

## Accumulation of Self in Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway

Gulrukh Raees<sup>1</sup>, Samina Akhtar<sup>2\*</sup>

### Abstract

*This critical engagement analyses the journey of self-completion that Clarissa and Septimus went through. The study focuses on two aspects: Firstly, the identity crisis these characters went through in the process of individuation—secondly, the inner working of their minds and its implications on routine activities that they perform. Virginia Woolf's characters are complex and mind-boggling. They can be seen in a constant struggle between their desire for identity formation and longing to escape from the unforgiving substances of regular day to day existence. In the novel Mrs. Dalloway; the two protagonists Mrs. Clarissa Dalloway and Mr Septimus Warren Smith, are incessantly involved in outer fights and inner struggles. According to Mikhael Bakhtin, there are no fixed boundaries within which individuals interact with each other. Their exterior world shapes the inner world of individuals and thus connects the inner hidden self with everyone and everything that an individual come across in his/her life. The effect of 'others' on a unique individual self is timeless and manifests itself in everything that an individual does throughout his/her life. The researchers used the theory of dialogical self by Mikhael Bakhtin as a research methodology and have critically interpreted the text of Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway.*

**Keywords:** Mrs. Dalloway; Individuation; Identity; Mikhael Bakhtin; Self-actualization.

Faculty member, Apple Green Public School, Muscat, Oman.

Email: [gulrukh@agpsoman.com](mailto:gulrukh@agpsoman.com)

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, Govt. College for Women, Peshawar, Pakistan.

\* Corresponding Author, Email: [samina.akhtar@sjtu.edu.cn](mailto:samina.akhtar@sjtu.edu.cn)

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## Introduction

Mikhail Bakhtin's<sup>i</sup> keen interest in the world of words is crucial to understanding the text of any novel, and particularly Virginia Woolf's<sup>ii</sup> novels as she deals with the psychological discourse between characters in her novels rather than simple discourse. The concept of stream of consciousness<sup>iii</sup> introduced by Joyce, Proust, and mastered by Woolf bears a resemblance to Bakhtin's philosophy of unfinzability. The theory of unfinzability states that nothing is final and fully known to people in this world. It means that the individual self cannot be known, understood, and described utterly. Moreover, personal identity changes with time; hence nothing is final, whole, and complete. In *Mrs. Dalloway* all the characters appear as incomplete individuals struggling to find their real selves. They are going through inner struggles, contemplating, admiring, disapproving, and regretting their past decisions. Woolf has presented her characters, not as some strange beings; aliens to the real world but instead she tries to communicate to her readers that her every character resides among her readers with all their emotions, feelings, struggles, insecurities, and achievements in the real world. Readers may find Septimus, Rezia, Clarissa, Richard, and Sally Seton in real life. It is this connectedness that the characters and readers of the novel and Woolf herself become the individual parts of the whole.

In *Mrs. Dalloway* one can see the personalities of the characters from different perspectives such as from their views about themselves and what others think of them, and what these characters think of others. In this context, Clarissa personality for Peter has always been one that is out of his reach and about whom he can dream and yearn to get. Peter idealizes Clarissa as the epitome of beauty and grace. On the other hand, for Richard, she was a simple housewife indulged in trivial matters all the time, and he finds himself unable to express his love for her. For the rest of the world, she is the perfect hostess who loves to throw parties. In her own eyes, she is a depressed and lonely woman who is always fighting an inner war between her real identity and the fake persona she has created in front of the world.

Similarly, all other characters are analyzed in the light of the architectonic model of the human psyche presented by Bakhtin. There is a stark contrast between how people perceive themselves and how 'others' perceive them. For identity formation, both these perceptions need to find common ground and can achieve the balance due to which their mutual existence can be possible. In the case of Septimus, this balance is missing; therefore, he ended up taking his own life. After studying the main theories of Bakhtin, one can notice the interrelatedness between Bakhtin's concepts of dialogism<sup>iv</sup>, the concept of being, aesthetics, and ethics are described by Bakhtin in his work *Towards a Philosophy of the Act* (1993). Bakhtin provided the framework of his work by dividing it into four sections, including the first part about the actual worldly experiences and not the imaginative or fictional world. The other three parts deal with "the ethics of artistic creations" "ethics of politics", and religion respectively (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 54). To explain the contribution of an individual in the realization of a unique being, Bakhtin explains his thoughts in these words: "It is in relation to the whole actual unity that my unique thought arises from my unique place in Being" (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 41).

An individual can contribute in three ways in the process of actualization of the unique being. First of all, an individual participates both actively and passively in this process. Secondly, the participation of an individual depends on his/her performed deeds and not merely on perceived thoughts or intentions. Lastly, the actual and real self needs its freedom to actualize its uniqueness. In this way keeping in mind all these three aspects every person participates in making a whole out of the unique experiences of individuals and bringing them in the circle of unity providing them with their unique places in the ultimate reality of being. In *Towards a Philosophy of the Act* (1993), Bakhtin has introduced the concept of "architectonic" model of the human psychic mind which comprises of "I-for-myself", "I-for-the-other", and "other-for-me" (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 41-43).

## Literature Review

Virginia Woolf is genuinely considered a trailblazer and modern fiction writer. She has been credited as the pioneer of the technique of stream of consciousness and psychological novels alongside other contemporaries James Joyce and Joseph Conrad. Woolf did not confine herself to some predefined principles of fiction writing. She unequivocally trusts that composition must be unconstrained and characters should be introduced realistically. Her novels are apparently not extraordinary; they narrate commonplace stories with banal settings, yet Woolf with her creative dominance makes these settings phenomenal.

In 1900 Woolf began composing professionally; however, her first work for publication was *Haworth* (1904). This work was published anonymously, and it was an account of Woolf's visit to the Bronte family home at Haworth. Her first novel was *The Voyage Out* (1915), at first titled *Melymbrosia*. This work was formed amid the time when Woolf was specifically experiencing a serious episode of depression. Along these lines, this novel bears the self-portraying aspects of Woolf's own identity. In 1919 another novel titled *Night and Day* was published, which deals with the concepts of relationships, love, happiness and success. In this novel, Woolf refers to many instances to William Shakespeare's play *As You Like It*. Woolf's third novel, *Jacob's Room* (1922), is chiefly a character analysis and is devoid of plot and structure. The story of the protagonist Jacob is told from the perspectives of different women in his life, and this novel varies a great deal from her first two novels in terms of style and narration.

*Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) is the best example of Woolf's technique of stream of Consciousness. This novel narrates the story of one single day in June; however, in flashbacks, the reader traversed numerous years. *To The Lighthouse* (1927) is considered as one of the most obscure and experimental works of Woolf. The whole action of the novel takes place in the minds of the characters, and just two days story is displayed to the reader, yet these two days are ten years separated. Half of the book is around one single afternoon, and a couple of dozen pages convey the ten years record of the novel.

*Orlando* (1928) most celebrated work of Woolf is the story of a young poet who mysteriously changes his sex from man to woman and then lives for three centuries without maturing. Commentators consider this novel as a picture of Woolf's sweetheart Vita Sackville-West. In this novel, Woolf derides the techniques used by historical biographers. *The Waves* (1931) is an account loaded with soliloquies of six characters of the novel: Bernard, Susan, Rhoda, Neville, Jinny, and Louis. There is likewise a seventh character Percival, yet he never talks, and readers know him from the speeches of different characters as they continually reflect upon Percival all through the novel. Woolf's biographical work: *Flush: A Biography* (1933) is written from a dog's point of view. Her inspiration for this work was the play "The Barretts of Wimpole Street" by Rudolf Besier. *Between the Acts* (1941) is the last work of Woolf, and it sums up Woolf's concerns and obsessions: her sexual orientations, treatment of life, time, and death, and her tendency towards the transformation of life through art. This novel is written in a lyrical form not only in feeling but in style.

Woolf's contributions to the English language and literature are immeasurable and every single piece of her writing is a masterpiece in its own way, but the main focus of this study is her novel, *Mrs. Dalloway*. Woolf is a very much interpreted creator, and her books have been deciphered in more than fifty languages. Her commitment to English literature is limitless, and each, and every bit of her written work is a perfect work of art in its own particular manner however the fundamental concentration of this study is her novel, *Mrs. Dalloway*.

The researchers would like to specify some of the recent research works on *Mrs. Dalloway* and how this study is different and unique from previous research. Linda S. Raphael has utilized narrative skepticism as a part of her study in her work "Narrative Skepticism: Moral Agency and Representation of Consciousness in Fiction" (2001). In her work, she contends that with a specific end goal to portray the stories of the characters, author dive deep down in their minds thus creating skepticism. Some researchers have interpreted *Mrs. Dalloway* from a purely feminist perspective, for example, Lisa Tyler paper "The Loss of Roses: Mother-Daughter Myth and Relationship between women in *Mrs. Dalloway*", and Kathy Mezei work titled "Ambiguous Discourse: Feminist Narratology and British Women Writers", are few of the feminist interpretation of *Mrs. Dalloway*. In Amy C. Smith's work "Loving Maidens and Patriarchal Mothers: Revisions of the Homeric Hymn

Demeter and Cymbeline in *Mrs. Dalloway*" (2011), he analyses *Mrs. Dalloway* as Greek Mythology, Fictional Characters and Mythological figures. Qiuxia Li discusses *Mrs. Dalloway* from a Freudian perspective in his research paper titled "A Study of *Mrs. Dalloway* From the Perspective of Freud's Theory of Thanatos" (2011), and Jane Lilienfeld commented on *Mrs. Dalloway* in her work "Success in Circuit Lies: Editing the war in "*Mrs. Dalloway*" (2009), as post-war written novel thus focusing on war-related content in the novel. However, the present research is different and new in that the researchers have applied Bakhtin's philosophy as a research tool in order to comprehend the polyphonic interpretation of the novel *Mrs. Dalloway*.

### **Polyphony in *Mrs. Dalloway***

Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, the one-day story of a woman who is arranging a gathering at home is the novel that reveals insight into the centrality of little and trifling minutes in a man's life. This monotonous day-by-day life routine is constantly underestimated; however, the genuine importance of trial of human personality and persistence is in playing out these little everyday undertakings. Woolf has kept this novel straightforward, nothing unprecedented is occurring in it, yet it gives the logic of life spreading over eras and moving from past to present and future all on the single page of the novel once in a while even in a solitary line. This is the authority of her specialty for which critics revered her to such an extent.

The idea of polyphony is elaborated in Bakhtin's work *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981), originally propounded in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1984). Polyphony literally means "multi voices" or multiple meanings. Woolf uncovered through her works the various voices of her characters as well as their states of mind to life, each other, and sometimes inserting her own commentary either commenting on her characters' actions or merging within the voices of her characters. Every single line of *Mrs. Dalloway* is loaded with polyphony. Readers can hear various voices of Clarissa through her mind and imagination and of Septimus' through his disease.

Mikhail Bakhtin, in his work *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics* (1984), demonstrates that his focus shifted from philosophy towards discourse/dialogue. *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Art* was translated into English and distributed in the West, Bakhtin included a chapter on the idea of "carnival" and the book was distributed with the somewhat unique title, *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*. As indicated by Bakhtin, the carnival is the setting in which particular individual voices are listened to, prosper and interact together. The carnival makes the "threshold" circumstances where general traditions are broken or turned around, and genuine discourse becomes conceivable. The concept of a carnival was Bakhtin's method for depicting Dostoevsky's polyphonic style: every individual character is firmly characterized and, in the meantime, the reader witnesses the basic impact of every character upon the other. That is to say, every person hears the voices of others, and each inescapably shapes the character of the other.

It is in this work that Bakhtin presents the three vital ideas. In the first place, that individual can be comprehended, known, and judged; however, as a general rule, it is impractical to comprehend, concluded or name individuals totally. He called this idea unfinalizable self. As indicated by the idea of unfinazibility, there exist the likelihood that a man can change. An individual is never completely uncovered or known in this world. This idea has solid roots in religion since for the most part religions accentuate the significance of the individual's particular personality and the concealed soul. The second hypothesis proposed by Bakhtin states that an individual's voice is impacted by others and cannot be deciphered in confinement. Bakhtin's philosophy greatly respects the notion of others influenced on self, and interestingly it asserts that others do not merely influence an individual in terms of how a person comes to be but also how a person thinks and sees himself. The most important among these three theories is the concept of "Multiplicity of Voices," he found in Dostoevsky's work, and Bakhtin named it Polyphony. This very idea of polyphony is related to the concept of unfinazibility and self to others since this notion that individuals are not finalized and completely known leads to polyphony. Furthermore, the idea that the self is influenced by others and must not be taken in isolation provides such complexity to the concept of polyphony which is indeed difficult to describe.

Shannon Forbes, in her article "Equating performance with identity: the failure of Clarissa Dalloway's Victorian "Self" in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*" (2005), declares that in the character

of Clarissa Woolf has exhibited “two conflicting formations of identity.” She illustrates that “Victorians celebrated the idea that the subject was stable, whole, and unified,” and that any deviation from this “real, moral, earnest and public” self was altogether problematic. Forbes trusts Woolf’s writing mirrors this origination and recommends that Clarissa clutches her part as Mrs. Richard Dalloway since it is “the only identity she has, yet in the meantime detests this part in light of how it restricts her and —functions as just a shallow and inadequate substitute for the self she covets” (Forbes, 2005, p. 39). This contention by Forbes can be discredited on the premise of Bakhtin’s investigation of the content of *Mrs. Dalloway* as it is apparent that Woolf never attempted to hate this domestic role of Mrs. Richard Dalloway. The attention to private consciousness, so obvious in the writing style of *Mrs. Dalloway*, causes numerous researchers, among them Ban Wang, to start their contentions about personality in the novel from a position that condemns the content’s preoccupation with private consciousness which, Wang proposes:

“Presupposes an outmoded notion of the subject that is believed to be autonomous, self-contained, and fully conscious of it and which is assumed to be the source of meaning and thought, independent of social structure, discourse, and systems of signification —a notion of the subject which has been stripped of its validity by contemporary critical discourse” (Wang, 1992, p.177).

In his article 'on the run: "Crisis of Identity in *Mrs. Dalloway*"', Wang emphasizes that private consciousness is not all that private and intimate; that without a doubt, the consciousness/subjectivity/identity of the characters is built by dialect/language and sign frameworks and the symbolic order. It is significant to consider the foundation of identity in connection to symbolic and social orders or ideologies/ philosophies. Nevertheless, the researcher additionally tries to attest through this study that to comprehend the connection between an individual belief system and social order; consideration should likewise be given to private consciousness.

Virginia Woolf perceived, and she tries to depict that how personality development/ identity construction relies upon both the private world and outer environment. Most likely, she was profoundly worried about women’s rights and opportunities. Clarissa is definitely mindful of her “weapon less state (she couldn’t acquire a penny) as an unskilled, fifty-year-old woman in 1920s England” (169). Woolf perceived that English woman in her time often played roles inside their social orders, performing, as in front of an audience/as on stage, scripts composed and directed by a patriarchal society. Claudia Barnett notes in her article “*Mrs. Dalloway* and Performance Theory,” (2002) that in Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse*, *A Room of One’s Own*, and in her play *Freshwater*, this issue is a central theme. Barnett underscores Clarissa’s pretending in *Mrs. Dalloway*, as “the immaculate hostess yet widens the way we may take a look at this performativity” (Barnett, 2002, p. 3-5), as Clarissa’s approach to express herself artistically. Like Barnett, Jacob Littleton proposes in his article *Mrs. Dalloway: Portrait of the Artist as a Middle-Aged Woman*, that Clarissa’s parties are her creative self and that she is, in fact, a consummate artist. Further, Littleton contends that against the world of job, family, assets, business, and power relationships, Woolf places a world of private significance whose meaning is wholly irreducible to facts of the external world.

### **Identity Crisis: Divided Self**

According to Bakhtin, the concept of self can be best described through an utterance. It is through dialogues and interaction that one can interpret the actual meaning of “selfhood” as projected in the minds of characters. The theory of dialogism is based on the concept that an individual expression in a literary context in an utterance or word is connected in the form of dialogue with the otherness (other people, other situations, different experiences, other times, and other worlds). This connection shows the relationship between the speaker of a specific utterance or word and the other in this case that “other” might be the listener or in more general terms the exterior world of the speaker in which he interacts. An utterance/word is marked by what Bakhtin terms “Addressivity” and “Answerability” (it is always addressed to someone and anticipates, can generate, a response, expects an answer). Any understanding of live speech, a live utterance, is inherently responsive: “Any utterance is a link in the chain of communication” (Speech Genre, 1986, p.64-68).

The characters of Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Warren Smith are seen in constant conflict with their own identities. Mrs. Clarissa Dalloway is exceptionally enamored with tossing parties, and the novel portrays one typical day for Clarissa. Woolf paints Clarissa in two differentiating shades;

the sane and insane. Clarissa appears to be extraordinarily composed and calm throughout the novel. Yet, the reader can see the shadows of aggravated and fomented personality of her at numerous occasions, for example, her discontentment over Peter's adoration for an Indian woman, disapproval of her daughter's lifestyle, and her sequential feeling of association and detachment with Septimus after she heard the news of his suicide. The battle amongst external and inward life; amongst rational soundness and madness and the endeavors of characters to fit into the societal expectations make Clarissa's character extremely confused and indecisive in her routine trivial decisions.

Clarissa Dalloway has a fantasy of autonomy and a free soul. A dream that she appreciates from a too young age and it is this fantasy she discovered Sally Seton (her female companion from the times of Bourton) exceptionally appealing and beguiling. She found in Sally what she believed is deficient in her; Sally was liberal, insubordinate, bohemian, and free-spirited.

"But all that evening she could not take her eyes off Sally. It was an extraordinary beauty of the kind she most admired, dark, large-eyed, with that quality which, since she hadn't got it herself, she always envied--- a sort of abandonment, as if she could say anything, do anything; a quality much commoner in foreigners than in English women" (Woolf, 1925, p.34)

Clarissa's love for Sally indicates Clarissa's yearning for free will and freedom of action without any judgment and scrutiny. Still, on the other hand, Clarissa feared that Sally would end up as a tragedy. Clarissa predicts a bleak and tragic future for Sally though these fears were unfounded and nothing turned out that way, and in the end, we can see Sally as a married woman with five kids. These fears of Clarissa for Sally were her apprehensions for women in general and also presented her conservative mentality implicitly. This contrast in her personality demonstrates that even though Clarissa needed to have an audacious and testing life yet, she couldn't trade-off her solace for that. She didn't want to conflict with the stereotypes, and most presumably, that was the reason she decided to marry Richard Dalloway rather than Peter Walsh. Septimus appears to us torn between his battles with life and his propensity towards demise. Septimus cannot see any charm in life. For him, life is unfortunate, and he deserves to die: "The whole world was clamoring: Kill yourself, kill yourself, for our sakes" (Woolf, 1925, p.68).

Septimus is so depressed and upset about his past that he couldn't differentiate reality from his imagination. He once mistook Peter Walsh for the dead friend Evans: "For God's sake, don't come!" Septimus cried out, for he could not look upon the dead. But the branches parted. A man in grey was actually walking towards them" (Woolf, 1925, p. 56).

This struggle of Clarissa to achieve her whole being and her desire to accept her existence is in sharp contrast with Septimus wish to become non-existent. He wants to disappear from present reality. The scene in which Clarissa is mending her dress and the thread and beads she was joining together symbolizes her ability to join together herself, indirectly her acceptance of existence. On the other hand, the scene in which Septimus's wife Rezia sewing a hat and Septimus helps her by selecting ribbons and flowers symbolizes Septimus's inability to draw the parts of his self together as he couldn't sew. At the same time, Septimus has a "wonderful eye" (ibid., 96), and can picture the finished hat in his imaginations can be interpreted as Septimus ability to foresee his future and that he has an idea of what kind of destiny he desires for himself yet he cannot define his existence. So he picks in reality which eventually resulted in his suicide.

### **Clarissa and Septimus: The United Self**

On the surface, the two main characters Clarissa and Septimus, are quite dissimilar, but their roots are connected. Septimus feels remorseful for his insensible sentiments and the passing of his companion Evans. He fears persecution and is in a constant struggle between the external and internal world. Septimus and Clarissa's characters are in many ways, quite similar. In fact, Septimus can be called Clarissa's double in the novel. Septimus and Clarissa both are beak-nosed, enamored with Shakespeare, and both dread persecutions. Both the protagonists are torn between their past and present realities. Their fragmented selves are frequently in fear of their loss of control and proportion in life. Throughout the novel, these characters are contemplating their past decisions. Clarissa, although in love with Peter married Richard, she preferred Richard over Peter because she feared that her freedom would be taken away from her.

"With peter, everything had to be shared; everything has gone into. And it was

intolerable... she had to break with him, or they would have been destroyed, both of them ruined, she was convinced” (Woolf, 1925, p.22).

She sacrificed her passion and gave up her love for the sake of her freedom and independence. She is disturbed due to the choices she made in her past life. Septimus is also a victim of his past life. He left his mother and moved to London to become a poet. He fell in love with his literature teacher Isabel Pole. He “was one of the first to volunteer” (*ibid.*, 64) at the time of the First World War. Septimus formed a very good and friendly relationship with his office Evans: “it was a case of two dogs playing on a hearth- rug” (*ibid.*, 64).

After the death of Evans, Septimus held himself responsible for his friend’s death which led him towards insanity and mental agony. Clarissa’s and Septimus’ choices of marriage and love life also resemble a lot. In Clarissa’s case, she gave up on her passion (for Peter) and her deep love (for Sally) and chose to marry Richard so that she could get more privacy, freedom and independence. Similarly, Septimus also did not decide to go back to England after the war ended and marry Isabel pole; instead, he married Rezia and chooses himself over his passions. Their decisions loom large like a dark shadow in their present lives and deny them the ability to enjoy life in the present thoroughly. Though Clarissa tries to reconcile with her present life and fit into the society, Septimus’ only option is to choose death to escape the pain of present and past.

### **Process of Individuation and Accumulation of Self**

Woolf has attempted to represent the common characteristic features of people through the characters of Septimus and Clarissa. Two opposite gender males and females share the same feelings and emotions, i.e., fear insecurity, yearning/longing, lament/regret, insanity, and love. These characters maintain their individuality and at the same time communicate with each other on the common floor of the novel. Here we can decipher the psyche of these two characters under Bakhtinian’s theory.

As indicated by Bakhtin, each individual is associated with another individual, and it is subsequently unrealistic to call somebody genuinely unique or individual. The character of Clarissa, regardless of the amount she tries to stay to herself and not to uncover the inward workings of her mind, is entirely not able to do as such. She gets influenced by the talk going ahead about Septimus in her gathering. Clarissa despised the fact that death and insanity are being discussed at her party, but she couldn’t resist death for quite some time. She is connected with every one of her guests at the party. She was away from Peter, still thinking about him. Sally and Peter were discussing Clarissa in the library. Septimus found a significant association with Clarissa at last when she was considering his suicide out of the window, and she was imagining that scene when Septimus tossed himself out of the window. All these individuals are interconnected with each other.

The fact that our exteriors can be seen by others indirectly means that only we are aware of our interiors. Also, correspondingly however we can see others’ exteriors because to them we are others yet we are ignorant of their insides. It is in this context that insanity cannot be understood. Subsequently, Septimus treatment by the specialists constrained him to suicide since they couldn’t comprehend his inward battles, and nobody could comprehend his inner world. Even though at last Clarissa attempted to encounter a similar level of an internal struggle and she found a shared opinion with Septimus yet she picks something altogether different. Unlike Septimus, she picks life, while Septimus picks demise; the individual reaction and uniqueness can be seen here. Both these characters spoke with each other for a couple of minutes, withdrew and went on different paths. The decision of these two distinct choices was likely as a result of their contextual differences.

The two main characters are opposites, yet at the same time double of each other. There is binary opposition between these two characters, and this binary opposition does not exist in only one aspect. Clarissa and Septimus are altogether different from each other regarding how they see their own particular identities as well as how the world/individuals see them. Their perceptions towards the realistic and imaginative world at some places unite them and at other places separate them. Clarissa’s exterior as someone who is the perfect hostess and wife of an accomplished man belonging to the middle-class clashes with her interior reality as a woman who is not sure about her life’s decisions and is torn between past and present. She is esteeming her present life yet in the meantime, lamenting her past choices. She is irritated by the musings of aging and death. Clarissa has lost her association with her body as she believes that the world no longer knows her by her name, but rather

Mrs. Richard Dalloway (Woolf, 1925, p.8-9). This demonstrates that Clarissa is detached from her physical being as well as rationally she is confused. She needs to concentrate on her present, her gathering and the arrangements; however, her considerations urge her to visit her past over and over.

Both Bakhtin and Woolf were conscious of the concept of "self" and the idea of "self-actualization". Most of Bakhtin's theories are constructed over his basic thought of "self", "individual reality", "identity formation" and contextual relevance. This study discusses the concept of "self-formation" within the contextual framework provided by dialogism, heteroglossia, and polyphony. Language and communication are taken as the vehicle through which one person's consciousness interacts with the consciousness of another person, the car that merges the multiple voices in one complete whole. Bakhtin clarifies his concept in these words: "I am conscious of myself and become myself only while revealing myself for another, through another, and with the help of another" (Bakhtin, 1993, p.42).

The in-depth study of the text allows the reader to compare Bakhtin's theory of self with Woolf's concept of self. It is interesting to notice that both Bakhtin and Woolf agree and disagree with each other in their philosophy of self-actualization. For Bakhtin self is the blend of "I for me", "I for others", and "others for me". Bakhtin doesn't believe in the individual self without realizing the effect of others. There is no such thing as an isolated self that is not visible or known to the "others" in Bakhtin's philosophy, but Woolf disagrees with him and rejects the strict concept of negating the existence of the individual self altogether. This is the reason that Woolf at the end of the novel chooses two different destinies for Clarrisa and Septimus. Although similar in many aspects, the two protagonists finally find their true selves by listening to the yearning of their hearts. Clarissa chose life while Septimus couldn't find the perfect balance and thus killed himself.

### **Conclusion**

To comprehend the complex working of human personality, one has to fathom the setting in which a move or action takes place. There is a consistent impact of environment, and people on each other, and together (environment and human impacts) shapes the identity of a specific person. Individuals cannot quit getting influenced by these outer strengths, and therefore the inward reality of a man is difficult to be recognized from his outside existence. As shown by Bakhtin, every individual is connected with other individuals, and it is consequently farfetched to call some person really one of a kind of person. It is important to understand that one can't even truly observe one's own outside and appreciate it overall, and no mirrors or photos can help; our genuine outside can be seen and saw just by other individuals, since they are situated outside us in space and in light of the fact that they are others, therefore, they see our exteriors better than us. The fact that others can see our own outsides implies that we know only about our particular insides. Correspondingly, however, we can see others' outsides because to them we are others, yet we are unaware of their insides.

What we can construe from the present study is that although Woolf believes in the interconnectedness of all her characters, she presents these characters as unique individuals. There are obviously some aspects of her characters that are unknown to each other. Unlike Bakhtin, who strictly believes in the concept of a person exists in relation to others, Woolf diverts from this strict conceptualization, and she presents her characters in two contrasting ways. She has used the technique of stream of consciousness according to which her characters can freely interact not only with each other but with the readers as well. This interaction allows the characters of her novel to find common grounds and common voices yet each character in *Mrs. Dalloway* carries a single, distinctive voice or multiple voices unknown, hidden, and suppressed uniquely by each one of them. Hence, evident from the last scene where Clarissa and Septimus went on two distinct paths. It is due to this fact that the reader can witness the process of self-actualization that Woolf's characters experience in one of her masterpieces *Mrs. Dalloway*.

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## Endnotes

<sup>i</sup>Mikhael Mikhailovich Bakhtin was born on 16 November 1895 and died on 7 March 1975. He was a Russian philosopher, literary critic and scholar who worked on literary theory, ethics and the philosophy of language. Many scholars and philosophers working in diverse fields of studies got their inspiration in the work of Bakhtin. The work of these philosophers encompasses a variety of fields such as literary criticism, sociology, history, philosophy, psychology and anthropology.

<sup>ii</sup>Adeline Virginia Woolf (25 January 1882- 28 March 1941) was an English writer. She was born in South Kensington London. Woolf describes herself as "born into a large connection, born not of rich parents, but of well- to- do parents, born into a very communicative, literate, letter writing, visiting, articulate, late-nineteenth-century world". She is truly considered as the modernist and pioneer of the technique of stream of consciousness. Her novels deal with the human psyche, thus making her writing psychological.

<sup>iii</sup>This is a narrative mode in which the narrator describes the events as a continuous flow of thought. It attempts "to depict the multitudinous thoughts and feelings that pass through the mind of the narrator".

<sup>iv</sup>Theory of Dialogism means "double-voiced "and "dialogue" between individuals. According to this theory, the actions, language, and dialogues are interconnected, and another person, group or community influence one person. Thus, it merely means that individuals get affected by their surroundings.