind.

The term Stream of Consciousness was first coined by philosopher and psychologist William James in “*The Principles of Psychology*” (1890): “Consciousness, then, does not appear to itself as chopped up in bits...it is nothing joined; it flows. A ‘river’ or a ‘stream’ is the metaphors by which it is most naturally described. In talking of it hereafter, let’s call it the stream of thoughts, consciousness, or subjective life” (James, 3)

Later, the technique stream of consciousness was widely adopted during the twentieth century by novelist like James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Dorothy Richardson and many others. It is often connected with the Modernist Movement. Woolf in her novel *Mrs. Dalloway* she used this technique excellently by putting herself inside of the main character Clarissa

Dalloway. James Joyce also used this technique in his novel *Ulysses* (1922). His novel describes a day in the pre-war Dublin. The novel is also considered to be an example of Modernism as well as Stream of Consciousness. Nevertheless, Woolf was not much influenced by Joyce's use of Stream of Consciousness, she says:

Ulysses fails because of the comparative poverty of the writer's mind; we might say simply and have done with it. But it is possible to press a little further and wonder whether we may not refer our sense of being in a bright yet narrow room, confined and shut in rather than enlarged and set free, to some limitation imposed by the method as well as by the mind. (*Modern Fiction*: 6).

Woolf considers that Joyce's work is narrow and locked in because the technique of stream of consciousness in Joyce's novel is focused only on one character at a time it doesn't relate one character that of another character. In contrast, Woolf uses stream of consciousness as a melted ice that flows through her storyline and attach her characters.

Virginia Woolf as a critic was playful and innovative, she was called as a great critic by her contemporaries and even several researchers have make an attempt to examine Woolf as a critic. In her essay *Modern Fiction*, she criticizes H.G. Wells, Arnold Bennett and John Galsworthy and mention and praises Thomas Hardy, Joseph Conrad and William Henry Hudson. Woolf says on Criticism:

Life escapes; and perhaps without life nothing else is worthwhile. It is a confession of vagueness to have to make use of such a figure as this, but we scarcely better the matter by speaking, as critics are prone to do, of reality. Admitting the vagueness which afflicts all criticism of novels, let us hazard the opinion that for us at this moment the form of fiction most in vogue more often misses than secures the thing we seek. Whether we call it life or spirit, truth or reality, this, essential thing, has

moved off, or on, and refuses to be contained any longer in such ill-fitting vestments as we provide. (Modern Fiction, 5).

Woolf states of criticism as being unclear rather than actual. Virginia Woolf as an excellent narrator she presents the characters' heads and hearts with the same shades as one does himself, we find her character appearing more alive and we are able to participate with them in the most human sense. Therefore, Woolf is a master of human heart. The characters are not given any description by her but she gives voice to thoughts of the characters as well as what others think of him or her. Thus, each characters are revealed from various view points and the reader is free to conclude about that character from their varied thoughts which also give the reader satisfaction of being involved rather than being only a mere spectator. The treatment of characters and incidents in Mrs. Dalloway is essentially psychological in nature. Virginia Woolf applied the theory of Sociological /Historical Analysis and Psychological Analysis in her novel Mrs. Dalloway. Further elaborated in such terms- Sociological Criticism is literary criticism focused to understanding literature in its major social background. It symbolizes social concepts through a sociological methodology and analyses what the role society accomplish in literature and how the literature works in society.

In Mrs. Dalloway we find the characters are deeply aware of their social standing, as British Society was very conservative and hierarchical. Woolf uses novel as a powerful weapon to criticize the society of her period, in novel the main characters Clarissa and Septimus raises their personal concern, through Clarissa Woolf present the suppressed social and economic situation of women and Septimus present the treatment of those driven by depression to the limits of saneness. Mrs. Dalloway give a picture of a rapidly changing society and its narration reflects these changes.

Woolf's critical attention is not only focused on individuals but on the particular class and their values at a particular historical moment, therefore we find the nature of historical criticism. Woolf was writing in the wake of World War I. her writing construct and reflects the anxiety of a world, resting on the precipice of destruction. Dalloway centres on the aftermath of WWI, in detail Woolf discovers the incapability of a governing party to states the psychological concerns of its citizens in transitioning from war into harmony and failure of the British government to remedy the effects its pre-war attitudes had on people's lives.

Psychoanalysis is a method of reading the mind and considering mental and emotional syndromes based on examining the role of the unconscious mind. it was first originated by Sigmund Freud and later the concept was brought into literary field by twentieth century novelist. Virginia Woolf uses this evidence all through Mrs. Dalloway by presenting the internal feelings of the characters and their thoughts to travel back and reflect their emotional experiences.

The novel is based on interpretation of Freudian Psychoanalysis and we may also have deeper understanding of Woolf's view of life in this novel. As we are discussing the question of authorship and authority it is a pertinent inquiry to invest one-self into. At the end the novel retells us that each person must assign meaning to worth of his or her own mental life, only by simultaneous growth between bodies and mind can we begin a harmonious relationship with each other in society.

Virginia Woolf, is well thought-out to be one of the finest of Modernist Writers, her personal life is almost as interesting as her fiction. Though she was troubled by mental instability throughout her life, she was remembered today because of her great works.

Literature Review

Virginia Woolf is an aspiring and creative writer she wrote novels as well as nonfiction books. Woolf also wrote many innovative popular works, which is usually difficult for critics and admirers to decide which is her best works among all.

Woolf highlight the dual role of author as a critic, her conventions is usually very haphazard and rough form which seeks for logical development. She wrote “to state of knowledge is pointless, all is investigating and quest”.

Henry James in his essay *The Art of Fiction* had confirmed that “The only reason for the existence of the novel was because it tried to represent life” (Henry James, *Art of Fiction*, 1884) life reached a kind of exposure without reformation or concession, touched truth. In differing Woolf conveys out that the novel wanted to make us understand that it is giving a whole and real interpretation of life, she also pointed that the novel is only the form of art.

On *Mrs. Dalloway and the Social System* published by Modern Language Association, Alex Zwerdling criticizes the social system. Virginia Woolf’s provoking statement about her objective in writing *Mrs. Dalloway* has regularly been ignored. Woolf’s own techniques as a social critic seriously avoid information or direct statement, for her fiction is absorbed rather than active art. Woolf’s social criticism is usually conveyed in the language of statement rather than in direct commentary.

On *Virginia Woolf and the Real World* Alex Zwerdling says Woolf is a author focus to the traumas of life in Britain stuck between the wars, well placed to clear the requirements for social reorganization and yet finally pushed to hopelessness by the seeming failure of every program she thought in. It is a striking and original portrait though not everyone will find it an exact likeness. Zwerdling's purpose is to examine "Woolf’s account of this complex relationship between the interior life and the life of society" (Alex Zwerdling, P-3).

As Jean Alexander points out in *The Venture of Form in the Novels of Virginia Woolf's* that the idea of character needed a modification in the conception of fictional form, the natural forms of fiction writing could only put forward the struggles between truth and the conventions of form, could only propose the complication of character and life without actually rising the difficult issue of which form would be more acceptable for the novelist who wanted to capture and discover, in deepness, life further than the surface, as Woolf would have it. Woolf rejected the traditional concept of practice as the visual construction through which content was organized because this concept was mismatched with the vision of life the novel was supposed to convey.

As Karen L. Levenback states in her book *Virginia Woolf and the Great War*, she says: “living in the postwar world, a combatant, such as Septimus, who lacked a visible wound was expected ‘to get on with it’ unobtrusively and discreetly” (Karen L. Levenback, P-61).

Therefore, Septimus behaviour by the social order can be understood as a kind of disloyalty in society’s rejection to freely admit its mistake for comprising countries in the war, and ignoring the psychosomatic effects war had on returning veterans.

In John R. Maze’s book entitled *Virginia Woolf: Feminism, Creativity and Unconscious* the writer states that in Virginia Woolf’s novels “there are mysterious pages that cannot be explained rationally by anything else in the text, and about which Orthodox literary criticism can say nothing informative. The limitation derives from the currently fashionable principle forbidding interpretation of anything in the text by reference to anything not in it. Such passages can be illuminated by reference to the author’s life history and unconscious mental life, insofar as that can be inferred from other, independent, evidence. Psychoanalysis, for its part, can benefit because the mental mechanisms involved in creativity are laid out for

inspection on the printed page, rather than glimpsed in the analysis of confused associations to dream” (John R. Maze, 6).

As per the narration is simulated in the mind of one character or another it is often unreal and uneven, there is no narration to convey a clear and systematized story and the description sounds very nearby to the thought progression taking place in character’s head.

Chapter I

Mrs. Dalloway and Mrs. Woolf: The Question of Authority

Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway speaks out much about the warfare and the post war years about human feelings and relationships, and about the dissatisfaction that would distress individual and united life in the period between the two world wars. Above all we recognize is a shattered world and shattered feelings driven by the negative effects of war on both the human perception and the human personality. The men and women we meet in Mrs. Dalloway are victims of their time physically and expressively injured and severely paralyzed by the authority of power that is beyond their knowledge. Mrs. Dalloway shows the most vivid and heart-breaking practice and misery of the battlegrounds of the European War which caused destruction, how the soldiers who survived the ravages of War, then fought unenthusiastically to understand their civilian surroundings, how they managed or failed to cope with the realities and the demands of the public society. One of the best examples from the novel is Septimus Warren Smith, harmed soldier who has returned from the Western Front, he is seen struggling eagerly to come to terms with and then to overcome his experience of war and death and then to dissatisfaction and mental illness.

Septimus Smith a World War I soldier in his thirties undergoes from shell shock or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), he was once also an aspiring poet but after recruiting in the war for idealistic reasons and death of his close friend and Officer Evans, Septimus became unable to feel emotion, at times the very atmosphere of London becomes extremely threatening for him:

In the street, vans roared past him; brutality blared out on placards; men were trapped in mines; women burnt alive; and once a maimed file of lunatics being exercised or displayed for the diversion of the populace (who laughed aloud), ambled and nodded

and grinned past him, in the Tottenham Court Road, each half apologetically, yet triumphantly, inflicting his helpless woe. And would he go mad? (M.D, 135-136).

Septimus married Lucrezia while posted in Milan. Septimus feels condemned by human nature and is often unhappy and thinks that he has been condemned by the world to die for his failure to feel. In his more intense hallucinations he imagines himself surrounded by flames, or as a prophet with a divine message. Though the two characters Clarissa and Septimus never meet they act as doubles in the novel.

Virginia Woolf Mrs. Dalloway deals with the two equivalent designs consist of Mrs. Dalloway's gathering event and retired warrior, Septimus Smith suicide. Though both of the character have never seen each other in whole storyline but they are coming nearer which can be feel by readers. Septimus Smith is not only Mrs Dalloway's duple, but also Virginia Woolf's duple. As Woolf herself commit suicide to end her life. Woolf describes how she move toward to write this novel, she wrote: "That in the first version Septimus, who later is intended to be her double, had no existence; and that Mrs Dalloway was originally to kill herself, or perhaps merely to die at the end of her party" (Briggs 141).

In Mrs. Dalloway the atmospheres and the character has been very well established. In precise, Septimus and Clarissa are appearing to be matching part of each other. Septimus refused to face the reality of life; therefore, he removed himself from the physical world. He is confine to the limitations of his own mind and survives in an interior world where he understands and overhears things that others do not. In contrary Clarissa is very much indulge with the physical or the real world, her life is continual visit and meeting with society. Whereas it may be throwing events or celebrations or intermingling with upper class society. Woolf intended to show these two character and their different role i.e. Clarissa to be the voice of intention and Septimus the voice of insanity. However, both of them are quite

similar in action and in thought. Also both characters have same taste of liking for Shakespeare, and a fear of domination. Septimus fears oppression by the world while Clarissa fears oppression by her standard of living and past.

In drawing a connection between the two seemingly distinct characters of Clarissa and Septimus it becomes clear that Woolf might have been trying to make a statement about depression/ suicide. Septimus whose mental state is a result of conditions over which he had no control as a result he killed himself. In contrast Clarissa whose unhappiness is a result of decisions she made, continues to live with the consequences.

Virginia Woolf began to write and comprehend Mrs. Dalloway in 1922 she had projected herself into the novel. Woolf says that Mrs. Dalloway saw the reality or the fact, while Septimus Smith saw the reality of insanity. Septimus and Clarissa are the two dissimilar sides of Woolf, they both are doubles of the writer. The whole story has been depicted after World War I and its effect which continued for a long time. Septimus with his suicide challenged the authority, in the novel when Woolf manifest about his challenge to the doctor authority, she also uprooted her own unhappiness and real life experience; she had been prescribed by doctor for complete rest, she had been enforced to take on rest cure, which involved separation, rich food, reading and writing, believed to excite the patient dangerously, were forbidden that means no intellectual activities. For Virginia, such prohibitions were a torture.

When Virginia Woolf was framing plans for the composition of Mrs. Dalloway, Woolf came across the death of her friend Kitty Maxse, which follow on October 8, 1922 Woolf read about the passing away of Kitty, a friend of her Pre- Bloomsbury youth according to the information she was died on October 4 after falling over handrail. Woolf mania with Kitty's secretive death and her ultimate unconfirmed conclusion that Kitty committed suicide may have lessened from her long standing obsession with self-killing. Woolf tried to commit

suicide and end her life twice before 1922 first in 1904 and again in 1913 in addition Woolf creating a fictional suicide. When concluding that Kitty killed herself; Woolf was framing plans for the structure of Mrs. Dalloway. Woolf wrote, “Mrs. Dalloway has branched into a book; and I adumbrate here a study of insanity and suicide: the world seen by the sane and the insane side by side – something like that. Septimus Smith? – is that a good name?” (Diary 2: 207)

Another suicidal dive echoes with Septimus’ in Woolf’s Mrs. Dalloway. Woolf’s nephew Quentin Bell states in his biography that Woolf first make an attempt to suicide by jumping out of a friend’s window in 1904. In 1910 Woolf had written a letter to Vanessa Bell during her confinement, she expressed her feeling to commit suicide: “I shall soon have to jump out of a window.... My God! What a mercy to be done with it!” (Woolf 431). Woolf is planning to throw herself out of widow but in contrast she come across the news of her friend Kitty Maxse’s death, who commit suicide.

“Mimicking Woolf’s failed and her friend Kitty Maxse’s successful and iconographic Victorian suicide, Septimus’ self - annihilation serves as a nodal point at which various biographical and representational anxieties interest. Moreover, the act of penning the event was for Woolf, a tiresome and troublesome task. Her difficulty with the scene, which she revised substantially, reflected a greater, ongoing struggle to write Septimus’ insanity.” (Hoffman, 178)

Septimus Warren Smith’s suicide is one of the most unforgettable in Literature and though Woolf appears to have little in common with her distressed character whose madness is recognized to his involvement in the Great War. Septimus is among her most autobiographical characters; the one who comes and closet to revealing the wildly shifting moods of manic depression. With his character Woolf is compare with her own unbalanced

and insecure situation of mind. When Woolf was preparing to write novel Mrs. Dalloway she projected the novel as a “Study of insanity and suicide the world seen by the sane and the insane side by side.” (Gay 107)

It is remarkable to notice here that Woolf had originally intended to make Mrs. Dalloway to commit suicide after the close of her party in the novel. Woolf in its place made an extraordinary twist by making Clarissa Dalloway to vicariously experience the death of Septimus in her consciousness. On the other hand, Septimus is nervous that the world no more holds any meaning for him, he suffers from hallucination speaking aloud with his friend Evans who died during the war and he also hears different kinds of voices. In Septimus we can see the typical sign of mental break down and when Dr. Bradshaw advises sending him to mental home for a rest cure, the same evening he throws himself out of the window. We find the horrific effect of World War I in Septimus Smith from his extreme expression of mental illness and in Clarissa Dalloway through her repressed emotional pain. Woolf signifies a society that communally feel pain, in spite of the individual’s best struggles to maintain a “perfectly upright and stoical bearing” (Woolf 9)

The factor that causes Woolf’s death instinct is the family tragedy that break her mentally, for example in 1895 death of her mother in 1904 her father died and in 1905 her brother died one after another follows the death of her family member which destroy her emotionally and became one of the reason for her mental illness. Woolf was wounded greatly by the death of her family members. In great pain she attempted suicide several times and also suffers from mental breakdowns. In her diary on October 25, 1920 she wrote: “Why is life so tragic; so like a little strip of pavement over an abyss” (Bell 72). The two world wars are also the reason for her traumatic experience. In her diary in 1920 she wrote, “Its life itself, I think sometimes, for us in our generation so tragic---- no newspaper placed without its shriek of agony from someone.... Unhappiness is everywhere; just beyond the door; or stupidity which

is worse” (Bell, 72-73). In World War II when she saw London was under the bomb she wrote to her friend; “And then the passion of my life, that is the city of London---- to see, London all blasted, that too ranked my heart” (Bell, 218).

Agreeing with the above exploration we discover the death instinct or the Thanatos redirected in Woolf’s works is the exterior of her desire for death, and it is clear that her death instincts is derived from her family and their death, as well as from the society and her teenage sexual sufferings. These are the causes that make her death drive grow greatly stronger than her life instinct. After Woolf uprooted her Thanatos into the novel, she also decides to commit suicide; she presented her life to understand the art of death leaving back the beauty of darkness to the readers.

THE LOSS OF SEXUAL DESIRE AND WOOLF’S OWN CHILDLESSNESS EUATED ON HER NOVEL MRS DALLOWAY

The loss of sexual desire in Woolf’s life is because of her sexual suffering during her teenage which is also uprooted in her most of the novels for example in Mrs. Dalloway we find the loss of any sexual needs in the hero and heroine. The sexual attack that she suffered in her teenage affects her totally and seriously which also results in her married life, Woolf and her husband Leonard Woolf were moreover a spiritual mate rather than physical. She was not able to respond to her husband desire, once she said to her husband that: “When you kissed me the other day... I feel no more than a rock.” (Woolf 8). Similarly, in the novel Mrs. Dalloway, the war and the society which adored power just like the sensual assault, made Septimus Warren Smith and Clarissa Dalloway dumb and loss their sexual desire.

Septimus had been married with Lucrezia Smith and they are together nearly from 5 years but they don’t have any child and Lucrezia desired to have a son very much but Septimus refusal make her dishearten the reason behind his refusal is the war which totally depressed him and

loss his sexual desire as well as ability to love. Likewise, Clarissa Dalloway is also incapable of having sexual want and reached her menopause; her narrow bed was just like a grave. Mrs. Dalloway used to sleep alone in the big bed covered with white sheet without anyone disturbance; she and her husband Richard no longer sleep together in the same bedroom. The sexual life of both the character Clarissa and Septimus had come to an end and they no longer have any desire or will of sexual pleasure to come back in their life. To the certain point, the effect of war which changes people's attitude may be the reason for the lack of desire. This also illustrate the effect of World War I which carried the psychological anxiety among people.

Mrs. Dalloway connection with Septimus is more apparent when we look upon Mrs. Dalloway as per a woman in menopause. Woolf's original intention in the novel is to show Mrs. Dalloway as a very depressed woman, therefore, at initially Woolf had thought of Mrs. Dalloway committing suicide or died at the end of the party but it was replaced by Septimus suicide. Mrs. Dalloway was so delicate to the suffering behind the disguise of cheerful surrounding that she is no longer able to have sensual pleasure, similarly the war, which affect the life of Septimus and which is also the reason behind his loss of desire to live and love. Therefore, in the novel we come through the kind of anxiety about sex and marriage that Septimus and Clarissa Dalloway had.

Quentin Bell Woolf's nephew in his biography *Virginia Woolf: A Biography* (1972), emphasis on Woolf's "aetherial" character as an individual. In place of exposing to research what is meant by the word "sexuality" when it is apply in association with work or literature, the critics of Bell's biography are immovable from Woolf sex life, mainly the hurt that apparently was shaped by George Duckworth's sexual attitude towards his half-sisters Virginia and Vanessa. Virginia in later life describes the behaviour of George and his sexual abuse towards them and in moments of being to Gerald Duckworth's pettings as well, but the

assumptions that her unfeelingness as a person and the “sexlessness” of her novels is the reason behind it and which can be found to be both rash and absurd, particularly meanwhile her sister Vanessa struggle with similar action but established in a different way. Certainly the sources of their sexuality were spread long before their involvements with the Duckworth.

Bell tells us as it turns out, that can be interpretation for the reasons of Woolf’s sexual “coolness.” Therefore, it will be very easy to move towards the conclusion that Virginia Woolf was ultimately a sexless woman and it may be the reason that her fiction itself consequently is sexless. Once Clive Bell husband of Vanessa and father of Clive Bell wrote:

Vanessa, Leonard and, I think, Virginia herself were inclined to blame George Duckworth. George certainly had left Virginia with a deep aversion to lust; but perhaps he did no more than inflame a deeper wound and confirm Virginia in her disposition to shrink from the crudities of sex, a disposition which resulted from some profound and perhaps congenital inhibition. I think that the erotic element in her personality was faint and tenuous (Bell 10).

Bell admits that Virginia’s connection with her husband is outside her coolness, he doesn’t remember the extent of their sexual events. Virginia shortly after her marriage with Leonard Woolf in a letter she writes: “but certainly I find the climax immensely exaggerated,” and Bell make reference to her consequently as “frigid.”

Virginia Woolf’s personal experience of trauma and her struggle with childlessness is reflected in her most of the novels. Woolf after her marriage in 1912 she wanted to have children, but in the face of her husband’s opposition she was forced to give up this wish. Though she was totally sad about the decision it was also the time in which she started her writing career and developed into a mature writer and for her creating novel is the main method by which she expressed her sorrow, regret, and anger about being childless. As

Woolf went over her exploration of life as a childless women and her novels traced the history of her miseries, awareness, change and ultimate development of spirit and imagination. Woolf as a creator of literature and her experiences as a childless woman are closely interrelated which explain her process of posttraumatic growth PTG.

In psychology the negative features of childlessness are often observed and discussed while the positive goods are ignored, while the idea of experiencing positive features of negative events has been a common theme in history, they emphasized that in using the term “posttraumatic growth,” they were concentrating on conditions of major crises rather than on mild stress, and on observing the consequent transformative life changes.

PTG provides an opportunity to recreate one’s way of thinking, i.e. through after one went a critical situation, one’s views or thoughts will be destroyed or changed and will be completely renewed. R.G. Tedeschi and L.G. Calhoun describe a PTG procedure using the likeness of an earthquake: “A psychologically seismic event can severely shake, threaten, or reduce to rubble many of the schematic structures that have guided understanding, decision making, and meaningfulness” (Conceptual Foundation 5).

Through the traumatic events and their aftershock one can follow the process of deconstruction and re-constructing of a new self. Likewise, life of Virginia Woolf is an exemplar; through her novels Woolf seek to overcome anxiety about her childless life and expresses unhappiness, regret, and anger on her barrenness.

All the way through the decades Woolf’s emotional disorder slowly became a major part of her writing, the relationship between Woolf’s failure to have children and the medical and social conditions surrounding motherhood in her period is often ignored to understand by the critics. Woolf living in post- Victorian England and through her experience of being childless she realized the power of patriarchy, which suppressed “improper” Women, further

she envisioned the meaning of becoming a mother, her own sexuality and the social and medical situation of the period. Woolf wanted a “proper” woman’s life but her redefining the childless self and the practice of questioning motherhood became her art and which eventually made her life.

Woolf is generally considered as a successful feminist but she failed in her own life to overcome patriarchy or to gain freedom from male - dominated belief in her writing, she was not a major and active member of the feminist movement whereas she constantly wanted ways for women to have a voice in her literature. Writing for Woolf is actually a great challenge for opposing the patriarchy and her revolt took the practice of helping to construct a female literary history. In *Thinking Back through Our Mothers* (1981), Jane Marcus defines Woolf’s boldness as a feminist writer:

She was so hostile to the patriarchy and felt that her anger was so present in all her efforts that no evidence of literary ‘success’ was assurance enough of acceptance, and she collapsed after sending her books to the printer” (Marcus 1). Her discussion of feminism arose only within her literature: “Woolf never developed this female literary history in a sustained, systematic, non -fictional form . . . (De Gay 62).

In Woolf’s writing we find her anger and fear about patriarchy which shaped the principle of her feminism, one of the reasons that bound Woolf to patriarchy is her desire for having children because the idea of wanting children evolves at different stages of a woman’s life. It is believed since centuries that women will gain “mother-power” after the attainment of motherhood, it is only by having a child that a woman could obtain a “power” to overpower men and defines her sex as female. In *Of Woman Born* (1995), Adrienne Rich explain that by having a child and becoming a mother, potential power arises from a woman, which is called “mother- power,” and is part of a “traditional of female power” (Woman 85).

Women who are oppressed, silenced and weak in a patriarchal society can gain power and respect only in the role of a mother therefore, women's sense of identity and independence are acquired entirely through the experience of being a mother. Only after becoming mother, a woman attains a patriarchal idealized gender identity. Nancy J. Chodorow in the *Reproduction of Mothering* (1999) states that: "... Women's mothering, like other aspects of gender activity, is a product of feminine role training and role identification. Girls are taught to be mothers, trained for nurturance, and told that they ought to mother" (Chodorow 31).

Furthermore, Iris Marion Young asserts that: "For centuries, identification with that power [female power] has bonded women to the patriarchal order, and while today its seductive hold on us is loosening, it still provides women a unique position with which to identify" (Young 84).

Virginia Woolf novels trace her emotional development as a woman writer. She started her writing career with *The Voyage Out* (1915) followed by *Night and day* (1919) which was innate from her traumatic experience of life and giving up all hopes of having children and the complex emotions about Victorian motherhood. Whereas, *Jacob's Room* (1922) expresses Woolf's sufferings in the setting of Victorian ideology and *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) displays the author's awareness of her own insanity, childlessness that raises questions about sexuality which we find in the novel *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* (1927). Woolf in order to realize the meaning of being woman and writing as a woman, analyses her sexual identity in these novels. Every single novels of Woolf marks the next step in her posttraumatic journey of spiritual growth and intellectual development.

In *Mrs. Dalloway* we find that Clarissa previous years is greatly sexualized however, her recent life as a mother and wife is deliberately missing sexual passion. Mrs. Dalloway is basically about a mother to Elizabeth and wife to Richard as the critic Mark Spilka put

forward that the novel has “no parental figures” (Spilka 20). In Mrs. Dalloway Woolf expresses her higher consciousness and anxiety about childlessness, we also find that Woolf often talk about her anxiety in relation to Vanessa Bell and her children. Woolf desired for happy married life alike Vanessa, who had three children. On January 2, 1923 Woolf wrote the following about Vanessa’s children in her diary:

“...what is it and why? A desire for children, I suppose; for Nessa’s life; for the sense of flowers breaking all round me involuntarily. Here’s Angelica- here’s Quentin and Julian.... They make my life seem a little bare sometime; and then my inveterate romanticism suggests an image of foreign ahead, alone, through the night: of suffering inwardly, stoically; of blazing my way through to the end- and so forth.... I said to myself... never pretend that the things you haven’t got are not worth having; good advice I think. At least it often comes back to me. Never pretend that children, for instance, can be replaced by other things.” (Woolf 221).

In this record Woolf states wanting her own children and exposes her jealousy of her sister’s successful maternal life, Vanessa’s life as a woman seems perfect to Virginia. In the same way in her novel Mrs. Dalloway, Lucrezia deeply wishes for children and envies people who have babies, she says: “She could not grow old and have no children” (Lucrezia 90). In contrary Septimus, coldly rejects her and his disapproval of life is emphasized by his choice not to have children. Septimus he doesn’t want to have children; on the other hand, his wife Lucrezia Smith hopes to have their children. Septimus refuses to have children because he believes: “One cannot bring children into a world like this. One cannot perpetuate suffering, or increase the breed of these lustful animals, who have no lasting emotions, but only whims and vanities, eddying them now this way, now that” (89). Virginia Woolf as herself battled against unreachable motherhood for her whole life hence, in her writings she continued to

strive for “everything- love, children, adventure, intimacy, work” (Woolf 496). This route shaped the art as well as the literary history of Virginia Woolf.

LATENT HOMOSEXUAL TENDENCIES IN THE CONTEXT OF VIRGINIA WOOLF’S LIFE AND WRITING

Virginia Woolf is best known to researchers at present as a feminist writer. In Woolf’s writing that is different yet attached from her feminist principles- the issues of sexual anxiety. Woolf struggle lifetime with several manners of sexual anxiety, through her writing she is attempting to express her distress of sexual relationship and to escape the influence of patriarchal domination. Molested as a child she fears male sexual aggression and equates it with the violation and destruction of the female.

Woolf’s homosexual tendencies and her relationship with Vita Sackville- West was argues by many experts. Virginia Woolf rather than simply satisfying the love affairs to men she tried to search more possibility about human relationship between women. Woolf gets a warm companionship from women thus her unconventional writing parallels her relationships with women. In her adolescence there was Violet Dickinson, in her thirties, Katherine Mansfield and in her fifties, Ethel Smyth, but not any of these females is like Vita Sackville- West, who aroused Woolf emotionally. Virginia Woolf and Vita Sackville- West come across in the early 1920s, and later both of them became close and started having romantic affair that lasted for a number of years. After learning that Vita was a writer, Woolf requested her to publish a novel with her small press, Hogarth Press. When they started working together their relationship blossomed into friendship.

In February of 1923, Vita and her Husband Harold Nicholson visited Woolf, after which Woolf wrote in her diary:

We had a surprise visit from the Nicholson's. She (Vita Sackville- West) is a pronounced sapphist, and may, thinks Ethel Sands, have an eye on me, old though I am. Nature may have sharpened her faculties. Snob as I am, I trace her passions- 500 years back, and they become romantic to me, like old yellow wine. I fancy the tang is gone. (diary, 1923).

Virginia Woolf and Vita Sackville were different from each other, whereas their difference in politics, sexual bearings and social class all were part of the fascination. Vita as she is unknown to Bloomsbury group and she objected their literary get-togethers, both of them had dissimilar intelligent background but Virginia found Vita appealing and beautiful with her refined appearance. Virginia felt that Vita was:

a real woman. Then there is some voluptuousness about her; the grapes are ripe; and not reflective. No. in brain and insight she is not as highly organized as I am. But then she is aware of this, and so lavishes on me the maternal protection which, for some reason, is what I have always wished from everyone. (Woolf 15).

Vita Sackville and Virginia Woolf shared intimate relations they both avoided classifying their relationship as lesbian. They began their sexual affair in December of 1925, unexpectedly Woolf happily married to Leonard Woolf at the time of the affair. Leonard didn't object even after knowing all about the affair, accepting how important it was for Virginia to be happy. Likewise, when Woolf's sister, Vanessa the open-minded Bloomsbury member, came to know about her sister relationship with Vita, Vanessa's reaction was curious rather than disapproval. Woolf wrote a novel about Vita in 1927 titled Orlando which shows she was so charmed by Vita. The affair that ended somewhere in 1927 and 1928 but the friendship survived. Both remained close friends until Virginia Woolf's death in March 1941.

Woolf herself refers to Vita- Sackville West as a model of Orlando: “Vita should be Orlando, a young noble man” (Woolf 157). Woolf also wrote to Vita that: “...suppose Orlando turns to be Vita; and it’s all about you and the lusts of your flesh and lure of your mind...” (Woolf 428-29). The novel was sold well at the time of its publication it became as a gossip novel on her affair with Vita. Whereas, this novel is not praised much like her previous novels. Arnold Bennett, writes: “Her best novel, *To the Lighthouse*, raised my hopes of her. Orlando has dashed them, and they lie in iridescent fragments at my feet” (Bennett 423). Through this novel Woolf exposes androgynous vision as well as the inner self, which frees her from the ideological bond and defines her as a writer. Orlando the protagonist of the novel is compare to Vita Sackville by Virginia, which describe Orlando’s androgynous nature. However, the change in Orlando’s sex from male to female unexpectedly happens it doesn’t cause much effect on Orlando’s life and her change is even interpreted as one from male into androgyny rather than into female. After the change Orlando, obtains both sexes and still remembers the experience as a man: “And here it would seem from some ambiguity in her terms that she was censuring both sexes equally, as if she belonged to neither; and indeed, for the time being, she seemed to vacillate; she was man; she was woman; she knew the secrets, shared the weakness of each.” (Orlando 158).

The attainments of Orlando’s both sexualities symbolize Woolf’s life as a writer, Orlando’s passionate and positive attitudes towards poems expresses her rich passion for literature:

...we are not going, this time, visiting the blind land. Blue, like a match struck right in the ball of the innermost eye, her flies, burns, bursts the seal of sleep; the kingfisher; so that now floods back refluent like a tide, the red, thick stream of life again; bubbling, dripping; and we rise, and our eyes (for how handy a rhyme is to pass us safe over the awkward transition from death to life) fall on....(Orlando 295).

Additionally, Virginia Woolf's own homosexual tendencies is illustrated in her writing, lots of experts argue the homosexual tendency of Woolf and Vita Sackville relationship. Hence, there is no doubt Woolf tried to search more chance about human relationship between women rather than simply satisfying the love affair to men. In her novel *Mrs. Dalloway*, the clear mark is the friendship between protagonist Clarissa Dalloway and her close friend Sally Seton, Clarissa mention the word while firstly thinking about Sally is 'love,' but not 'friendship':

But this question of love (She thought, putting her coat away), this falling in love with women. Take Sally Seton; her relation in the old days with Sally Seton, had not that, after all, been love? The strange thing, 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 quality which could only exist between women, between women just grown up. It was protective, on her side; sprang from a sense of being in league together, a presentiment of something that was bound to part them (they spoke of marriage away as catastrophe) (Mrs. Dalloway, 37).

Mrs. Dalloway experiences both feelings of feminine and masculine because of her feelings towards both sexes. Alike Clarissa and Septimus, also experience the feeling of both gender. Mrs. Dalloway though she has given birth she compares herself to nun or virgin when she thinks about her relationship with her husband Richard, she senses like she has lost her womanhood whereas she is only trying to maintain her feminine role in patriarchal society. Septimus feels greatly the part of the masculine society in his earlier age, later he went to war to prove himself a man but unexpectedly he develops feeling for the man name Evans and more than friendship it was sexual kind: "he drew the attention of his officer, Evans by name... They had to be together, share with each other, fight with each other, quarrel with each other" (Mrs. Dalloway, 86). After the war experience which follows the death of Evans,

Septimus return back to his society. The traumatic experience of war and death of his friend makes him totally depressed, as well as his emotions are completely suppressed and no more can feel anything he became feeling less.

Clarissa and Septimus both are in same position though their problems somehow differ both of them are leaving an unfruitful life. Marriage with their partner is just to keep up appearance in front of the society but in actual they are living a sexless marriage always thinking of their lost loved ones and mourning secretly. Many critic views in the topic of homosexuality in Mrs Dalloway they say that Clarissa Dalloway is not only the character who repressed her homosexual tendencies but Septimus Smith as well was victim because of the patriarchal culture. Both the character has emotional, intimate relationship with the same sex. Therefore, we find the homosexual tendencies of Woolf's own life which has been reflected in her novel as well.

CHAPTER- II

“FEMALE, FEMININE, AND FEMINIST”: WOOLF AND WRITING

Simone de Beauvoir the French writer, feminist and social theorist in ‘*The Second Sex*’ (1949) had stated, “One is not born, but rather becomes, a Women.” (330). Women are regarded as inferior and different from men they are assigned to followed several norms made by men, they have been taught and socialized to do and be as per men direction. Women undergoes various physical pain, they have more strength than men yet, they are considered to be weak. Beauvoir says it was dangerous to visualize an endless feminine nature, in which women were more in touch with the earth and cycles of the moon.

Elaine Showalter in her book “*A Literature of Their Own*” she composes on English women playwrights, she says in the growth of female tradition we can see shapes and stages.

Showalter has divided the period of growth into three stages, they are: The Feminine, The Feminist and The Female stages. The Feminine stage, the first stage started from about 1840-1880, women used to write at that time in a strength to achieve equal intellectual authority in the male culture but women’s writing at that time were not taken seriously therefore the unique sign of this period is the male pseudonym. Women they used to write under the male pseudonym because there was the wrong conception of women not being able to generate the text and their writing were not taken into consideration. The trend of writing under male pseudonym was first introduced in England in the 1840s and became a nationwide characteristic of English female’s writers. Throughout this stage the feminist content of feminine art is typically slanting because of the inferiority complex experienced by female writers. Second is the Feminist phase which go on almost 38 years i.e. from 1882 to 1920. This New Women Movement or the Feminist Movement grew strong point; women were

allowed for right to vote. Women writers started to write about their sufferings and begin to exaggerate about wrong womanhood in literature.

The third phase is the latest phase called the Female phase continuing since 1920, here we find women refusing both imitation and object which is the signs of dependency consider by Elaine Showalter. During these phase women started showing more liberated outlooks and they realize the place of female in art and literature and their experiences. They also began to focus and think on the forms and techniques of art and literature. Showalter considers that there is self-ruling art that can come from women because their experiences are distinct and individualistic. The female representative such as Dorothy Richardson and Virginia Woolf began to think of male and female sentences they even wrote about masculine writing and feminine fiction and redefined external and internal experience.

“Feminine Writing” the literary innovation, originated from Woolf or the feminist movement called *l’écriture féminine* founded in France by several women writers including Helene Cixous, Julia Kristeva, and Luce Irigaray. It is a refusal to accept the traditional Western binary opposition of mind and body. Feminism is also known as Womanism and comes under gender criticism. It is an attempt to formulate the issues and find solutions to gender problems. The Feminist Literary Criticism reexamines the reflection of Feminine experience and hence space where critically the categories begin to blend and take newer shape within the world of Woolf’s novels. It studies literature produced by women for how it addresses the particularity of women’s life and experiences. It studies male dominant canon in order to understand how men have used culture to further their domination of women. The feminists question the validity of role models assigned to women at home and in society, generally by male writers.

Women have predominantly played role of second class, the place which was kept by men in order to dominate female. From the long period women were always been ignored for right to education and also historically been denied to have personal and leisure time to generate their creative writing. The reason behind this is also the poverty, lack of education, social expectations that tied women to the homely domain. During the period of eighteenth century there was a lack of female authors, as well as the lack of information about women's day to day lives, therefore, according to the historical picture it seems that women are present only in the literature written by men and which is present from man's point of view. Men usually thinks that female are inferior to them as well as they are regarded as weaker sex and their mind cannot produce any creative. When we look at historian writers they only write of champions and winners, and women were simply not permitted to play any role. Women's education is also not taken into consideration, as a result when women are not able to read and write they are also unable to record their own history, till nineteenth century, there were only few diaries, personal histories, plays or poems by women. Before the eighteenth century only little is known about women's life. It is difficult to know why women didn't pen down their feelings and sufferings; and even their private lives, hopes and expectation are unknown.

In 1920s and 1930s, Virginia Woolf was a major literary figure; she broke the classical patterns of narrative writing and portrait mode. In Virginia Woolf's well-known novel Mrs Dalloway, she combined the moments of characters to the cityscape of London; equally she described the free style of the New Woman (protested critically against personal circumstances) ideologically by avoiding using traditional plot pattern, she focuses more on the daily life of ordinary women, displayed the notions of 'equal rights' and 'free love' of urban female.

The beginning of Feminist Literary Criticism is one of the most important changes or the growth in literary studies in the previous thirty years or so. The critics like Simone de Beauvoir, Mary Elleman and Kate Millett were among the first to discuss about the dominant stereotyped images of female fictional characters and reveal the literary history of women's images, the history of feminist criticism goes back hundreds of years in time. Simone de Beauvoir in her introduction to *The Second Sex* she traced back to Aristotle's declaration that "The female is female by virtue of a certain lack of qualities" (Vintage Classics, 15-16). Women's writing and *écriture féminine* were extremely widespread inside and outdoor of university in the decade from the mid- 1970s to mid- 1980s. Books with titles like- *A Literature of Their Own* (Showalter, 1977), *Fictions of Feminine Desire* (Kamuf, 1982), *Women Writing and Writing about Women* (Jacobus, 1979), and *The Poetics of Gender* (Miller, 1986) were progressing off the presses.

In the 1980s, feminist philosophy was vastly thoughtful with the problems involving to women's and their writing, women and creativity, women and the construction of art, hence women's writing was often defined as writing by women, about women and for women.

Feminine writing can be understood and stated in two ways i.e. aim and fate of the women writers. When women began to write about the wrong imposed upon them by the patriarchal literary tradition because of their female position they began to correct it. Further rectifying the inequality presented in the literary tradition, women target to find a true language or the secret language of their own which can surely express female experience. Thus, writing/righting is a kind of feminist poetics.

Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), one of the most pioneering power within Modern literature and also one of the author of contemporary Feminism, she wrote: "A woman's writing is always feminine; it cannot help being feminine: the only difficulty lies in defining what we mean by feminine." (Woolf, 70). Feminine writing was left untheorized during Woolf's time; it is still

in process of formation and modification. Woolf argues that women writers should keep on writing she says: “To try the accepted forms, to discard the unfit, to create others which are more fitting,” “Before there is freedom or achievements” (Woolf, 67)

Woolf’s *A Room of One’s Own* (1929) turn into an important pioneer of Feminist Literary Criticism. Virginia Woolf here discusses that the patriarchal society and the male dominated ideas which prevented women from realizing their true potential and creativity:

In the first place, to have a room of her own, let alone a quiet room or a sound- proof room, was out of the question, unless her parents were exceptionally rich or very noble, even up to the beginning of the nineteenth century... Such material difficulties were formidable; but much worse were the immaterial. The indifference of the world which Keats and Flaubert and other men of genius have found so hard to bear was in her case not indifference but hostility (Woolf, 52).

As Woolf was particularly highlighting, female’s writers in order to write they had to work against the grain. However, for women writing is the only the way left to state individualism and liberation, though it was not easy for them to turned to writing all of a sudden excluded from many societal, political and economic activities. In her essay “Professions for Women” Virginia Woolf states that she had to kill “the Angel in the House” so that she can write her novels and critical works freely. According to Woolf perception one has to end the conventional image of house- wife and mother in order to be a writer. Further when we look at Simone de Beauvoir, concept of “woman’s nature” she fined it as domination, according to her the term motherhood is women turning into slave. Though it should not be ended that way but it usually ended up that way in society, the reason behind is because the women were told to be more concern about their divine nature. Instead of political affairs, technology or

anything else outside the home and family women were forced to focus on motherhood and feminist.

“Given that one can hardly tell women that washing up saucepans is their divine mission, they are told that bringing up children is their divine mission” (Simone de Beauvoir, 1982).

Simone de Beauvoir’s observe the work of Feminism is to transform society and women’s place in it. Furthermore, in *The Second Sex* (1953), Simone de Beauvoir defines motherhood as a way to free women stating:

Becoming a mother in her turn, the woman in a sense takes the place of her own mother; it means complete emancipation for her. If she sincerely desires it, she will be delighted with her pregnancy and will have the courage to go through with it by herself; but if she is still under maternal domination, and willingly, she, on the contrary, puts herself in her mother’s hands.... (493-94).

Fulfilled motherhood gives a woman the place of the own mother and removes her mother’s influence. Hence motherhood in not only the simple act of reproducing it is also the re-creation of her as part of patriarchy and the same social system: “... people themselves need to be reproduced both daily and generationally ...women as wives and mothers reproduce (or not) largely by themselves.” (Nancy J. Chodorow 36). Women they eventually reproduce the whole social system and a mother who accepts her gender-identified social position becomes a primary factor in maintaining a patriarchal society.

In Woolf’s essay “*Professions for Women*,” Woolf proposes that the two main problems being a woman is Angel in the House and the difficulty of “telling the truth about my own experience as a body’ (62). Among these two problems Woolf thinks she solved the both i.e. “killing the Angel in the House,” by rejecting the ideal, pure image of women, and the second one i.e. “telling the truth about [her] own experience as a body,” Woolf has openly spoken

and written about sexuality and unconscious in her novels which is considered to be hard to deal with at that time, as she doesn't think "that any women have solved it yet" (62). Both male and female have accepted the stereotypes of womanhood for quite a long time. Hence, it needs much time to "give woman herself as herself" (Morris 122).

AUTHORITY OF WOMEN OVER MEN: WOOLF'S LIFE AND HER FEMALE CHARACTER

Across her oeuvre, one stumbles across independent, judgmental, opinionated woman, bound in life's struggles and going through mundane motions with no sense of finality. The binary which is presented by Mrs. Dalloway, proves to be an interesting study of the matter.

Superficially looking, one finds a typical housewife of a typical Upper-Class British household. Her personality is delineated through the party that she is going to throw for an odd and motely assemblage of people. But as one begins to go deeper, the binary starts to unfold even further, as thence emerges a woman who is strong within her own right. The sense of empowerment that comes across is not due to their ability to shoot for the stars or even reach one, it lies more in the value of their existence as specimens of humanity who possesses as voice and knows how to use. On further analysis, a parallel can be drawn between the relationship presented between Clarissa and her husband, Richard vis some vis, Mr. and Mrs. Woolf. The Dalloway's reflect the same inverted model of domesticity within public space as the Woolf's themselves were emblematic of.

In keeping with the 20th century sensibility Virginia Woolf chose to predicate the men while making the heroines/women to dominate their male counterparts. Mrs. Dalloway is a point in case shows how Clarissa remains to be an unforgettable experience to her suitor Peter Walsh. In spite of his harsh judgement of Clarissa he remains hemmed in his emotional attachment to her. He never quite gets over the fact that she has turned down his marriage proposal and his

thoughts often wander upon the speculation whether she is happy with her husband Richard. His disillusioned is so stark that only when he sees Elizabeth that he is able to surmise that Clarissa and Richard might be happy together. Even though he departs abruptly her refusal remains to be a constant obsession. On the other hand, Richard who is married to Clarissa and has a child with her returns home with a large bunch of roses. He intense to profess his love for her but just cannot bring himself to say it because he has grown on a custom to doing so. In one of Clarissa's mental expedition she wanders the idea that Richard doesn't know everything about her.

In Virginia Woolf personal life in spite of the close bond that she shares with Leonard several incidents contest the idea of conventional marriage the Dreadnought hoax. Incident of 1910 prior to their marriage in 1912 brought her notoriety where she was disguised as a male Abyssinian royal. In 1937 Woolf writes in her diary "Love- marriage – after 25 years can't bear to be separate... you see it is enormous pleasure being wanted: a wife. And our marriage so complete." However, contradictorily she also refers to him as the "penniless Jew" and drew attention to his low material status. She asserted as a women writer, "For a room of one's own". She also went on to have from 1922 onwards a sexual relationship with Vita Sackville- West and this continued till the early 1930s. Woolf was able to balance a close bond with Vita Sackville and her husband till her death.

Biographical information upon the lives of the Woolf's are contradictory in nature. Irene Coates's book *Who's Afraid of Leonard Woolf: A Case for the Sanity of Virginia Woolf* and Victoria Glendining's book *Leonard Woolf: A Biography* address their marital woes differently. Irene suggest that Leonard was a catalyst to her failing mental health and incriminates him for her suicide whereas, Victoria paints him as highly supportive of his wife enabling to prolong the longevity of his wife's life and giving her an ambient atmosphere to write. Virginia own diaries chronicle Leonard's unconditional support. The books are but an

extension of the conflicts imminent in her trouble psyche. The women characters invariably cast a shadow on the male protagonist.

THE BLOOMSBURY CIRCLE: MEN OUTLOOK TOWARDS WOMEN IN THE GROUP

The Bloomsbury Group was a leading group of English writers, which included intellectuals, philosophers and artists, some of the top known members of the group are Virginia Woolf, Clive Bell, E.M Forster, Vanessa Bell and Lytton Strachey. Their works and their point of view toward the movement like Feminism, Uninhibited sexuality and Pacifism has totally influenced literature, criticism, aesthetics and economics as well. This liberal and influential group of friends or the intellectuals, worked lived and studied together near Bloomsbury London during first half of 20th century.

The Bloomsbury Group was an informal circle of intellectuals who were all born in the 19th century, its members called Bloomsburies, were mainly writers and artists from the English upper class and the members used to meet from 1905 until the beginning of the Second World War. During these meetings they were indulged in discussion on current topics and new courses in art, literature and politics as well as a timeless philosophical analysis of “the God,” “the Beautiful and “the Truth,” which they derived from G.E Moore’s Principia Ethica (1903).

The Bloomsburies, they were generally confidential and well- educated members of the upper middle class. Their unconventional ideas make them different from the others educated groups, they reject the societal conventions and freely support gay rights, pacifism, women’s art, open marriages and uninhibited sexuality. Though they were grown up in Victorian households the Bloomsbury Group openly rejected the old Victorian morals since from their young period and take on more open-minded and liberal attitudes. The group they see

Victorian Society as narrow-minded and prejudiced therefore, they decide to live free from any restriction and conventions of the society, as the book "Great World Writers: Twentieth Century" explains: "In short, they were determined to reinvent society, at least within their own circle." (Patrick M. O'Neil, 2004).

Bloomsburies were often blamed by snobbism and elitism due to their class origins, as their critic's states that as they didn't experience much difficulty in their lives because they led comfortable and more carefree, unconventional lives consisting only of plenty of leisure time, their work is not reliable and thus doesn't reflect the reality of life. Generally, they were judged for their homosexuality, swapping partners and non- nuclear family arrangements and also for not following 'decorum of society.' The group was not only criticized but also praised and more importantly, its members were observed as inventors and pioneers within certain fields. They were undoubtedly foresighted, progressive, open- minded as well as brave and bold people. Bell adds that Bloomsbury believed, in fact, "in pacific and rational discussion." (104). Bloomsbury revolted against some of Victorian values, because of their revolutionary, unconventional minds and thoughts they have not only been seen as progressive but also as controversial and by quite a number of critics they are still viewed in a rather negative light.

In the summer of 1904, when Vanessa Bell sister of Virginia Woolf had found a house at 46 Gordon Square in Bloomsbury and the same year in November Virginia Woolf finally left Cambridge and began to live and write there, where they came in contact with The Bloomsbury Group, a weekly evening gatherings. They called these meetings simply 'Thursday Evenings.'

Vanessa Bell and Virginia Woolf shared the house with Thoby Stephen; they had not started to attend the meetings until later. At that time, it was still inappropriate for women to

participate in men's intellectual discussion, it was only after a few months when: "they very serious young men recognized that the little Cambridge -in- Bloomsbury not only had a new setting, but was destined to be 'co-educational.'" (Edel, 123). Therefore, after they decided male and female to work jointly in their group Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell too joined the Bloomsbury group.

Other people in Bloomsbury group had obtained university education except Woolf and Vanessa Bell lack; therefore, they were rather reserved at the beginning. They were silent: "No conversational opening seemed good enough" (ibid. 124). However, after few occasions, this had changed and Woolf became well known for her mockery, sharp tongue, and fierce fighting for her point. The Thursday evenings were well established by the summer of 1905. In response to those highly academic Thursday evenings, Vanessa bell organized "Friday Club" in the same year.

The coterie then began to redefine what it was to have an international circle dedicated completely to intellectual pursuits. The circle becomes predominant because it challenged the norm of 'men-only intellectual group.' The fact that Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell, two women (who, incidentally were not even University educated) could co-find a group which will harbor both established as well as budding critics, gives us an insight into the praxis of feminism. It is not to say that all women's opinion was rendered useless.

Here and there, we see opinions that matter, views that are held sacred, even though they come from a woman's mind: Gertrude Stein being one example, Dorothy Richardson, being another. But with Bloomsbury the concentration of a feminist intellectual group begins to grow and take hold.

CONCLUSION

Virginia Woolf's, 1925 published novel is unique which takes place in a single day. Woolf is known as one of the most famous modernist writer, we find the features of modernism in her novels. In Mrs Dalloway she uses the major modern technique i.e. Stream of Consciousness which reflects the psyche of the characters. The novel is based on Sociological and Psychological analysis of theory. Woolf shows mirror to the reality of society so as to understand literature in its social background as well as she shows the picture of people's mind or the psychological condition of the character and their inner lives. This dissertation proposes to place its central concern within the understanding of time, Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Warren Smith are the main characters and their present moment is evoking the past memories and the past time which is effecting their present condition. Moreover, Woolf uses the flashback techniques in the novel.

In Mrs. Dalloway, Woolf projected herself through Clarissa and Septimus, as her two different sides of. Woolf says that Mrs. Dalloway saw the reality or the fact, while Septimus smith saw the reality of insanity. Woolf depicted the effect of post-war or the trauma that people suffer from. Clarissa Dalloway even in the traumatic situation of war wants to create beauty around her by gathering flowers and organizing party, she wants to find beauty in day to day life.

Woolf's personal experience of trauma, her loss of sexual desire and her struggle with childlessness is reflected in her most of the novels. Similarly, in her novel Mrs. Dalloway the main character Septimus and Clarissa no longer have any sexual desire, the effect of war which changes people's attitude may be the reason for their lack of desire. Moreover, Woolf herself was ultimately a sexless woman therefore, her fiction itself is sexless. Woolf is best known as a feminist writer talks about women's writing and women's art. She is also the

member of Bloomsbury Group, a knowledgeable group of English writers. They rejected the old Victorian morals and their traditional way of writing. The group freely talk about homosexual, feminism, modernism, uninhibited sexuality. Additionally, Virginia Woolf's own homosexual tendencies are illustrated in her writing. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Septimus and Clarissa alike Virginia Woolf experiences both feelings of feminine and masculine, they have feeling for both gender.

Mrs. Dalloway, is the novel which is made out of mental state, feelings and sorrows of the characters in the London gardens and paths. In novel we come across the two characters Clarissa and Septimus who are parallel to each other but take different step to overcome their problems. Septimus is seen as dark and filled with negative thought and feeling, he is not leaving a real life whereas Clarissa live in reality of life and perform her social duties but the similar thing is that both of them are not happy with their life. However, Septimus was unable to overcome his mental illness and finally choose to commit suicide, which he finds the right decision for him to take at that moment. In contrast Clarissa Dalloway defeated her dark side and felt peaceful. In the end, she realizes that she chooses the best that she could, she is happier in her safe and predictable life, although it could be considered monotonous and uninteresting.

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