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England,War and its Tragedy

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In this text I will examine how author Virginia Woolf in the novel *Mrs. Dalloway* through stream of consciousness and by using the method of multi selective omniscience is describing the inner thoughts of a single character whereby using this unique literary method she is freely describing detailed segments of thoughts. (Ferrer, 1990,8). More so, I will also explore how Woolf considering the given method through her characters, reflects on multiple personalities that in some ways corresponds to her own agony. Woolf is basing her novel mostly on the troubled inner world of English socialite Clarissa Dalloway, who is throwing a party for her inner circle of friends, part of middle upper-class London English society. However, Woolf also reflects on the inner mind of characters through the method of stream consciousness. Most notable of them is the character of Septimus Smith, a war shocked veteran with whom Clarissa shares a deep inner connection, although Woolf never formally introduces them to each other in the novel.

In my paper I will therefore strongly argue how Virginia Woolf through her novel and her characters is advocating about various of things, such as human rights; inequalities in English society, and very importantly she advocates about social inequalities regarding female roles in society and their oppression due to male dominance in British society. More so, I will also argue how she raises awareness about mental issues in society, especially issues regarding suicide. A clear case is Septimus Smith, war shocked veteran, whose post-traumatic stress disorder is being widely ignored and stigmatized by the society, which eventually results in his own death by suicide. When discussing the female role in society, I will briefly look into character of Doris Kilman, who in the novel is presented as a highly educated intellectual struggling to find a decent job, and whose personality strongly resembles Woolf's own. Furthermore, I will directly address the relationship between Clarissa Dalloway and Virginia Woolf, and how Woolf's

mental illness was crucial in creating the novel *Mrs. Dalloway*. More so, I will look how Woolf through the character of Clarissa is reflecting on her own life, whereby her own struggles with mental issues such as bipolar disorder are somehow directly imposed inside the character of Clarissa Dalloway. I will also explore how Woolf's mental illness continuously was present in the novel, especially when Woolf was reflecting on the social life of her characters – Septimus Smith and Clarissa Dalloway, whose socio – psychological mental issues and their struggle for existence are constantly being addressed in the novel (Ghalandari, Jamili,2014,483). Therefore, in this paper I will further investigate if Woolf's mental disorder indeed influenced the writing of her novel, and if so- to what degree her mental issues have played a role in creating *Mrs. Dalloway*. To understand Woolf's literary work better when suffering from bipolar disorder I will closely examine Woolf's split characters - and their inner consciousness – to understand what kind of message Woolf is trying to pass to the world through her literature.

In the article *Mental Illness and Manic-Depressive Illness in Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway*, authors S.A.A. Ghalandari and L.B.Jamili are arguing that Woolf's medical history plays an important role in Virginia Woolf's writing. Woolf in early life was first diagnosed with *Neurasthenia*, which can be translated as nerve weakness, but due to weak medical resources on mental disease, she did not receive proper medical treatment. However- today's modern science recognizes *Neurasthenia* as a bipolar disorder or manic -depressive illness (Ghalandari, Jamili,2014,484). Since England in the early 1920s was extremely patriarchal society, where being a woman with mental illness was doubly difficult and where society believed that education among females was harmful- as that contradicted their role as mothers and wives. The same applies for lower class society– whereby education is seen as mentally harmful. Those factors were extremely troubling for Woolf- as she felt powerless and useless in a society where female insanity and illness, lowered, and decreased female value in general (Ghalandari, Jamili,2014,484).

However, her condition as a manic-depressive manifest itself in her writing and like in the cases of many novelists – her characters are a reflection of her own life and inner self. In creating the novel, Woolf perfectly uses a technique known as stream of consciousness, whereby she narrates the story through the inner monologue of her characters. In this inner monologue Woolf gives us a firsthand experience in their social and private lives. Woolf is using this method to

express her own feelings and troubles as well. This kind of shifting method from one character to another directly points to her own struggles with bipolar disorder- whereby different inner monologue is de facto one character but split in different voices, which is a typical bipolar disorder behavior. More so, Woolf's moral interest and principles are also very present in her writing, whereby she through the dialog between private voices and public sphere addresses political and social problems as well as historical contexts. One such example is the case of Septimus Smith, whose psychotic breakdowns are a direct result of the political situation in the country, who at that time was dealing with a generation of post war veterans. The government shamefully did not address post war traumatic stress as a medical condition that required special care, but instead considered it to be nothing less than act of cowardness or insubordination where only medical treatment would be moral coercion (Caramagno,1989). Furthermore, the characters of Clarissa and Septimus share the same inner consciousness as they both suffer from feelings of guilt and inner madness. Woolf's feeling of guilt also manifests in both Clarissa and Septimus, as in the novel they both suffer psychologically. Septimus's feeling of guilt is constantly emerging through the novel and is more extended when he marries an Italian girl who he never really loved – Lucrezia. She on the other hand is also connected to Clarissa, and shares with her inner spiritual agony., where they both feel socially stigmatized. Lucrezia is brought to England as one of the war brides- a symbol of heroism, masculinity, power, and male dominance. However, she suffers tremendously, as she is lonely and unhappy and unable to express her anger and anxiety issues in the country where she is being oppressed both as a female and a foreigner (Hussey, Usui,1992,153). Clarissa as well is feeling guilty, although her guilt is different, and mainly is surrounded by issues concerning her own existence and suicidal thoughts (Ghalandari, Jamili,2014).

However, this complex inner duality between Clarissa and Septimus and constant feeling of guilt that I mentioned previously, is more severe and complicated. In the chapter *The female victims of the war in Mrs. Dalloway*, author Masami Usui is arguing that not only Septimus and Clarissa share the same inner consciousness, but Septimus also serves as a substitute for Clarissa's suicidal thoughts. They both seem to be victims of the society - Septimus as the war veteran, who never received the treatment he deserves together with his feeling of tremendous guilt, and Clarissa, who also suffers mentally, and whose existence is being repeatedly questioned. Additionally, Usui in his text argues that women could not openly express any form

of dissatisfaction or weakness, as well as to show any signs of emotions, regardless of their pain and agony. Additionally, war is considered an element of male dominance and a sign of patriarchy, and therefore another element of oppression of the female role in the society, whereby their reason of existence is different and circulates around encouraging males, in this context their sons, husbands or lovers to join the war, only to meet the destiny of death, which leaves women in agony and pain all over again- in a society that neglects female voices, regardless of form or emotion. Therefore, war is seen as a direct oppression to female inner self conscience as the war itself is considered to be of patriarchal nature (Hussey, Usui,1992, 152).

Woolf's self-comparison to her novel characters, most common - Clarissa and Septimus , comes to attention in several events through the novel. Most notable is the party itself – when Clarissa reenters society after recovering from health issues to host the party where she invites her inner circle. Society after the war was not in a good state, financially or socially, as well as Clarissa – who was suffering from her own mental issues. The war just ended, and people in general still struggled with post war elements, which include the pain of losing loved ones, losing estates, suffering high taxations as well as the burden of the whole generation suffering psychological wounds in a society that was not ready to accommodate mentally ill patients with proper care, like the case of war veteran Septimus Smith. (Hussey, Usui, 1992,151,152,153). Woolf in her novel also draws attention to Doris Kilman, whose character is well educated university historian, but also reformist who struggles to find a job in well preserved male dominated patriarchal England. This kind of work segregation based on sex is dominating in English society and is certainly agonizing and depressing for many females. (Hussey, Usui,1992,160). Furthermore, society disliked women like Kilman, someone who is highly educated and independent. Women like Kilman most likely struggle to find husbands, as they are examples for independency and reform against traditional ways of living and thinking. More so, this conflict corresponds to the problem all educated female professionals had in the early twentieth century. They may be respected for their work excellence, but on the other hand it is male dominated sex segregation policy that thrives. (Hussey, Usui,1992, 162). Woolf reflects on herself tremendously in the character of Kilman, an educated historian who opposes the war and advocates gender equality. Woolf recognizes the female role in the war, and how women were neglected and silenced, whereby patriotism is the key motivator for the war and female voices are oppressed and segregated. Woolf through Kilman strongly advocates against the war and

points out the struggle's women are facing in a male dominated world, where power struggle is at its peak. More so, she identifies with Kilman due to her intellectual side. Woolf is also intellectual with strong sense of policy and diplomacy.

Many authors agree that Woolf's characters presumably are created to represent the author herself, and that Septimus did not really exist in the first version at all. More so, some authors claim that Septimus was actually Clarissa- who then in the novel was supposed to commits suicide, and not Septimus (Ferrer, 1990,8). This fact can clearly suggest that Septimuses creation came out of Woolf's inner madness and suicidal thoughts. In the chapter "*The lie of origins*" of the book "*Virginia Woolf and the Madness of Language*", author D. Ferrer argues that soon after Woolf realizes that *Mrs. Dalloway* will develop into the book, since *Mrs. Dalloway* actually originated from two short stories "*Bond Street*" and "*The Prime Minister*", Woolf actually admits that this new version will indeed be book of suicide and madness and actually asks her self – Septimus Smith?- Is that a good name?(Ferrer, 1990,9). Ferrer therefore explores more this dilemma and wants to see who is the person behind Woolf's heroine and tragical Septimus? In the volume two of "*The diary of Virginia Woolf*" , he argues that Woolf shares her thoughts on that matter in the diary dating October 1922 , and gives us clues that it is presumably Kitty Maxse, childhood friend of Woolf who was both actual inspiration for Clarissa Dalloway character in general, as well as for Septimus as well, due to the fact that she died from the supposed suicide in October 1922, just like Septimus dies from suicide (Ferrer, Bell, McNeill,1990,10,1978,207). Woolf in her diary reflects on the death of Kitty, and how she mysteriously dies from falling from the steps- whereby she at the same time reflects on her realization of her novel *Mrs. Dalloway* – where novel develops into the book, and whereby thoughts of suicide and madness are continuously present. Furthermore, Woolf directly draws the connection between Kitty and the novel, and in that perspective to herself as well. It is important to mention that Woolf had already tried to kill herself earlier in life due to her mental breakdowns (Ferrer,1990,10). This fact strongly draws connection to how her mental illness directly influenced her work and how she repeatedly draws awareness on suicide. In the novel she continuously looks for answers and reasons why anyone would commit suicide (Edmondson,2012,24).

Nevertheless, the question does the character Septimus really represents Woolf's own personality is a big dilemma that many scholars are struggling to answer. In the chapter "*Septimus- partly me; point of view and beyond*", I strongly agree with author D. Ferrer that it is possible that Woolf is partial Septimus after all, and readers certainly can discover passages from diaries that indicate this dilemma. However, the mad and insane nature of Septimus's character makes it quite impossible to be the whole author of *Mrs. Dalloway*, therefore it is more possible that he presents more objective role – the outside point of view of Virginia Woolf (Ferrer, 1990, 17). From her diary we can see how she simultaneously gives a clue about the possibility of double personality- she describes how the mad part of her inner mind makes her life difficult and hard to handle. Septimus or Clarissa never takes on a single person narrator in the novel, as there is no first-person narrator in *Mrs. Dalloway*. This kind of writing methods when author is using "*no first narrator method*" is called *multiselective omniscience*, whereby a single narrator, who acts impersonal and omniscient is using his or her omniscience in each sequence or length- whereby this length varies from one narrator to another. This narrator then limits himself to describe the thoughts of a single character's stream of consciousness – whereby when describing this inner stream- the narrator has the freedom to literally describe every segment of thought into one phrase and in free indirect discourse (Ferrer, 1990, 18).

Considering the given method, Woolf gives us an inside of view of Septimus's troubled mind, where he as a shock war veteran is suffering extreme post war stress disorder. At this point I strongly argue that Septimus indeed is Woolf's second inner self and that she through narrativization of his character is trying to give a message to the world not only about her mental struggles, but also to advocate about human rights, issues about how mental health is not being addressed properly in society, especially treatment of war veterans and their need for recognition to be able to get treatment they deserve and to reintegrate back in society. First and foremost, Septimus before the war – was a true poet lover, who enjoyed poetry and English country lifestyle. Therefore, we can see many mentions of Shakespeare through the novel when narrating inner thoughts of Septimus. When discussing Septimus and his madness through the omniscience narrator we can see that Septimus takes the role as a reflector in the third person- we also know little about his outer appearance. His description is based more on inner self reflection, rather than putting notion on outside appearance. Additionally, his constant irrational behavior makes him socially not able to function normally in society. His state of mind is based on directly

avoiding any societal order, and therefore cannot be socially integrated in society. He is a post war figure, who after losing his friend in the battle, becomes extremely fragile and emotionally unstable figure. However, his emotional struggle begins much earlier in life, where he showed already signs of psychological issues that only intensified after the war. (Woolf, Showalter, McNichol,1992,17 & Sautter- Legger,2017,4,5)). These elements, Woolf points out as clear signs of his mental struggles, where some novelist consider his irrational behavior positive rather than negative. He is being considered as a rebel against society and social norms. Somebody who feels that society purposely silenced and abandoned him. Fact is that his frustration and agony lie in the fact that he feels enormous guilt through whole novel. To answer the question why he feels this guilt is the fact that he does not feel anything at all. In his reality it was society and its order that made him not to feel. The same society that he admired so much and has thought him to obey its set of norms and rules.

I also strongly agree with author of the text *Railed in by Maddening Reason; A Reconsideration of Septimus Smith and his Role in Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway*”, Sautter-Leger who points out that Woolf’s novel has individual characters whereby not just that their inner mind is somehow irrational and troubled, but their strange and illogical behavior is a direct response to emotional instability (Sautter- Leger, 2017,3). More so, Woolf through those characters provides direct representation of herself in the public world. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, the connection between subjects and insanity is quite obvious – whereby the novels main character and its hero Septimus Smith, is an insane character, whose irrational and lunatic behavior is not easy to define or predict (Ferrer, 1990,8). More so, in the book *Virginia Woolf and the madness of language* by Ferrer D., he points out that this situation, whereby the discourse of irrationality and madness is present through the whole novel, was Woolf’s intention. She wanted to present and provide us detailed account of the world of insanity, madness, and suicide- namely through the account and inner voice of Septimus. This situation of madness, irrationality, and suicide that he is going through are typical signs of schizophrenia and signs of post war traumatic stress. However, at that time when the novel was written there were not so many accounts or research on that matter. Woolf through Septimus reflects on irrational behavior and points out that he is suffering from post war traumatic stress that causes schizophrenia. (Sautter- Leger,2017, 4). Septimuses personality before war was already presented as somehow gentle, emotional, and fragile, even showed early signs of psychological condition and instability- whereby this fragile

condition only intensified negatively and worsened after serving in the front lines of the war. Woolf pictures Septimus as a person with severe war trauma, and somebody who is not capable to face his own reality- and is in constant stress and discomfort. More so, he is constantly in direct conflict with social order- additionally his character moves beyond his subjectivity only to escape rational order- social or political (Sautter- Leger,2017 4).

Specifically, when referring to schizophrenia, Woolf through her literary work and through narrative of Septimus is clearly engaging in advocating for patients' rights, since patients with mental disorder were not being properly treated, and therefore suicide was quite common. Only escape from this kind of psychotic and difficult state of mind was indeed suicide- it seemed like the only option. Nevertheless, in the book *Psychology of the behavior* by author Carlson N. R , schizophrenia is a disease that is only being discovered recently, which is quite obvious since when reading any significant research on that matter ,especially in book mentioned above - we can clearly see that they were all conducted after 1950-ies, although many ancient writing suggest that disease was present for about thousands of years(Carlsen, 2001, 528). More to the fact, it was first Swiss psychiatrist P.E. Bleuer (1857-1939), that introduced and coined term schizophrenia in Berlin. Even though it was early -in the1908- however his research was first being translated in English by J. Zinkin in 1950-ies, which explains why there were not so many studies being done on that subject. More so, general insanity was now being given new medical term, such as dementia praecox, now known as schizophrenia, and therefore public view on those patients was quite negative, since people could not really differentiate between disease and being insane. Even public prosecutions on mentally disabled people was present even after Woolf wrote her novel. People who suffered mentally were even medically exterminated or sterilized, most notably was in Nazi Germany when Action -T4 was being performed in which people were medically murdered if found mentally unfit only to preserve and to keep racially purified nation.

The most recognizable symptom of schizophrenia is irrational thinking, something that Carlson in his book/research is calling *a thought disorder* – disorganized and irrational thinking. In this phase patients have difficulties placing their thought rationally and logically, whereby they when in conversations attend to switch from one conversation to another, or they just talk meaningless. Disease is therefore characterized as disease where patients are suffering from

extremely bizarre behaviors. Bleuer differentiates between positive and negative symptoms, and Septimus obviously is suffering from negative one- whereby he is experiencing variety of examples with irrational behavior, little or no emotional response, inability to feel pleasure and most notably social withdrawal (Carlson, 2001, 529). More so, well known feeling of guilt that Septimus is constantly experiencing in the novel, can be traced in Woolf's mental and bipolar disorder, and therefore another sign of Woolf's inner voice in the character of Septimus. Carlsen in his book/research talks about the bipolar disorder in chapter 18- where he states that bipolar disorder, is a disorder that is followed by episodes of depression and mania. Usually, loss of the beloved person is typically being followed by depression or like in case of Septimus constant feeling of guilt occurs as well. Critically ill and severely depressed people also feel unworthy and therefore, this kind of disorder is extremely dangerous, and patient is on high alert and danger of committing suicide, just like in the case of Septimus. Carlsen in his book refers to study that is conducted in 1996, whereby its researchers Chen and Dilsaver argue that whereas 15.9 percentage of people with unipolar disorder commit suicide- the number of people with bipolar disorder who commit suicide is 29. 2 percent- obviously much higher. To add an additional information before the 1950s there was no effective medical treatment for bipolar disorder in England, whatsoever (Carlson, 2001, 544,545). I therefore argue that due to lack of medical findings and the fact that general population could not be aware of what post-traumatic stress is, as there were no relevant published documents on that matter available to general public, it was not possible that people who suffered from it could receive all-inclusive treatment they deserve. However, through inner consciousness of her characters, Woolf advocates for recognition and better treatment of people who are suffering mentally, regardless of lack of fundings and lack of knowledge. Woolf points out struggles and unacceptance that mentally ill people were facing daily and were being subjected to. Septimus loved his country but is feeling stigmatized and abandoned by society that he once admired so much.

The role of Septimus was not viewed all negatively through all the novel as it may appear by many. On the contrary, he was the subject of many feminists' investigations. He indeed plays an important role in society whereby he is seen as somebody who saves woman from male dominance, which was widely present in England in twentieth century. He is seen as a savior, rather than a lost figure, whereby his actions save woman like Clarissa to fall under the dominance of the male and their order. Clarissa understands Septimus and his desire to escape

this restrictive societal norm and has been given an opportunity to break free from society that is both repressive and clearly not supportive towards people like him, namely escape by suicide. More so, she also understands how he suffers tremendously due to his inability to perceive the reality as it is- whereby his points of views differentiate from public opinions. He, therefore, is regarded and portrayed as a victim of the society that fails to protect him. He goes against the society and avoids following its oppressed rules and norms whereby in the process he becomes a tragical victim of the societal and patriarchal order- which at the end causes him his life (Sautter-Leger, 2017,4). His irrational behavior makes him estranged from natural realm of his surroundings, and therefore different. His behavior rebels against the society – whereby he is experiencing rather strings of emotional swings that he cannot control. He feels that he is being persecuted for not feeling anything at all- therefore he feels tremendously guilty. More so, Septimuses feeling of guilt is far bigger than the societal one. In his private life and marriage, he was not capable of showing emotions whatsoever. When his wife expresses any kind of emotional distress, he shows no emotions whatsoever- he does not feel anything- he does not acknowledge his wife emotional distress or discomfort. He feels as he is condemned and persecuted for the biggest human sin ever- sin of not feeling anything. In addition, he also feels tremendous guilt of seducing and marrying his wife without loving her. All he wants to do is to escape his reality, and to finally be free of his emotions, basically to leave the earth. (Woolf, 1992,100,101). He feels as this lonely emotional swing or depression that he sometimes found himself to be in- was a luxury – it was this certain calmness, something that normal people would never understand. However, this calmness does not last long, since Woolf through her inner consciousness describes troubled and irrational behavior-whereby Septimus starts to experience set of irrational behaviors and outbursts, that are typical with people who are suffering from mental illness. Usually, those outbursts come right after the calm period, just how it was in the example of Septimus where he starts to hallucinate about hearing voices from his dead friend Evans, and situations where he is talking without any reasoning as well (Woolf,1992 102). He simply cannot connect to reality, and is speaking irrational, showing all signs of accurate post-traumatic stress. More so, it is at this point in the novel where Woolf points out also the neglect of Septimuses doctor, who fails to treat him properly. In the novel Woolf is presenting us with the situation whereby when Septimus is experiencing moment of delusion, where doctor fails to intervene properly and provide him with proper care, but also soon

afterword's Septimus takes his own life. This is also the realization of Woolf's own dissatisfaction about societal order, whereby society has no means, knowledge, or desire to help patients with mental disorder, but is rather oppressing and leaving them alone to suffer and eventually to die, lonely and deserted. Again, she is raising awareness about suicide and how important it is to acknowledge people who are suffering from suicidal thoughts.

Woolf presentation of Septimus about his inner suffering and mental problems made outstanding progress in modern literature in early 1920s. More so, she gave psychological representation and view into a condition that was then unknown to public- schizophrenia and post-traumatic stress. Like mentioned previously, research fundings about schizophrenia was first publish and translated into English around year 1950s. By then it was viewed as extreme mental disorder or just madness- whereby its patients were stigmatized and even prosecuted (Nazi Germany and its Action T4 program presents perfect example). Post-traumatic stress was also something that was not discussed before by general population. People that suffered from post-traumatic stress were never given the chance to get treatment that they deserve. Septimus death by suicide was a direct result of this situation. More so, through his character Woolf illustrates psychological trauma that post war veterans were facing and experiencing, which is extreme guilt and continuously string of emotions. Above everything their need to communicate to the world and also their need for their suffering to have the meaning, so that they could with therapy have the possibility to recover from trauma (DeMeester, 1998, 1). Septimus as a witness to the war trauma could, if being given proper treatment also can help others that were going through the same trauma and can contribute to progress in medical research. However, society at that point did not treat veterans with the care that they deserved. Instead, when veterans come back from the war, their traumatic experience unable them to function normally within society. Cultural process of reintegration into society did not exist, instead society and their leaders silenced and ignored their need for recovery and reintegration (DeMeester,1992,1). What happens in the mind of traumatized people is quite unique and must be treated with caution properly. In the text *Trauma and recovery in Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway*, author DeMeester points out that Woolf in her characterization of Septimus managed to preserve the actual state of mind of traumatized Septimus and is using this narrative to step aside from traditional narrative (DeMeester,1998,1). DeMeester in her text describes this situation whereby when trauma appears, and survivor fully realize what happened, he creates a full real narrative of the situation,

which then becomes his own reality by piecing together fragmentation of consciousness of his traumatic experience. However, trauma experience or situation before person has fully structured it into his own reality – has a prenarrative state that does not develop or change over time. More so, survivor is in the same state of mind and at the same time as when the actual trauma appeared. Survivor did not structure the events in a meaningful and communicative narrative. Woolf created this narrative in *Septimus* and has preserved the fragmentation of consciousness that typically are present in the aftermath of trauma. Septimus did not manage yet to arrange his thoughts in meaningful and arranged order. He as a war survivor does not have the ability to communicate his experience to others, instead he is trapped with fragmentations of his consciousness of experienced trauma- whereby his thoughts seem to not have any meaning. At this point, he loses his own presumption of who he actually is- his own identity. Survivors' perception of time changes as well, whereby his mind does not differentiate what is real or not- his experienced trauma seems like ever present reality. As mentioned above, survivor if the trauma is not being properly treated, his state of mind does not change- his mind is captured in that same traumatic situation. His memory from the trauma still is present in his consciousness as fragmentations of events or separate images of thoughts that collide with other non-traumatic memories – but at the same time are unrelatable. Septimus in the novel is experiencing exactly that. His mind is set of unrelated thoughts and fragments of images that are not chronologically related. At one point he is calm and thinking of leaving the world and in the next moment he is hallucinating, talking to himself and can hear his dead friend Evan talking (DeMeester,1998,2, Woolf,1992,100). This sets of emotions that are circulating through one's mind is indeed painful and hard to comprehend. He is experiencing a constant swing of emotions- calmness and madness one after another. Woolf perfectly narrates his inner consciousness whereby she preserves this fragmentation of consciousness of his trauma and his suffering. He is unable to structurally order his thoughts and leave his present reality of distress and trauma. His own identity is damaged as well. Survivors of trauma are suffering also from identity crisis, whereby they are unable to confront their trauma in a chronological way. It is very difficult for them to rationalize their experience – or simply to think of the events as they were; this is what happened, this is what will happen. They only know the present situation- their reality, which at this point is in distress, due to the fact that it is not addressed properly or medically treated (DeMeester,1998,2).Survivor finds it difficult to talk about his experiences to others, or to

summarize the traumatic event. Survivors struggle to define their trauma as the critical point in their life, and the fact that this critical point in life does not define who they are, but rather is a separate and individual situation – and therefore must be treated as a separate element. True to the fact, a trauma survivor must leave his troubled mind and their perception of the traumatic event since the collaboration and connection between the event and emotions that follow within have an explosive negative and self-destructive impact when they remain together in the same fragment of thought. To be able to progress in his recovery, a survivor must leave his own present traumatized reality and reestablish a healthy relationship between his previous self and post-traumatic realm. More so, he must therefore escape this psychotic realm that he is trapped within and create his own stable communicative narrative reality (DeMeester, 1998, 2,3).

Septimus, who suffers as a war veteran- with many episodes of swing emotions and troubled behavior caused by his traumatic experience finds himself separated from his past, due to experiences that he endured in the war that made him change the presumption that he had about himself and the world- world that once gave him certain meaning and order in life, now left him in a damaged state. His thoughts now are disconnected parts of images and fragments of memories that he struggles to connect. More so, he struggles to give meaning to this experience, and is unable to communicate about the matter. Woolf is using the character of Septimus to openly criticize the society, as they fail to address his condition in a medical manner. More so, society in the novel, most notably Septimus's doctor is silencing war veterans and are preventing his testimony to be heard- which could be the beginning of his recovery. Survivors must find a way to communicate and to give their pain a meaning- if they are left alone in their painful consciousness, they are basically being left to die, as they cannot start the process of healing on their own. Woolf, therefore, criticizes and blames society for Septimus's suicide, as they refuse to listen and acknowledge his pain- and his attempts to communicate and to give his pain a meaning and purpose. Society and their silence is what caused his death- he did not want to die, he liked life (DeMeester, 1998,3, Woolf, 1992, 164).

Furthermore, it is quite understandable that Septimus's feeling of constant guilt, lack of emotions towards people that he is close to and irrational behavior, such as talking to himself, and hearing voices are typical signs of post-traumatic stress. However, Septimus is suffering from psychological injury and a delayed stress response, as we can see from the novel that first he

was functioning normally, and his first nervous breakdown was four years after he has left the Army. Delayed stress response happens when survivor due to the traumatic experience suffers from loss of his identity. Many psychologists believe that war indeed damages person's identity center- whereby one losses sense of himself, his awareness, continuation, and identification (DeMeester,1998,5). Soldier's lives are therefore shattered in pieces, whereby they are in constant struggle to find a connection from their previous lives to their present lives- as their identity is not the same as it was before traumatic events occurred. Septimus struggles to find meaning in his existence, since war destroyed his faith in his previous beliefs- he loved poetry, especially Shakespeare, and his idea about the world could not reach beyond English countryside and English conventions of life. Now it is all gone- destroyed- because he has seen it all-, he been through it all, the war, destruction, loss of his beloved friend, most above – death. War took away the fundamental believes that Septimus had on civilized order of the English society- which was a fundamental opinion and belief that he ultimately hold about himself as well. Now those same values could not measure upon what he saw and experienced in the war. More so, war changed perspective that Septimus had on human beings as well. In combat he saw humanity at its worst- how centuries of civilization vanish by the evil and horror of the war. More so, he witnessed firsthand what human nature is capable of doing- whereby civilization proved to have full potential for destruction and evil that is not entirely gone or disappear, but it is just temporary paused by civil order (DeMeester,1998,5). However, Septimus grew numb to feelings and emotion- he is unable to feel pain, not just himself, but he does not express feelings for others as well. This condition of emotionless and inability to feel is quite usual for war veterans- as they shield themselves from the real terror that they have witnessed. This kind of behavior protects survivors mind of the tremendous horror of death, their dying comrades, smell of blood, noise of falling bombs- all the elements of the war. Septimus struggles to find emotions for all that he is experiencing during the war- but not only that he does not feel pain for what he experiences- loss of his friend, but he also fails to give meaning to that suffering after the war. It is that realization of not feeling anything makes him to feel guilty and angry. He reaches the point where nothing has meaning for him anymore- some psychologists refer to this condition quite typical for war veterans- it is not the suffering that is painful, but rather the meaningless of it makes it unbearable to live with. Septimus therefore struggles and finds it difficult to give purpose for his suffering-whereby he admits it when he experiences situation where he tries to

understand why he with a completely reasonable mind, whereby he could read and understand Shakespeare and Dante, on the other hand is unable to feel emotions. Septimus ultimately fails to understand his condition, but above everything he also fails to find any meaning in life as well, as life at this point is meaningless for him. (DeMeester,1998,5,6, Woolf,1992,96,97)

Finally, we can see how Woolf through inner voices of Clarissa and Septimus openly criticizes English society and wants to show how it works at its most intense (McGuigan,2013,124). More so, since the novel *Mrs. Dalloway* was published people started to have more understanding and insight into emotional suffering of post war veterans. Woolf can be perceived as pioneer of psychological literature that give the actual meaning to post traumatic stress and gives direct voice to the veterans. Through the novel and its story, she addresses those issues in society which fails to properly address issues on mental health. She fully advocates for woman rights, like in the case of Doris Kilman, highly educated intellectual who due to male dominance is unable to find a job, but in many ways corresponds to Woolf herself, since they are both intellectuals and reformist with a sense and mind for policy and diplomacy. As mentioned above, Woolf is using voices of various character to openly raise awareness about many issues in the society, not only female inequality. Those issues mostly are occupying areas on mental issues and war tragedy, that impacts both male and female. Some authors are arguing that her novel can be approached as a post war elegy, as it openly embraces tragedy and losses that war imposed on society. It also criticizes society as a patriarchal state, whose societal order silences and stigmatizes war veterans, by not providing them with proper medical treatment. Novel also gives us an insight how little people knew about schizophrenia or post-traumatic stress in 1920s England; therefore, I strongly argue and suggest that indeed *Mrs. Dalloway* can be approached as psychological analysis of a post war elegy, whereby its inner context is a mirror in the society that is full of violence; societal and psychological (Froula, 2002,125,126). More so, novel provides us with everyday accounts on tragical consequences of the war; psychological trauma, grief, guilt, mourning and ultimately death, like in the case of Septimus. In the article *Mrs. Dalloway s Postwar Elegy; Woman, War and the Art of Mourning*, author Froula C. is arguing that Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* can indeed be measured on the international level and be compared with other literature contributors on post war debates on European future like Sigmund Freud and his ideology on class oppression and violence that civilization can never eradicate but simply must manage it (Froula,2002, 126). It is well documented that most British soldiers died in the

World War 1, then in any other conflict, further to the note, novel *Mrs. Dalloway* perfectly summarizes the whole cruelty of the war, which not only that caused so many casualties, but also was accidental and fought with much incompetence and horror. This novel explores this cruelty of the war, mostly through Septimus and his struggles (Bethea,2010,249). Woolf is trying to pass the message to the world about those matters and advocate for varieties of rights; whereby post-war stress must be acknowledged and treated, not silenced and stigmatized. Woolf points out the fact that Septimus death does not really achieve anything and that people who were supposed to help him, like, his doctors, not only that they prosecute him, but are openly showing societal neglect towards war veterans and how society is silencing people with mental issues. Nevertheless, Woolf also in her novel depict world as broken, through its damaged characters, and therefore points on her own despair, whereby she does not think that nonexistence is necessarily a bad thing; she struggles every day to survive, as she herself suffers from suicidal thoughts. Here Woolf points out her own suicidal thoughts and deep connection that she is sharing with Septimus and Clarissa (Berthea,2010,251).

I finally argue that there is indeed strong connection between Woolf's mental illness and her writing, since all context of *Mrs. Dalloway* is written as a psychological war elegy, and its heroine Septimus is as a typical stereotype of a damaged war veteran, whose irrational and chaotic behavior eventually results in his own death. Woolf is an educated reformist, and against the war, furthermore, novel embraces all the tragedy and losses that war inflicts on people. However, she also points out awareness regarding suicide; not only that the case of Septimus is clear evidence of mental struggle that ends in his own suicide, but also Clarissa suffers from suicidal thoughts through the novel. Through the prodigy and heroine Kitty Marxe, Woolf's childhood friend that commits suicide in real life and who is original inspiration of tragical character Septimus, Woolf constantly is raising awareness regarding suicide, and why does it happen. Woolf has a known history of suicidal attempts (Edmondson,2012,24). According to Thomas C. Caramagno , literary scholar who studies Woolf's mental illness on the ground of new evidence and research on mental issues disorders, is arguing that there is indeed connection between Woolf's work and her own illness, and that Woolf's mental state can be traced in her past, whereby she suffered certain traumas that could be cause for her illness. However, he also argues that although mental breakdowns could in some cases be the cause of experienced trauma, it does not necessary means that it is the main cause of mental illness (Ghalandary,

Jamili,2014,484). However, we can indeed see that her illness had an impact on her writing, as she also constantly raises awareness regarding suicide and why it happens.

Mrs. Dalloway and her presentation of psychological condition gives us introduction into modernist literature of drama, and its context that many psychologists would not be able to understand for another fifty years to come (DeMeester,1998,1). Nevertheless, Virginia Woolf is perceived by many critics as the most talented writer of all modern British writers whereby she serves as a model for ethical affective response (Edmondson,2012,17). She rewrites *Mrs. Dalloway* from short story to the novel, only to subjectivize deeper nature of her main characters and to pass the message to the world about mental issues and cruel societal response to war veterans, who are suffering tremendously due to post war stress. More so, through various characters in her novel she also advocates for human rights and points out the inequalities of the system, whereby mental patients who were not given proper treatment suffer the most from society that neglects them. Ultimately, Woolf admits how in some of her rare statements that indeed her intention in the novel is to criticize social system and how it works at its most intense (Smith,1995,60). It was only up to us readers to read between the lines to fully understand many ideas that she successfully managed to embody in the remarkable novel that circled around many different ideas about life and death, sanity and insanity- ultimately main theme of the novel(Smith,1995,65,66).

I would like to put final word in my paper regarding Woolf's writing style. In *Mrs. Dalloway* it is very hard to distinguish the voice of the narrator and the voice of the character, due to the similarity of their inner consciousness. In *Mrs. Dalloway* idiolects appear very rare, and the concept of languages are very similar. Notably all the characters in the novel share the same accent. This kind of writing language can easily be called Woolfian, due to fact that their monologs are very similar to each other and are not distinguishable like it is the case in different authors and novels. This identical or very similar inner voice of both the narrator and the character in Woolf writing is nevertheless backed by the idea that Woolf was indeed slave to the society, and prisoner to her own class, with very much loyalty to her own circle of people, whereby she could not distinguish or write in any other dialect rather than her own. (Ferrer,1990, 23).

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