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**Traumatic Experience of the Great War and Obstacles to
Recovery in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway***

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Requirements for Master Degree in Language Teaching, Civilization and
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Dedication

The finest word, with love and respect, expressing my profound gratitude granted to my dear parents, whose sacrifices have brought me to this position. I would also like to thank my marvellous brothers, sisters and nieces. Special thanks to my faithful friends and all those who supported me along my studies.

Dedication

In the name of ALLAH, the most Beneficent, the most Merciful, the most Compassionate.

This work is dedicated to the soul of my beloved father, BENELMOUAZ Benabdallah (1950-2008), who encouraged my curiosity and supported me at each time to be the woman that I am today. May Allah grant him his highest paradise (Ameen). No word can describe what you have done for me, my charming idol.

I am forever indebted to the greatest woman in my life, my beloved mother. Her deep faith, her prayers, and supreme trust are always the most efficient motivation to accomplish my ultimate goal. Thank you for your selfless and endless love.

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgments.....	I
Dedication.....	II
Dedication.....	III
Table of Contents.....	IV
Abstract.....	VI
ملخص.....	VII
General Introduction.....	1

Chapter One: The Psychological Aftermath of the Great War and Post-war British Literature

1.1 Introduction.....	6
1.2 The Psychological Aftermath of the Great War on the British Society.....	6
1.3 Shell Shock and British Fiction.....	11
1.4 Virginia Woolf's Biography.....	17
1.5 Synopsis of <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i>	19
1.6. Post-War British Society through Woolf's Lens.....	21
1.6.1 Grief and Commemoration of the Great War in <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i>	22
1.6.2 Virginia Woolf's Interpretations of Gender Roles in <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i>	25
1.7 Conclusion.....	27

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Virginia Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

2.1 Introduction.....	30
2.2 Psychoanalytic Theory.....	30
2.3 Freudian Trauma Theory.....	32
2.4 Contemporary Trauma Theory.....	36
2.5. Poetic Narrative Style in <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i>	40
2.5.1 The Representation of Characters in <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i>	43
2.5.2 The Stream of Consciousness.....	44
2.5.3 Symbolism and Poetic Language.....	46
2.6 Conclusion.....	49

Chapter Three: The Portrayal of Trauma in *Mrs. Dalloway*

3.1 Introduction.....	51
3.2 The Analysis of Clarissa Dalloway’s State of Mind.....	52
3.3 The Analysis of Virginia Woolf’s Personal Trauma.....	56
3.4 Freudian Trauma Theory and Contemporary Trauma Theory Applied to Septimus Warren Smith.....	59
3.5 The Similarities between Woolf’s, Clarissa’s, and Septimus’ Traumatic Experiences.....	69
3.6 Conclusion.....	72
General Conclusion.....	74
Works Cited.....	77
Appendices	

Abstract

The modernist novelist Virginia Woolf was among the first writers to deal with the psychological aftermath of the First World War in post-war British society particularly in her fourth novel *Mrs. Dalloway*. The present study examines the traumatic experience of the shell-shocked character Septimus Warren Smith. This study attempts to describe the hysteric symptoms, possible causes and treatment of the trauma and psychological loss as portrayed in both the literature and the medicine of that time. Hence, this work adopts two main theories: Freudian trauma theory and Contemporary trauma theory in order to analyse and diagnose Septimus' traumatic experience of the Great War, and to see how these trauma theories could work properly in discovering the various kinds of traumas and psychological losses in Woolf's novel.

The main findings of this work are that it is too hard for the survivor to integrate himself into normal life especially who suffered from traumatic experience. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, the traumatized characters can be successfully associated with trauma studies especially for Clarissa and Septimus. The novelist and the two characters share some common perspectives particularly Septimus, who becomes her double. Thus, the novel can be stand to highlight the influence between literature and medicine particularly in psychology. Consequently, she contributes to add special perspectives in literature of trauma.

Key Words: Virginia Woolf, First World War, *Mrs. Dalloway*, Septimus Warren Smith, Trauma, Psychological Loss, Freudian Trauma Theory, Contemporary Trauma Theory

ملخص

تعتبر الكاتبة فرجينيا وولف من بين أوائل الكتاب الذين تناولوا موضوع الاثار النفسية للحرب العالمية الأولى على المجتمع البريطاني وبالأخص في روايتها الرابعة السيدة دالواي «Mrs. Dalloway». هذا العمل يهدف الى دراسة الصدمة النفسية من خلال تسليط الضوء على الجندي الناجي من الحرب سابتييس ورن سميث «Septimus Warren Smith». هذه الدراسة تعنى بوصف الأعراض الهستيرية، الاسباب والعلاج لهذه الصدمة من الناحيتين الأدبية والطبية لتلك الفترة. لذا هذا العمل سيقوم بدراسة تحليلية وتشخيصية للحالة النفسية لشخصية سابتييس على ضوء نظرية الصدمة النفسية لفرويد ونظرية الصدمة النفسية المعاصرة. وذلك بالنظر فيما إذا كانت هاتان النظريتان تساعدان على اكتشاف أنواع الصدمة المختلفة والتوهان النفسي في هاته القصة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: فرجينيا وولف، الحرب العالمية الأولى، السيدة دالواي، سابتييس ورن سميث، الصدمة النفسية، التوهان النفسي، نظرية الصدمة النفسية لفرويد، نظرية الصدمة النفسية المعاصرة.

General Introduction

General Introduction

The so-called “war to end all wars” is one of the greatest and disastrous events in the history of humanity that the world could never forget. Being patriotic to defend one’s country is a meaningless sacrifice after experiencing the horror of the Great War (1914-1918). Thus, the problematic issue was not the war itself, but its psychological aftermath. Certainly, the homecoming soldiers found several difficulties to return to normal life. Hence, this issue is strongly reflected in literature particularly in prose. The writer Virginia Woolf is one of the pioneers to portray the psychological effects of the war in her novel *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925).

Most of the previous studies of *Mrs. Dalloway* focus mainly on the narrative style as well as her modernist way of writing. Some view *Mrs. Dalloway* from the philosophical perspective of time as Bernard Blackstone declares that *Mrs. Dalloway* is “an experiment with time and point of view” (76). While some insist on the modernist mode of the novel as Soňa Šnircová states that this famous novel “is one of the most accessible modernist experimental novel” (27). Others, however, focus on the feminist representation. However, our main concern in this study is to explore the traumatic experience of the Great War on the chosen character Septimus Warren Smith with the association of the Freudian trauma theory as well as the contemporary trauma theory.

In this study, the central objective is to testify as well as to demonstrate the extent to which Woolf’s portrayal of traumatic experience and loss in her fourth novel *Mrs. Dalloway* could be successfully associated with the psychoanalytic approach, Freudian trauma theory as well as contemporary trauma theory. This study would be restricted mainly to her two characters: the protagonist Clarissa Dalloway and the shell-shocked veteran Septimus Warren Smith. This work will focus on the representation of traumatized characters through examining the different symptoms of psychological trauma.

The major motivation behind choosing such subject is our psychological orientation as well as our previous findings in licence phase that was about war poetry (1914-1918) particularly the poem of Wilfred Owen (1893-1918) “*Dulce et Decorum Est*”. Ultimately, the main finding of that study was that patriotism is a great lie in which Owen concludes his poem with an Italian line; *The old lie: Dulce et Decorum Est pro patria mori*. This very expressive line aroused our curiosity to look whether prose includes the realistic perspective or not. Then, our curiosity about the research results and what these findings will add to the field of trauma literature. In addition to that, a deep concern about the value of the information that can be provided for future researchers.

The novelty that this study brings is how the terms shell shock and trauma evolved and changed from merely medical terms to metaphoric ones. This will highlight the influence between literature and medical discourse of trauma in spite of the differences within each field. Thus, it is an uncommon task that literature may contribute in diagnosing mental illness through the portrayal of specific details without relying on psychological studies mainly that of Freud. Indeed, Virginia Woolf makes it possible through *Mrs. Dalloway*. Her own personal traumatic experience, poetic style, and artistic creativity were embodied all together in depicting the traumatized minds in such a way the recent medical studies have diagnosed.

The central research question that this study aims to answer is: to what extent Virginia Woolf was successful in depicting the symptoms of the traumatic experience of the Great War as it is associated with Freudian psychoanalytic and trauma studies as well as contemporary trauma theory, namely through the two characters Clarissa and Septimus? To reach the intended purposes of the study, a set of research sub-questions are needed. After the end of the war, what are the psychological aftermaths of this conflict on the British people? How was the term shell shock introduced as a new concept during the wartime? How did Virginia Woolf see the post-war British society? Did Woolf read Freud’s works to portray the

symptoms and treatments of psychological trauma, or did her mental illness aid her to reflect them subjectively? What are the similarities if any existed between the novelist and her two traumatized characters, Clarrissa and Septimus? Does Woolf provide in advance some signs implicitly about her ending through the traumatized soldier Septimus?

This qualitative study aims at answering these questions by relying on the descriptive evolution of shell shock. Then, the display of psychoanalytic approach, Freudian trauma theory, and contemporary trauma theory; as well as the use of analytical approach in analysing and examining the traumatic experience and the obstacles to post-war recovery on the two chosen characters.

The purpose of this research work is to explore and examine the traumatic experiences and psychological losses after the Great War in *Mrs. Dalloway*. Therefore, the work will be divided into three chapters. The first chapter will provide the general background about the psychological aftermath of the First World War on the British society as well as in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*.

The three main theories in the psychological field will be exposed in the second chapter. Starting with Freudian psychoanalytic approach that focuses on the functions of the human mind. Moving to trauma theory that was led also by the pioneer Sigmund Freud and the foundation of contemporary trauma theory that adopted Freud's findings mainly in *Beyond the Pleasure principle* led by the pioneer Cathy Caruth, ending up with presenting Woolf's new style in telling the story; the representation of some characters, the use of the stream of consciousness, symbolism and poetic language.

Ultimately, the third chapter will deeply analyse the portrayal of traumatic experiences of Clarissa and Septimus. First, the analysis of Clarissa's state of mind in the light psychoanalytic approach. Second, the analysis of Virginia Woolf's personal trauma.

Third, the immediate application of both Freudian trauma theory and contemporary trauma theory in examining Septimus' traumatic experience. The work will be ended with the depiction of the similarities between the novelist Virginia Woolf and the chosen characters, Clarissa, and Septimus.

Chapter One

1.1 Introduction

The psychological consequences of The Great War were very tragic. The horror of the frontline dominated British memory which created collective trauma for the entire society. World War I caused psychological symptoms as it introduced the new term “shell shock”. Hence, the main focus of fiction of First World War literature is the depiction of post-war Britain by putting the emphasis on the individual’s emotions and feelings after the war as well as the public. Moreover, the modernist writer Virginia Woolf concentrates on the reflection of post-war British society and embodies this interest mainly through her psychological novel *Mrs. Dalloway*. Her main concern is the portrayal of the mental state and the attempt of reconsidering the traumatic experience of the survivor. The novel depicts the mood of the British people in the era between the two World Wars, as well as the shift in the gender roles. Furthermore, the broken human personalities due to the war casualties lead the human feelings and relationships to be extremely paralyzed.

1.2 The Psychological Aftermath of the Great War on the British Society

From World War I and up to the 1980s, studies were mainly institutionalized for exploring the psychological aftermath of war in the whole world, particularly in Britain. After the First World War (1914-18), the British people experienced a psychological shock. The Great War experience has both traumatic and social aspects within post-war Britain the fact that led to a public suffering from “traumatic experience” (Trobaugh 63). The mental impacts of the war were awful at all levels in which the public’s feelings became paralyzed. Indeed, the entire society could not even live a single moment of joy or even smile due to the horrible casualties of that war. The survivors who returned home found themselves living

with traumatic memories that could never be forgotten (64). For them, the end of the war did not mean the end of their suffering. Thus, families found many paradoxes on the reasons behind their young sons' and brothers' participation on the conflict at different levels.

During the war, both soldiers on the battlefield and people who remained home had been affected by the destructive effects of the conflict. Previously, families saw their beloved as heroes whose participation in the war was considered as a sense of patriotism and nationalism. In fact, the soldiers were too excited to be those heroes and do their duty toward their nation. However, after the soldiers had experienced the life in trenches, they changed their standpoint about the glory of the war. Those veterans as well as their families were psychologically and emotionally broke down.

Conversely, the government imposed censorship on media as an attempt to protect the British people from receiving bad news about the physical and psychological states of their relatives (65). Thus, false propaganda was needed by the British government to prevent any kind of threat that would upset the "high morale" of the country. This attempt by the government is mentioned in details in Fussell's book *The Great War and Modern Memory*¹. Fussell includes part of the British forces speech that was published in London newspaper.

WHAT CAN I DO?

How the Civilian May Help in This Crisis

Be cheerful.

. . .

Write encouragingly to friends at the front.

Don't repeat foolish gossip.

¹- The US writer Paul Fussell's 1975 book *The Great War and Modern Memory* was, according to the British military historian John Keegan, revolutionary. Fussell, in what he called "an elegiac commentary", shaped a picture of the horrors of the First World War, and the cold stupidity of its leaders, made more trenchant by his own experiences in the Second World War. He also used the writings of Robert Graves, Siegfried Sassoon and others to show how the romanticising of the war and its heroes provided the creative spark for modernism, and the sensibility of disillusion and distrust of authority that characterised the so-called "lost generation".

Don't listen to idle rumors.
Don't think you know better than Haig.² (17)

In other words, this speech exposes how the government wanted to deny the casualties of that disastrous war without revealing the real facts. As a result, the public lost faith and trust on their country. The term happiness merely existed in their hearts because what differs Britain's experience is the heavy traumatic effects within a period of five years. This new generation that engaged in the conflict has a great impact on the British war literature due to the novelty of trauma as an experience. The authors' main concern is mainly the psychological and emotional side of the soldiers rather than the consequences of the First World War.

In the middle of the war, even all the attempts of government to deny the fact and glorifying the war, the news reached the people at home about the sufferance of their lovers, friends, neighbours, and brothers in the trenches. Consequently, people had low morale and more than that British citizens experienced what Caruth³ called "collective traumatic experiences" (45). That is to say, they experienced trauma from distance in which the public became too sensitive toward any news about the soldiers. Even when the conflict ended, the whole society relived wartime life and suffered traumatic experience. As a result to the war, the British population witnessed several changes especially after the death of the innocent generation of young men and the hardship for the survivors to return to normal life (Trobaugh 67).

²- Douglas Haig (1861–1928) is a British soldier who commanded the British Army in France during World War one.

³- Cathy Caruth is Associate Professor of Comparative Literature and English at Emory University. She is the pioneers of the Literature of Trauma

In *Writing the War: The Literary Effects of World War One*, Carolyn Wilson perceives that it was too hard to live through traumatic events that destroy the self gradually. For Carolyn, The homecoming soldiers had a “crisis of identity”. They could not see themselves as heroes any more as their families saw them but rather culpable men. Those veterans realized that they are unhappy since they could no longer get the character they were before the war (40-41). Some of them started to isolate themselves from the society as they were unable to express their feelings about their participation on the battlefield. Furthermore, they preferred to remain silent and not to communicate with the people around them.

By the end of the war, the citizens of Britain adopted new customs to end the conditions they had lived in. They responded to distant traumatic experiences through making riots and creating new legislations to express their anger toward the system of their government. The sense of nostalgia for old Britain would not be existed anymore owing to these dramatic changes in the psyche of the whole society. The brutality of the war made particularly the survivors suffered from “psychological trauma”⁴(Trobaugh 68).

In her essay *Parting Words: Trauma, Silence, and Survival*, Caruth sees that the survivor suffered more and more from the repetitive ordeal within his memory as he witnessed every single second under the threat of dying or seeing blood in every place. Her expression “the apparent struggle to die” describes the repetition of traumatic experience via flashbacks or nightmares of that survivor, but those symptoms are not yet recognized (02).

⁴- In the Medical Oxford English Dictionary, Psychological trauma refers to an overwhelming experience of catastrophe to which the response occurs not immediately, but in a series of delayed and repetitive after-effects. It is a type of damage to the mind that occurs as a result of a severely distressing event. Trauma is often the result of an overwhelming amount of stress that exceeds one's ability to cope, or integrate the emotions involved with that experience. A traumatic event involves one's experience, or repeating events of being overwhelmed that can be precipitated in weeks, years, or even decades as the person struggles to cope with the immediate circumstances, eventually leading to serious, long-term negative consequences.

This means that these signs and symptoms were not well recognized by both the victim himself and the people around him, as it was the first catastrophic war the world had witnessed.

Consequently, in the early medical study of the traumatic experiences Pierre Janet⁵ and Sigmund Freud started to explore the reason for a traumatic response rather than focusing on physical injury particularly the unconscious part. The repetitive memories brought on practices what Pierre Janet called it "psychological automatism"⁶ which are partitioned into two classes. Adding up to automatism, the whole body being outside of the control of conscious and incomplete automatism regularly begin in traumatic experiences (Clayton 15). Janet also added that the victim has "subconscious fixed ideas" that controlled the conscious mind through the integration of painful memories in every aspects of the soldier's life (16). Hence, the issue of the psychological after-effects of the Great War that destroyed the entire British people's psyche was adopted in the British post-war one literature under the name of "shell shock".

5- Pierre Marie Félix Janet born May30, 1859 was a pioneering French psychologist, philosopher and psychotherapist in the field of dissociation and traumatic memory. He passed away on February 24, 1947.

⁶- The existence of the unconscious was first demonstrated in 1889 by Pierre Janet in *Psychological Automatism*. Before Freud, Janet found that when certain patients remembered unconscious traumas, they got better. His findings are illustrated with numerous case studies. The book was an immediate success and would remain popular for forty years. Although *Psychological Automatism* is regarded as a basic textbook and is frequently cited, it has been out of print for decades. The publication of this new edition is to be applauded. Readers will now be able to discover or rediscover Janet's major synthesis of the workings of the human mind and his significant contributions to the field of psychology. Psychological automatism is a method of expressing the inner thought of the patient that avoids conscious thought and allows a free flow of ideas. Thus, psychological automatism means mainly repetitive motor or verbal behaviour without conscious realization or censorship.

1.3 Shell Shock and British Fiction

[...] it took the war to teach it, that you were as responsible for everything you saw as you were for everything you did. The problem was that you didn't always know what you were seeing until later maybe years later, that a lot of it never made it in at all, it just stayed stored there in your eyes. (qtd. in Caruth 11)⁷

The quotation above describes mainly what the term shell shock really means. The concept of shell shock is coined just during the First World War. It describes the case of the shell-shocked soldiers who experienced the effects of trauma of the war. The entitled article *Contribution to the Study of Shell Shock* was published by British medical journal *The Lancet* in February 1915 describes the mental state of the three soldiers study cases who became blind and loss their memories after experiencing the war (see appendix one). This shock came from “exploding shells” that had led to traumatic and “hysterical symptoms”. The study of shell shock from historical, medical and literary perspectives requires the focus on the effects of the war on the mind of the veteran as well as the whole society. The shell-shocked soldiers were neither alive nor dead, but rather they felt compelled living with those tragic memories and repetitive hysterical reactions (Hemmings 32). The latter were expressed through different symptoms and had various descriptive concepts.

By 1916, the concept of shell shock was integrated in the medical discourse and doctors were asked to cure the veterans of the terrible psychological condition. Doctors at that

⁷-This quotation was said by Michael David Herr (1940-2016) was an American writer and war correspondent, known as the author of *Dispatches* (1977), a memoir of his time as a correspondent for *Esquire* magazine (1967–1969) during the Vietnam War. The book was called the best “to have been written about the Vietnam War” by *The New York Times Book Review*; novelist John le Carré called it “the best book I have ever read on men and war in our time.” Herr later was credited with pioneering the literary genre of the nonfiction novel, along with authors such as Truman Capote, Norman Mailer, and Tom Wolfe.

time advised the shell-shocked victims not to recall the memories and nightmares of the horrible conditions they had witnessed in the battlefield. However, Dr Rivers observed that those doctors who wanted to convince victims to disregard their experiences “[...] merely accentuated the disease, and even produced new manifestations, by encouraging the patient to believe in the physical character of his conditions” (29). As a result, Rivers persuaded his patients to talk about their war experiences, but in fact the soldiers could not get rid traumatic memories due to the conditions they went through. One soldier remembers: “there was a terrific noise, a smell of powder, and we were breathing black smoke; a shell had come into the trench, the fumes lifted and hung over the trench and drifted away”, causing panic in the trenches (31). However, later the theories of Sigmund Freud and Post-Freudian psychoanalysis led the discourse of shell shock to other directions.

In this vein, Smith and T. H. Pear define accurately shell shock in their book, *Shell Shock and its Lessons*. It is “all those mental effects of war experience which are sufficient to incapacitate a man from the performance of his military duties”. For them shell shock is a serious mental illness that has “far reaching societal problem in time of peace as in war” (33). On other words, the traumatized soldiers could not forget what happened to them in the conflict even with the doctors’ strong emphasis on finding the effective treatment to their psychical and psychological trauma. Yet, the inquiries that shell shock raised at that time were not yet able to be answered. Through time, however, it became known under the medical term Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)⁸ (34). PTSD suggested that not only warriors, in any

⁸- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a disorder that develops in some people who have experienced a shocking, scary, or dangerous event. It is natural to feel afraid during and after a traumatic situation. Fear triggers many split-second changes in the body to help defend against danger or to avoid it. This “fight-or-flight” response is a typical reaction meant to protect a person from harm. Nearly everyone will experience a range of reactions after trauma, yet most people recover from initial symptoms naturally. Those who continue to

case, but also anybody could encounter the impacts of injury and that these could rise not just from war; however, from several occasions.

Jay winter in his book *Shellshock and Cultural History of Great War*, argues that the term shell shock is utilized as a code to portray the shock of the war and the life in trenches. For him the three terms shell shock, hysteria, and neurasthenia neuroses were widely used interchangeably during the war and undoubtedly all those illnesses raised out of “psychological vulnerability” (9). Those victims who suffered from shellshock need help to give an end to their psychological problems before looking out for their physical injury. Furthermore, in his book *Remembering War*, he writes a description on how the civilians saw the disastrous state of mind of the homecoming veterans, “their illnesses were so odd, so frightening, that their presence was always a problem. [...] to see such men was to encounter a side of war no one wanted to confront” (59).

Moreover, Elaine Showalter⁹ in her book *The Female Malady* suggests that the treatment of shell shock in fighters amid the First World War was mixed with a belief gender system. Women had contributed in creating the new British gender system as they took the role of men during the wartime. They attempted to aid their husbands to bear the responsibility toward their families, but their husbands could not. The shell-shocked soldier is often placed in relation to a woman or women who must negotiate the troubling effects of his return home. Accordingly, therapists started to investigate to find how particular sort of war neurosis affected the mind (10). They likewise started to pointedly recognize it from hysteria.

experience problems may be diagnosed with PTSD. People who have PTSD may feel stressed or frightened even when they are not in danger.

⁹- Showalter argues that shell shock is a male version of hysteria; associated primarily with women, she argues that shell shock can be read as a challenge to ideas of gender, pointing particularly to *Mrs Dalloway* as a novel which draws out the tensions of gender, mental health and the war.

Thus, they concluded that men who suffered from neurosis witnessed painful actions mainly because of the death of their comrades in wartime.

Bonikowski suggests that many concepts such as hysteria¹⁰ and neurasthenia¹¹ came under the title of shell shock (05). It was clear that shell shock became nothing more than a synonym for war neuroses in which they share the same symptoms. The latter are characterised by the loss of control over memory and sensation. However, these characteristics may increase or decrease according to the soldier's personality (06). The victims simply may not have normal character since their unconscious mind opposes the conscious part and the entire body. Consequently, the loss of memory was regarded as a door to inter into the exploration of mental trauma theory in medicine and literary trauma theory.

Eventually, the term shell shock had been shifted from “medical to metaphoric term” in British literature (36). Most of the British First World War fiction represented the brutal after-effects of the war. The representation of the Great War was deeply highlighted in poetry and prose. The horror of the war and the massive traumatic events were depicted by those who participated on the battlefield as well as who remained on the home front. The syndromes and the causes of shell shock had dominated the post-war English literature. What is called “the war to end all wars” inspired many writers of all classes.

¹⁰- Hysteria, in the colloquial use of the term, means ungovernable emotional excess. Generally, modern medical professionals have abandoned using the term hysteria to denote a diagnostic category, replacing it with more precisely defined categories, such as somatization disorder. In 1980, the American Psychiatric Association officially changed the diagnosis of hysterical neurosis to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

¹¹- Neurasthenia is characterized by general lassitude, irritability, lack of concentration, worry, and hypochondria. The term was introduced into psychiatry in 1869 by G. M. Beard, an American neurologist. Neurasthenia covers a wide spectrum of symptoms, including painful sensations or numbness in parts of the body, chronic fatigue, anxiety, and fainting. Some medical historians believe that neurasthenia may actually be the same as the modern day disorder of chronic fatigue syndrome.

In his book *Shell Shock: Traumatic Neurosis and the British Soldiers of the First World War*, Leese declares that the term shell shock mainly started first in literary works, from Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) to Pat Barker's *Re-generation* Trilogy, (1991-95) both works are considered as an icon of the issues of gender roles as well as the portrayal of the psychological loss among the veterans. Here, Leese views those works as outstanding in making clear that shell shock was a special kind of experience and memory that even shaped the British culture (12).

Consequently, such kind of literary works are based on the interpretation of the war by using various means to have an objective depiction toward every psychological aspect through fictional characters. The outstanding Paul Fussell considers such genre of works basically as a "literary revolution" that shaped modern literature. In the light of those works, Fussell insists specifically on the utilization of the literary devices by each writer. Not only that, he focuses primarily on the study of the literary work from psychological dimension with a connection to the important characteristics of the post-war British society (17).

Most British war novels were written by middle-class writers or by "the gentleman-ranker"¹² (Trotter 34). The British war literature principally focuses on the British "war novel". The latter is explicitly characterized by the vivid discussion of physical and mental suffering of the soldiers and essentially the survivors. This Fictional genre is flourished during and aftermath of the war. Many prose writers emphasize the importance of the true representation of the First World War as "war not as a history" (35). Although, some works cover just the circumstances of the war for political reasons. Others overemphasize the

¹² Gentleman-ranker is an enlisted soldier who may have been a former officer or a gentleman qualified through education and background to be a commissioned officer.

meaninglessness of self-sacrifice for one's nation. Despite the various aims behind the interpretation of after-effects of the war, they all attempt to oppose, explicitly or implicitly, the war by using their literary works as a medium.

It is worthwhile to mention that most of the post-war writers aim to disclose the dreadful truth of the war by creating characters suffered the same impacts as in the reality, especially the case of the soldiers who maintained suffering constantly even after the end of the conflict. This led to the raise of full description of "the traumatised soldier" in the fiction of the Great War. Therefore, there are two kinds of war writers. On one hand, war writers who do not want to remember or commemorate their experiences at all. On the other hand, war writers who insist on revealing the fake glory of the war (44-45). They write about the soldiers to express their sorrow toward the war, because they have considered the veteran as a person who deserved all kinds of pity rather than considering him as a hero fight to save the nation.

Besides that, the combatant writers' topics have specific aspects of dealing with war consequences on "the entire humanity" and how it differs from other conflicts that any country previously have ever witnessed. However, the non-combatant writers have dealt with the immediate effects of the war, particularly the emotional and psychological aspects. Trotter, also, declares that many of combat novel should not only have "psychiatric orientation", but what make these kinds of novels more influential is that they must be as a "resource rather than an affliction" (46). Nevertheless, not only men writers had exposed their knowledge about the war.

Women who remained home on the wartime they had the curiosity to know more about the life in trenches. Yet, they felt the terrible effects of the war although they did not

have personal experiences. Thus, women writers inevitably were of that kind of war novelist. They wanted to understand the shell shock of the war through having glimpse about the case of their relatives, who survived after the war as well as their connection with other men war writers, who wrote about the horror of the war on the battlefield. Eventually, most of them insisted on traumatizing the war rather than romanticizing it. Fictional works such as Rebecca West's *The Return of the Soldier* and Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* served the same purpose. Both women writers focused on shell shock and war trauma. Additionally, sometimes those women writers suffered their own trauma and that was the case of the war writer Virginia Woolf.

Finally, some historians and psychologists emphasize that Britain have never been recovered from the shell shock of the Great War (1914-1918). Since 1918, most British intellectuals have set their distinctive representation of narratives via observing the psychological trauma of the ex-soldiers. Consequently, war writers and novelists present individual and collective trauma of the war in a poetic way. Besides, many writers criticize the cruelty and inequality of the British policy during the war including Virginia Woolf whose relative experience of neurasthenia and hysteria inspired her to include a shell-shocked character in her novel *Mrs. Dalloway*, which became the outstanding modernist novel that represent accurately shell shock.

1.4 Virginia Woolf's Biography

Adeline Virginia Stephen was born in 1882, during the Victorian era, to Leslie Stephen and Julia Princep Duckworth, his second wife. Virginia's father was a prominent Victorian intellectual. He was an author, literary critic, philosopher and a mountaineer. Sir

Leslie Stephen's most famous achievement was the edition of the three volumes of the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Julia was born in India to Dr. John and Maria Pattle Jackson. She had been a model for photographers and painters, and she had worked as a nurse.

Virginia had three full siblings, Vanessa, Thoby and Adrian; and four half-siblings as Julia had three children from her first husband, Herbert Duckworth: George, Stella, and Gerald. The family lived at 22 Hyde Park Gate, Kensington in London. They were an upper class and they had a good reputation with writers, painters and the social elites. From 1897-1902 Virginia took classes in Greek, Latin, German, and History in the King's College Department for Ladies, London. She loved to write from an early age, contributing to the family newspaper, *The Hyde Park Gate News* (Pattison 20).

The most tragic event in Virginia's life was when her mother passed away in 1895. This event caused Virginia's mental illness and made her suffer from mania and severe depression along her life. Two years later, she had experienced psychological trauma after the death of her half-sister, Stella. In addition to these painful losses, she was sexually abused by her half-brother George during her childhood. After the death of her father, Virginia tried committing suicide by throwing herself out of a window.

Her siblings, Vanessa, Thoby and Adrian moved to 46 Gordon Square in Bloomsbury where Thoby organized meetings to discuss intellectual and cultural subjects that were known as "The Bloomsbury Group". Virginia married one of the members, Leonard Woolf. Woolf adopted Virginia's talent and encouraged her to start writing seriously. Her first novel was *The Voyage Out* in 1915. After having this experience of mastering writing, she started publishing her works: *Night and Day* (1919), *Modern Fiction* (1919), *Jacob's Room* (1922),

Mrs. Dalloway (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1927), *Orlando* (1928), *A Room of One's Own* (1929), *The Waves* (1931), *The Years* (1937) *Three Guineas* (1938), and *Between the Acts* (1941) (Jeffers IX).

Lastly, Virginia Woolf committed suicide in 1941, and before doing so, she left notes expressing her regret about spoiling her husband Leonard's life. Otherwise, she is considered as a creative writer and the only one who could depict the syndromes of manic depression and trauma as she had experienced during her personal life. Hence, modern critics firmly insist that Virginia Woolf's life and experiences of trauma are often understood to have influenced her writing about trauma and war, particularly in *Mrs. Dalloway*.

1.5 Synopsis of *Mrs. Dalloway*

“On the eighth of October 1922, Virginia Woolf writes in her diary: “I adumbrate here a study of insanity and suicide: the world seen by the sane and the insane side by side – something like that” (207). Later on, this study became known as *Mrs. Dalloway*. This work is one of Virginia Woolf's best known novels. It was published on May 14, 1925 after the end of the First World War. The novel is created from two short stories, *Mrs. Dalloway in Bond Streets*, and the unfinished *The Prime Minister*. It details the journey of Clarissa Dalloway, an upper class wife, in a single day of June in post-World War I London.

The story begins with Clarissa preparing to go out to buy flowers for the party she intends to host in the evening. While she is walking through her neighbourhood, Clarissa remembers her old days in Bourton in the summer when she refused to marry Peter Walsh, an old friend whom she was in love with. For a moment, the lady rethinks her weird choice of husband; she married the reliable Richard Dalloway instead of the demanding Peter. When

she comes back home, she unexpectedly, meets Peter. He is middle-aged, enigmatic, and unpredictable even to himself. Peter returns to England after a long stay in India. Although he plans to marry Daisy, a married woman in India, Peter has shown a sense of grief that he could not get married to Clarissa.

During their meeting, Clarissa and Peter remembered the time they spent together and judged each other harshly. Afterwards, Peter leaves the house and walks into Regent's Park when Elizabeth, Clarissa's and Richard's only child comes in. In spite of his critical nature that may detach him from others; Peter still feels his life deeply. Simultaneously, Septimus Smith is introduced. A young shell-shocked veteran from the First World War who struggles to return to natural life when the war is over. He went to war for patriotic reasons. But now, he lost the desire to recover from the horror of the war and to preserve his society and himself.

Septimus is mentally ill. He suffers from a mental depression and hallucinations after witnessing the killing of his friend Evans in the war without grief. He lives in an internal world where he hears voices, sees faces, and even talks to the dead, Evans. As he challenges to overcome his horrible situation by looking at the beauty of the external world, Septimus afterwards, loses faith in people as being dishonest. He spent his day with his Italian-born wife Lucrezia, whom he shows no affection, in Regent's Park waiting for their appointment with Sir William Bradshaw. The latter is a famous psychiatrist who recommends a sanatorium for Septimus as to recover from his serious illness.

The narrator, then, moves to Richard Dalloway who is Clarissa's husband. He is a distinguished politician, a stable, and a hardworking person. In this scene, Richard is having lunch with two high members of the society, Hugh Whitbread and Lady Bruton. He helps

Lady Bruton writing a letter to the most famous newspaper, *The Times*. After lunch, Richard tried to express his love to Clarissa by offering her a bunch of roses; but unfortunately he failed. Clarissa has a tendency toward privacy because she deeply thinks that it is important to maintain a slight of distance between husband and wife.

Clarissa's party is attended by almost all of the characters she has met in the novel. She works hard to make her party successful by establishing a sense of communication among her guests despite her attitudes of privacy. In this way, Sally Seton, Lady Rooster now, appears unexpectedly in her party to complete the gathering of those of Bourton thirty years ago. Moreover, even Septimus whom Clarissa has no relationship with is introduced in the party when Lady Bradshaw tells her about the suicide of Dr. Bradshaw's patient. In fact, Septimus puts an end to his life to escape his mental troubles when he failed to survive. At the close of the novel, Clarissa felt pity for the young man; however, she considers his act as an effort to preserve his purity of happiness.

1.6. Post-War British Society through Woolf's Lens

Virginia Woolf is considered as an important modernist as well as feminist writer. She is one of the most famous literary critics of early and mid-twentieth century in Great Britain. Woolf's works, including short stories, novels, and essays, have such great contributions to literature. Essentially, her novels, written in stream of consciousness, give the reader a big chance to gain familiarity with the life of its characters. Besides, the reader could "get a glimpse of how life was changing in post-war Great Britain" (Cabrera 55). This means that almost all of Woolf's novels depict the remarkable changes that British society has known. For instance, the radical changes brought by the First World War. This matter is a dominant theme in Virginia Woolf's fiction such as *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway*.

Starting from the Victorian era, the period of time when Virginia Woolf was born, to post-war time, Woolf provides her readers with a variety of topics that seem to be the turning points in the development of British society. Accordingly, Woolf shows “how the Great War cultivated a vast range of once tabooed alternatives that were becoming tolerable”. She also focuses on the importance of concept of time and its relationship with death as well as to what extent does the aftermath of the war altered the understanding of life and death. In addition to these topics, Woolf highlights the position of women in society and explains how inferior women were treated in comparison with men. Furthermore, the novelist depicts how the British social class system function including; the class hierarchy, the social differences, and the ruling class (55).

Woolf’s criticism of the social system “comes through her work subtly”. This unique style of writing makes a balance between representing the social system and “retaining the artistic and poetic voice in her novels”. Essentially, characters’ views are diplomatically set. For instance, they expressed their opinions of gender and royalty in a way that suggests “that the Empire is fading, that Victorian values are in question, and that class boundaries are not as rigid as they were in pre-war Great Britain” (56).

1.6.1 Grief and Commemoration of the Great War in *Mrs. Dalloway*

During the First World War, England had suffered heavy casualties. Due to those casualties, “[o]ne can truly talk of [it as] a society in mourning” (Capdevila and Voldman 30). The sense of mourning was shared publicly. The funeral rites for the millions of dead soldiers were performed communally. Even “families that did not lose a soldier were expected to

participate in public acts of mourning” (Gregory 24). Later, the building of monuments and memorial ceremonies are some of the means used to deal with the trauma of the war.

In an attempt to explore the effects of the Great War propaganda on the conscious of individuals, it is very interesting to mention Virginia Woolf’s view vis-à-vis that issue. On several occasions, she has shown her strong rejection of national grief following the end of war. In response to Peace Day celebrations¹³ in 1919, Woolf writes in her first diary that there is “something calculated & political & insincere about these peace rejoicings. Moreover they are carried out with no beauty and not much spontaneity” (292). Essentially, in *Mrs. Dalloway*, authentic grief work is not encouraged because the communal mourning is controlled by the state and “merely performed by the public” (Brandt 69). Generally, Woolf tries to emphasize the effects of the trauma of the war on people as well as the ways the nation responded by assimilating or rejecting particular narratives. In this way, she engages the readers in a discussion about how the war experience could change the individual’s view of the society.

In his book *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History*, Jay Winter insists, “everyone in mourning for a soldier was a victim of war” (30). This quote shows the pitiful state of mourners and the carelessness of the community that refuses to recognize their grief. As an illustration, Septimus’ wife, Rezia moved to London from Italy when they got married even she has no familial or social kinships. Moreover, Septimus is not considered as a heroic soldier, but instead, he and most of the war veterans were “derelicts as well as outcasts from society”. In this way, Rezia found it hard to express her grief and sorrow with the British community. Her grief is silent: “It was she who

¹³ To celebrate and mark the end of First World War, a Bank Holiday was declared in Britain, having been decided by a committee chaired by Lord Curzon, foreign secretary.

suffered—but she had nobody to tell” (25). In fact, she admired the lifestyle of the English people, but unfortunately she fails to create a social sense.

The ideological function of the war dead was strongly rejected by writers and intellectuals of that time. Actually, ideology aims to consider the individual as a subject in which it neglects the individual narratives that contradict social value. The state has a tendency toward censoring the war experiences of soldiers. It attempts to marginalise, and even “reject their authentic experiences” (Brandt 102).

As a result of these actions, suspicion and mistrusting the policy of the state became very popular among these individuals. Glorifying and honouring the war dead are essential strategies that are used to hide the reality of the war “with an air of celebration”. The images produced in the home front were completely different from the ones in the war. Even soldiers who experienced the horror of the war could find any similarities:

Once the soldier was seen as a victim, the idea of a hero became unimaginable: there would be no more heroic actions in the art of this war. And if entire armies could be imagined composed of such victims—if indeed every army was an army of martyrs—then Victory too must fade from the story, and war became only a long catastrophe, with neither significant action nor direction, a violence that neither fought nor won, but only endured. (Hynes 215)

The citation above shows the refusal of the soldiers to participate in glorifying the fake victory of the war that was merely a catastrophe. Through *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf criticizes the

erection of monuments that encourages the national grief by depicting the Cenotaph¹⁴ as “the latest of memorials that are scattered throughout the London landscape” (see appendix two).

The state’s intentions to set some patriotic elements such as commemoration and mourning rites suggest that it attempted to control post-war mourning. Additionally, the grief was communal rather than personal and that “rituals of the bereaved, including the silence, the wearing of a poppy, or the placing of flowers on the Cenotaph” are the features to confirm that the entire British society were living communal mourning (Brandt 103).

1.6.2 Virginia Woolf’s Interpretations of Gender Roles in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Post-World War One time brought a slight difference in defining the gender roles. The New Woman is a term coined around the turn of the century to signify the emergence of women into the public sphere. It is closely associated with the suffrage movement. This concept highlights the new different position of the post-war British women. Now, the traditional roles of woman were completely changed (see appendix three). As a result, the woman gained more opportunities to learn, work and even more being outstanding intellectuals.

Previously, “the English class system was rigid, a father of a family was usually the patriarch and a mother had to play the household Angel” (Nahrwold 02). According to Leila Baradaran Jamili, it is a typical image of “male-dominated centrality and female-dominated

¹⁴- The Cenotaph is a stone monument in the middle of Whitehall, London, built in memory of the members of the armed forces who died in the two World Wars. Every year, on Remembrance Sunday, the Queen and the leaders of the main political parties place wreaths, arrangements of flowers, there as part of a special ceremony. The word Cenotaph means “empty tomb”.

marginality” (106). One of the consequences of such a patriarchal society was that at that time, women had no right to go to school.

Accordingly, Virginia Woolf, a product of an upper-class Victorian family, was living with these ideologies and could never go to school or receive a college education. She was extremely resented of this gender discrimination; and later in a letter to Vita Sackville-West, she wrote, “No school; mooning about alone among my father’s books; never any chance to pick up all that goes on in schools—throwing balls; ragging; slang; vulgarities; scenes; jealousies!” (qtd.in Nicolson 09). After the death of her father, Virginia “could feel free from his shadow, a feeling that helped her show how much she changed and rebelled against her father’s Victorian frame of mind”. As a critic of patriarchal society, Woolf tries to criticize the attitudes of those societies that restrict women to the private sphere and preserve woman’s position in the status of inferior toward man in society.

In her 1929 essay *A Room of One’s Own*, Virginia Woolf considers the difficulties of the woman artist. As a fervent supporter of women’s rights, she argues that men and women should be treated equally and that women productivity knows no limits when it comes to writing literature. She claims that the items that women need to write fiction are “a room of their own and a salary”. For women artist isolation provide privacy to feel free “to write without being interrupted by domestic chores” that might create a sense of chaos in their thought and subsequently weaken their creativity. By having a regular salary, a literary woman would avoid unnecessary distractions (115). Woolf ultimately claims:

Intellectual freedom depends upon material things. Poetry depends upon intellectual freedom. And women have always been poor, not for two hundred years merely, but from the beginning of time. Women have had

less intellectual freedom than the sons Athenian slaves. Women, then, have not had a dog's chance of writing poetry. That is why I have laid so much stress on money and a room of one's own. (117)

Oppositely, Natasha A. Cabrera suggests that Woolf's assertions are to some degree exaggerated. This suggestion is supported by the idea that even male writers were "wage earners". Hence, she illustrates with the case of Septimus Smith who moved from Strauss to Great Britain in order to achieve poetic success. "He works during the day and attends lectures at night" (41).

Before the mid of the nineteenth century, there was a radical belief that women are weak, both physically and intellectually. In fact, there existed what is called "the private world" that believes neither in the education nor in the work of woman. It instead imposed that women should stay at home and sees that "the sole vocation for women was marriage" (Shihada 121). In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf highlighted this belief through female characters. For instance, the protagonist, Clarissa was a middle class woman. When she marries Richard Dalloway, who is an upper class man, she immediately became an upper class woman whose social and financial success are achieved only by marriage. Lastly, Woolf wants to break the social beliefs of that time. She tries to encourage women to create their own identity far from the shadow of men whose power dominated the social scenes for ages.

1.7 Conclusion

The First World War brought about an extremely different understanding of the war. Particularly, in Great Britain, millions of people were killed and others became psychologically traumatized when they returned home. In fact, there existed two main crashed

views about the war. First, war veterans and shell-shocked individuals were no longer believing in the sense of patriotism and defending one's country. Second, the political ideologies that the state were imposing through media in the home front applied completely different images from the ones lived in trenches. In this way, many intellectuals and writers' literary works came as a response to those ideological actions. Virginia Woolf was among the pioneers writers to depict the theme of war in her fictional works. Accordingly, through her novel *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf works hard to express her views toward particular social beliefs such as the ideologies about war, the social class system, and the gender roles issue.

Chapter Two

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

2.1 Introduction

The discussion of traumatized soldiers and survivors is supported mainly by the trauma theories of Sigmund Freud. Recently, the contemporary trauma studies are basically originated from the adaptation of Freudian trauma theory. Trauma analysts such as Caruth, Helman, LaCapra, and others insist on the relationship between literature and the realistic representation of trauma narrative in fictional and non-fictional literary works. Moreover, some of those contemporary scholars insist on studying traumatic experiences and memory via inserting Freudian psychoanalytic studies. However, the psychological novelist Virginia Woolf attempts to provide a poetic trauma narrative in her famous novel *Mrs. Dalloway*.

2.2 Psychoanalytic Theory

In the late 19th century, particularly in 1897, Sigmund Freud (1856-1938), Austrian physician and neurologist, created a new different approach to understand the human mind. This approach is known as "Psychoanalysis"¹⁵. The latter is a therapeutic method¹⁶ that aims to provide accurate diagnosis as well as cure to the mental disorders by the investigation conscious and unconscious elements of the mind. The purpose of this practice is to let the patient talks freely in order to ease the tension of fears and conflict in the unconscious part which cause stress and disorder and gradually brought them into the conscious part of the mind.

¹⁵- Today psychoanalysis is very familiar for the wide public after it has been either rejected or adulated for a long time. But, as a paradox, the success achieved for example in the Fifth decade, especially in Europe, estranged it from its essence. Psychoanalysis spread everywhere but not only due to the interest incited by its therapeutical method. It could even say that therapy was shadowed by the virtues of its application to other domains. Psychoanalysis applied in literature, sociology, anthropology, ethnology, religion and mythology incited the interest of a public that had no inclination towards the clinical realm.

¹⁶- Therapeutic method is related to therapeutics, the branch of medicine that is concerned specifically with the treatment of disease. The therapeutic dose of a drug is the amount needed to treat a disease.

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Speaking about personality structure, Freud in his book *First Lecture in Psychoanalysis* determined that these three elements, the id, the ego and the superego, are the bases of the human personality (see appendix four). The id is the “reservoir of the instinctual drives of the individual”, which consists of biological desires, wishes, and emotional motives. The id is dominated by the “pleasure principle, through which the individual is pressed for immediate gratification” of their urges (493).

The ego is the chief and the most important part of personality. It is formed at birth when the mind encounters the outer world of people and things. The ego works to change behaviors and attitude by controlling the socially unacceptable impulses. It plays an intermediary role between unconscious instincts and social as well as personal standards. The third element of the personality structure is the superego. It functions automatically “to modify and inhibit those instinctual impulses” of the id that produce antisocial actions and thoughts (449). Essentially, the ego develops when the child starts unconsciously adopt values and principles of their parents first, and of the social environment later.

In the period from 1895 to 1900, Freud developed the concept of the unconscious. The latter is a complex of “survivals of feelings experienced during infantile life including both instinctual drives or libido and their modifications by the development of the superego” (496). As postulated by Freud, the unconscious is “the dark, inaccessible part of our personality” (Jarvis 01). Accordingly, there exist some deep parts of the mind such as thoughts, memories, and desires, which are hard to access. Nonetheless, their role in shaping the human's identity and behaviour is very important (01).

Psychoanalysis is a language based cure, which is regarded as a “form of talking cure” (02). In this way, psychoanalysts encourage the patients to articulate their problems in

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

order to engage in word play; free association technique, and to talk about their dreams; dreams interpretation technique. Freud defines dreams as being the “royal road” to access the unconscious. A dream by definition is “the imaginary dramatization of wishes and fears that have been repressed in the waking world”. The dream has “manifest content” what the dreamer remembers and narrates when he wakes up and “latent content” which is the secret meaning of these stories (497).

Besides that, Freud's studies were introduced in many subjects. For instance, religion in *The Future of an Illusion* (1927) and *Moses and Monotheism* (1939), occultism in *Totem and Taboo* (1913), humour in *Jokes and their Relationship to the Unconscious* (1905), and trauma in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920).

2.3 Freudian Trauma Theory

If Freud turns to literature to describe traumatic experience, it is because literature, like psychoanalysis, is interested in the complex relation between knowing and not knowing, and it is at this specific point at which knowing and not knowing intersect that the psychoanalytic theory of traumatic experience and the language of literature meet. (Caruth 03)

Caruth argues that there is a deep correlation between the Freudian trauma theory and its implications for literature. This suggestion gives an opportunity to modern literary criticism to explore the full meaning of extrasensory states of fictional and non-fictional characters in the novels via trauma theory. According to Forter, “the concept of trauma can be said to lie at the heart of Freud's initial discoveries and so to inform his earliest psychoanalytic formulations” (262). Thus, particularly in modern literary criticism, it is

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

essential to utilize Freudian's traumatic experiences studies and other critics that come after his experiments in order to scrutinize the notions of trauma.

The concept of trauma would be reflected through the careful choice of the characters mainly in psychological novel. Fundamentally, many novelists of the First World War mirrored the psychological aftermath in their literary works. Shell shock and traumatic experiences of the individual as well as the collective trauma of post-war British society were the main themes and plots in the Great War literature. Hence, Freudian trauma theory has a great impact on analyzing literary texts in modern literary criticism.

Freud's first essays began with the study of hysteria as well as the focus on other related notions. In part II of his posthumous collection of essays *Project for a Scientific Psychology*, he first utilized the term "Nachträglichkeit"¹⁷. His study of traumatic experiences was based mostly on women who suffered from hysteria. In *Studies on Hysteria*, he found that those women's trauma is originated profoundly from sexual trauma during their childhood. Nevertheless, later, Freud claimed that hysteria stems from imagination and "fantasy" (284). In other words, Freud saw that the symptoms of hysteria are connected essentially with traumatic experiences, which made the nature of trauma primarily formed as a response to the individual's sexual desires, fantasies, and accidents.

Afterwards, Freud and his Viennese physician colleague Joseph Breuer carried in developing the theory of Nachträglichkeit. In *On the Psychical Mechanism of Hysterical Phenomena: Preliminary Communication*, They introduced the new term "traumatic hysteria" as both mental and memory disease:

¹⁷- Nachträglichkeit is a German word. It refers, in the psychoanalytical concept, to the English word "afterwardsness" that appeared initially in Freud's writings in the 1890s. In the common sense form of the German adjective-adverb "afterwards" or "deferred" (*nachträglich*), Freud wrote in the unfinished and unpublished *A Project for a Scientific Psychology*, "a memory is repressed which has only become a trauma after the event".

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

The causal relation between the determining psychological trauma and the hysterical phenomenon is not of a kind implying that the trauma merely acts like an agent provocateur in releasing the symptom, which thereafter leads an independent existence, but the psychological trauma – or more precisely the memory of the trauma – acts like a foreign body which long after its entry must continue to be regarded as an agent that is still at work. (06)

In other words, it is not an easy task for a patient suffers from trauma to neglect or release from a painful event as he has the ability to store these awful memories willingly or unwillingly and subsequently enacts or re-enacts according to them in a similar present situation.

Furthermore, Breuer and Freud added, “any experience which calls up distressing affects, such as those of fright, anxiety, shame or physical pain may operate as a trauma of this kind” (07). This means that trauma has various kinds that can be expressed differently according to the level of the traumatic experience. These reactions are termed as “the interval of latency” (12). That is to say, the patient reacts later to what he has already passed through during the tragic periods in his early life, which intensely fixed in his memory.

This case was already mentioned in his book *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud carried out his investigations about trauma and stated that, “The clinical picture presented by traumatic neurosis is unlike that of hysteria” (50). He sustained his trauma theory by corroborating the temporary symptoms of the traumatic experiences mainly the after-effects of horrible accidents and war (51).

Freud established a connection between traumatic neurosis and hysteria, where the sufferers are “psychically fixated on the trauma,” when he declared, “Hysterics suffer mainly

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

from reminiscences" (55). Although, Freud discovered that these symptoms will no more be originated in the memories of the patients once they will be discharged through verbalizing. And this led to the establishment of the "cathartic method"¹⁸ or the so-called approach "talking cure"¹⁹ (06). Freud affirmed that traumatic experiences were constantly accused of high feeling and the response to those emotions are according to the degree of the trauma; if the trauma is too terrible, the nerve system cannot respond or even be aware of the surroundings.

Therefore, the concept of trauma in Freudian theory has a psychological meaning. In view of the fact that it portrays the severe case of the mind rather than the body itself; because of the victim's sudden and unexpected emotional shocks happened in the past. Drawing from Freudian theory, the traumatic formulation relates to "an analogy between psychic and physical trauma" (Forster et al 263). Furthermore, Freudian theory also argues that for a traumatized person there is a "conflict between the forces of sexuality and its repression" (263). Breuer and Freud also point out that trauma can be derived from both irreparable loss of a loved person and the social circumstances (10). Hence, some of Woolf's characters in *Mrs. Dalloway* suffer from the loss of a beloved person, the conflict between sexuality and repression.

Many critics state that Freudian trauma theory has a fundamental role in interpreting and analysing literary texts in modern literary criticism. Caruth claims, "texts of a certain period—the texts of psychoanalysis, of literature, and literary theory—both speak about and

¹⁸ - The so-called cathartic method was a treatment for psychiatric disorders developed during (1881-1882) by Joseph Breuer with his patient "Anna O." The aim was to enable the hypnotized patient to recollect the traumatic event at the root of a particular symptom and thereby eliminate the associated pathogenic memory through catharsis. The term was derived from Aristotle's use of it to describe the emotionally purgative effect of Greek tragedies.

¹⁹ - The Talking Cure is known in case studies by the alias Anna O, used for the verbal therapy given to her by Joseph Breuer. They were first published in *Studies on Hysteria* (1895).

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

speak through the profound story of traumatic experience [and] the complex ways that knowing and not knowing are entangled in the language of trauma and in the stories associated with it" (04). She insists convincingly on the association between literature and psychoanalysis.

In brief, Freudian trauma theory covers vast areas of the psyche and for literary analysis; it remains among the most relevant approaches for fortifying Woolf studies. It includes the notions of hidden unconscious sexual repression, illusion, fantasy, daydream and nightmare, identification, family relationships, the transfer of desire, the complexities of childhood development, and many other useful concepts. All these notions can be used effectively to explore their implications in Woolf's novel *Mrs. Dalloway*. In 1990's, however, modern critics developed Freudian trauma theory, and gave birth to the contemporary trauma studies accompanied with the medical study. The latter has been changed officially from shell shock in the context of World War I to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

2.4 Contemporary Trauma Theory

In the mid-1990s, the publication of the contemporary fictional and non-fictional trauma narrative came after the adaptation of Freudian trauma studies, which led to the rise of contemporary literary trauma from the works of contemporary literary scholars Cathy Caruth, Shoshanna Felman, Geoffrey Hartman, Dominick LaCapra and others. Then, new theorists shifted their focus toward the veterans' Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) particularly by the American Psychiatric Association in their official *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* (DSM). This research was derived from the understanding of the effects of trauma by observing and diagnosing the survivor's symptoms (see appendix five).

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Michal Balaev observes in *Trends in Literary Trauma Theory* that, "The evolution of trauma theory in literary criticism might best be understood in terms of the changing psychological definitions of trauma as well as the semiotic, rhetorical, and social concerns that are part of the study of trauma in literature and society"(03). To be exact, the concept of trauma has many interpretations according to modern critics; those contradictory theories give the opportunity to both psychologists and literary scholars to study trauma and its personal effects with the use of shifting definitions of trauma.

In her book *trauma fiction*, the contemporary writer Anne whitehead sees that trauma theory gave birth to a new literary genre that can be called "trauma fiction". She affirms that there is an interaction between trauma theory and narrative fiction in literature; "in which each speaks to and addresses the other" (04). However, Julian Wolfreys mentions in *Trauma, Testimony, Criticism: Witnessing, Memory and Responsibility* that trauma theory is influenced by discourse of "psychoanalytic literary criticism" (128). In this vein, Geoffrey Hartman's *on Traumatic Knowledge and Literary Studies* already asserts, "The theory derives mainly from psychoanalytic sources, though it is strongly affected by literary practice" (537).

Therefore, these critics point out the distinguished aspects of trauma theory by figuring out the importance of the repetitive memory of the traumatic events. They insist on the personal disorder that came after having violent incidents happened to victims, especially those who witnessed the war. The pioneer critics of contemporary trauma theory such as Caruth and Felman relate the theory to the representation of trauma with the understanding of historical narrative and truth. Both of them agree that literature is the better realm for representing traumatic experiences. Effectively, literature became a site where the belated memories enacted as it is called "unclaimed moment of trauma" (Rodi-Risberg 12).

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

In *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*, Caruth presents a new mode of reading trauma by returning to Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. She claims that "trauma is described as the response to an unexpected or overwhelming violent event or events that are not fully grasped as they occur, but return later in repeated flash-backs, nightmares, and other repetitive phenomena" (44). In other words, the notion of trauma is mainly came as a result of violent event not only as physical experience in which shock is fixed in the victims' memory the thing that prevent them from recovery. She describes the repetitive nightmares of those who saw the painful sights in trenches as an avoidable memory.

In addition, Felman emphasizes that the victims of the traumatic experience can never recover from those emotional shocks. He declares that, "trauma survivors live not with memories of the past, but with an event that could not and did not proceed through its completion, has no ending, attained no closure, and therefore, as far as its survivors are concerned, continues into the present and is current in every respect" (69). The victims are not certainly "in touch either with the core of his traumatic reality or with the fatedness of its re-enactments, and thereby remains entrapped in both" (69).

Many critics insist on the fact that both Caruth and Felman used literary language to express the traumatic discourse in their own writings as it was seen by Freud in *Studies on Hysteria*. Fundamentally, Freud declared that his case study has a literary quality: "it still strikes me myself as strange that the case histories I write should read like short stories" (15). Definitely, Caruth sees that the language of trauma is a literary language. Hence, she argues that Freud draw to literature in his studies.

Hartman expands this point of studying trauma within the literary context through rising questions such as "Why literature, story, and not just events, history?" (541). In other

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

words, he asks why figurative language may be integrated in exploring traumatic event as he called it “event without a witness”. The other view by the trauma theorist Dominick LaCapra looks into the demand for truth in connection to literary trauma. He stated:

Narratives in fiction may also involve truth claims on a structural or general level by providing insight into phenomena such as slavery or the Holocaust²⁰, by offering a reading of a process or period, or by giving at least a plausible “feel” for experience and emotion which may be difficult to arrive at through restrictive documentary methods. (13)

The above quotation shows that LaCapra insists on the representation of incidents such as the Holocaust and slavery with real facts. This emotional “feel” about traumatic events and experiences may seem true. Other trauma scholars, however, claimed that the representation of trauma may be successful through both “realistic” and “non-realistic” methods or needs to be represented in each one independently (Rodi-Risberg 19).

Moreover, LaCapra made comparison between absence and loss in political, social and cultural subjects and how this loss and absence lead to one's own trauma. He also confirms, “losses are specific and involve particular events, such as the death of loved ones on a personal level” (49). Simultaneously, he explores the idea of loss in correlation with the idea of lack and declares, “loss is often correlated with lack, for as loss is to the past, so lack is to the present and future” (53).

Other trauma authors provide different conceptions for trauma such as Allen Meek. In his book *Trauma and Media*, he presents the “understanding of historical trauma as an open-ended, experimental approach to engaging with the violent and catastrophic legacies of

²⁰ - The killing of millions of Jews by the Nazis in the 1930s and 1940s.

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

the past" (01). Meek insists on using of Freudian psychoanalysis in analysing literary texts. Meanwhile, he provides three various media images of trauma: structural, historical trauma, and traumatic images. But what is interesting is the traumatic image that "shows us something physically or psychically traumatic: someone is being, or has been, threatened, attacked, abused, starved, imprisoned, enslaved, tortured, murdered or executed, or is shown responding to the reality or consequences of some catastrophe" (31).

Drawing from all these ideas of both Freudian trauma theory and the contemporary trauma theory are possible to be useful in analysing shell shock, trauma, and psychological loss of the characters in Virginia Woolf's fictional novels. *Mrs. Dalloway* is a novel that provides a good example for exploring the traumatic experience and memory in association with Freudian trauma theory and contemporary trauma theory. Moreover, it could present both psychiatric notion of PTSD and Freudian psychoanalysis through Woolf's poetic narrative style.

2.5. Poetic Narrative Style in *Mrs Dalloway*

Virginia Woolf notes the various changes of the twentieth century's society and attempts to reflect that through her new way of writing. She is more interested mainly in the life of the mind as well as in the sensation of the individual. Bernard Blackstone claims that, "For Virginia Woolf, the outer is not only related, but it is absorbed into the inner life" (116). The novelist wants to make this realistic connection between the outer life and the inner one; her writing reshapes these two different worlds in order to create her own artistic style. Unquestionably, she is able to put her readers in the right path by giving them the chance to interpret her work more objectively. Hence, her writing is a kind of explorations of the

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

abstract world via the integration into the pure inner thoughts. Explicitly, she takes into consideration the inner reality much more as an external world.

Woolf, however, criticizes the writers of her time as being “materialists”. She affirms that they focus much more on the body rather than the spirit (Zanwar 16). She wants them to be much closer to the themes that have relation to life and society they live in. Interestingly, the novelist asks them to be sincere and faithful in order to make literature as a medium to reflect the era they belong to. For Woolf, fictional novels may contain various subjects, no single subject is related to fiction. The latter must involve what Woolf states “[...] everything is the proper stuff of fiction, every feeling, every thought; every quality of brain and spirit is drawn upon [...]” (qtd.in Zanwar 17). To be exact, Woolf sees that unimportant themes and plots could not exist any more. Evidently, she asks the new novelists to give all their attention to feelings, sensations, and intuitions.

Yet, she praised some Victorian writers for their objective views in creating the fictional characters who reflect the reality unlike some Edwardian writers who could not bring the right image of post-war British society (Schulz 27). Woolf wants writers to portray every specific element in life as it exists in reality. Therefore, she declares that every method is right and can be expressed freely according to what came to the writers' minds. No matter what the method is to be chosen by the writers, but what is important is the right depiction of the phenomenon. In consequence, many critics comprehend Woolf's poetic narrative as “the endeavour to reflect the modern world in not only the subject but also in the method and literary representation” (qtd.in Schulz 28). Effortlessly, the ordinary readers may easily give their own interpretation to her writing.

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Virginia Woolf gives trust to the reader in order to interpret correctly the messages she wants to send through the reaction of some characters with particular surroundings. Undoubtedly, the reader's ability to interpret the literary work is not a matter of being a good intellectual. The novelist wants to influence her audience by seeing other aspects from life, not as ordinary things but as essential parts that should not be ignored any more. In doing so, Woolf's main aim is to bring life and literature to the same scope (29). Necessarily, the writer's feelings, experiences, and experiments are preferable to be included through passages expressed by the characters. Indeed, Woolf's journey of searching within the psyche makes her a creative and an artistic writer.

Woolf's own artistic narrative style comes thanks to her awareness about the inner thoughts by emphasizing explicitly the emotions of the human being. Similarly, she takes great advantages by exploiting her own inner life (Zanwar 18). Thus, her own experience contributes in revealing the facts about the psyche. However, Woolf states that, "the dark places of psychology is still missing" (qtd.in Schulz 29). Certainly, with the publication of the novel *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf becomes truly a psychological novelist thanks to her special poetic style.

In this novel, Woolf provides different themes such as the psyche, traumatic experience and death. These themes are embodied with the use of various literary devices. The two important themes are the representation of the feminists psyche through *Mrs. Dalloway*²¹. Basically, the story narrates the past life of the protagonist Clarissa Dalloway and her relationship with other characters; Peter Walsh – beloved of Clarissa; Septimus Warren

²¹- *Mrs. Dalloway* is abbreviated to (MD).

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Smith, his traumatic experience, Rezia's care for her husband; Miss Kilman's life; and other characters.

2.5.1 The Representation of Characters in *Mrs. Dalloway*

The method of representing the characters in Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* has two characteristics. One is the portrayal of the character through "external perception" and "internal representation" (Schulz 30). That is to say that Woolf's character-depiction is based on the relationship between characters as well as the deep depiction of their consciousness as Woolf says through Clarissa Dalloway, "to know her, or any one, one must seek out people who complete them" (MD 168). Hence, the main subject of the novel is the depiction of the life of Clarissa in a single day. Throughout these brief moments, Woolf enables the reader to recognize the different aspects in Clarissa Dalloway's life; her personality, relation to other persons, her inner world, her reactions and impressions, and reveals others' personality who are not even closely connected to the protagonist, or even does she come across in this day.

The second characteristic is the narrative voice. There is no specific narrative voice in *Mrs. Dalloway*; but instead there are "multiple character-focalizers"²². The centre of the consciousness is "the focalizer, while the user of the third person is the narrator" (Schulz 30). The main focalizers in the novel are the two characters Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Smith because their thoughts and feelings are presented through various passages. Not only this, other characters' perceptions are revealed by events. The setting is also related to the focalizers in which space and time are not fixed, they may shift. Yet, they are limited

²²- The focalizer is the primary consciousness of a story. The events, situations, interpretations of other characters dialogue, etc. are all filtered through this focalizer. This character holds the main point of view. The focalizer sometimes changes throughout a narrative, resulting in multiple focalizers for one story. Thus, the focalizer is not always the narrator or the main character.

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

according to the characters' perspective. The view of readers is limited to the presence of the focalizer; the temporal dimensions are connected to what the focalizers are thinking of their past. Thus, the story of the characters is told to the reader as inconstant tense process in which Woolf does not provide the plot in chronological order (30). Yet, she chooses other aspects such as the repetition of the characters' events and images.

Additionally, the novelist could create her own specific style by utilizing specific literary devices. In this vein, in *the Novels of Virginia Woolf*, R. L. Chambers declares, "what Virginia Woolf does, is to borrow the technique of poetry to enlarge the possibilities of expression in prose, at one and the same time to make clear her meaning and drive home its emotional implications" (17). There are many literary devices such the use of the stream of consciousness, symbols, and poetic language.

2.5.2 The Stream of Consciousness

Virginia Woolf is considered as a perfect example in using the stream of consciousness²³. This technique focuses mostly on the depiction of feelings and thoughts of the character rather than the actions and events. The use of stream of consciousness in the

²³ - The stream of consciousness is narrative technique in nondramatic fiction intended to render the flow of myriad impressions—visual, auditory, physical, associative, and subliminal—that impinge on the consciousness of an individual and form part of his awareness along with the trend of his rational thoughts. The term was used first by the psychologist William James in *The Principles of Psychology* (1890). As the psychological novel developed in the 20th century, some writers attempted to capture the total flow of their characters' consciousness, rather than limit themselves to rational thoughts. To represent the full richness, speed, and subtlety of the mind at work, the writer incorporates snatches of incoherent thought, ungrammatical constructions, and free association of ideas, images, and words at the pre-speech level. The stream-of-consciousness novel commonly uses the narrative techniques of interior monologue. Probably the most famous example is James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), a complex evocation of the inner states of the characters Leopold and Molly Bloom and Stephen Dedalus. Other notable examples include *Leutnant Gustl* (1901) by Arthur Schnitzler, an early use of stream of consciousness to re-create the atmosphere of pre-World War I Vienna; William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), which records the fragmentary and impressionistic responses in the minds of three members of the Compson family to events that are immediately being experienced or events that are being remembered; and Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), a complex novel in which six characters recount their lives from childhood to old age.

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

representation of the characters' thought exposes the artistic tendencies of the novelist (Zanwar 52). The portrayal of the inner life of the character is convincingly used through illuminating all what come to the mind. It is that amazing combinations between bringing all inner thoughts and past times in just spell of time that aids to provide a full description of each character.

Initially, from the first scenes of the story Clarissa's life is clearly covered. Her early life comes to her mind with the various phases of her girlhood. She remembers her relation with her parents in Bourton, her early relationship with Peter and Sally, her marriage to Richard Dalloway as well as her life as a mother and a politician. All these past events come spontaneously to Clarissa's mind and she could remember every specific incident that happened in her past such as

She could remember scene after scene at Bourton - Peter furious; Hugh not, of course, his match in any way, but still not a positive imbecile as Peter made out; not a mere barber's block. When his old mother wanted him to give up shooting and to take her to bath he did it, without a word; he was really unselfish, and as for saying, as Peter did, that he had no heart, no brain, nothing but the manners and breeding of an English gentleman, that was only her dear Peter at his worst; and he could be intolerable; he could be impossible, but adorable to walk on a morning like this. (MD 09)

Woolf begins to introduce first just one of character's stream of consciousness, then she starts going forward and backward in order to give glimpse about the other characters as it suits the action and particularly the process of thoughts. The latter, without any doubt, give the reader clear visions of outer world and inner world of the character. Fundamentally, the utilization of the right time for the right stream of thought creates fantastic scenes that make

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

the reader moves smoothly from one character's feeling and sensation to another. Besides that, the suitable selection of words to show the beauty of the language used and its simplicity.

In this context, Woolf introduces some signposts in order to add clarity and order to her narrative style. Thus, the novelist makes the clocks of London strike from the beginning to the end of the novel that are purposely set. Woolf provides different indications for the time to draw the reader's attention easily from one point to another (Zanwar 53). For instance, Woolf illustrates, "Rezia Repeated, What is the time?" [...] "I will tell you the time", said Septimus [...] (MD 78, 79). Therefore, the indication of time is also used in order to pass from one personality to another, from one's character's stream of consciousness to another.

One more example that shows the perfection use of the stream of consciousness is when Clarissa becomes too upset about the relation between Miss Kilman and Elizabeth, "How they hated each other! That was Elizabeth's feeling. She simply wanted to run away and leave them, because it was so painful. And Miss Kilman looked so plain; so big; so shabby [...] because her mother and her friend hated each other" (MD 14). This state of anxiety is presented through exposing this inner struggle as something comes spontaneously to Elizabeth's consciousness.

2.5.3 Symbolism and Poetic Language

As symbolism²⁴ are used for different aims, Woolf's use of symbols is purely for aesthetic reasons. She wants to create an image about thoughts and feelings that could not be

²⁴ - Symbolism is the use of symbols to signify ideas and qualities by giving them symbolic meanings that are different from their literal sense. Symbolism can take different forms. Generally, it is an object representing

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

merely expressed. Yet, these images may be embodied by the use of characters, actions, and the time of the day (Zanwar 54). Subsequently, the novelist aims not only to provide the reader with the nature of the symbols, but she also exposes these symbols due to their effectiveness on the audience's mind. Indeed, she facilitates and frees them to read between the lines of the work with suitable emotions and ideas that it conveys.

Primarily, to represent the various aspects of the post-war British society, some characters are used symbolically. The main characters are employed to symbolize the different phenomena that characterized the modern western civilization. Mr. and Mrs. Dalloway symbolize the external brightness of this civilization particularly for Clarissa Dalloway that is described in the novel as "the perfect hostess". The latter stares constantly at the stars and invite others to make them enjoy every single moment in the party. Besides, Miss Kilman represents the possessive love, jealousy, and corrupt religion because she envies everyone who has a good fortune. For this purpose, Woolf portrays her external unsightly look as a symbol of her inner ugliness "Bitter and burning, Miss Kilman [...] this hatred of Mrs. Dalloway, this grudge against the world, she thought of God [...] Rage was succeeded by calm [...] She looked with steady, and sinister serenity at Mrs. Dalloway" (MD 137).

Other damaged souls are represented through Sir William Bradshaw and Dr. Holmes who display the negative side of power. The grey car of Sir Bradshaw and the grey-haired doctor are symbols of the lack of sympathy. In addition, Peter Walsh and Sally Seton are used symbolically to propose the adventurous side in the society as they represent the cultured class as they read Pope, Morris, Plato, Shelley.

another to give it an entirely different meaning that is much deeper and more significant. Sometimes, however, an action, an event or a word spoken by someone may have a symbolic value.

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Secondly, the actions of the character are also used symbolically. Peter Walsh's pocket of knife symbolises his way of thinking, "Fingering his pocket – knife" (MD 59). It is a symbol of his need to restore confidence that he is still a young man. The green dress also symbolises the personality of Clarissa, which glimmers in artificial light but goes down in the sun. Then, this colour becomes the suggestive symbol of a "perfect hostess". Moreover, Woolf uses of nature and time as symbols. Clarissa's happiness, when she remembers her girlhood in Bourton, is clearly symbolized in the early morning of the day. Flowers and roses are used to describe her love to Peter. However, trees express the stability of the memories, "Men must not cut down trees" (MD 28). Trees symbolize Clarissa's, Septimus', and Rezia's life and memory that remain stable unlike the "waves" that suggest the movement of life.

Thirdly, Virginia Woolf's way of narration is splendid thanks to her aesthetic and poetic style. She could easily make this fantastic transformation of expression from poetry into prose. The mastering of selecting specific words for specific passages add to the creation of marvellous expressions that contain rhythm, rhyme, and sounds. All these characteristics exist mostly in poetry; however, Woolf makes it possible in her prose such as "Still, the sun was hot. Still, one got over things. Still, life had a way of adding day to day" (MD 72). She includes a passage from Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, "From the contagion of the world's slow stain [...] Fear no more the heat O' the sun [...] And now can never mourn, can never mourn" (MD 07) in order to insist on the artistic and poetic narrative style.

Finally, the novel is full of simile such as in: "He thought; and was overcome with his own grief, which rose like a moon looked at from a terrace" (MD 154). Words are used in metaphoric way that could not be expressed better than that. Obviously, the expression of

Chapter Two: Trauma Theory and Woolf's Narrative Style in *Mrs. Dalloway*

scenes and moments in the novel are displayed in poetic and emotional structure rather than rational or logical one. This mode offers unity and harmony to the expressions used throughout the novel by seeing the soul and the inner world of the characters using the stream of consciousness. Hence, the utilization of symbolic and metaphoric language suggest evidently a great perfection of Woolf's fictional novel *Mrs. Dalloway*.

2.6 Conclusion

Sigmund Freud is regarded as the father of psychoanalysis. He created the psychoanalytic approach which is a very systematic approach to explore the human psyche. Years after, many scholars and analysts, who were concerned mainly with acknowledging the relationships between literature and trauma, found in Freud's psychological studies a sense of reliability since he is the pioneer of both psychoanalytic theory and trauma theory. These scholars represent the so-called the contemporary trauma theory. As literature of trauma is the main focus of their investigations, they have tried to find some new and reliable diagnoses to the traumatic cases in different literary texts. In fact, the theme of war trauma is a major dominant in Woolf's novel *Mrs. Dalloway*. Throughout the novel, Woolf depicts accurately the psychic states of the characters using her own aesthetic style of writing including the stream of consciousness, symbolism and poetic language.

Chapter Three

3.1 Introduction

In spite of the fact that both Freud and Woolf share a profound concern in the mechanisms of the human mind and memory, in one of her letters, Virginia Woolf once declared that, “I have not studied Dr Freud or any psychoanalyst – indeed I think I have never read any of their books: my knowledge is merely from superficial talk. Therefore any use of their methods must be instinctive” (36). It is evident that her artistic creativeness in depicting the inner state of mind of some characters in *Mrs. Dalloway* becomes a mark to her genius realistic depictions of the unconscious part of the mind, particularly during facing traumatic crisis. Indeed, Freud had authored a large collection of essays related to hysteria and trauma that makes him the pioneer figure in trauma theory and psychoanalytic approaches.

Certainly, using trauma theory or contemporary trauma theory to analyse characters’ emotional losses is usually uncommon. However, among the most important topics treated in literature are trauma and loss as theme mainly after the Great War. Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway* is the best examples of such type of writing that portrays in its subplot a young veteran Septimus Warren Smith who experiences psychological trauma as consequence to the aftermath of the First World War. Besides that, this novel is characterized by the similarities between the novelist Virginia Woolf and her two characters, Clarissa and Septimus. The three suffer nearly in the same way, both physically and emotionally, even the suicidal impulse exists either implicitly or explicitly throughout the novel.

It is necessary to analyse the personality of the fifty-one years old Clarissa. This study will be accompanied with the analysis of the novelist’s personal trauma. And the immediate application of both trauma Freudian theory as well as contemporary trauma theory on the twenty-four young Septimus. Then, the likeness between novelist and her two chosen

characters in the portrayal of traumatic experience in order to discover whether Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* reveals something about her personal life through her two characters.

3.2 The Analysis of Clarissa Dalloway's State of Mind

It is all agreed that the trauma of the First World War is an essential theme in *Mrs. Dalloway*. Some characters in the novel represent the accurate image of the psychological aftermath of the war including Septimus Warren Smith as an explicit example. Generally, *Mrs. Dalloway* is a novel whose characters' state of mind are differently set, but the traumatic attitudes make a sense of unity among them. Therefore, most of the major characters have different psychological losses.

For instance, the female protagonist of the story Mrs. Clarissa Dalloway is an upper class hostess who struggles to beatify the pessimistic world around her and tries to ignore the sense of death. She is shown in a contradicted way. In one hand, she believes in social relationships including friendship, marriage, and even homosexuality. In fact, Clarissa has friends such as Sally Seton and Peter Walsh and she is married to a very distinguished husband, Richard Dalloway. Yet, she has a lesbian orientation. The latter is confirmed by the love affection she shows to Sally Seton. In the other hand, she lonely expresses her disconformity and never shares her deep feelings with others.

The opening of the story describes Clarissa's journey when she walks the street and suddenly she finds herself in moments of rethinking. The technique of stream of consciousness takes the reader into her unconscious mind where her memories are situated. Clarissa became completely a different person when she remembers her experiences such as the love she shared with both Peter Walsh and Sally Seton. Moreover, she also rethinks her

weird choice of husband. Therefore, Clarissa seems to be shallow and introspective even with the people who loves her such as her husband, Richard.

After marriage, Clarissa became known as *Mrs. Dalloway*. Immediately, she is now belonging to an upper class. Accordingly, Virginia Woolf shows Clarissa as a symbol of the loss of power and superiority. Thus, when she is alone she falls into a deep “alienation caused by a traumatic shattering of her identity” (Burian 70). Due to her interactions with psychologists in Bloomsbury group, Virginia Woolf adopted some psychological ideas and subsequently interpreted them into her fictional works.

Woolf started to use unwillingly some principles of psychoanalysis, when she published her short review entitled *Freudian fiction*. In fact, Woolf did not read for Freud interestingly until 1930s (see appendix six). Nonetheless, the psychoanalytic principles are dominant in the characters’ way of thinking (Ruddick 620). Essentially, she provides the reader with a deep investigation into the characters’ minds the fact that helps them understand the characters’ personalities in a realistic way such as recognizing their mental state including moments of happiness, sadness, and other various feelings.

Actually, Septimus is the real representative of a shell-shocked veteran who still suffers the trauma of the war. However, the character Clarissa is unstable and merely suffers from psychological problems. In an attempt to analyze the character Clarissa, it is very important to mention the specific features about her. For instance, Clarissa spends most of her time in remembering her old days when she was young in Bourton. Essentially, she can remember every single moment in her relationship with Peter Walsh and Sally Seton that led her to express different feelings like anger, fear, and depression.

Clarissa has been suffering from an illness, which neither diagnosed nor named. Furthermore, it mentioned that her heart is affected by influenza:

For having lived in Westminster - how many years now? over twenty, - one feels even in the midst of the traffic, or waking at night, Clarissa was positive, a particular hush, or solemnity; an indescribable pause; a suspense (but that might be her heart, affected, they said, by influenza) before Big Ben strikes. (MD 02)

Although Clarissa's suffering, she still loves life and enjoys its pleasures.

In people's eyes, in the swing, tramp, and trudge; in the bellow and the uproar; the carriages, motor cars, omnibuses, vans, sandwich men shuffling and swinging; brass bands; barrel organs; in the triumph and the jingle and the strange high singing of some aeroplane overhead was what she loved; life; London; this moment of June. (MD 08)

According to these passages, one can convincingly understand that Clarissa's depression contradicts her moment of happiness. Moreover, she could not easily overcome her painful memories despite the fact that she seems externally strong. Actually, the parties she arranges and the walking she goes for are very helpful for her mental health.

Clarissa seems slightly traumatized since her behaviours are strange. Scientifically, these behaviours may happen with a patient who suffers from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). According to Georgia Damiani, PTSD is characterized by three major symptoms. Firstly, "the re-experience of the traumatic event" repeatedly with the emotions it caused through a series of "flashbacks and nightmares" (04).

Secondly, the patient tries hardly to avoid the places and people that may remind them of the trauma. Accordingly, he tends “to withdraw from human relationships, ordinary activities and situations, which might arouse unpleasant memories” and therefore they cannot feel positive emotions such as love or happiness due to “emotional restriction”. Thirdly, this symptom consists of incoherent memories, a serious difficulty in sleeping, and “hyper vigilance” (05).

For Clarissa, the concept of death is very sacred. She considers the dead as a survivor from this terrible life: “All this must go on without her; did she resent it; or did it not become consoling to believe that death ended absolutely? But that somehow in the streets of London [...] she survived” (MD 07). Additionally, “her illness provokes in her feelings of fear and anger which, at times, become egotism and hatred” (Damiani 06). Hence, the first symptom accurately resembles Clarissa’s state of mind.

The protagonist has a tendency toward privacy and prefers to stay in a separate room to accomplish quietness. However, Clarissa cannot sleep regularly (06). Thus, the third symptom can also occur in diagnosing Clarissa’s illness. For second symptom, it has no place among the components of Clarissa’s personality because she is a lovable hostess, a perfect mother, and wife. Clarissa represents a real sociable person who believes in friendship. She even cares about the people who did not know such as Septimus whose death at the end of the story affected her deeply.

Consequently, Woolf tends to portray the protagonist, Mrs. Clarissa Dalloway in a very subtle way. Clarissa is a symbol of various principles of the British society in post wartime. She represents the truly feminine vision of life in a masculine dominant society. However, Clarissa’s psyche is depicted in an implicit way the fact that make it hard to decide her

insanity. Hence, thanks to the indication of PTSD's symptoms, it is clear that she is not mentally stable.

3.3 The Analysis of Virginia Woolf's Personal Trauma

Despite the fact that she was a creative writer, Virginia Woolf's personal life was full of shocking events. Essentially, some events that happened during her childhood are considered as traumatic experiences, which subsequently affected her state of mind later. As mentioned earlier in her biography in chapter one, Woolf experienced several traumatic events including; the death of her mother as well as the sexual abuse practiced by her half-brothers.

Additionally, she suffered from a series of serious breakdowns particularly after her father's death. Woolf's life was also studded by a series of social issues chiefly the inequality of gender roles in which women were seen as weak and unproductive. More interestingly, she witnessed the outbreak of the First World War. In her second diary, she writes: "One has come to notice the war everywhere" (01). Hence, all of these circumstances have largely participated in shaping Woolf's troubled personality.

Many critics tend to interpret the novelist's fictional works, which describe the life of the characters and the implanted attitudes, by using her expressive personal sufferance as a reliable means. Accordingly, it is noticeable that Woolf attempted to include her own experiences as well as attitudes in her writing. Logically, Woolf found in writing about the psyche a medium toward exploring her inner thought in order to achieve self-comforting. Woolf's mental stress was diagnosed as a manic-depressive illness or accurately, Bipolar Disorder²⁵. For that reason, scientific investigations argue that this illness's causes are traced

²⁵- Bipolar Disorder mental illness in which a person's mood alternates between extreme mania and depression. Bipolar disorder is also called manic-depressive illness. When manic, people with bipolar disorder feel intensely

back to early childhood trauma and to the family background as well. In fact, “Virginia Stephen was raised in a household” where sexual violence and abusive behaviors were “common rather than singular” (De Salvo 01).

The novelist suffered from stages of mania and depression as her husband Leonard Woolf’s once states, “She talked almost without stopping for 2 or 3 days, paying no attention to anyone in the room or anything said to her [...] Then gradually it became completely incoherent, a mere jumble of dissociated words” (Bazin and Hamovit 33). Besides that, most of Woolf’s family members were mentally ill. Her father, Leslie, had many psychotic breakdowns²⁶; her cousin, James Stephen, committed suicide because of his severe bipolar disease; and her half-sister Laura was diagnosed with having Schizophrenia²⁷. Therefore, one can clearly maintain that Woolf had gained a familiarity with psychological illnesses, the thing that had a negative impact on her future life.

Virginia Woolf shows a variety of symptoms that confirm her mental deterioration. For example, she was hearing voices and she even heard birds signing in Greek. Furthermore, insomnia was also among the things she suffered from in which she experienced stages of sleepless nights due to her unexplained fear to ghosts. As mentioned earlier, all most all

elated, self-important, energetic, and irritable. When depressed, they experience painful sadness, negative thinking, and indifference to things that used to bring them happiness.

²⁶- Psychotic breakdown is a symptom or feature of mental illness typically characterized by radical changes in personality, impaired functioning, and a distorted or non-existent sense of objective reality. Patients suffering from psychosis have impaired reality testing; that is, they are unable to distinguish personal subjective experience from the reality of the external world. They experience hallucinations and/or delusions that they believe are real, and may behave and communicate in an inappropriate and incoherent fashion. Psychosis may appear as a symptom of a number of mental disorders, including mood and personality disorders. It is also the defining feature of schizophrenia, schizophrenia form disorder, schizoaffective disorder, delusional disorder, and the psychotic disorders i.e., brief psychotic disorder, shared psychotic disorder, psychotic disorder due to a general medical condition, and substance-induced psychotic disorder.

²⁷- Schizophrenia, severe mental illness characterized by a variety of symptoms, including loss of contact with reality, bizarre behavior, disorganized thinking and speech, decreased emotional expressiveness, and social withdrawal.

Virginia Woolf's experiences of mental disorders are reflected in her fictional writings. The issues of mental sanity and madness is a basic theme in the novel. Woolf creates kind of comparison between the two main characters; Mrs. Clarissa Dalloway, the protagonist, and Septimus Warren Smith, the war veteran who suffers from serious traumatic disorders.

It is worth mentioning that each of these characters share some particular points with Virginia Woolf. The latter shares similarly with the protagonist; her love to London, the discussing of life and death, and the homosexual behavior. Accordingly, Clarissa shows affection toward her friend Sally Seton and it is the same case for the novelist who "overly passionate in her dealings with Violet," a friend of her sister Stella, Woolf was "demanding, childlike, pleading, jealous, and unreasonable in her requests for petting and reassurances" (Curtis 09). For Septimus Smith, the act of committing suicide indicates the novelist's suicidal impulse that will be revealed later.

Despite the joyful life and the endless love she shared with her husband, Virginia Woolf felt seriously depressed and her mental state got even worst. Additionally, she also lost her ability to write or even concentrate. As a result, Virginia Woolf committed suicide. It is a fact of matter that Woolf's early mental illness has not been taken into careful consideration. According to Michael Cunningham, "the medical profession of her time" was unqualified to treat or diagnose the existed illnesses. In fact many doctors were extracting "the patients' teeth believing that an infection of the teeth could somehow poison the brain" (43). These features are shown through the character Septimus Smith, who fails at establishing social communication in order to return to natural life when the war is over.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder patient may suffer from sleep disturbances and nightmares, and the loss of a beloved. In fact, it is not an easy task to decide the nature of a Woolf's illness by just accumulating some of her strange behaviors and actions. The

syndromes of PTSD, however, are clearly existed in the case of Woolf's personal trauma, Besides that, it might be possible to know and understand her personal life through *Mrs. Dalloway* due to its main focus on the mental sufferance of the characters that certainly reflect her own mental illnesses.

3.4 Freudian Trauma Theory and Contemporary Trauma Theory Applied to Septimus Warren Smith

Before applying the Freudian trauma and contemporary trauma theories, it is necessarily to know briefly who is Septimus Warren Smith and by whom Woolf was inspired in the representation of this character, particularly as a poet. Subsequently, like many other modernist writers, Woolf was profoundly influenced by the traumatic changes brought by the First World War. Hence, *Mrs. Dalloway* emphasizes the negative effect that nationalism and patriotism has on individuals and public as well.

Septimus Warren Smith is a survivor from the war in which Woolf embodied through his character the tragic psychological effects that caused individual and communal mourning. His character represents a lower middle class man who suffers from trauma and loss that prevent him to integrate himself in post-war London. For Woolf, the horror of the war could never be left on the battlefield for the survivors. The young generation's duty of the participation on the war simply ended with traumatic memories. Eventually, the image of death is deeply embodied in Septimus' mind, mostly the death of his comrade Evans.

In this vein, Karen DeMeester states that, "Woolf's characterization of Septimus Smith [...] illustrates [...] the need for survivors to give meaning to their suffering in order to recover from post-traumatic stress disorder". She concludes by insisting on the fact that "Imagist poetry and the experimental novels of the post-war decade [...] reflect the

fragmentation of consciousness and the disorder and confusion that a victim experiences in the wake of the traumatic event” (77). DeMeester emphasizes that literature of post-war, with its all genre, is considered as the literature of trauma that reflect the consciousness as well as the traumatic memories of the victims. Therefore, for many traumatized survivors their homecoming did not mean the absolute solution for forgetting the harshness of the life in trenches.

Initially, Septimus character in the novel has been taken as a model of relative people of Woolf’s decade. Thus, many critics predict from whom Woolf took this personality to be a fictional character. Joyce Kelley, in her essay *Corrected in Red Ink: Septimus Warren Smith, the First World War, and the Culture of Erasure* sees Septimus as *Mrs. Dalloway*’s own “soldier-poet”. For Kelly, Septimus is not just depicted by observing a single person in Woolf’s life, but a composition of several cases of war poets of the post-war era whom Woolf encountered in Bloomsbury group²⁸. Therefore, Elaine Showalter displays that Woolf was inspired by the post-war poet Siegfried Loraine Sassoon²⁹ in creating Septimus character and

²⁸ - The Bloomsbury Group was a small, informal association of artists and intellectuals who lived and worked in the Bloomsbury area of central London. Most prominent of these was novelist and essayist Virginia Woolf. In all, only about a dozen people at any one time could have called themselves members of the group. Beginning shortly before 1910, the Bloomsbury Group gathered at irregular intervals for conversation, companionship, and the refuelling of creative energy. The members of Bloomsbury, or “Bloomsberries,” would more or less maintain allegiance to their mutual philosophy of an ideal society, even through a World War and three decades of tectonic shifts in the political climate. They had no codified agenda or mission. They were not political in the ordinary sense of the word. Most importantly, there was no application or initiation required to become a member. Bloomsbury was an informal hodgepodge of intellectual friends, and one either merited inclusion to that circle or one did not. No rules of order, as in a committee, governed the way in which Bloomsbury managed their interactions. Instead, they held impromptu dinners and gatherings where any number of topics was the subject of serious discussion and contemplation. These intellectual exchanges served as the main influence on later work by individual members. By no means were all members in full agreement on all subjects. Some of Bloomsbury’s most stimulating ideas and writings were borne out of internal disagreement and strife. One can safely say that each member of Bloomsbury was leftist in his or her politics, although as individuals they expressed their politics in very different ways.

²⁹ - Siegfried Sassoon is best remembered for his angry and compassionate poems of the First World War, which brought him public and critical acclaim. Avoiding the sentimentality and jingoism of many war poets, Sassoon wrote of the horror and brutality of trench warfare and contemptuously satirized generals, politicians, and churchmen for their incompetence and blind support of the war. His later poems, often concerned with religious

his story of the life in trenches (192). For her, Septimus has some other points such as they are both interested in literature and poetry.

Conversely, in her book *Virginia Woolf and the Great War*, Karen Levenback declares that Septimus is not the model of Sassoon, but instead Leonard Woolf's brother, Philips (57). Levenback insists that Woolf's depiction of this character refers to the similarities between Philips and Septimus state of mind because they shared the same symptoms of psychological trauma. However, what is particular for Septimus' case according to Vara Neverow stresses his non-response to the treatment as well as "his suicidal impulse" (54).

As result to all what is said above, one can clearly notice that the principles of Freudian trauma theory and contemporary trauma theory, which have been exposed in the second chapter, can be applied to Septimus character. It is evident that Woolf uses her creation as well as some subjectivity to depict Septimus traumatic symptoms by using Septimus' stream of consciousness and the reaction of other characters. Woolf introduces to the readers that "Septimus was one of the first to volunteer" and that he "went to France" (MD 64) and he becomes a good friend with his officer Evans. Yet, the tragic effects of the war had changed him dramatically from a brave soldier to a coward person. Consequently, drawing from the analysis of Freudian trauma theory Septimus suffers from various kinds of traumas: traumatic hysteria, loss of his beloved, loss of identity, and repression of the society.

First, Septimus Warren Smith suffers mainly from unconscious and traumatic hysteria. The painful memories are fixed due to the horrific scenes that are certainly living in the traumatized Septimus' mind. This traumatic hysteria comes surely as a response to

themes, were less appreciated, but the autobiographical trilogy *The Complete Memoirs of George Sherston* won him two major awards.

unexpected traumatic experience as Freud mentioned in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* that the symptoms of war neuroses may come unpredictably, “without provocation” (11). The past memories live strongly within Septimus later life that inhibit him from recovery, what Freud called it “interval latency”. That is to say, that Septimus was a victim of events that have been stored in his memory unwillingly. This experiment actually is permanent in his unconscious part and comes in several forms such as repetitive flashbacks or nightmares. Septimus inability to recover is because of the high degree of his too terrible experience. Thus, his nerve system could not response ever. His awareness about the world around him became nearly impossible, even with the several attempts of his wife and his doctors to help him to recover from his mental illnesses.

Obviously, Septimus is marked as the representative of after-effects of the ordeal. His sufferance is presented through the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder as well as his feeling of guilty. Despite the fact that Septimus Warren Smith suffers deeply from shell shock and psychological trauma that is caused by horrific life in trenches, Woolf mentions his experience in trenches in a brief passage “There in the trenches [...] he developed manliness; he was promoted; he drew the attention, indeed the affection of his officer, Evans by name” (MD 84). His officer Evans was not just his close friend, but also apparently his lover. The suppression of Septimus’ feeling and sensation toward the world around him is noticeably manifested in the non-response to his wife, Lucrezia. As Woolf clearly states, “he could not feel” (MD 86).

Second, Breuer and Freud come to insist that the trauma can come as a result to the loss of loved person. Explicitly, Woolf describes the solid relationship between Septimus and Evans, “They had to be together, share with each other [...] But when Evans was killed [...] Septimus, far from showing any emotion or recognizing that here was the end of a friendship,

congratulated himself upon feeling very little and very reasonably” (MD 84). Septimus faces traumatic neurosis and psychological loss in a fantasy world whereas it happens in the reality. Meanwhile, Lucrezia suggests that many peoples are familiar with traumatic events and she states, “But such things happen to everyone. Everyone has friends who were killed in the War” (MD 64). According to Lucrezia, “Septimus let himself think about horrible things, as she could too, if she tried” (MD 65). She thinks that he himself could not overcome his sorrow and sadness because of his fragile personality.

Third, the other different symptom of trauma is the loss of identity. In fact, Septimus have passed step forward to get rid of those memories when he begins engaging with Lucrezia. The latter starts convincing him to take medical treatment so that he could return to his ordinary life. Additionally, His doctors also attempt to integrate him to post-war London norms by providing him with pieces of advice to forget his sufferance. Even though he could not feel belonging to that society any more and he starts wondering about pre-war Britain that he sacrificed for her. Despite his brave as a worrier during the wartime, he blames himself for the meaningless participation in the military army as well as for being among the first volunteers as a kind of patriotism and nationalism. Like many men of his generation, Septimus was too motivated to serve his country, afterwards he finds himself merely a victim of false propaganda that was created by the British government. Hence, Septimus feels that he lost his identity in front of these paradoxes and contradictions of post-war London society.

Virginia Woolf notably blames the society for not accepting this shell-shocked veteran. Her pessimistic tone reveals that not only Septimus who should take treatment to recover from his illness, but the whole society. The lack of understanding by everyone he encounters makes the things harsh for him even his wife, Lucrezia, could not really help him. Nonetheless, her help is a sign to avoid a shame of how her husband acts in front of the

others. She convinces Septimus to go to Dr Holmes to end his sufferance and having medical treatment, which makes things even worse for him. The gap between what Septimus feels and the misunderstanding of his case by Dr Holmes is due to the lack of understanding of what a traumatic experience really is. This ignorance is clearly manifested when Holmes repeatedly says, “nothing whatever the matter” (MD 67) with Septimus. Certainly, the lack of dialogue between the members of the society in the time of communal grief makes some sensitive issues and realities a hard thing to be discussed.

In the end, the repression of the society is highly marked in Freudian trauma theory just as the case of Septimus and the unbearable pressure puts upon him that is embodied through the right depiction of Septimus’ two doctors. At first, he follows his doctors’ pieces of advice and tries to do something he already loves as art and literature. This process comes in order to understand his inner thoughts and memories; nevertheless, he feels “he cannot return to his pre-war life”. His sensation becomes completely paralyzed, even with his wife, he cannot share any moment of joy or happiness. Now, he impossibly could return to his normal life just as post-war England society cannot return to its previous values and ideals.

Conversely, the society expects from him to control and repress his emotions and attitudes. As a consequence, Woolf’s representation of the two doctors, Holmes and Bradshaw, is just a reflection of the society’ opinion that wants from Septimus to overcome his sufferance without even try to understand his case correctly. Hence, He sees that the doctors as dictators who want just to control his own life rather than care sincerely for him. To be precise, the novelist portrays Holmes and Bradshaw as the ones who “mixed the vision and the sideboard; saw nothing clear, yet ruled, yet inflicted” (MD 148). Both of them want just to keep the normality of the society values without accepting any challenges or shifts that Septimus brings unwillingly with him. As Septimus describes both of them implicitly as

hypocritical persons, in which their insincere aid is a symbol of inhumanity of that society. Thus, their treatment of Septimus is such simply a kind of repression.

Moving to the contemporary trauma theory that contains nearly the same aspects and symptoms of the Freudian trauma theory, nevertheless, it differs from the latter in the utilization of some precise and concise details. The new mode of reading, *Beyond the Pleasure principle* that was done by Caruth and others, could be certainly applied in Woolf's portrayal of Septimus psychological loss mainly in four aspects: the complex relation between knowing and not knowing, isolation and alienation, suicidal impulse, realistic representation of the never-ending of traumatic-memories, and the misuse of the process of time.

Initially, the complex relationship between knowing and not knowing plainly appears in the ignorance of the nature of Septimus mental illnesses. Septimus takes his primer treatment with general practitioner Dr Holmes who diagnosis Septimus case as nothing matters for him, but just suffering from "nerve symptoms," that could be solved by letting him practice his hobbies. Holmes's advice to Lucrezia is just to care for her husband: "For Dr Holmes had told her to make her husband (who had nothing whatever seriously the matter with him but was a little out of sorts) take an interest in things outside himself" (MD 21).

On the contrary, Lucrezia finds that Septimus' state of mind has not improved. The ineffectual pieces of advice of Dr Holmes makes Lucrezia losses confidence in him. Hence, Dr Holmes suggests, "If they were rich people" and "had no confidence in him" [...] "that was Sir William Bradshaw [...]" (MD 91-92). There is a great specialist called Sir Bradshaw, who treats only rich patients, which might help him and becomes an alternative option for his failure in improving Septimus' state of mind. Similarly, Dr Bradshaw does not understand him correctly and declares, "[...] we know nothing about—the nervous system, the human brain [...]" (MD 96).

Next, because of the other's misunderstanding of Septimus emotional state, Woolf portrays him as the most isolated character in the novel who suffers also from alienation and isolation. Dr Holmes describes his mental state, "He was too weak; he could scarcely raise his hands. Besides now that he was quite alone, condemned, deserted, as those who are about to die are alone, there was a luxury in it, an isolation full of sublimity" (MD 103). This isolation becomes part of his life. Day after day, his psychological state becomes more and more complicated. Thus, the medical professionals in mental diseases like Sir William Bradshaw advises Septimus to "Order rest in bed³⁰, rest in solitude, silence and rest; rest without friends, without books, without messages" (MD 110). That is to say, that his patient needs necessarily a rest cure³¹ to ameliorate his physical and emotional response to the world around him.

Despite all these recommendations of doctors, Septimus notices that both doctors contradict each other "Holmes said one thing, Bradshaw another" (MD 108). One asks him to play cricket, the other sees him as an insane. As a consequence, he refuses both treatments because of their illogic interpretations and analyses. His sufferance becomes something unbearable especially as Septimus threatens to kill himself. Here, Sir William insists that he is "very seriously ill" (MD 71). Thus, Sir Bradshaw has no other choice than to manage sending

³⁰ - Bed rest is a medical treatment in which a person lies in bed for most of the time to try to cure an illness. Bed rest refers to voluntarily lying in bed as a treatment and not being confined to bed because of a health impairment, which physically prevents leaving bed. The practice is still used although a 1999 systematic review found no benefits for any of the 17 conditions studied and no proven benefit for any conditions at all, beyond that imposed by symptoms. It also referred to as the rest cure.

³¹ - The rest cure treatment was developed by a prominent Philadelphia physician and graduate of Jefferson Medical College, Silas Weir Mitchell, M.D. His most prominent books were *Wear and Tear, or Hints for the Overworked* (1871), *Injuries of Nerves and Their Consequences* (1872), *Fat and Blood* (1877), and *Doctor and Patient* (1888). As the most prominent U.S. physician in the treatment of neurasthenia, Dr. Mitchell was consulted by patients and their families throughout North America and Europe. His patients were a roll call of leaders of U.S. society. Dr. Mitchell is most often associated with the rest cure for women. He admired active, intellectual women, and in later years when he was the preeminent specialist in neurasthenia, colleagues and friends would try to persuade him to take a new patient by extolling her intelligence and accomplishments.

Septimus to sanatorium. Meanwhile, Septimus is truly convinced that the only solution to end his sufferance is to commit suicide.

Then, Septimus' suicidal impulse is evidently found as a reaction to the oppressive societal roles and restrictions. He is quite sure that he cannot live any more in a world where all the laws of human nature are inhuman, but rather he has committed "appalling crime and had been condemned to death by human nature" (MD 96). He is unable to express himself in a society that despaired him of living peacefully. Later, Lady Bradshaw tells Clarissa of Septimus' suicide. "[J]ust as we were starting, my husband was called up on the telephone, a very sad case. A young man (that is what Sir William is telling Mrs. Dalloway) had killed himself. He had been in the army" (MD 179). Septimus inability to free himself from his memories as well as living his true self led him to accept his destiny saying, "There remained only the window [...] it was their idea of tragedy, not his [...]" (MD 149).

Afterwards, the contemporary trauma theory insists primarily on the realistic representation of the endless impact of traumatic memories within the victim's mind. Woolf utilises the realistic method in revealing Septimus sufferance. She even challenges the medical professionals of her time by declaring explicitly that they knew nothing about the nerve system. Additionally, her own traumatic experience as well as her great creativity enables the reader to have a realistic picture about the symptoms of trauma that have just been discovered recently. Precisely, three pioneers of this theory; Caruth, Felman, and LaCapra called it also the never-ending traumatic memories that affect the person's life due to the inability of distinguishing between what happened in the past and what is happening now.

Ultimately, Septimus reverses the process of time in order to retrieve his past. Woolf uses the dialogue memory and the stream of consciousness in Septimus' passages that have no reference to the future. Accordingly, Caruth's observation of trauma is deeply found in the

confrontation between reality and the fantasy world with Septimus traumatic memory that did not enable him to differentiate between the past and the present. He cannot clearly distinguish between “is” and “was” because his experience was too heavy to be borne for a long time.

Woolf describes the treatment of war trauma nearly in the same approach as both Freudian trauma theory and contemporary trauma theory. Yet, Woolf chooses rest cure instead of talk cure that of Freud. The latter insists on the talk cure to have verbal communication with the victim’s friends or with the member of his family that it was not the case for Septimus. The diagnosis of trauma’s symptoms and treatments by the two pioneers Freud and Caruth is merely objective. However, Woolf depicts the treatments in a very subjective way thanks to her personal sufferance from manic-depression³².

3.5 The Similarities between Woolf’s, Clarissa’s, and Septimus’ Traumatic Experiences

Through the deep reading of Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*, one can evidently notice that the theme of trauma, death, and suicide are clearly repeated. The character Septimus and Clarissa are noticeably suffering these phenomena. The former represents the realistic traumatic experience of the veteran of the First World War whereas the latter reflects the instability of post-war London society. In addition to that, the novelist herself has a first-hand experience of trauma. Hence, all of them follow the treatments of medical professionals in order to make an end to the difficulties they passed through. Consequently, the novelist and her two characters share certain similar characteristics.

³²- Manic-depression is alternating moods of abnormal highs mania and lows depression. It called bipolar disorder because of the swings between these opposing poles in mood. A type of depressive disease. Not nearly as prevalent as other forms of depressive disorders. Sometimes the mood switches are dramatic and rapid, but most often they are gradual. Mania often affects thinking, judgment, and social behavior in ways that cause serious problems and embarrassment. For example, unwise business or financial decisions may be made when an individual is in a manic phase. Bipolar disorder is often a chronic recurring condition.

In introduction to *the American edition of Mrs. Dalloway*, Virginia Woolf said, “in the first version Septimus, who later is intended to be her (Clarissa’s) double, had no existence; [...] Mrs. Dalloway was originally to kill herself, or perhaps merely to die at the end of the party” (Jeffars 200). However, in the actual story, Septimus Warren Smith is the character who kills himself after experiencing emotional shock. As Sir, William Bradshaw said in Clarissa’s party, “the deferred effects of shell-shock” (MD 207). Besides, Woolf portrays Clarissa as sane female. Both of them want to understand the realistic meaning of life in a surrounding where people are careless about the individual’s feeling. Interestingly, Clarissa and Septimus attempt to give sense to death.

Indeed, the protagonist of the novel Clarissa is paralleled with Septimus. She suffers mainly from accumulation of traumatic memories that happen in her society due to the hypocrites. Despite the fact that she does not have a serious trauma that makes her very insane, the others’ opinions and attitudes make her suffer implicitly. Without a doubt, her inner world is not stable as she always gives a great interest to every event and aspect throughout a single day. She could bring past and present events into one scene in order to emphasize the negative realities of the daily life in post-war London. Through Septimus and Clarissa, the reader notices that the ideals and the values of society are no more existing after the disastrous war. The society through Virginia Woolf’s lens seems pessimistic and no one may even dream to have an idyllic society to live in.

Even with the different symptoms of trauma in Septimus’ character, Woolf portrays his inner world nearly in the same way she actually feels. Moreover, Septimus sees his country before the war as perfect and idyllic world that is certainly symbolised by his reading of Shakespeare’s works as well as the woman he was in love with, Miss Isabel Pole. Although, after the war the idyllic life in post-war British society had been vanished. Similar to the novelist’s point of view, the act being the first volunteer who went to war defending his

beloved country is meaningless for the actual people. Thus, his brave pre-war personality is actually regarded as “coward” according to his surroundings.

Basically, the society has no positive impact on his personality, but rather pushes him to remember the horrific sights and memories. In fact, he is convinced that no one deserves his sacrifice which is also the case for Woolf who experiences that after the death of her family members. On the other side, Clarissa notices that too, but she wants to get rid of these terrible realities by arranging parties. The reader can clearly recognize through Clarissa’s stream of consciousness that she does not meet Septimus in any scene. Yet, the likeness between the fifty-one years old Clarissa and the twenty-four years old veteran of the First World War Septimus is mainly obsessed by the term death. She certainly feels “somehow like him- the young man who killed himself” (MD 135).

As Septimus, Woolf is certainly affected by some series of painful events including fundamentally the death of her close relatives. This led her to have a very tragic personal experience the meaning of death and loss. Her trauma is paralleled with that of Septimus the fact that led their medical professionals to recommend the rest cure instead of the talk cure. Due to the false expectations that they have by the society, Woolf sees that the verbal communication is ineffective in a society that was deaf to his sufferance. Truly, Septimus does not accept the rest cure treatment and just a moment before managing to go to the asylum, he throws himself from a window.

Despite the brief information that is given about Septimus’ early life, the reader discovers that Septimus has an obsession with art, literature, and poetry just like the novelist. The fact that Woolf had friends in Bloomsbury group who had the same interests, including Siegfried Sassoon who was also a post-war poet, aids her in the depiction of Septimus character. Septimus, however, asks his wife Lucrezia to burn his drawings and scribbles as an

end to his creation. For Woolf and Septimus, these creation and artistic vision are soundless when it comes to live in an inner world that contradicts completely the outer world. Therefore, Woolf's sensitive personality toward people around her as well as Septimus faithful love toward his friend Evans led them to become extremely traumatized personalities.

Undeniably, Septimus reflects part of Woolf's life and becomes her double. For Woolf, her husband Leonard was the first loyal supporter to ameliorate her state of mind like Septimus' wife. Hence, taking a rest cure, where either the doctor or the nurse does everything for the patient, becomes one of the main reasons behind her suicide. Thus, Woolf portrays Sir William Bradshaw's advice to Septimus for rest cure treatment as a reason to finish his life without adding another tragic phase to his sufferance. Since, Septimus is considered as her double, she knew very well what rest cure means and under which circumstances her character will pass through.

Accordingly, Septimus and Woolf may understand people but the opposite is not correct. The protagonist Clarissa does not kill herself despite her deep sadness. Yet, Woolf attempted several times to end her life, when she was just a young girl, then in 1904, 1912, and 1913. One of her attempts was by throwing herself from a window, which is the same ending that the writer has chosen for the shell-shocked Septimus. Her final attempt was in 1941, when she ended her life by filling her coat pockets with stones and walking into the River Ouse and drowned herself. Before that, Virginia Woolf left a letter to her husband Leonard in which she expressed her deep love to this faithful and loyal man. (see appendix seven)

3.6 Conclusion

By revealing the inner thought of the traumatized characters, Woolf shows her poetic narrative of trauma as well as her realistic depiction of this concept. Essentially, *Mrs*

Dalloway is featured by the likeness in the traumatic experience between the novelist Virginia Woolf and her two characters, Clarissa and Septimus. Despite the fact that the novel portrays the protagonist Clarissa Dalloway as a sane character, she suffers implicitly from a traumatic experience. However, Septimus' portrayal of trauma is plainly diagnosed. Then, the novelist suffered nearly in the same way. Thus, analysing the characters' traumatic experience by having reference to Freudian trauma theory as well as the contemporary trauma may create a completely new mode of understanding the characters' state of mind especially for Septimus.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Several issues were raised after the First World War, among the fundamental subjects were the rise of shell shock and psychological trauma among the unexpected huge number of victims. Doctors of that time did not know exactly what shell shock means and under which circumstances the survivor lives. The latter found great difficulties to integrate himself into post-war life. Indeed, the entire British society was uninformed about the symptoms of shell shock. Yet, they experienced distant and collective traumatic experience during the wartime. After the end of the Great War, radical changes happened in post-war Britain which never existed in pre-war society mostly the shift in the gender roles and the class system. Consequently, modernist writers attempted to reflect these new realities through their writings. Many modernist critics consider Great War literature as literature of trauma.

The modernist war writer Virginia Woolf raised this issue in a very subtle way by standing on her own artistic creativeness. Her fourth famous novel *Mrs. Dalloway* reflects the right depiction of the symptoms of trauma as well as the post-war England. Meanwhile, her fictional novel can be associated with the new advance studies in the fields of psychoanalysis and the trauma theory of the pioneer Sigmund Freud. Later in the 1990s, the pioneers Caruth, Felman, and LaCapra in the contemporary trauma have adopted this theory. They carried out on the study of shell shock, hysteria, and trauma by concluding that these terms refer to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

However, all these studies may be embodied instinctively in the depiction of the two main characters Clarissa and Septimus. On one hand, the novelist's genius portrayal of trauma merely comes from her first-hand traumatic experiences. This portrayal of psychological trauma is highly presented by the use of the stream of consciousness which makes the reader perceive the inner life of the character decorated with symbolism and poetic language. On the

other hand, Virginia Woolf seems very pessimistic due to the careless reaction of the society toward Septimus' traumatic experience as well as Clarissa's. The psychoanalysis is properly applied in the analysis of Clarissa's state of mind as she had implicitly suffered from trauma. Yet, she does not totally submit to her sadness like Septimus. The latter's different symptoms of traumas are noticeably existing with the association of both Freudian trauma theory and contemporary theory due to his painful and tragic experiences that he lived in the trenches.

Ultimately, Woolf represents Septimus' doctors as truly dictators who want just to repress his emotion and feeling which only make the matters even worse. His state of mind became unbearable and has non-response to the treatment. Hence, the novelist and her two characters share some common perspectives particularly Septimus who becomes her double. Their traumatic experiences, reaction toward society, tendencies, hobbies, treatment are alike. Even the tragic act of Septimus' suicide was among the several attempts that the novelist had chosen to end her life too.

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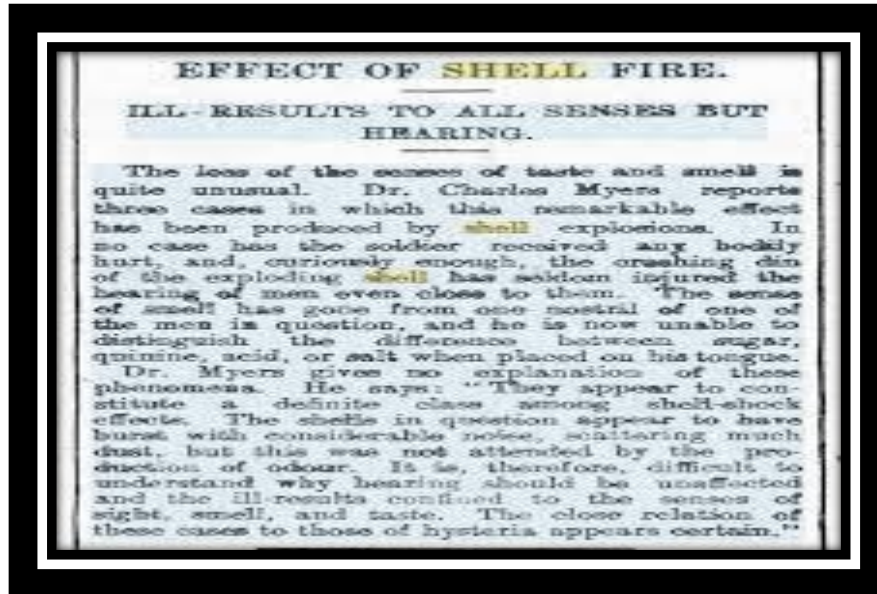
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Appendices

Appendix One

The Beginning of Diagnosing Symptoms of Shell Shock in the British Newspaper (1917-1919)



London Newspaper published the symptoms of shell shock as a new disease that affected the mind of the First World War soldiers.

Appendix Two

Forms of mourning; personal and national



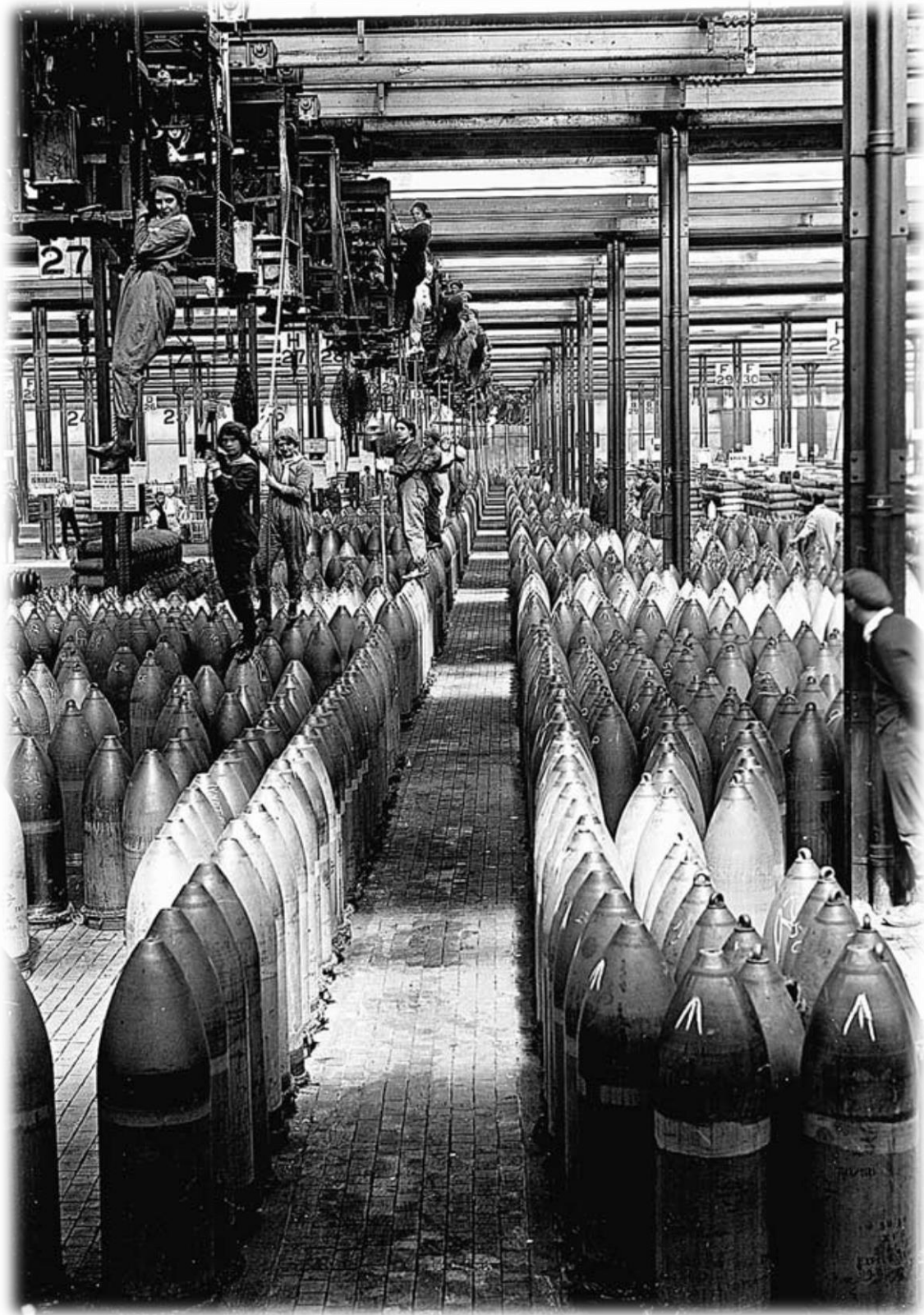
A British soldier on battlefield



The Great Silence 11 a.m., 11 November 1920. The Cenotaph, London.

Appendix Three

The Shift in Traditional Role of Women



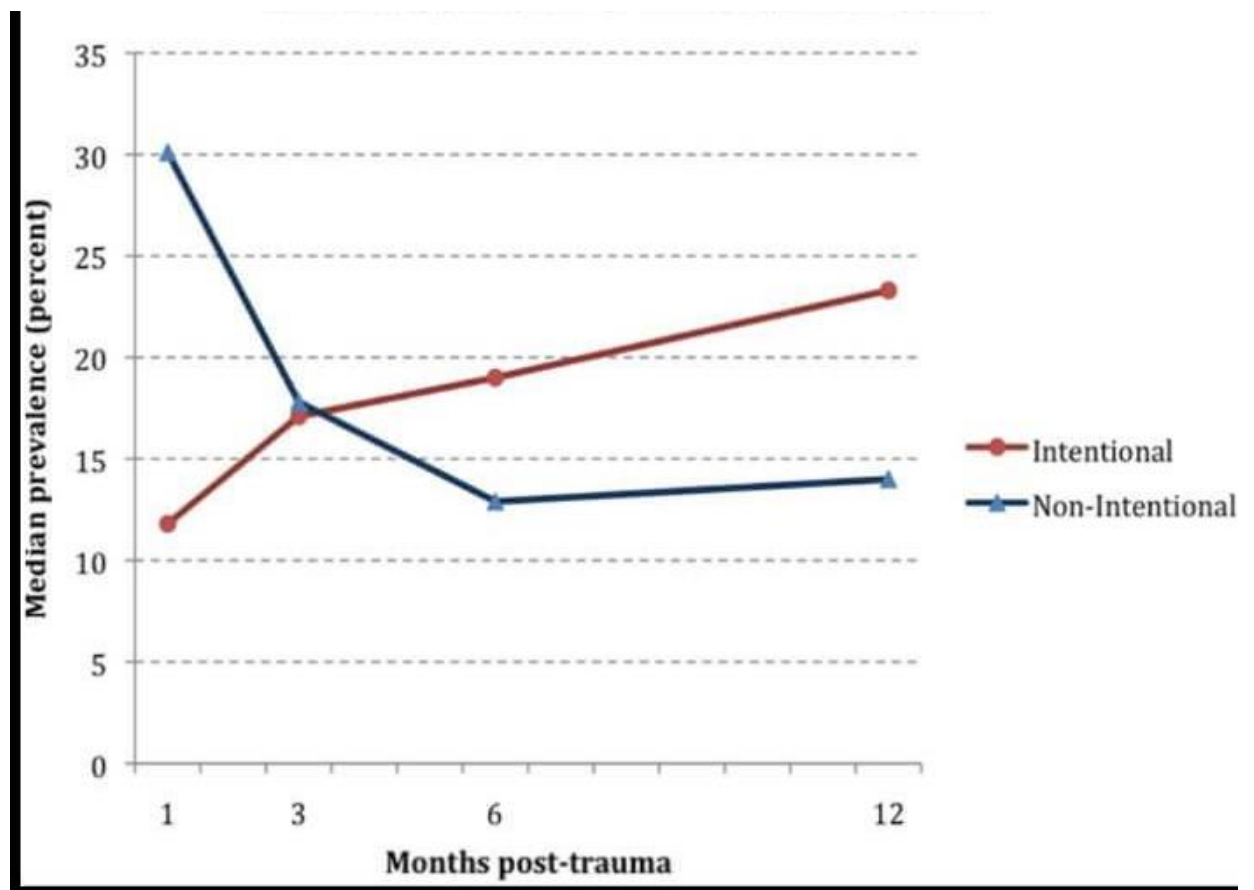
Change in gender roles where British women worked in military fields.

Appendix Four

Dignosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) on the mind



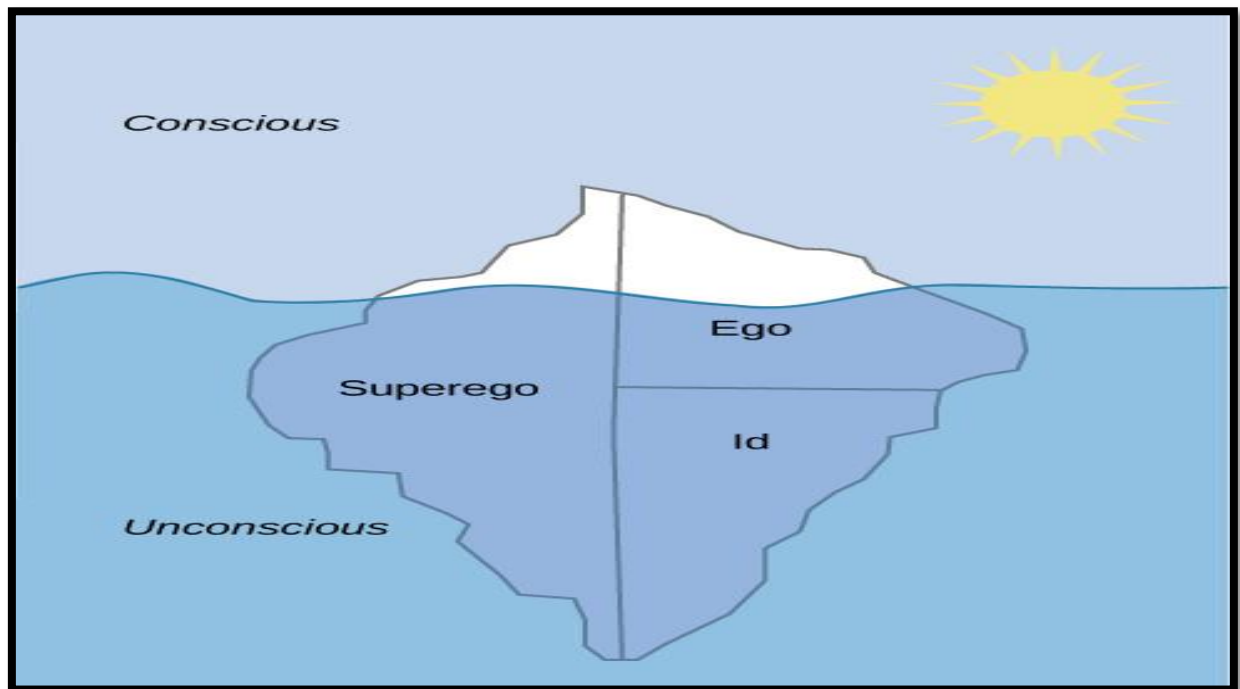
The state of mind of soldiers before going to the battlefield and after coming home.



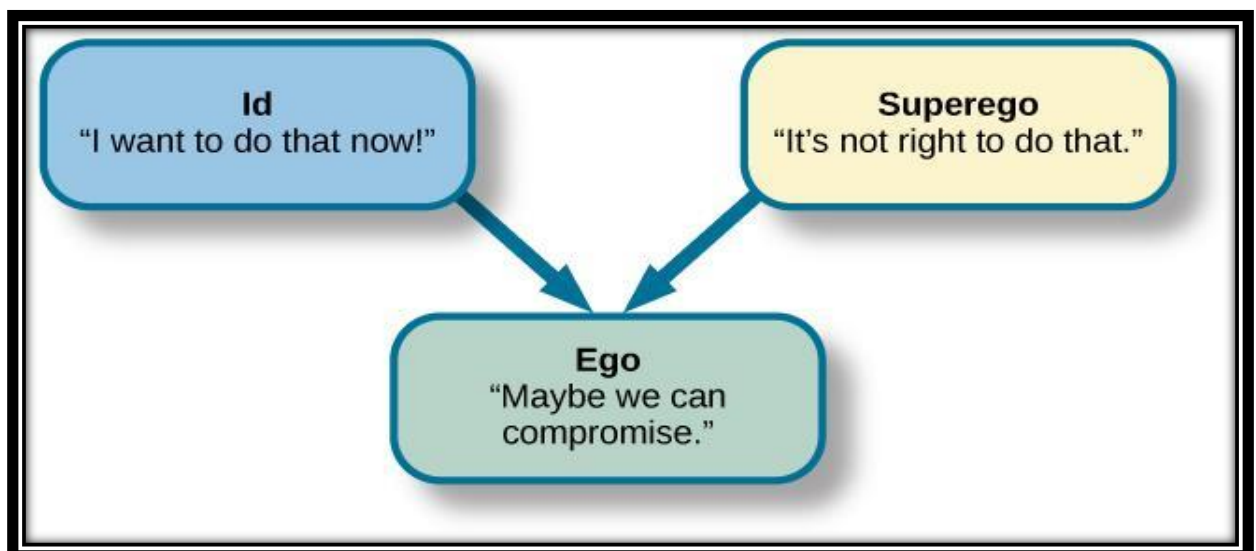
Post-traumatic Stress Disorder rates in people experiencing intentional and non-intentional trauma.

Appendix Five

Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory



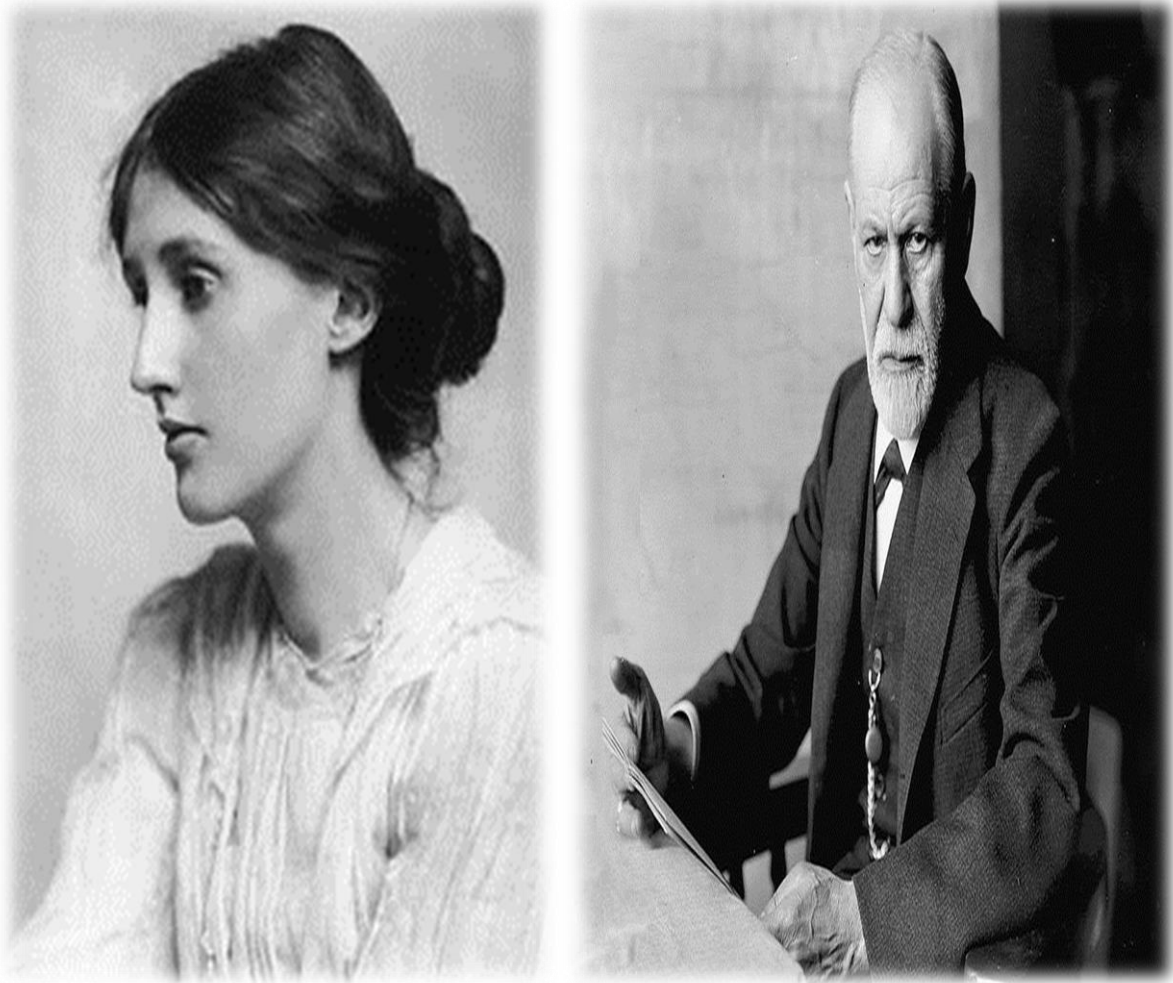
The father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud, compared the human mind to an iceberg. The tip above the water represents consciousness, and the vast region below the surface symbolizes the unconscious mind. Of Freud's three basic personality structures—id, ego, and superego—only the id is totally unconscious.



The interaction between the three components of the human mind.

Appendix Six

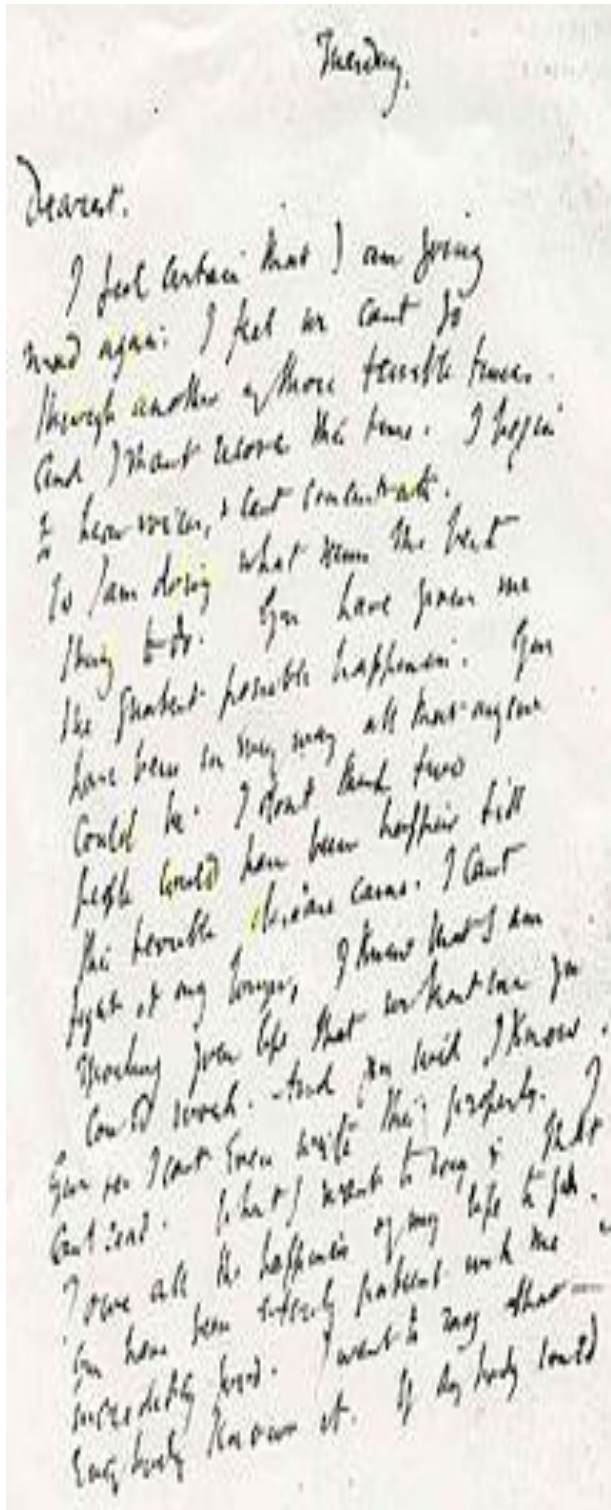
Virginia Woolf and Sigmund Freud



Virginia Woolf met Sigmund Freud on: The 28th of January 1939 at 20 Maresfield Gardens. She said to him: We have often felt guilty – if we had failed to win the Great War, perhaps Hitler would not have been. He said to her: It would have been infinitely worse if you had not won the war. She gave him: Her close attention. He gave her: A narcissus. And the consequence was: She finally read his work. And the whole world said...but no doubt the whole world had other things to worry about in January 1939.

Appendix Seven

Virginia Woolf's Suicide Letter to her Husband Leonard



Thursday.

Dearest.

I feel certain that I am going mad again. I feel we can't go through another of those terrible times. And I shan't recover this time. I begin to hear voices, and I can't concentrate. So I am doing what seems the best thing to do. You have given me the greatest possible happiness. You have been in every way all that anyone could be. I don't think two people could have been happier till this terrible disease came. I can't fight any longer. I know that I am spoiling your life, that without me you could work. And you will I know. You see I can't even write this properly. I can't read. What I want to say is I owe all the happiness of my life to you. You have been entirely patient with me and incredibly good. I want to say that—everybody knows it. If anybody could have saved me it would have been you. Everything has gone from me but the certainty of your goodness. I can't go on spoiling your life any longer. I don't think two people could have been happier than we have been".

Virginia Woolf.

"Dearest, I feel certain that I am going mad again. I feel we can't go through another of those terrible times. And I shan't recover this time. I begin to hear voices, and I can't concentrate. So I am doing what seems the best thing to do. You have given me the greatest possible happiness. You have been in every way all that anyone could be. I don't think two people could have been happier till this terrible disease came. I can't fight any longer. I know that I am spoiling your life, that without me you could work. And you will I know. You see I can't even write this properly. I can't read. What I want to say is I owe all the happiness of my life to you. You have been entirely patient with me and incredibly good. I want to say that—everybody knows it. If anybody could have saved me it would have been you. Everything has gone from me but the certainty of your goodness. I can't go on spoiling your life any longer. I don't think two people could have been happier than we have been".

Virginia Woolf.