

# 琉球大学学術リポジトリ

Mrs. Dalloway : 意識の交錯と表層下における  
sigification の生成プロセス

メタデータ	言語: 出版者: 琉球大学教育学部 公開日: 2012-12-27 キーワード (Ja): キーワード (En): 作成者: TAIRA, Katsuaki, 平良, 勝明 メールアドレス: 所属:
URL	<a href="http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12000/25595">http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12000/25595</a>

## Tunneling through the Minds of Narrative Personae in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Katsuaki TAIRA

It is quite interesting to follow, merely to follow, the fragmented images that are scattered throughout the novel Virginia Woolf wrote almost a century ago and find multifarious facets of gestalt significations arise from them, which happens, needless to say, if only one allows his imagination to run amok and lets the flow of the narrative take him wherever it is inclined. As one, perhaps unconsciously even, conjoins his mind with the consciousness that runs through the liquid, transmogrifying and yet lucid flow that sweeps through the story of and the narrative of *Mrs. Dalloway*, something quite wonderful seems to happen, which is not necessarily in agreement with the cold, clear-cut logic one might be tempted to associate with natural sciences, but which perhaps transcends them all and yet which is quite primal in its derivation and which coalesces as it interacts with the imaginative function of the reader and acts on it to connect seemingly disjunctive images and story lines and allows them to give rise to an overall effect that is beyond the mere sum of particular words or senses but rather more like a fluid interlinkage, which the human imagination naturally allows to take place in the very process of structuring the meanings and elements that are played out and moving in synchronization with the development of the narrative consciousness in action. The meanings may be intimately connected or almost indigenous to the narrative sphere that is defined by the linguistic and physical perimeters which the published object comes to possess, but there is certainly an element of mystery and joy which the primal function embedded in human imagination can supply and does supply as the reader interacts with the moving significational objects in play. The disjunctions, which are the prominent feature of the novel, in this sense function well in that they encourage the readerly imagination to bloom and come to full potential as the interstices and breaks that are deliberately etched out in the original lines are voraciously filled in and connected in the manner that suits the imaginative desire of the readerly psyche, who happens to be involved in the process of reading the work. If the completely haphazard, non-structured and spontaneous process were merely a chaotic one, unanchored to the primal potential which humans naturally seem to possess, or to at least some (even hypothesized) common denominators of the readerly consciousnesses, there might be no consensus as to the significational and reinterpreted

refractions that are to be re-interjected into the narrative flow and textures that are physically patent to every reader involved in the process. But considering that there is so much degree of appreciation and sharing, both signification and emotional (which might as well be described as a total absorption that redounds to perfect empathy—under the ideal conditions, needless to say—with the narrative pulse which the readers partake of and intuit), among all the readers who undertake a mysterious and yet potentially rewarding trip through the world of *Mrs. Dalloway*, the seeming disjunctions and deconstructed imageries that populate the world of the narrative may as well be described as an optimal means through which to bring the disparate readerly consciousnesses together to the foci that are both immaterial and yet irresistibly centripetal. Only the paths, by which the mysterious signification and emotional congruence is achieved, are seemingly random and innumerable. In this essay, I would follow the trajectories of the conscious flows that are in narrative focus and allow my mind to freely associate with the objects and narrative particulars that are depicted and let them form seamless narrative lines that recursively incorporate the former to produce a gestalt sense and signification picture at any given moment and juncture—a sense or a multiple and multifarious phases of it even—which empathetically interact with the characters etched out through the deft craftsmanship of the author, who may or may not be buried under the narrative flow that pulsates through the story. Without much further delay, then, I will begin with Maisie Johnson's uncertain, and unsettling, response to her surroundings.

In the following passage, what takes place is the hodgepodge impressions Maisie Johnson thinks she receives from her surroundings, which obviously are made up of numerous particulars and events and things and people. But the superficial disjunctions that are inherent in the connections that exist between them, that is the seeming commonality that unites them all, which are (at least on a superficial level) rare and almost none, if there is any at all, jumps out of the narrative picture as if it really does exist and that is the very thing that appeals to the deepest psyche of our protagonist at this juncture, who obviously is identified with Maisie Johnson the novice and newcomer to London. The cacophonous images, which are merely there by coincidence and by dint of her imaginative prowess, begin to cohere in a strange way, which almost suggests to the readerly psyche that they are homogeneous in that everything communicates to the central consciousness in play on a level that is graspable and inter-communicable. The strangeness that immediately becomes almost natural, almost a given, aligns itself in a manner that is malleable and completely intelligible to the central consciousness at this moment and simultaneously to the

reader as well and when that process is over there is no barrier that inhibits one from entering into the essential being of the other, which in a way allows one without any reservation into the inner and arcane mysteries each object and particular contains at this very moment when they appeal, as it were, to the inner being of the central consciousness, who passively and, simultaneously actively, interconnect with their essences, establishing a kind of communion that is partakable by the bystander and interpreter that is identified as the readerly eavesdropper, who has been following the footsteps, or rather the narrative flow that pulsates through the narrative. But the fear and cacophony amid the interconnection between disjunctive elements nevertheless comes out, as Maisie Johnson notices strangeness and fearsomeness and oddities that are linked to the subjects and objects that surround her in the strange city of London. Albeit she willingly took the journey, which brought her to the new and strange and yet hopefully exciting place, far away from her monotonous and yet habituated native land in the north, the garish images that strike her as almost menacing and threatening her being in the new environment put her on the defensive and which in turn make her all the more aware of the situation and the overall miseries she finds herself in, which she is convinced is despite her own freewill, or perhaps because of that. The images and all the subjects and objects that assault her visual and psychological ken are the very things that the readerly psyche has been concentrating on until the new character in the person of Maisie Johnson broke into the narrative scene. In a sense, there is both disjunction and conjunction, or rather a break and continuity, in the narrative flow, as the self-same objects and subjects are merely treated differently and observed from a slightly different perspective while they remain the same and are situated the same, from an absolute narrative and objective point of view.<sup>1</sup> They are still there, Septimus

---

<sup>1</sup> The myriad of impressions and images that are reflected upon the consciousness of the character in ascendance may be transmogrified images and avatars that are ultimately derived from the force that runs through the narrative throughout the story in its flowing extension. Or perhaps, as suggested by Araujo Lima, the reflections that constantly change their shape and significations within the mind observing them may be merely refracted shapes and images of the life that runs through every single move and development that incessantly occurs around the protagonist that emerges as the reader is concentrated upon her at any given moment. Either way, the narrative of *Mrs. Dalloway* is full of shifting images and significations that both occur inside and outside of the mind of the observer who happens to interject refracted meanings to the story as well as to the readerly mind, who overlooks and eavesdrops on the goings-on of the narrative. See more on the descriptive processes that are in action both in the novel and in the mind of the readers and the argument implicated with that of the realist vs. traditionalist of novelistic techniques in “‘For there they were’: *Mrs. Dalloway*, Clarissa, Mrs. Dalloway” by Jose Araujo Lima, collected in *Virginia Woolf: Three Centenary Celebrations*, edited by Louisa Flora and Maria Candida Zamith, pp. 109-118.

and all the others who gathered in the space where all the drama has been taking place, once centered upon the motor vehicle with a mysterious figure inside it and currently or even passingly, the aeroplane booming through the sky. In spite of the sameness of the objects and subjects that are made to inhabit and autonomously act on their own, the perspective and the psyche that catalyze them in the narrative horizon render them completely different, nuanced and colored and tinged with the biases and interpretations signifying and signaling the person of and mind of Maisie Johnson, who is inevitably and emphatically thrust upon the readerly psyche. The difference in the sameness, heterogeneity in homogeneity that are commingled via the consciousness thrown into the narrative at the appearance of Maisie Johnson, makes the readerly interpretational significance also different, that is it is made to reflect the subtle nuances that occur and splice them into the development that takes place while the new interpretational existence engages with the same surrounding environment on a multifaceted unpredictable plane. The strange behavior, thus, Septimus and the interactions between him and his wife, assume an eerily estranged and detached look that needs to be reinterpreted by the readerly psyche, as if it and they, who inhabit the selfsame sphere as they did a minute ago, are not only different beings differentiated by the temporal passage but also beings who are heterogeneous in essence from the beings who occupied the space a mere minute ago. The heterogeneity, which could have been explained by the temporal dislocation and the perspectival shift, becomes something entirely different and the difference that gets magnified by the strangeness the Maisie Johnson foregrounds, is disproportionately multi-valuated by the discrepancies and ambivalences that are spawned along the interpretational process the readerly psyche is ever intently, and intensely, engaged in, or forcibly drawn into, willingly or unwillingly.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> The multivalent significations that are incessantly spawned in the interaction between the readerly psyche, or the interpretative mind, and the narrative minds in focus may be the prime object for which the author strove to bring the narrative complications and signifiatory intersections to bear upon the reality-impacted fictive phases. Although the free-reined minds that reside in the narrative domain tend to go beyond the authorial control (the more so, the harder the author tries to contain them), the amorphous and expanding signifiational dynamism that comes from the autonomous minds of the personae is the final product the author finally arrived at when she needed to give rise to the true state of psychological expansion and processes, which, as Tony E. Jackson points out, could not be contained in traditionalist novelistic operandi, but needed to be brought out of the box, into which they had been pushed before our author fortuitously realized to let them loose and express their true state of reality, which is the minds in action and in the process of constant renovation. See on the argument developed by Tony E. Jackson in *The Subject of Modernism: Narrative Alterations in the Fiction of Eliot, Conrad, Woolf, and Joyce* on pp. 113-123.

Defamiliarized features, the strangeness, that becomes emphasized and reiterated by the lonesome girl from the north are ever present as the reader faces the strangest mobs and the presences who putatively surround our girl in the center of the narrative stage at this juncture. The estranged, precarious emotions and the piquant lugubrious imagery that is manifested by the lonely figure is augmented and amplified as the busy mind of the girl constantly travels between the here of the London street and the there of where she hails from. The past that is almost the immediate continuation of the preceding moments before the current time that is being deployed becomes so distant, as it were, and the geographic location she imagines to be such a polar opposite of “normalcy” is transmogrified into an idyllic idealized landmark that the reader is torn between the locales and moments in time trying to search the best and optimal ground from which to safely judge the objective basis on which to judge the evaluations Maisie Johnson renders through her seemingly prejudiced deracinated mind. Nothing remains untinctured by the biased eyes of our young heroine, as she deems everything that meets her eyes as somewhat abnormal and menacing, which obviously includes at this moment the whole town, which swoops down on her to command her absolute abjection and subjection to whatever essence it exudes, at least that is what the whole interactive process potentially appears to her mind.<sup>3</sup> What is interesting is the bits of strangeness the town itself exudes and present themselves to her as if they were conniving to coddle her psyche with the intent of unsettling her sanity and surreptitiously alienating her from the sanest and securest mooring she can recall at this very precarious moment, her memories of and the loving anchors of the town and the people who reside in the north of England. The equilibrium that is maintained so far in the mind of our heroine threatens to break down and she is tempted to cry for help, to succor her from the wicked corrupting environment of the city where she, ironically, willingly threw herself in, in spite of the entreaties and arguments

---

<sup>3</sup> The external stimuli and what occurs in the mind of the characters in ascendance within the narrative horizon may not be directly correlated to each other, either in nature or degree to which they could be compared to and ultimately homogenized, but the way one reacts to the other, which may not necessarily be logical or sequential even, seems to tell a certain reciprocity that could be construed as subjectively sequential to each other and significant. The argument pertinent to the issue of the internal and external reciprocity that is exhibited in the narrative may be well worth paying attention to, such as, if circumstantially, developed by Lucio Ruotolo, and reading the story of *Mrs. Dalloway* that hinges upon the psychological contingencies which are linked to the multifaceted phases of the external stimuli that constantly change in accordance with the flow of the narrative force may yield something more than a cursory, and superficial, contact with each character seems to promise at any given moment. See “*Mrs. Dalloway: The Unguarded Moment*” by Lucio Ruotolo, collected in *Virginia Woolf: Revaluation and Continuity*, edited by Ralph Freedman, pp. 141-150.

dissuasive of making a rush decision to do whatever she believed was her prerogative. Or maybe all the arguments and quandaries over relocation to London may have happened in the mind of Maisie Johnson alone and the dissuasive and contrary forces that seemed to clash against her will were merely her imagination, or rather something she herself willed to arise in the face of a daunting adventure to the land of the strange and unknown and yet which is filled with ineffable fascination. The fears she imagined initially because of (possibly in spite of) the dissuasive foes and that which still linger seize her and in a way reify in the middle of the city and she is terrified of the faces, gazes and the organic and inorganic moves and whispers that seem to fill her mind, as they transmogrify into antagonizing forces that militate against a young novice, who is perceived to be a complete stranger to the new domain. She even retrospectively regrets having asked the couple about the way to the station that would, she naively assumed, take her to where she could safely feel at home again after such a mysterious life-threatening journey through the middle of London. The couple, who re-emerge and become magnified in her peripheral vision, as it were, present themselves as scary monsters who are intent on her destruction, or some indomitable existence that tries to bar her from reaching the right path to the temporary harbor she is seeking. What seemed like the new normalcy in the strange land becomes more and more odd and incomprehensible now that she has in fact talked to them and asked them to guide her in the "right path." Asking someone not in the right mind to guide her through the disorderly chaos that is London suddenly seems more than absurd and the absurdity adds to the disproportionate fears she feels in the face of the disorganized jumble of crowd and strange particulars and objects that assault her eyes and ears. The dislocation of perspectival unity and sane centrality is matched, at this point, with the increasing oscillation in her thought process between Edinburgh and what it signifies and the streets of London and what assaults her senses as Maisie Johnson lets her mind hopelessly absorb all those physical and psychical forces that impinge upon her and fly in her direction. The forces that are driving her mind to the brink of insanity are so much that the continuous flow, which is dictated by the consciousness that is in command or rather the authorial judgment that dictates the whole gestalt narrative lay of personae and organic and inorganic ingredients that constitute the story, must needs find its continuance, paradoxically enough, in the disjunction that is supplied by another mind other than that of Maisie Johnson's. The insertion, or rather interruption, as sudden as the entrance of Maisie Johnson herself, is almost brutally obtuse and abrupt, as the thought of another onlooker jumps in the fray and she commandeers the narrative dictate as if it were her privilege to contribute and comment on the mind and

the workings thereof, who is a completely discrepant being and who merely happens to be within the visual ken of the mind observing her. Inevitably, the dislocation, or disjunctive fusion of the two minds is seamless, as the consciousness in flow merely moves from one mind to another and the perspective is continuously complemented by a person labeled by another name, or rather in this case it may be more appropriate to describe as delineated in a different generational and existential configuration, who has seen, as she herself claims, more of the world. Thus, the being who seemed to have been the center of the narrative, in fact was in a sense and in the most superficial meaning of the word perhaps, was merely a temporary observing vehicle to define the street, the city of London and what it contained (particularly inclusive of the strange couple whom she inquired about the way to her destination) and the new observational vehicle becomes another node through which existential significance of aging and the fact of being inexperienced is judged, in other words a new vehicular existence who claims to be, at least she herself seems to be claiming, a better medium through which the ever-telescoped existence of the world is reevaluated and commented upon. The dislocation and multi-tiered perspectival shifting makes the judgment one makes ever temporary and relative, making the continuous conscious move the only one that is relied upon to be in existence and to be harkened back to for comprehensive valuation of the whole gamut of narrative evolution.

The narrative perspectival transition that lands in the old wizened woman named Mrs. Dempster, it turns out, results in foregrounding the sordid and naked truth about aging. The woman on the roadside, who happens to be observing the internal agony and suffering of the young woman and becomes a recipient of the conscious energy, which in the narrative scheme of things is identified with the perspective that had been lodged with Maisie Johnson, coalesces as an agent who exudes nothing but the sordid aging process that inevitably robs one of exuberance and spontaneous energy that is a contributing factor to being a loving, compassionate human being, compassion here understood as something that spontaneously flows from the mind of one to the other and without any refractive and reflective sentiment and which means nothing other than love and compassion per se, tautologically speaking. For one, who claims to have seen more of the world in her long life than others younger than herself, Mrs. Dempster is both objective and cruel in that she puts the girl in a perspective that comprehends the intractable sordidity and complications life brings on, regardless whether she tries to live in one manner or another. The heavy burden of aging leaves no one unaffected, and all the misfortunes the girl, the young one apparently in desolation, seems to be suffering, which makes her so miserable and unhappy, are mere passing



and transient occurrences that cannot compare to the passage of time and what it brings on, which merely foregrounds the ephemerality of youth itself. The desultory conscious wandering Mrs. Dempster engages in at this moment is merely the mirror reflection of the insignificance of temporary sadness and unhappiness, the kind the girl from the north is apparently undergoing, and the emotions and idea of being desolate, being left alone in the whole wide world is nothing and not likely the kind that has any lasting consequences on the life of someone who will eventually reach the age Mrs. Dempster is at this moment. The ephemerality of the girl's suffering and the despondency that is privately consequential and yet in the long span of life's continuance is likely to be insignificant is the very idea that allows Mrs. Dempster to recall the family and the experiences of her past, which in the end she reasons turned out reasonably well in spite of and because of the preceding events and experiences she had in her youth. The lesson she seems to remind the reader that a person should derive from every single second of life's mundane and critical phase is no matter how serious and consequential an event may be it results, or at least likely to, in an expected mediocrity, to which one should at least resign herself and nevertheless make an effort to reconstitute her life, even backwardly, to align the outcome in a manner that makes the past meaningful and the future hopeful so that the whole accumulation of the past in turn redounds to the fluid flow of chronological array of events more manageably and comprehensibly. The nasty habit of her son, which might be considered at least a peccadillo, may as well be regarded as manly given the alternative of a hopeless abyss he might otherwise have been forced to plunge into under different circumstances. Mrs. Dempster understandably nods at the good life she has lived overall in comparison to the state the girl seems to be in, so gloomy and stricken with grief. The thinking and yearning mind, which needlessly finds causes for suffering perhaps is destined to be unhappy, while a person like Mrs. Dempster, who is easily reconciled to the life she has been assigned to live, finds it more convenient, and carefree, to eke out even a meager living if she could reconcile herself to it without much undue rationalization. She is perfectly content with the mere necessities and bare minimum life she has been granted, for she has been able to philosophize and arrive at a certain understanding of life as it is unraveled for her except for the "roses," which by now comes to stand for everything youth signifies and promises. Amidst the conflicting sentiments, however, she continues to reiterate that one should be blasé about life's vicissitudes and should be able to find meaning of life even in mere procreation and mere act of eating and in daily routines that keep one alive even for the day, an existence that is on the level with that of an animal and, if needs be, without any intellectual nourishment--which after all only

arises in a leisurely upper-class milieu Mrs. Dempster and her like have never known or personally experienced. Interestingly enough, and perhaps inevitably, there crops up an issue of class and division that is embroiled and expressed through the ideas and the manners as Mrs. Dempster muses about the young girl and what the lonesome girl represents most prominently to an old woman like herself, an old woman who holds a certain social and familial position that is also opposed to that of the young girl in distress in the middle of an unfamiliar city.<sup>4</sup> The crass and bare-minimal life Mrs. Dempster is obviously forced to live, to which, however, she is oblivious because the other lives that exist beyond the wall of the Buckingham palace and those that are differentiated by the temporal and geographic distance, do not directly impinge upon the mind of Mrs. Dempster. The differentiation, or perhaps an adumbration thereof in the most abstract inchoate sense, that figurates in the unconscious and spontaneous utterance Mrs. Dempster makes, which gives rise to a reflection of the apparent misery the young girl from the north is in can be at least subterraneously traced in the coarse and crass language and ideas that are projected onto the narrative landscape and simultaneously the differentiation in cultural and class and social realms Mrs. Dempster and others occupy is directly impacted (perhaps it may be better to say made to be impacted) upon the idea of passage of time, a chronological flow which results in and which is most piquantly represented by the figural roses and the loss thereof. Mrs. Dempster time again and recursively and repeatedly hearkens back to the contrast between the product of aging and the freshness, and possibly rather enviably in spite of her confession to the contrary, which gives rise to the possibility, at least in the mind of the reader, that the belittling of the suffering and the temporary and youthful desolation that seem to leave the young girl unhappy and despondent and worried and lonely, is nothing more than a mirror image of the sentiment Mrs. Dempster at her

---

<sup>4</sup> The issue of class and societal relevance one holds vis-à-vis others in the same and different hierarchical ladder may be dovetailed into that of the female consciousness that is deviously and multifariously resistant to the ethos and dominant patriarchal pressure phallic society exerts over the other. In a way, the point Lisa Low makes in “Freedom of My Mind: Fascism and Disruptive Female Consciousness in *Mrs. Dalloway*” is germane in that all the strains and conflicts that arise from being a member of and holding a certain positionality in society, as demonstrated by the instances played out by the women in question, could be translated into the pressure and the dominance patriarchal society exerts over the weak and individuated members of the society, such as the force that coalesced in the totalitarian waves that swept at the height of the war fevers during and into two world wars. The resistance and the nebulous matriarchal force exhibited by the prominent characters in *Mrs. Dalloway* may be well highlighted in connection with Low’s essay. See in particular the argument made by the same on pp. 92-101, as it appears in *Virginia Woolf and Fascism: Resisting the Dictators’ Seduction*, edited by Merry M. Pawlowski.

advanced age would rather entertain as long as the roses and what they stand for might become once more hers and what she could partake of both emotionally and physically, the latter of which needless to say is a dream that is beyond reach of a woman past her prime. The wishing for the impossible Mrs. Dempster makes at this juncture and the fact the wish is repeatedly dovetailed into multifarious personal episodes, recollected and connected to her life's particularized outcome, makes the miseries she observed the young girl suffered more or less in fact pertinent to Mrs. Dempster herself and others of her ilk in society that is filled with Maisie Johnsons and Mrs. Dempsters. Simultaneously, the roses she wishes for and the fact she negates the rosy development of one's life, life in general both for the young and the old, and the act of revisiting the same theme repeatedly and recurrently in such a short passage of time, renders the hopelessness of recuperating the loss of bliss one had enjoyed before and the futility of the controlled despair, or forced contentment, Mrs. Dempster feels in regard to the life foisted upon her and others, almost universal, a sentiment which may as well be shared by everyone in the purview of the narrative that develops right in front of her eyes, or so is she convinced as the readerly mind observes the ever wider perspective that evolves from the interaction and connection between the two.

As a bold and indefatigable assessor of youth and what it implicates and signifies, Mrs. Dempster nevertheless cannot help but beg for pity, a pity for the aged and shriveling. What remains, after all these years of life and accumulation of wisdom, which seems to have given her the right to view and analyze the mind of the girl with absolute certainty and accuracy (which only the wisdom of long life she has lived grants her, she seems to be convinced) she cannot obliterate the desire, the inner and secretive one, that has been suppressed and tamped upon by the chorological detritus that has accumulated over the years. Only a hint of freedom, a second of opportunity that opens up through the manifestation of the moving object in the sky is enough to remind her of the frustration and the dissatisfaction she has been suppressing all these years. Opportunely and quite relevantly, she recollects her relative, a missionary, who dared to act on his conviction and went abroad, regardless of the outcome and the fate that might have awaited him there. Her nephew, however, merely functions as a transfigural and figural presence, who embodies the freedom and the spirit that bursts out of the shackles of the restraint that inevitably grows out of the monotonous life a woman like Dempster has become inured to, and perhaps was born into and has grown into. The image her nephew evokes is translated and echoed by the perpetually soaring and moving object in the sky, which is uncontainable and spontaneous as it merely "soared and shot." In the process, the mind of Mrs. Dempster is sympathetically affected and

she dares to invoke an image of herself going out to the sea, only that she has to stay within sight of the land, which provides security and peace of mind, but nonetheless the act of venturing out to the water entitles her to the claim to be superior to those who cringe at the sight of the water, a vast ocean that seems to engulf them and drown them in the fluid turbulence, that may perhaps be the eventuality when the weather turns stormy. But the sweeping and falling of the liquid environment merely translates into the movement of the aeroplane that flies in front of the crowd, above and over them in the aerial ken that engulfs both Mrs. Dempster and the young girl from the north. As the aerial object moves so wildly and freely, Mrs. Dempster, who is inured to the watery element, a fact that which she boasts of as a manifestation of inherent courage and self-worth, becomes or threatens to become sick with a sympathetic motion, "Her stomach was in her mouth." Or is it her excitement that lets her synchronize with the movement of the aeroplane and experience the push and pull of gravity just as the one in the cockpit must in response to the rise and fall of the aeroplane? Mrs. Dempster cannot help admiring the one in the plane, who keeps his calm and composure in such an extreme circumstance, which conveniently redounds to both her inadequacy and pride in sharing an experience that, she surmises, automatically grants her the right to be on his equal or partial sharer at least of the courage and indefatigably free spirit by way of both the figurally and literally, or at least seemingly, unbounded flight of the aeroplane in the sky. But how sympathetically synchronous does Mrs. Dempster really wish to be with the aeroplane and the pilot in it, flying over the churches and everything that lies beneath the flying object and moving away from her stationary position ever so wildly and quickly every passing second? As if at least partially deal with that question, the yearning and the soaring spirit the old woman shares and manifests in response to the rise and fall of the aeroplane and its pilot is suddenly brought downward, as the mind of the woman focuses on almost infinitesimally small event that is taking place in the forest lying under the bouncy and joyful vehicle in the sky. The contrast the next imagery gives rise to is so abrupt that the reader is suddenly taken to a new psychological level where he is forced to find a flow that conveniently connects the previous motion with the current tap, tap, tap of the thrushes breaking the shell of a snail, or are they meant to be merely greeting the creature in the whirly enclosure? If one stops and analyzes the new phase of the narrative and figural evolution, he is struck by the oddity of the conjunction both of the birds and the snail and the aeroplane and the two engaged in such an encounter. What connects the two perhaps may be the unpredictability of the fate of those who enter into life's adventure, the one who defies the law of gravity and conventions and dares to break away from the norm, like the pilot and the woman's nephew, and the other who goes out in search of food? However, in the case of

the thrushes and the snail, the party that is causing the unpredictable and undesirable eventuality to take shape may be the one that is involved in the act of tap, tapping, which means the connection between the aeroplane and the pilot and the bird-snail encounter does not hold, or one figural element does not smoothly or conjunctively flow into the other, or each other, in the overall figural development that could have been accumulated over the narrative horizon. If the two phases are merely there to foreground the courage and experience of the pilot in the wild ride above the crowd gathered in the middle of the city of London, however, the juxtaposition could be experienced as, or rather more effectively experienced, as a disjunction that is to be savored as a discrepancy manifested as a happenstance indifference nature could give rise to whenever she wishes to, completely unbidden and unframed by any eventuality. The only logic that is traceable in the acrobatic development and evolution leading to the thrushes working on the snail may be the inherent rhythm the tap, tapping the shell is making as the snail, or rather whose shell, comes in contract with a stone, "once, twice, thrice."

Indeed nothing but the inherent and concomitant rhythm that is contained in the whole sequence of the episodes and the scenes can tell what is transpiring in the minds of the personae that are thrust before the consciousness of the readerly mind. They are a group of cacophonous and seemingly disorderly band of people who happens to be there except that they are aligned together in the manner represented by the conscious mind of the uber-narrator that has been directing the narrative since the inception of the story that is evolving as Mrs. Dalloway's adventure through the city of London, or more accurately what occurs in a day of random events as she mentally and psychologically prepares for the crucial event that awaits her in the evening. But the rhythm and the minds of the characters suddenly and abruptly introduced to the scene seem so arbitrarily random that the only believable way, or even possible manner, to delve into the workings of their minds would be to grapple with the inchoate, and oftentimes obscurely reified, flow woven into the narrative pulsation that is overlaid and merged with the rhythm of the vivacious activities of the twosome of the wild creatures, who happened to be in the woods and were discovered by the mind of the author as she traveled and soared in synch with the soaring aeroplane that continued flying away and over the organic and inorganic matters that lay beneath it. The rhythm keeps the mental rhythm of the characters flow from one to the other, and into each other, and allows the readerly consciousness to eavesdrop on the random thought processes taking place before his eyes as if they were something brought forward for the sake of his understanding and appreciation of what discrepant minds manifest vis-à-vis the concentric object flying and winging through the sky. As the pulsation and the

rhythm that runs and constantly relives the conscious energy that is felt to be passing through the narrative landscape, the very disjunctive views bared for display and appreciation thereof, which transpires in front of the narrative stage, does not give the feeling of artificial unnaturalness, which otherwise would be felt quite forced and wherein the disjunctivity would be overwhelming and the readerly mind would be forced to find a way out of the narrative quagmire from which it would be requisite to escape for him to make out the flowing narrative significations for the narrative to even exist as a structured and justifiable entirety and entity. But as it is, thanks to the way the rhythm overarches the potentially disjunctive crevasses that could fatally interrupt the narrative propulsion, the readerly mind feels at ease to appreciate each perspective, which inevitably and invariably coalesces abruptly at each conscious node, and can afford to mull what it contains and how it sequences seamlessly over to another. But here we had better follow the example of a perspective manifested in the narrative flow and ponder what actually, literally and metaphysically perhaps, reifies therein and what each thought process signifies therein and entails therefrom. To a man named one Mr. Bentley, who is presumably standing somewhere in the midst of the conscious concentric circles in the spatiality demarcated as the municipality of London, the object that recedes from the view of the crowd, not at all surprisingly, is “an aspiration; a concentration; a symbol ... of man’s soul.” It is exactly the sentiment everyone else in the crowd, at least a majority of them to be exact, has been entertaining as they watched the aeroplane flying so freely, rising and falling and finally going over the hills and mountains, that is at least in their minds’ eyes, and simultaneously constantly moving away and away from them, and yet not before it went behind the cloud and reappeared therefrom and aroused curiosities of the people on the ground, including Mr. Bentley, but what implicitly crossed their minds as they watched, in awe possibly, especially after the mysterious figure in the car, is that the object in the sky symbolized an aspiration and some concentration of a valuable essence. When the figural connection is finally and explicitly made between the aeroplane and the “human soul” Mr. Bentley merely satisfies the desires of the masses, who have been awe-struck and baffled by the ineffable majesty of the thing in the automobile and sequentially by the mighty controller of such a free and majestically wild and awe-inspiring flying vehicle in the sky. Both objective instantiations that have occupied the attention and minds of the crowd so far have been a reflective adumbration and objectification of the most mysterious and noble and majestic of the creation, the soul, or so it turns out. That is why the crowd has been, recursively speaking, in such awe and in a tantalized state of curiosity. They need to figure out and decipher the mystery but they are somehow numbed and dazzled and have to wait until a mere chance circumstance

introduces an individual, who nonchalantly blurts out and defines the very structurality and the mystery, which the episodes the crowds are involved in, however, have been patently manifesting throughout. Once the word is out, how blasé and unsurprising it sounds, but there is a concomitant rhythm that pulsates through the narrative flow. The energy and the forces the mystery has generated are out in the open and prolonged by the trajectories the aeroplane describes, which the eyes and the souls of the men in the streets amplify. The force and energy that gets “outside his body, beyond his house,” in the word of the man in the narrative, is spread ineffably and irresistibly “by means of thought, Einstein, speculation, mathematics, the Mendelian theory,” and what is amplified and prolonged and spread out is both concentrated and promulgated by an aeroplane, which is ever receding from the crowd.

The rhythm of the scenes, which is intricately woven into the movement of the aeroplane, transitions into the quiet, which is both ineffable and ineradicable, when the consciousness in focus notices the letters written and spread out in the sky. Not surprisingly, after all those disjunctive moments that are not at all breakages or the symbols thereof but continuity of the ongoing flowing process the inorganic and organic lives manifest all around the consciousness, which encircles and engulfs every and each one of the personae participating in the narrative, nothing seems out of place except the very conjunctivity that is presented all too matter of factly.<sup>5</sup> The letters, to continue the thought process that is dangled there in the narrative process, what they describe is so mundane and bathetically linear that the word each letter constitutes threatens to break the mysterious tensions all the perspectival transitions and the inner workings of the minds enabled thereby have built up so far. As the “profound” word is spelled out, it is nothing and no less than an advertising for, which, however, is initially a vaporous object that tries to coalesce as an advertisement for whatever that is to be filled in the remainder of the word following, “T-O-F,” or more accurately the word completed by the same process and what it obviously

---

<sup>5</sup> Needless to say, the spatial and temporal flow to and from the past/there to the present/here are conflated with each other. Or rather, the nowness of the present incessantly merges with the pastness, or for that matter futureness, of the there and other and results in endless intercalation of events and episodes that might or might not take place externally or internally. The overall effect that has on the reading psyche is the ubiquitousness of the expansive continuous moments that might have taken place in the past or there but simultaneously present and being contemporaneously felt by the mind in interaction with the novelistic personae who exist in the interpretative present. The concept of clock time and the symmetrical synchronic presence of the flowing and continuous moments and spatial-temporal particularities that become woven into the novel engender endless signification nuances that in their turn contribute to the richness and sophisticated phases of the story. See on the argument of various exemplifications of chrono-spatiality in *Virginia Woolf: The Major Novels* by John Batchelor, pp. 43-55.

signifies to all those who are watching the dramatic event unfolding on the ground. Needless to say, at this very moment there is more curiosity on the part of the deciphering minds on the ground than the guffaws that would be elicited by the revealed mystery, which would be merely a continuation of the mystery that has been occupying their minds for some time now. Suffice to say that the peaceful quiet that pervades the horizon engulfing the crowd in search of the mystery and a solution to it, and the mundanity of the mystery that is ever so tantalizingly revealed over their heads, is in itself enough to hold their attention a few more seconds, perhaps. The narrative break that is typographically foregrounded is in that sense an effective device to let the readerly consciousness dwell more leisurely on the ineffable mystery and the profundity it evokes than the readerly mind might be allowed to otherwise. Or the complete turnaround in the nature of the mystery that has been prepared for the sake of the personae and all those who have been pursuing the conscious flow of the narrative uber-author needs to have been somehow diverted or circuitously achieved one way or another in order to bring the full force of the absurdity that is to follow with the revelation of the full spelling of the word intended at the tail end of the aeroplane that is receding, or has receded by then. The breakage would have been almost unsustainable and there is in that sense reason that the author transitions into a phase of another character's mind as the narrative picks up after the typographical interstice. It is no other than the eponymous character that is allowed to supersede the contingent ones who preceded her, but with a continuity and in a manner that actually allows her to participate in the disjunctive flow of conscious energy that is dovetailed into the rhythmic pulsation which underlies the entirety of the narrative. But before we pursue that metaphysically tenuous strand, let us look at the physical manifestations Mrs. Dalloway exhibits, which may be patently unambiguous even to the least careful eyes and minds. It is a curious and very interesting segment where she, unbeknownst to herself, emphatically continues the flow that has been pulsating and is derived from none other than the aeroplane and what caused the concentric circles around it to form. She merely echoes what the previous characters manifested subconsciously and verbally, "What are they looking at?" The transition, this affirms, that seems to have taken place is merely the prolongation of the thought process that has been in force since the inception of the concretion of the mystery, hearkening back to the figure in the car and to the aeroplane and what it signifies, and ultimately iterated and defined by Mr. Bentley. As it is, she threatens to become another mouthpiece for the ineffable mystery that is concentrically transmitted and amplified by the minds who happen to be around it.<sup>6</sup> But the introduction of the maid

---

<sup>6</sup> The diffusive relationship that seems to widen and shrink according to the state of the personae's minds reflects the idea of the "envelope" and "halo" Woolf espoused when she



changes the tone and inserts an hiatus between the previous episodes and the current narrative segment, albeit not a completely unbridgeable one, for what is to transpire is more like an interlude and narrativistically more homogeneous than otherwise.

What immediately coalesces in the wake of the initial interjection is an idiosyncratic realm mainly characterized and delineated by the intuitive reaction to whatever is beckoning and beckons from the externality and reaches into her deepest psyche. Once the external recognition, that of whatever is transpiring in the field and outside the realm of the protagonist's private realm, is made, she indulges in the sensations that well up from the depth of her heart, which however does not necessarily exclude the tactile sensations that dominate the present that is continuous with the externality that lies within and without the window, which happens to be a demarcator for the boundaries of the two realms. The predominant sensation that is foregrounded at the moment is the coolness of the vault-like sphere where Mrs. Dalloway apparently imagines herself to be in, which, without any undue stretch of imagination can be connected to the desolation, or the sense of being left behind, by the receding aeroplane, albeit the physical disappearance thereof may not be recognizable to the introspective phase of the mind she is in at the moment, but the effulgence that hovers over the crowd and the sphere that engulfs the inorganic and organic lives that inhabit the narrative world is tangibly there even within the realm of Mrs. Dalloway, including her private innerscape overlapping with the heart and mind of whatever perceives the external objects from the center of the percipient mind that is identified with our protagonist at the moment. It is, therefore, a mirroring image and sensation of whatever is taking place outside and over and in the field that is occurring within the mind and heart of Mrs. Dalloway as she wanders around in her inner self, trying to determine the feeling that dominates and dictates the domestic mood at this very juncture. The introduction of the maid, here identified as Lucy, is an intermediate device to connect the external occurrence with what is to be reflected inside the mind of our heroine, as what is first noticed by Mrs. Dalloway after the initial emptiness and a potential sense of desolation is "the swish of Lucy's skirt," which is autoreflexively spliced into the memories,

---

decided to adopt the modernist method to render the reality that is all around us, not only outside but, more importantly, inside us. All those minutiae and particles that dance in the conscious sunlight and constantly change their positions and relative valuations and significations, to the viewer and interpretive mind, are the ones that constitute the extension and the body of the mind that analyze and interpret and constitute the reality out there. The all the concentric circles and circles of people, who seem to join together and form to one corporeality and mental corps may be just a reflection of the extension, which is both the core and diaphanous constituent of the mind in the relative center of the narrative horizon. See an argument on the concept of halo and envelope in conjunction with Wool's modernist project, made by Joseph Allen Boone in his *Libidinal Currents: Sexuality and the Shaping of Modernism*, pp. 172-203.

vaguely and without any logical justification, with a verbalized effusion, “she felt like a nun who has left the world and feels fold round her the familiar veils and the response to old devotions.” The sensation evoked by the textualized line flows through her mind and out into the narrative scape, as if the environment in which she is located and the air she breathes is a perfect catalyst and conductive channel through which all relevant emotions, or what she feels is relevant and appropriate for the occasion, runs from one end to another. Once again, the element that is most conspicuous as she gives utterance to her emotions is the tactility and tantalizingly recursive trigger that hearkens back to the content that has been stored in her mind throughout her life. Whether she has direct experience of having been a nun, which is at least not suggested, or communing with such existence may not be relevant here but the emotional resonance the images associated with such presence evoke in the mind of the protagonist and the sensation the moment contributes in association with the receding aeroplane, regardless of the physical recognition thereof once again, and the reverberative communion and partaking of the emotional resonance such image evokes--all of the concomitant elements that concur at this juncture bring about a tactile sensation that is somehow homogeneously equated with the feeling that is exuded by the swish and the vault and the nun left deep in the medieval stone structure never to return. The deepening solipsistic danger is potentially so destabilizing for our heroine, at least psychologically, that the ensuing mundanity reified by the “click of the typewriter,” is a welcome sequitur that at least tries to bring the soul back from the edge of psychological despair. The realistic cue allows our heroine a respite to hold on to the platitudinous and yet tangible world where monotonous sanity rules such as the telephone calls and messages left on the pad specifically for her. The way (and the result thereof) even those mundane reifications are turned into figurative agents and impetus for Mrs. Dalloway to process what is transpiring inside her heart and mind is both transformative and familiar. She is in a phase where she needs to associate the present and what it contains with what her life stands for and signifies, since its beginning, consciously speaking, since her childhood when she has some recollections of her surroundings until the present, inclusive of what intervened and accumulated in the process, and connects it with what the very present suggests to her on a figurative and metaphysical level. Anything that congeals in her mind based on the physical present is a web of images and imageries that seems to be impacted by something profound and yet somehow in the midst of a rushing process as she immediately and deliberately tries to find their corresponding sensations and memories deep inside her psyche, a process in which she cannot help but resort to something vaguely familiar not only to herself but also to the reader as well. The tree of life and the flowers of darkness, etc.-- they try to develop into something magnificence and yet on their way to full

potential, or the potential that is initially conceived by the fertile mind of Mrs. Dalloway, they are constantly diverted into a figural efflorescence that is trite and perhaps have been repeated many times before. The sudden and vague suspicion makes the readerly mind wonder if the protagonist is also merely tracing the imaginative trajectory he is tracing. And with the realization the timbre of the narrative tone definitely turns trivial and the protagonist's mind fortuitously corroborates it as she muses about repayment for the servant and others, which at least partially, and increasingly so, threatens to sound literal.

The mundane imageries and references made to the clicking of the typewriter and the whistle that is being heard and registered by the meditative mind of Mrs. Dalloway are both reminders of the external world that exists outside her mind but also a door through which she can explore multifarious and variegated imaginative world that is potentially waiting to be developed into its full fruition inside her mind. They could function as a cue to trigger an unlimited figurative images which the imaginative mind of Mrs. Dalloway could countless multiply and transform into something beautiful and increasingly profound and meaningful, albeit remaining and limited to the private domain in which her increasingly solipsistic psyche attempts to indulge. The physical touch, or contact with, the pad, on which the message intended specifically for her is inscribed, unleashes a reverie that is both arcanelly nuanced and inchoately rife with significances, and the act of tactile contact with the material object both directs her mind to delve even deeper inside her mind and make reference to the significations that may perhaps lie external to her own mind. How apt, then, to allow a development of a signifiatory image that is vaguely familiar and then at the same time fresh, "moments like this are buds on the tree of life, flowers of darkness they are." Diachronic and synchronic signifiatory dilation the remark allows to occur immediately triggers multi-dimensional memories inside the depth of the reader's psyche as well and they simultaneously develop into rings of figural and literal coalescences, which remain perhaps residually in the mind of the retentive mind, waiting to be reawakened later in the course of narrative development. But as soon as the multi-signifiatory imageries had sunk in the mind of the retentive readerly mind, or even sooner than the act had run its full course, the narrative consciousness that is in the center of the focus indulges in free associative play on the concept of payment and repayment, which she thinks is due for her helpmate and the maid, who has been the cause of the physical reminders that have been registered and allowed to function to remind our protagonist to turn her attention simultaneously to inner and outer realms that may or may not coincide with her psyche. The dubiety or the dithering narrative potential that opens up for her mind is seized and momentarily turned into a blessing that fortuitously befalls her at this particular moment,

and for a mind and heart as sensitive as hers only, and she does not let the occasion slip by without appreciating the moment of bliss and wallowing in the rare gift that has been thrown her way, “as if some lovely rose had blossomed for her eyes only.” This tendency to seize the blissful opportunity and turn it into her personal spiritual gain perhaps causes her to interpret the whole gamut of events and eventuality in the manner that is manifested in the narrative sequence, which reifies with a rhythmic intonation that sounds all but inevitable, or the concomitant rhythmic pulsations that carry the readerly mind with their inevitable and ineluctable evolution. The directionality, which dictates the narrative flow at this particular moment, however, is so forcefully unidirectional that each element that constitutes the blissful state she is stated as in threatens to reach an almost bathetic level with the mention of dogs and canaries, to which she is indebted and thankful for, and the fact her husband, to whom she expresses her profound gratitude, is combined with the incidence of such creatures both makes the juxtaposition appropriate and jarringly cacophonous that at the end when the readerly mind takes a breather and reflects back on the narrative components--each and every single one as a meaningful whole somewhat contributing to the narrative entirety and yet remaining distinct and potentially disjunctive --he realizes the comedic element that is surreptitiously inserted between the interstices of the textual bits may not necessarily be evident or foregrounded but nonetheless centrifugally apart from the rest while remaining integrally part of it.<sup>7</sup> The disparate elements, or the tendency to splice divergent nuances into the unidirectional flow of the narrative does not pose such disastrous or garishly jarring obstacle to the readerly comprehension or interpretation, however, as the flow that incorporates all the minds and thoughts that occur in the narrative horizon of the story involves infinitesimally disjunctive and bathetic combinations such as her indebtedness to her husband, the whistling maid or the act of whistling by her maid per se, and the subtle explanation of the inevitability of the act thereof, and the not so fortuitous occurrence of the whistling, as she rather

---

<sup>7</sup> The elements that cram the narrative space of the novel in action are so restlessly placed each from the other that they may as well destabilize a stasis that would be the norm and expected in a conventional and traditional work of the genre called novel. But in this work traditional expectations are so mercilessly overturned that the point Joan Douglas Peters makes may as well be justified in that the conventions that rule the novelistic genre, such as those that have been practiced for centuries, may as well be questioned and turned against themselves, as the authorial voice continually plays with the flowing minutiae of mental events and external vicissitudes that are in turn used as a starting point to destabilize themselves in an effort to capture and rebel against the stasis that might result from the equilibrium they could bring about. See on the argument of “the textual incorporation of literary parody into the language of the narrative on a level completely distinct from the narrational telling of the story itself,” more specifically the Bakhtinian concept applied to *Mrs. Dalloway* and developed by Peters in *Feminist Metafiction and the Evolution of the British Novel*, pp. 127-135.

matter-of-factly admits to herself that Lucy whistles all day long--the list, in other words, tries to fade into perfunctory non-importance ad infinitum when Mrs. Dalloway reverts to her own obsession with her private bliss and happiness, which after all wells out from deep within herself, perhaps for no particular reason at all but to trace the trajectory of her whimsical mind. After all, the ubiquitous sense of bliss is allowed to derive from, specifically and nonchalantly, the "secret deposit of exquisite moments," she ineluctably and privately enjoys at this moment in her life.

The disparate elements that jostle each other in the consciousness of the protagonist, or the mind that is in the narrative focus, somehow align themselves into a unison that coalesces as an amicable relationship between the two that prominently figure in the narrative horizon. Needless to say, Mrs. Dalloway is too bashful or undemonstrative to admit the naked emotionality that could have surfaced between the two, her and her maid, but rather she resorts to an abstruse and diaphanous admission, which is left to the readerly mind to interpret and reconstruct as a tangible and perceptible imagery that can be transmogrified into a sensible ingredient to be warmed into some concrete emotional seedling. The message, which is as abhorrent and anticlimactic at this juncture as she is brutally brought back to the sordid reality, which the lady mentioned on the note pad alone could evoke--but the fact that Lucy can invoke the same and identical sentiment and wrap it in a tone that is obviously sympathetic to what Mrs. Dalloway is undergoing is enough to induce a sentiment that is both old and heartfully encouraging. It is the sense of camaraderie and empathy that is desired most by Mrs. Dalloway, as she is suddenly confronted with the brutal force which the reality and the name of the lady mentioned personify and represent. In the mere interstice, which the dual and reciprocal repartees supply and fill in, occurs the mysterious and expansive emotional dithering and wandering where she is thrust into a precarious and yet decisive moment and in which she needs to choose to venture on a perilous journey, both emotional and figurative. Mrs. Dalloway would have cringed to take such a journey but she feels swept on by the energy and the circumstances that are most prominently intervened by the loyalty and the strong moral support identified and represented by what Lucy stands for and she epitomizes. By the time the whole gamut of the figural journey is over she has already put away the gilded sword, or the parasol, and after having handled it like a sacred weapon as a goddess might have been wont to, she replaces it in an umbrella stand and the reality pervaded by the loyalty and the understanding that has established itself due to the deepest "concord" felt within her soul and once again supplied by the sympathetic heart of the maid of the house...who conveniently reemerges upon the narrative surface at this juncture, and whereupon our

protagonist is seemingly within the external stasis where she would feel safe and at ease. However, that is not meant to be, as she is obsessed with the uncertain and jealous fear, which Lady Bruton unprovokedly evokes in her mind. Even the goddess' strong weapon, which she unfortunately has stashed away and parted from, could not save her from the nagging sense her nemesis by the barbaric name ineluctably engenders and suffuses her unsteadied heart with. The feverish and lonely heart seeks to find its correlative, which rather fortuitously bubbles up from the depth of her heart and which in fact is merely an echo of the passage she recognized some time ago through the shop window in the street of London, "Fear no more the heat o' the sun."<sup>8</sup> She cannot help but admit the influence or the effect the name and person of her antagonist has over her soul and psyche, and yet she somehow resists the nefarious implications of lady Bruton by transforming the "shiver" she experiences in her own person through a metaphor that is transmitted over the river and which is initially engendered by an oar as a rower rows it and generates waves over the medium he is skimming over, or rather the sentiment the protagonist is forced to invoke and allows to impinge upon herself is rendered in such a manner that it is transfigured into ripples that travel over the surface of the water and the air and the bodies that pullulate the space where she herself becomes a body that resonates with the same except that it is transmuted into, on a personal level, a "shiver." But she is compelled to transfigure the current experience into something distinctly her own, albeit inevitably shared by others as well, the kind that is occurring and being felt by her own person that is distinctly specific and yet homogeneous with the ripples and waves spreading out from the center; thus she "rocks" and yet she "shivers."

But the "shivers" she experiences are merely the result of the dreaded jealousy Mrs. Dalloway ineluctably feels at the audacious attempt on the part of Mrs. Bruton not to ask, or

---

<sup>8</sup> The thoughts and inchoate ideas that bubble up from the depth of the protagonist's mind may be linked to the labyrinthine intermediacies that could be refracted to impact on the matriarchal and patriarchal clashes and what the struggle between the two entails. It may be an interesting idea to put the conflict between the two domains or ideologies and let them overlap with the labyrinthine streets or peregrinations our heroine engages in while she lets her mind release to the textual surface all it contains at any given moment. However, the indeterminacy or the inchoate condition under which the mind works does not necessarily give rise to uncontrolled emotional upheavals or centrifugal thought processes that may or may not be identified with any of the phase of the protagonist as she encounters the external stimuli that assault her mind on the day she makes the psycho-somatic journey, but all the significations that coalesce around the mind of the protagonist may be interpreted, at least according to Jeannette Baxter, as an indeterminate and unnamable resistance to the ubiquitous patriarchal rule that prevailed all around Clarissa/Virginia Woolf. See "Case Studies in Reading 1" by Jeannette Baxter, pp. 85-81, collected in *The Modernism Handbook*, edited by Philip Tew and Alex Murray.

obtain permission in the first place from her to invite Mr. Dalloway for a party. The shivers, which Mrs. Dalloway herself may not have realized the provenance of initially perhaps grip her mind and force her to undergo a prolonged crisis in her suffering spiritual journey. The trauma that the audacious act of Mrs. Bruton leaves her in is such that Mrs. Dalloway cannot leave the emotional wavering behind and go on with her business, which is to get ready for the event that is planned for the evening. Rather, the invitation for the lunch becomes an invitation for reverie on the passage of time and aging, which leaves indelible marks on the face and body of Mrs. Bruton, for one, but which also reminds Mrs. Dalloway of the change in her aspects and physical appearances that are not flattering to her heavy heart and despondent psyche. In fact, the fear and the dread with which the passage of time is regarded are so foregrounded at this stage that it is transformed into an element that has the most impact on herself rather than on Mrs. Bruton. As the meditation on jealousy-cum-time continues it is the face and body that are being ravaged by time and the sentiment involved in the process which is most closely felt by the one who is meditating on them at this very moment. The poignancy which the meditation brings to the surface of the narrative is so keenly felt that the readerly mind is forced to sympathetically delve into the psychological drama that develops deep within the heart of our protagonist, who at this juncture is ever heading to the nadir of her emotions as she simultaneously denies the evil influence such petty jealousy the invitation of Mrs. Bruton aroused in her, and which she allows to become the driving force to bear upon herself as she tangibly feel the process of aging, in the midst of which she is apparently feels placed and her self being the main persona who is bearing the brunt of the devastating force, albeit that the effect thereof is obviously universal and the sentiment she harbors may be perfectly sharable with others of her compeers. But what is interesting and noteworthy here is that the exclusive sentiment jealousy has aroused renders her so monomaniacal and drives her ever deeper and deeper into her own solipsistic world, where she is the only and the most pitiable person that needs to be both self-pitied and universally regarded as such. The abrupt manner in which the aging process and the imageries which represent and typify it are developed is a telltale sign that the mind in the center of the fluid figuration is in a state of isolation and she is no way reaching out to the external world that seemingly surrounds her being can succor her from the desperate isolation she is in at the moment.<sup>9</sup> In isolation, therefore, the

---

<sup>9</sup> The dynamic relation between the external world and the psyche that lies in the center of the being in narrative focus plays an important role in *Mrs. Dalloway*. The endless significatory nuances and the minutiae and diaphanous meanings that impinge upon the readerly consciousness that are inevitably refracted and reflected by the consciousness in the center of the narrative ceaselessly give rise to a transmogrifying sense of being in the present and in the reality that are framed by the recursively

transmogrifying and yet piquant figurations flow from one phase to another and the readerly mind is best to follow the desultory and yet consistent divergence of images that well out of the mind of the narrator-cum-protagonist. Note how the concept of time is transmuted into a lapidary object and the idea of pulsating chronological progress is objectified as something irresistible and yet palpably analyzable, "Lady Bruton's face, as if it had been cut in impressive stone." Immobilizing and irrefutable a being as Lady Bruton may be, she is yet to be transfigured into a stony clock, which ticks away her time each passing moment. But the immovability of the stone into which the dial is etched, perhaps, is fused with a slice of her body, flesh and blood, that is ever being transgressed and invaded by the ravaging teeth of time. In a sense, the passage of time, or the effect of the process thereof, is rather insignificant, at the initial stage at least, but it is the agent which eventually delves deeper into your edifice and works against it and erodes and transforms it into something ever changing that matters in the long run. Or perhaps what the process effectuates is the transformation in the inner structure of one's being, as one loses springiness, round fleshy and desirable features of a woman's body, for instance, and the cruel passage of time sculpts it into an object with jagged and sharp edged skeletons, which no one desires and which most likely one abhors and shun from. With such a form no one is taken or intrigued to suddenly come face to face and hold his breath, in an "exquisite suspense," as if a diver gets ready to jump from a high precipice to plunge into the blue water that awaits him at the end of the infinitesimally short journey. That suspense, or rather the suspense-inducing corpulence, is the thing of the past for her and the likes of Mrs. Bruton, who not so mysteriously is the cause of the mental journey to which Mrs. Dalloway has been thrust due to the jealousy that bubbled up between the lines left on the notepad. The trajectory of her mind is seemingly intricate and unrelated to the initial cause found on the notepad; however, the flight of fancy it initiates in the mind of our protagonist is so relevant to what the narrativistic itinerary has been concerned with that the reader is both mesmerized and forced to find the continuous strands that tie the significational circles in a dramatic fashion as much as possible. But when the current imagery has run its full cycle the ease and the desire that manifest simultaneously with the gentle wrapping waves that await and engulf the body that slips into them are so vivid and wish-fulfilling that one could be forgiven to think that the resolution to the preceding turbulent and soliloquistic keening

---

incremental significations that arise from the interplay of the whole. In the seemingly abstract domain that hinges upon the phases of the mind in the narrative center at any given moment, issues of morality and social consciousness do arise, however, and constitute an important element in the narrative as pointed out by Linda Schermer Raphael. See an argument developed by the same in *Narrative Skepticism: Moral Agency and Representations of Consciousness in Fiction*, pp. 126-139.



about aging is a easeful death, an escape from the jealousy and the fears of mundane and inevitable outcomes of living and exiting in the world, “the waves which threaten to break, but only gently split their surface, roll and conceal and encrust as they just turn over the weeds with pearl.”

The intense and hectic imagination threatens to take our heroine to where she should not be plunged into. But at this very juncture a piece of reality-impacted image falls upon her, as well as reader’s, consciousness. When they both crave to be relieved of the heavy air that fills the narrative space and for the change that might take place, in direction and imaginative content that could ensue, the mind of Mrs. Dalloway is taken back to the darkness and solipsistic desultory wilderness, where the lugubrious imaginative winds blow and try to keep her penned in the perilous sentiment that had threatened to both drag her to the bottom of her sentimental incarceration and deny a valiant rebound, or the effort to travel back from the pit of despair to the joy that seems to be awaiting her at the end of the journey off the cliff. The reality that comes in the shape of “banisters” seems to buttress our heroin, psychologically, and support her into the sphere where she can be assured of solace and peace of mind. But even as she travels up and trudges on to the safety of her own private space, uncertainty creeps up and seizes her in the midst. She is suddenly seized with the sensation that she had untimely left the conviviality of the party where everyone else enjoyed each other’s company, and now once removed from them by the mere separation of the thin door, which divides her from the rest both in distance and mood, she feels thrown out into the lugubrious terrain where she has to bear all the psychological pains and loneliness that assault her mercilessly. The faces and the memories of the joy that pertains to the party that is seemingly still going on in the next-door rush to her mind and make her feel all the more isolated, as she keenly senses that she does not by any means belong to the conviviality that is theirs as opposed to the loneliness and separation that is uniquely her own. The memory then becomes a torturing agent as she putatively climbs the stairs and onto her room of her own. It plunges her into the depth of the past that has no limit as to the events and people that had some impact on her psyche and she feels them while simultaneously she is racked with the sense of her alienation from them all the more because they feel so near to her even as she physically attempts to distance herself from the present joy that is occurring in the neighboring room, which is ironically within reach. Even the setup of the bright June morning with full of sunlight and the promise of an entertaining and fulfilling evening coming within hours somewhat leaves her despondent for the brightness and the auspicious day merely portends, to the mind racked with the faces and the memories jostling and crowding into her mind, more

alienation and senseless solitude that inalienably grab her mind wherever she goes. The rose petals that flutter outside and within reach are another reminder that the joy and promise of the day that exist outside her, and separate from her, merely enhance the sense of loneliness because she now has this acute sense of being outside the party that pertains to others, to those who are over and beyond the door and within her memory and yet distinct and separated from her being. The “blinds flapping,” and the “dogs barking” also function in the same manner as they indicate, for her mind is keenly aware and perceptive of what is transpiring outside her self, the reality with its springiness and joy and life that do not comingle with her soul but merely brush by, perhaps, and remind her of the unattainability of the convivial communality that can be achieved through reaching out and being part of them, which unfortunately is not her lot. The sense of being left out of all the goings-on of life leaves her “shrivelled, aged, breastless.” The hopelessness that assaults her at this moment is so overwhelming that she not only distances herself from the youth and what it stands for and the memories of her younger days when she used to enjoy the fresh air and companionship of her youthful friends, who still linger in her mind and impact her so much after so many years of physical separation, but projects herself into the temporal spatiality where she is already feeling sterility of an old age and asexuality and where she imagines to be, and is, no longer fertile and productive. She is an existence that no longer functions properly, or in the way she thought she would when she had aspirations and wild longings in her youth, those long-gone days when she cavorted and enjoyed the saline air and dove and jumped to her heart’s content regardless of what other might say, regardless of norms and ostentatious customs which might have prohibited her from engaging in what she heartily desired. The blackest of despair engulfs her and almost threatens to plunge her into the abyss of inchoate disorder, into commission of a desperate act when the readerly consciousness fortunately notices the (true) derivation of the current imaginative desolation. Despite her denial and her effort to dismiss the influence of Lady Bruton over her husband and herself, she has been unable to leave her thought behind and throw the idea of and what Lady Bruton represents in her mind in the dust heap of the momentary past. On the contrary, her image and what she stands for still fills her mind and leaves her incapacitated insofar as her judgment is concerned, to the degree that the jealousy, which is the ultimate outcome of her struggle to eliminate the influence of Lady Bruton, or rather what the latter’s invitation for dinner to her husband has occasioned, still smolders in the depth of her mind and prevents her from coming out of the dangerous suicidal frame of mine she is in as she heads to her room upstairs.

The loneliness that lingers as she climbs up the stairs and arrives in her room does not vanish, rather it spreads and increases the sense of desolation, egging her on to dream of situations where she is more isolated than others and in ways that are indescribably distant and disconnected from everything else that could succor her from the current despondence out of which she has no way of climbing out at this point. The images that arise are all related to the lugubrious solitary adventure into nothingness, or rather where nothing could lend her a supporting hand, as she struggles to come out of the blackest hole of despair, a situation which renders her all the more vulnerable to desolation and hopelessly disoriented. The first one that thrusts out of the murky inchoate ideas that overwhelm our heroine is an image of a nun who is withdrawn from the world and into a tower where she has no chance of making any contact with the outside world, or a child who is left alone in a situation where disoriented and guideless she has no hope of establishing any friendly and morally encouraging contact with her friends or parents. As the protagonist abruptly recognizes the “bathroom,” which, instead of looming hopefully out of the blackest of despair and abyss, is rather matter-of-factly thrust to her and reader’s conscious realm, as if to emphasize the physicality and the tangible location that defines her and renders her objectively surrounded and simultaneously shunned by all the others that might intervene between herself and anything else that could encourage her to relieve herself of the oppressive despondency, which oozes out of the air that permeates the narrative horizon at this juncture, she identifies a “green linoleum and a tap dripping,” a veritable image of desiccated and sterile inhuman presence that rings so hollow in the psychological incarceration that may as well be coalescing within the heart of our protagonist. The auditory echo that reverberates from the “dripping tap” rings ever so emphatically that it brings home the sense of solitude and solitariness, which has been increasing as she climbed up the stairs—stairs which in fact could separate her from the party that could have brought respite to the current misery and self-pity our protagonist is drowning herself in. The bathroom, and the images of the linoleum and the dripping tap coincide with emptiness and desolation, which is identified with and transfigured into the denudation of her soul and self, as she must disrobe and reminds herself of the artificial separation from the warmth and protection a mere apparel she happens to be wearing provides, which is precarious, at least, and not sufficient, at most. The condition of being nothing and nothingness, which is herself, and the precariously protected self, which the fortuitous attire lends her is further pronounced as she continuously denudes herself by removing what she ornamentally wears at the moment, albeit the descriptive details that relate to the disrobement is sketchy and only symbolic as usual,

foregrounding further the vulnerability the protagonist keenly feels about herself as she faces the hostile environment that constantly antagonize her against all that potentially surrounds her being with even modicum warmth. In fact, the series of disrobement is over as soon as she “laid her yellow hat on the bed” and the same imagery, at least in tone, as it relates to her sense of desolation and vulnerability is continued with the observation of the “narrower and narrower bed” and the half burnt candle, which is linked to Baron Marbot’s *Memoirs*. As soon as the physicality of the bed is introduced, with its particular feature of narrowness and its ever narrowing tendency, reflecting the condition of the sleeper who occupies it, the theme of sterility and old age recurs and the reader is thrust back to the lamentation our heroine indulged in only a few seconds before, perhaps psychologically longer time ago. But this time, the combination with the candle, which is directly linked to the idea of life and the life being consumed and lived vigorously, appears to make the idea of protagonist’s desolation rather suspect, as she is associated with someone who flippantly engages in an entertainment that is light-hearted or even adolescent such as reading a memoir—a voyeuristic venture that is conducted in a bedroom, which almost vitiates the incremental tragic force the previous circumstances have seemed to be building up. The insertion of new and careless bits of information concerning the private affair of the protagonist threatens to shed light on the “true” state of the heroine’s mind, which in turn, figuratively speaking, destroy and renew the corpus of ideas the readerly mind has formed about Mrs. Dalloway. The fact that the mind of heroine is unduly attached to the memoir makes the reader doubly wonder why the protagonist is, albeit momentarily, so obsessed about the book that seems to have been casually introduced to the narrative. As it turns out, her taking up the book, the act thereof, is related to the psychological issue she developed after childbirth and her idea of virginity that are both of them deeply implicated in the idea of her selfhood. The momentary freedom from the binding issue of loneliness and vulnerability to hopeless desolation she suffers from in her own mind’s prison is turned on its head and she is once again confronted with the issue of girlhood, virginity and the loss and preservation thereof, as she recalls the physical and sexual acts with the person who seems to be most concerned with and who is none other than her husband, the person who provided the *Memoirs* that made her so enthralled with the idea of burying herself in the world referenced and framed by the magical world and word Moscow. As she recalls the dilemma and the vicissitudes that repeat themselves in her mind, she is encumbered and distracted by the cold and thin and flapping sheet that perhaps represents all the sweat and flesh contact with her husband’s flesh and body and the child birth and the innocent girlhood that may be revisited by way of the

flapping curtains and the windows to the beach and the fresh breeze stirred up by the morning air and the plunge and splash, all those memories associated with Bourton.<sup>10</sup> But how coy and bashful our heroine remains all through the series of recollections she indulges in, albeit she professedly engages in the thought process in the privacy of her recollective soul and the room of her own, “Lovely in girlhood, suddenly there came a moment—for example on the river beneath the woods at Clieveden—when, through some contraction of this cold spirit, she had failed him.”

The contraction and ecstasy, neither of them succeeds to bring the man and woman to the unity and the purpose for which they are primordially made for each other. That may be part of the reason why Mrs. Dalloway, or rather Clarissa, cannot help but be coy and bashful whenever she imagines herself to be in a situation where she is required to fulfill what a woman is supposed to, to provide a man she is supposed to care for with the passion and fleshly desire and consummation. But she could not and cannot, for her mind is somewhere else when it is needed to be consummately involved with the heart and mind of the other. Or perhaps she has the heart and mind to give what her husband desires, but it is the essential secret only a dedicatedly caring woman can give to the other, something that he or she lacks and cannot self-generate to their complete satisfaction. Her mind is filled with the metaphoric substitute that can express and represent the state where she is one but not the other or even somebody else who is incapable of granting a kind of emotional stasis and pleasures that a man craves and truly seeks in search of the union, which only those full-hearted unadulterated emotions give rise to and underlie. Her mind's attempt to touch the surface of the forbidden, unachievable tension and plosive quivering, not surprisingly, is only indirectly and euphemistically developed in her mind when she diversionally and circularly describes the state where she cannot help but unfortunately lack the essential emotions that make the ultimate and consummate union possible. Her way of bringing it out, or

---

<sup>10</sup> The disjunctive contradictory phases of Clarissa's mind here manifested could be translated into her conflict that takes place on the level of homosexuality and heterosexuality. Indeed, it may be an intriguing idea to seize the confrontation coalescing around the idea of the two phases of her sexuality and place it with the divergent timeframes that arise with the introduction of the present and past and the overlapping and simultaneous presence of the both, or at least characteristic chronological positions derived from them, the function of which prominently supplied by the memory of the protagonist in focus. The reading of the predictability and the preconditioned state in which the personae in the narrative reside from the inception of the narrative, as explicated by Annamarie Jagose in her *Inconsequence: Lesbian Representation and the Logic of Sexual Sequence*, could be meaningfully impacted upon the conflicts to produce nuanced significations that incessantly unfold in the narrative horizon of *Mrs. Dalloway*. See the argument developed in the essay by Jagose on pp. 77-86.

attempt to come closest to it is the sentiment expressed when she gives rise to the utterance, both mysterious and furtively emotional, “something warm which broke up surfaces and rippled the cold contact of man and woman, or of women together,” which is felt within almost graspable and tangible distance and which she savors as something she could only dream of. But even in that mysterious phase lies the seed of her failure to come face to face with the perfect union with her husband, both physically and emotionally. She, rather honestly with her true sentiment over sexuality and mutual attraction, has uncertain and irresistible attraction to someone of the same sex, which might or might not override the love and attraction she should be feeling exclusively toward her husband. The warmth and fleshly ecstatic pleasure that is made possible by the unconditional exuberance of emotional outburst is not only derived from her sentiment and duty she feels she owes to her husband but from an unconditional and supra-rational emotions she feels toward someone she met and had time together in her youth. Whose name that is yet to be announced incessantly interferes with the gushing emotionality, which she should be experiencing whenever she attempted to consummate her “love” and passion with her husband. Unaware of its attraction and value to her primordial womanhood and reflexive animality, she is subconsciously, however, aware of the ever-present influence that special person holds over her psychological and entire being. She resists, perhaps, and yet there is, admittedly, irresistible attraction that draws her and her psyche to someone, some presence, that has persisted throughout her life since she met her in the past. Now is the time that she has to bring the emotions and the person they are attached to despite the presence of her husband who she thinks should supersede the mysterious and irresistibly attractive one that finally pushes through the liminal surface to the textual horizon. The charm and the force to which she invariably yields can be described in multi-faceted forms and phases. Our heroine dithers and transfigures and metaphorizes the emotions that well out of the depth of her psyche. The ensuing lines that push through the liminal wall are her attempt, or rather the process in which she inevitably loses to the charm and forces that turn out to be ubiquitously and indomitably attached to the presence and the person of her youthful love, and who happens to be of her own sex. The mind of our heroine undergoes transmogrifyingly numerous phases in which it gives rise to various and valiant attempt to suppress and indulge in secret emotions that are tied to and developed into very private images texturized and metaphorized in the narrative horizon. Fortunately for the reader, the secret depth of our heroine and other characters is fathomable, not necessarily all the time, but whenever and wherever the mind in control of the narrative flow allows the reader to peek into and explore them and perhaps expound them in the manner that makes gestaltic sense of the narrative contingencies that after all contributes to the narrative

entirety. Thus, the mind in action in the narrative horizon continues to indulge in private thoughts and the readerly mind in pursuit, or accompanying her, incessantly is tasked to make the best of the situationality that coalesces thereupon.

#### Works Referenced

- Batchelor, John. *Virginia Woolf: The Major Novels*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Boone, Joseph Allen. *Libidinal Currents: Sexuality and the Shaping of Modernism*. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- Flora, Luísa and Maria Cândida Zamith, eds. *Virginia Woolf: Three Centenary Celebrations*. Porto, Portugal: University of Porto, 2007.
- Freedman, Ralph, ed. *Virginia Woolf: Revaluation and Continuity, a Collection of Essays*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1980.
- Jackson, Tony E. *The Subject of Modernism: Narrative Alterations in the Fiction of Eliot, Conrad, Woolf, and Joyce*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1998.
- Jagose, Annamarie. *Inconsequence: Lesbian Representation and the Logic of Sexual Sequence*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2002.
- Pawlowski, Merry M. *Virginia Woolf and Fascism: Resisting the Dictators' Seduction*. Basingstoke, England: Palgrave, 2001.
- Peters, Joan Douglas. *Feminist Metafiction and the Evolution of the British Novel*. Gainesville, Florida: University Press of Florida, 2002.
- Raphael, Linda Schermer. *Narrative Skepticism: Moral Agency and Representations of Consciousness in Fiction*. Danvers, Massachusetts: Rosemont Publishing, 2001.
- Tew, Philip and Alex Murray, eds. *The Modernism Handbook*. London: Continuum, 2009.

Mrs. Dalloway: 意識の交錯と表層下における signification の生成プロセス

Virginia Woolf の Mrs. Dalloway では登場人物の意識下にあたかも”tunnel”を掘って自由自在にそれぞれの意識の流れを描写することが可能になっているということができると思うが、この論文ではそのプロセスをその流れに沿うようにたどりそれぞれの人物の表層下

にある絶えず変化し続ける *signification* を追及するとともに、そのプロセスから見えてくる *meta-voice* の存在にも迫っていく。