

Twentieth Century Fiction
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Lecture - 38
Mrs. Dalloway - Part 9

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even if they took him, she said, she would go with him. They could not separate them against their wills, she said.

Shuffling the edges straight, she did up the papers, and tied the parcel almost without looking, sitting beside him, he thought, as if all her petals were about her. She was a flowering tree; and through her branches looked out the face of a lawgiver, who had reached a sanctuary where she feared no one; not Holmes; not Bradshaw; a miracle, a triumph, the last and greatest. Staggering he saw her mount the appalling staircase, laden with Holmes and Bradshaw, men who never weighed less than eleven stone six, who sent their wives to Court, men who made ten thousand a year and talked of proportion; who different in their verdicts (for Holmes said one thing, Bradshaw another), yet judges they were; who mixed the vision and the sideboard; saw nothing clear, yet ruled, yet inflicted. "Must" they said. Over them she triumphed.

"There!" she said. The papers were tied up. No one should get at them. She would put them away.

And, she said, nothing should separate them. She sat down beside him and called him by the name of that hawk or crow which being malicious and a great destroyer of crops was precisely like him. No one could separate them, she said.

Then she got up to go into the bedroom to pack their things but





So, hello and welcome to this NPTEL course entitled Twentieth Century Fiction. We are looking at Virginia Woolf's novel Mrs. Dalloway. So, this would be the last lecture on this novel after which we move on to a new text.

So, we ended in the last lecture how the word must is, it carries some symbolic significance because we keep hearing that the doctors tell Septimus, he must be taught to rest. So, there is a, it is a very violent vocabulary. There is a lot of very violence in the rhetoric of the doctors, the medical rhetoric, the vocabulary, it is embedded in violence, it is quite you know aggressive in that sense.

Now, the word must obviously means that there is a degree of coercion as well. So, that the patients are coerced into confinement, coerced into resting, etcetera. Now, the final scene which we will study in this particular section it is a scene of Septimus's suicide. When he jumps from the window and that becomes in a sense his only the only available agency for him, right, the all agency in committing suicide. I mean, he does it because, he realizes he is trapped, he is confined and you know doctors come in like invaders.

And the image obviously, is very violent image the vocabulary is very violent, and the doctors appear like soldiers coming in to take him away and presumably put him in some kind of a corrective regimen which he does not want to be a part of, ok.

So, and just prior to that we see how Septimus and Rezia they talk about how they should be inseparable, they should never be away from each other at any cost. So, that becomes obviously, that the good sense of sentimental attachment, romantic attachment, empathetic attachment and empathy is something which is visibly conspicuously absent in the entire medical discourse that these people are sort of exercising the doctors, Holmes and Bradshaw, ok.

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Then she got up to go into the bedroom to pack their things, but hearing voices downstairs and thinking that Dr. Holmes had perhaps called, ran down to prevent him coming up.

Septimus could hear her talking to Holmes on the staircase.

"My dear lady, I have come as a friend," Holmes was saying.

"No. I will not allow you to see my husband," she said.

He could see her, like a little hen, with her wings spread barring his passage. But Holmes persevered.

"My dear lady, allow me . . ." Holmes said, putting her aside (Holmes was a powerfully built man).

Holmes was coming upstairs. Holmes would burst open the door. Holmes would say "In a funk, eh?" Holmes would get him. But no; not Holmes; not Bradshaw. Getting up rather unsteadily, hopping indeed from foot to foot, he considered Mrs. Filmer's nice clean bread knife with "Bread" carved on the handle. Ah, but one mustn't spoil that. The gas fire? But it was too late now. Holmes was coming. Razors he might have got, but Rezia, who always did that sort of thing, had packed them. There remained only the window, the large Bloomsbury-lodging house window, the tiresome, the troublesome, and rather melodramatic business of opening the window and throwing himself out. It was their idea of tragedy.



So, this section is just a continuation from where we ended last time. And she said nothing should separate them, she sat down beside him and called him by a name of the hawk or crow which being malicious and a great destroyer of crops was precisely like him, right. So, this in this analogy is interesting. He has been called a crow or a hawk. It is almost like you know destructive birds something which comes in as a predator bird. No one could separate them, she said.

Then she got up to go to the bedroom to pick their things, but hearing voices downstairs and thinking that Dr. Holmes had perhaps called, ran down to prevent him coming up. So, this becomes the really intense scene now. She hears Dr. Holmes come in and she wants to go down to prevent him to stop him from coming up and he is obviously, come

with a crew of people, he is come with some people and you know they obviously want to take Septimus away. So, the entire intention is one of violence, entire intention is one of coercion over here and which is what it does Septimus in, emotionally even more.

Septimus could hear her talking to Holmes on the staircase.

“My dear lady, I have come as a friend,” Holmes was saying.

“No. I will not allow you to see my husband,” she said.

So, again this becomes almost like a forcible thing. So Holmes wants to come in, I come here as a friend. So, you know there is a sinister quality about that statement I come here as a friend. As it obviously, means there is some implications over here which are non-friendly or unfriendly, perhaps hostile, perhaps he comes in as something who somebody, who has an intention, has a motive to take away this dysfunctional soldier, right. So, he sounds like one of those Harold Pinter plays where a mysterious agent of the state comes and takes away people who are dysfunctional.

So, if you think of let us say the Birthday Party for instance where the figure of Stanley this washed off washed away you know washed out. So, a washed-out pianist is taken away by two mysterious people who come in a black van who take him away. Something similar is happening here. So, Holmes comes in very mysteriously, very sinisterly and says I come here as a friend and obviously Rezia does her best to stop him from coming. And Septimus overhears entire thing from upstairs and that is the obviously, traumatizes him even more.

“My dear lady, I have come as a friend,” Holmes was saying.

“No, no. I will not allow you to see my husband,” she said.

He could see her, like a little hen, with her wings spread barring his passage. But Holmes persevered.

“My dear lady, allow me” Holmes said, putting her aside, Holmes was a powerfully built man.

So, again the masculinity over here is interesting. The masculinity here is aggressive is formidable is sinister in quality and he pushes her away. And again, this obviously,

becomes very symbolic movement because pushing her away, pushing the patient away, pushing the patient's will away is a very clear indication of the complete lack of agency exhibited by experienced by the patient, where the doctors decide one of the time to come in the doctors decide to take them away, doctors decide to do the things which they think are right for the patient, which often entails which often includes corporeal confinement.

So, the degree of corporeal fear, the viscosity, the corporeality of the fear is something which is dramatized over here; Holmes coming up the stairs, Rezia trying her best to stop him from coming and Septimus overhearing the entire thing from the upstairs. And obviously, Holmes you know is trying to put her aside and walking upstairs in order to see Septimus.

Holmes was coming upstairs. Holmes would burst out open the door. Holmes would say "In a funk, eh?" So, again the vocabulary over here is very male, in a funk eh. So, funk obviously being a sort of depression, is almost a slang, colloquial term for depression something happens to you in the head, you are muddled in the head etcetera; in a funk, eh.

So, again there is a degree of fake familiarity, a very fake friendliness about this particular expression in a funk, eh. So, the fakeness, the phoniness is obviously a continuation, of the sinister quality in which he said I come here as a friend. That was fake as well and of course, that is even darker than fake it's almost sinister in quality.

"In a funk eh?" Holmes would get him. But no; not Holmes; not Bradshaw. Getting up rather unsteadily, hopping instead indeed from foot to foot, he considered Mrs. Filmer's nice clean bread knife with "Bread" carved on the handle. Ah, but one must not spoil that. The gas fire?

So, he now looks at different weapons to kill himself, the bread knife and he thinks that the bread, the word bread carved in the middle in the handle and then of course, he, it is almost like a dark comic quality about it he thinks that if I use that to kill myself that will spoil the knife and it is a beautiful knife, I do not want to spoil that. So, even his last thoughts are very unsettled. The gas fire, but it was too late now. So, the other thing, the other option for him, between start a gas fire and exhume himself, maybe suffocate himself to death by inhaling carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, but that would be too

late. I mean that he does not have so much time because Holmes is obviously climbing up the stairs.

Holmes was coming. Razors he might have got, but Rezia, who always did that sort of thing, had packed them. There remained only the window, the large Bloomsbury-lodging house window, the tiresome, the troublesome, and rather melodramatic business of opening the window and throwing himself out, right. So, it becomes a very symbolic suicide. He climbs the Bloomsbury window. The typical regency type houses in England and he jumps from that, right.

So, that almost like a symbolic, it is almost like a symbolic departure from you know regency Edwardian England, that has come to an end and he becomes you know one of those people who thought, he could protect that England. And of course, now that is impossible he kills himself from jumping from the window, right. And it becomes, it is described as a very melodramatic prisoner, open the window and throwing himself out.

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not his or Rezia's (for she was with him). Holmes and Bradshaw like that sort of thing. (He sat on the sill.) But he would wait till the very last moment. He did not want to die. Life was good. The sun hot. Only human beings – what did THEY want? Coming down the staircase opposite an old man stopped and stared at him. Holmes was at the door. 'I'll give it you!' he cried, and flung himself vigorously, violently down on to Mrs. Filmer's area railings.

"The coward!" cried Dr. Holmes, bursting the door open. Rezia ran to the window, she saw; she understood. Dr. Holmes and Mrs. Filmer collided with each other. Mrs. Filmer flapped her apron and made her hide her eyes in the bedroom. There was a great deal of running up and down stairs. Dr. Holmes came in – white as a sheet, shaking all over, with a glass in his hand. She must be brave and drink something, he said (What was it? Something sweet), for her husband was horribly mangled, would not recover consciousness, she must not see him, must be spared as much as possible, would have the inquest to go through, poor young woman. Who could have foretold it? A sudden impulse, no one was in the least to blame (he told Mrs. Filmer). And why the devil he did it, Dr. Holmes could not conceive.

It seemed to her as she drank the sweet stuff that she was opening long windows, stepping out into some garden. But where? The clock was



It was their idea of tragedy, not his or Rezia's for she was with him. Holmes and Bradshaw like that sort of thing. So, interestingly we see how the affect induced by the suicide is something which is more akin to Holmes and Bradshaw's understanding of life and death something very melodramatic, something very thick, something very broad brushed in quality. There is no nuanced quality about this kind of an act.

And Septimus dislikes the fact. Septimus dislikes the fact that this suicide is more palatable to someone like Holmes and Bradshaw rather than to himself and Rezia. It was their idea of tragedy, very thick-headed idea of tragedy, a very thick heavy-handed idea of tragedy, ok.

So, Holmes and Bradshaw like that sort of thing. He sat on the sill. But he would wait till the very last moment. He did not want to die. Life was good. The sun hot. Only human beings - what did they want? Right. So, again this becomes a human tragedy and the human quality of the tragedy is accentuated over in this particular point.

He realizes that we realize as readers that the only reason why Septimus kills himself is because of his human confinement or the lack of human empathy everything else around him seems very nice and pleasant, the sun is hot, the birds are chirping, the set up looks good, the air is nice, but you know the human beings are the ones who are pushing him to suicide, pushing him into destruction. What did they want? So, the word 'they' comes with a collective over here.

It is something which is you know put up as some kind of a you know figure and so they want becomes important. What did they want? So, they become a collective pronoun, a collective you know category where all human beings are put together, but obviously, the human beings over here mean the medical people, people who are coming with this coercive tyrannical quality, people who want to dictate and you know dominate him, right. So, what did they want? So, it is a complete lack of complete collapse of communication; what did they want; Septimus to understand it and so he wants to kill himself because he feels forced, he feels pressurized, he feels persecuted by them.

Coming down the staircase opposite an old man stopped and stared at him. Holmes was at the door. "I will give, I will give it to you," he cried, and flung himself vigorously, violently down on to Mrs. Filmer's area railings, right. So, he jumps and he kills himself by falling on the railings of Mrs. Filmer, right.

So, I will give it to you. So, at the end he becomes, it is almost like an act of violence and with which he kills himself. So, the entire suicide over here it is not so much of submission, but it becomes an act of violent retaliation. And only retaliation possible in this situation is suicide. So, suicide over here is not really an act of the loss of agency, but it is the final agency available to Septimus in the you know, according to his

imagination. And so he kills himself thinking that this is the only thing available for him at this point of time.

“The coward” cried Dr. Holmes, bursting the door open. So, again this is very interesting because this obviously, you know was packed with masculinity rhetoric and Holmes’s you know response, immediate response a major response to Septimus’s suicide is that it is an act of cowardice. So, he fails to see the emotional trauma, he fails to see the complete alienation suffered by Septimus over here and the entire episode is seen as a lack of manliness by Dr. Holmes.

So, we can see how it is a continuation of the military vocabulary, a continuation of the military masculinity even in a post war metropolis. So, even when the war has come to an end, even when you know people are seemingly moving on with their civilian lives we find how someone like Septimus is still hounded by this military vocabulary of coercion and confinement and you know judgment. Because whole judgment over here by Dr. Holmes is that you know he is a coward, Septimus is a coward, he does not have the bravery, the courage to sustain life, right.

So, that becomes the problem that becomes a disparaging remark from his end. So, it is not really a medical problem, it is not really a psychological problem, it becomes a problem of masculinity according to Dr. Holmes, right. So, it becomes an example of inadequate masculinity.

The coward, said cried Dr. Holmes, bursting the door open. Rezia ran to the window, she saw; she understood, right. So, again the short sentences over here, the short expressions over here are very pointed. She saw, she understood. So, she saw what happened and she understood why that happened, right. So, this is in that sense Rezia and Septimus they finally come together as a husband and a wife, as partners, you know who understand each other’s sentiments, so and so completely and so holistically.

And so we have different kinds of understandings over here. There is a complete lack of understanding that is exhibited by Dr. Holmes. He does not see what the situation is, he thinks it is an act of unmanliness. He does not see the bravery in the act actually in trying to kill himself when there is nothing else to be done and trying to kill himself as a resistance too has been taken away and confined medically. So, it actually becomes an

act of bravery. But of course, he fails to see it and hence he cries cowered over here, but Rezia, she sees what happened and she understands what had happened.

Dr. Holmes and Mrs. Filmer collided with each other, right. So, you know he is obviously, he is coming down and Mrs. Filmer is you know they collide with each other. Mrs. Filmer flapped her apron and made her hide her eyes in the bedroom. There was a great deal of running up and down stairs. Dr. Holmes came in - white as a sheet, shaking all over, with a glass in his hand. She must be brave and drink something, he said. What was it? Something sweet, for her husband was horribly mangled.

So, again this very decimated body of Septimus is again very symbolic. It is a mangled body, it is a messy body, and that messiness of the body, the messy corporeality which Septimus's corpse exhibits you know symbolically is obviously, a pointer to the messiness that he experienced existentially, right. So, his messy experientiality, his messy existential self is now it has a corporeal shape now, the shapelessness of the corpse is basically the shape of his confusion at the end.

So, her husband was horribly mangled, would not recover consciousness, she must not see him, must be spared as much as possible, would have the inquest to go through, poor woman. Who could have foretold it? A sudden impulse, no one was in the least to blame, he told Mrs. Filmer. And why the devil he did it, Dr. Holmes could not conceive.

So, again if we take a look at the very masculinist rhetoric over here, the woman cannot see it, the woman is obviously too nervous, woman who become hysteric, at the sight of a dead man, so she is again confined away, she is taken away corporeally pushed away from her husband's dead body. She was not allowed to see it because the doctor decides it will be too confusing, it will be too traumatic for her.

So, instead he is she is given something to drink in a glass. But then the irony is Dr. Holmes comes in white as a sheet shaking all over. He is the one who is you know completely shaken by this incident, but of course, he, she he is the one who is you know encouraging her to be brave. An assumption of course is that a woman cannot be brave, the woman needs an artificial stimulant, maybe something alcoholic in order to you know sustain this hysteria, ok.

And of course, the final sentence over here you know it is very reflective, it is you know it says a lot. Dr. Holmes could not conceive why the devil he did it. So, again this complete lack of understanding is exactly what is the problem in Mrs. Dalloway. So, the doctors do not understand why the patients behave in a certain way, the complete lack of communication, the complete crisis of communication and the lack of understanding is what you know accentuates the trauma and isolation and alienation of these people these sufferers, ok.

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It seemed to her as she drank the sweet stuff that she was opening long windows, stepping out into some garden. But where? The clock was striking – one, two, three: how sensible the sound was; compared with all this thumping and whispering; like Septimus himself. She was falling asleep. But the clock went on striking, four, five, six and Mrs. Filmer waving her apron (they wouldn't bring the body in here, would they?) seemed part of that garden; or a flag. She had once seen a flag slowly rippling out from a mast when she stayed with her aunt at Venice. Men killed in battle were thus saluted, and Septimus had been through the War. Of her memories, most were happy.

She put on her hat, and ran through cornfields – where could it have been? – on to some hill, somewhere near the sea, for there were ships, gulls, butterflies; they sat on a cliff. In London too, there they sat, and, half dreaming, came to her through the bedroom door, rain falling, whisperings, stirrings among dry corn, the caress of the sea, as it seemed to her, hollowing them in its arched shell and murmuring to her laid on shore, strewn she felt, like flying flowers over some tomb.

"He is dead," she said, smiling at the poor old woman who guarded her with her honest light-blue eyes fixed on the door. (They wouldn't bring him in here, would they?) But Mrs. Filmer pooh-poohed. Oh no, oh no!



It seemed to her that she drank the sweet stuff that she was opening long windows, you know as she drank the sweet stuff she that she was opening the windows long window, stepping out into some garden. But where? The clock was striking – one, two, three; how sensible the sound was; compared with all that thumping and whispering; like Septimus himself.

So, again and this becomes interesting Septimus is now equated with the sensible clock, the sensible flow of time and everything else becomes unintelligent, everything else becomes you know mere foolishness, everything else all the little micro things that you know hurled around are becoming you know foolish things. Septimus becomes the only sensible marker of time the only sensible marker of meaning, right, like the grand clock, the clock was striking. So, in the end posthumously Septimus is equated with standardization, Septimus is equated with uniformity with sensibility, right, ok.

She was falling asleep. But the clock was striking, four, five, six and Mrs. Filmer waving her apron. They would not bring the body in here, would they? Seemed part of the garden; or a flag. She had once seen a flag slowly rippling out from a mast when she stayed with her aunt at Venice, at Venice. Men killed in battle were thus saluted, and Septimus had been through the War. Of her memories, most were happy.

So, this becomes a beautifully moving section. So, in her mind Septimus gets a posthumous military salute, right. So, she goes back, in her mind travels back in time to dig up a memory in Venice, where she saw a flag waving, some kind of a military flag in salutation of a dead soldier and she evokes that image, her brain evokes the image again and Septimus a dead soldier who exhibits his final act of bravery, and his resistance against medical terrorism, he gets the final salute of bravery the final military salute, the true salute of you know the military for a true soldier.

Septimus's suicide over here would be seen should be seen is seen by Rezia, as an act of bravery. But of course, the medical doctors the medical practitioners failed to see it completely and they see it as an act of cowardice, an act of you know unmanliness so to say. For Septimus, in Rezia's mind gets a final salute of bravery and this becomes a very moving, a very symbolic scene. And you can see the craft of Woolf at play over here, the lovely descriptions, the density of description, the density of human psychological the depth of human psychological you know complexity over here at play.

So, we in the final image about Septimus is Rezia's mind traveling back in time, when she was a girl in Venice she was Italian and in Venice she sees from here childhood memories she digs she digs up something the flag saluting dead soldier, the brave dead soldier and that salute, that flag comes back in her mind now when her husband the dead soldier lies dead, mangled in a post-war city.

Of her memories most were happy. So, again you know the memory becomes an important thing over here, most of memories are happy at this time. So, there is some kind of a reconciliation over here as Septimus and Rezia they are reconciled with Septimus's death. They achieve a sentimental, affective, emotional reconciliation which is something which the city, these doctors this war did not allow them to do.

So, in that sense we can see the war and the continuation of war, the continuation of battle, modest military medical people have some kind of thing a function which

separates human beings, which makes human beings difficult, more tensed, you know it alienates human being from each other in that sense. And the dream continues.

She put on her hat, and ran through cornfields - where could it have been? - on to some hill, somewhere near the sea, for there were ships, gulls, butterflies; they sat on a cliff. In London too, there they sat, and half dreaming, came to her through the bedroom door; rain falling, whisperings, stirrings among dry corn, the caress of the sea, as it seemed to her, hollowing them as it's, in it's arched shell and murmuring to her laid on shore, strewn she felt, like flying flowers over some tomb.

Right. So, the final image of the tomb gives a sepulchral quality to this entire reverie, but we find different markers of beauty and fulfillment, the natural you know abundance. So, the final image of our Septimus in Rezia's mind is one of abundance, a romantic abundance, and fecundity and fertility, right. Things, he could not achieve in real life you know they were they had this almost loveless life in the end. Thanks to the medical intervention. Thanks to medical you know violence that he was subjected to.

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... it is death, she said, smiling at the poor old woman who guarded her with her honest light-blue eyes fixed on the door. (They wouldn't bring him in here, would they?) But Mrs. Filmer pooh-poohed. Oh no, oh no! They were carrying him away now. Ought she not to be told? Married people ought to be together, Mrs. Filmer thought. But they must do as the doctor said.

"Let her sleep," said Dr. Holmes, feeling her pulse. She saw the large outline of his body standing dark against the window. So that was Dr. Holmes.

One of the triumphs of civilisation, Peter Walsh thought. It is one of the triumphs of civilisation, as the light high bell of the ambulance sounded. Swiftly, cleanly the ambulance sped to the hospital, having picked up instantly, humanely, some poor devil; some one hit on the head, struck down by disease, knocked over perhaps a minute or so ago at one of these crossings, as might happen to oneself. That was civilisation. It struck him coming back from the East — the efficiency, the organisation, the communal spirit of London. Every cart or carriage of its own accord drew aside to let the ambulance pass. Perhaps it was morbid; or was it not touching rather, the respect which they showed this ambulance with its



"He is dead," she said, smiling at a poor old woman who guarded her with her honest light-blue eyes fixed on the door. They would not bring him in here, would they? But Mrs. Filmer pooh-poohed. Oh no, no. They were carrying him away now. Ought she not to be told? Married people ought to be together, Mrs. Filmer thought. But they must do as the doctor said.

So, again the final violence in a medical you know determination is at play over here. Mrs. Filmer is an innocuous woman, she thinks the wife should be told that her husband is dead, the wife should see the final image, the final body of the husband, but the doctors decided that it is too violent for her. The doctors decided that they should be separated from each other, so they must do as the doctor said, right.

So, again the word must over here carries a very sinister quality of force of violence, of confinement, of corporeal containment and that is something which medical practitioners over here are operating, right. So, the entire we can see how the war becomes it gets played on, it gets extended endlessly into all this proxy little battle is steered off by different figures, doctors being some of the central figures in that proxy battle, right. So, they must do as the doctor said.

“Let her sleep,” said Dr. Holmes, feeling her pulse. She saw the large outline of his body standing against the window. So, that was Dr. Holmes. So, again this final cinematic image which closes down the Septimus story, it is a beautiful image and a final image of a sinister doctor guarding the window, right. The big body of the male doctor guarding the window, the window which through which this is how her husband exerted, or exercised his final act of bravery, his final act of bravery and Dr. Holmes stands there you know like an outline of his body standing dark against the windows. So he becomes a dark figure, the sinister figure who drives Septimus to this point of desperation.

So, Septimus’s suicide over here, is understood by Rezia as a final act of bravery as a result of which in her mind, in her reverie she produces his final salute, the military salute, and a salute through a flag that she has seen as a child in Venice on to the dead soldier who happens to be her husband, ok.

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touching rather, the respect which they showed this ambulance with its victim inside – busy men hurrying home yet instantly bethinking them as it passed of some wife; or presumably how easily it might have been them there, stretched on a shelf with a doctor and a nurse. . . . Ah, but thinking became morbid, sentimental, directly one began conjuring up doctors, dead bodies; a little glow of pleasure, a sort of lust too over the visual impression warned one not to go on with that sort of thing any more – fatal to art, fatal to friendship. True. And yet, thought Peter Walsh, as the ambulance turned the corner though the light high bell could be heard down the next street and still farther as it crossed the Tottenham Court Road, chiming constantly, it is the privilege of loneliness; in privacy one may do as one chooses. One might weep if no one saw. It had been his undoing – this susceptibility – in Anglo-Indian society; not weeping at the right time, or laughing either. I have that in me, he thought standing by the pillar-box, which could now dissolve in tears. Why, Heaven knows. Beauty of some sort probably, and the weight of the day, which beginning with that visit to Clarissa had exhausted him with its heat, its intensity, and the drip, drip, of one impression after another down into that cellar where they stood, deep, dark, and no one would ever know. Partly for that reason, its secrecy, complete and inviolable, he had found life like an unknown garden, full of turns and corners, surprising, yes; really it took



Now, we come to an end over here. But just a last final formal bit in Mrs. Dalloway which makes it such a wonderful novel in terms of all these different narratives connecting each other at different points of time, because remember this is happening in one day in London. All these incidents everything we see in Mrs. Dalloway and those of you who read the whole novel would know, this is about a one-day novel. It is very modernist architectonic you know category style, where everything happens in one calendar day, one journey of the sun, yeah and obviously, goes back to the classical traditions of tragedy.

But in this one day we have different transportations in time. So, you know it is the superficial one day, is not very important it is a calendar day. It forms a closure. But within this calendar day we have different and several and multiple and endless negotiations with time embodied negotiations with time, people go back in time, come back in time, transported in time. So, memory becomes a very important marker as a ripple effect it crosses one day. And likewise, place too is interconnected. So, each of the narratives over here are spatiotemporally connected to the other narrative.

So, Peter Walsh at this point, he sees the ambulance which takes away Septimus's body and he looks at the ambulance as a signifier civilization, of velocity of treatment, of cure and that obviously has a dramatic irony about it, because we the readers know, that it is Septimus's dead body taken away by the agents of medical profession, they take him

away, siphon him off, presumably to a morgue or to a hospital where he will be declared dead, classified as dead. To Peter Walsh the objective outs- you know outsider, onlooker over here that looks like a spectacular you know success of civilization which is something that he is you know congratulating himself about and this is what he said over here.

One of the triumphs of civilisation, Peter Walsh thought. It is one of the triumphs of civilization, as the light high bell of the ambulance sounded. Swiftly, cleanly the ambulance sped up sped to the hospital, having picked up instantly, humanely, some poor devil; someone hit on the head, struck down by disease, knocked over perhaps a minute or so ago at one of those crossings, as might happen to himself, as might happen to oneself. That was civilization.

So, this is a classic dramatic irony at play. This ambulance obviously, happens to take Septimus's body as we know later, but to Peter Walsh it looks like a siren of civilization, a spectacular signifier of civilization.

It struck him coming back from the East - the efficiency, the organization, the communal spirit of London. Every cart or carriage of its own accord drew aside to let the ambulance pass. Perhaps it was morbid; or was it not touching rather, the respect which they showed this ambulance which is with its victim inside - busy men hurrying home yet instantly bethinking them as it passed of some wife; or presumably how easily it might have been them there, stretched on a shelf with a doctor and a nurse.

Ah, but thinking became morbid, sentimental, directly one began conjuring up doctors, dead bodies; a little glow of pleasure, a sort of lust too over the visual impression warned one not to go with that sort of thing anymore - fatal to art, fatal to friendship. True and yet, thought Peter Walsh, as the ambulance turned the corner, though the light high bell could be heard down the next street and still farther as it crossed the Tottenham Court Road, charming constantly, it is the privilege of loneliness; in privacy one may do as one chooses. One might sweep, one might weep, if no one saw. It had been his undoing - this susceptibility in Anglo-Indian society; not weeping at the right time or laughing either.

So, again look at the way in which Peter Walsh like Septimus too has been a victim of emotional confusion. He has been unable to laugh at the right time, he has been unable to weep at the right time and that has been his un-doing, the susceptibility of not being able

to laugh or weep at the right time in Anglo-Indian society. So, he too is an outsider, he comes back from somewhere. So, it is remarkable how all these different men are coming back from somewhere in London, you know Septimus comes back from the war, Peter Walsh comes back from India and they all feel like outsiders in this post-war metropolis, ok.

I have that in me, he thought standing by the pillar-box, which could now dissolve in tears. Why, Heaven knows. But beauty is of some sort probably, and the weight of the day, which beginning with that visit to Clarissa had exhausted him with its heat, its intensity, and the drip, drip, of one impression after another down into the cellar, where they stood, deep, dark and no one would ever know. Partly for that reason, its secrecy, completely inviolable.

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Clarissa once, going on top of an omnibus with him somewhere, Clarissa superficially at least, so easily moved, now in despair, now in the



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So, we have a long passage over here with which I will come to an end. This is the final bit which we will study in Mrs. Dalloway. But the point is the real crisis in Mrs.

Dalloway is an emotional crisis, people not able to emote at the right time and of course, we find the whole idea of masculinity is engineered not to emote. It sort of trains men not to emote, right and that becomes the undoing of someone like Peter Walsh or Septimus Smith.

Now, the whole idea of rationality in Mrs. Dalloway is obviously a very tyrannical idea of rationality, one which had historically informed the tyranny of imperialism where everything must be controlled classified coerced and contained into a production of meaning and anything which cannot be done in that sequence becomes dysfunctional and meaningless, right.

So, in that sense Septimus becomes a meaningless person and the meaninglessness of Septimus is obviously, part his medical existential, but also cultural. He becomes a meaningless man. He is someone who has been liquidated of meaning, meaning has left him, abandoned him, right. So, he will he is one of those abandoned men after the war. The war had moved him, moved from him. So, he becomes essentially a timeless man there is no space and time for someone like him in London, right.

So, that informs the exhaustion of Septimus, the emptiness, that he embodies with his disillusion, with his trauma, with his cynicism, with his entire inability to connect to anyone around him. And a less, on a lesser degree we have we found Peter Walsh too, who is essentially feeling more and more meaningless having come back from the India, the Anglo-Indian society.

Now, he comes to London which is the center of the metropole of the colony, and he finds himself completely unable to connect to the people around him. So, again he finds people around him hyper rational, he finds people around him emoting in a particular level and he finds he is unable to go to the same rhythm and finding some incompatible with the entire emotional landscape around him.

Now, this is how I end Mrs. Dalloway. But the final point is we look at the novel as something it is a modernist success, it is a massive modernist success it is one of the finest novels written in English modernism. And what gives us such a lasting legacy, what gives us such a classic quality today is this magnificent probe into human consciousness and the human emotions and the human behavior, motor behavior, cultural behavior, political behavior and how those different modes are connected, right.

So, motor behavior is determined by your political behavior which in turn determines your gendered behavior, and your cultural behavior. And we see how the entire engineering of a certain kind of a masculinity is a fatal engineering because once it goes wrong we are left with someone like Septimus, who cannot function otherwise because he has been trained to unlearn and undo and un-remember so many things such as you know feeling, an emotion, he has been trained to distil away those things at all completely, clinically and now that the war has left him he cannot bring back emotions he cannot feel full anymore, he cannot emote and empathize with anyone around him anymore. And therein lies his entire crisis, his entire crisis of embodiment. His crisis of embodiment is actually an emotional crisis.

And so just going back to this final act of suicide, his last act of killing himself against the increasing invasion, the imminent invasion of the doctors, it becomes an act of bravery and an act of the soldiers. So, the soldier comes back in Septimus at the end as a result of which Rezia gives him this posthumous gift of salute, the soldierly salute that she offers in her mind by digging up a point in time in her memory through which you know it overlaps to the present.

And again, we see how the temporal quality is so complex, the different kinds of overlaps in time happening all the time, right. So, different kinds of space time, different kinds of chronotope, chronotope being a combination of space and time – it's a term used by Mikhail Bakhtin as I am sure he is familiar to most of you, chrono being time and topos is topography of space, a chronotope being a combination of space and time.

So, we have in Mrs. Dalloway different kinds of chronotopes, all interlinked together and this interlinked quality gives this novel a very hyperlinked narrative structure, where each narrative crisscrosses with each narrative at some points of time; the different nodal points in which the narrators crisscross with each other.

So, Peter Walsh is an ambulance sirening away, presumably going up to pick up Septimus and he has a different impression of the ambulance altogether Clarissa Dalloway, sees Septimus, hears about Septimus, and she responds in a particular way as well.

So, all these different narratives come together and they do not really inform each other, but they connect to each other in a way, it is very organic and harmonious and very

human in equality. The randomness of these connections is actually what makes this novel such a human novel, and which gives it the lasting legacy and the status of a classic which it so richly enjoys today.

So, I end with this, and this is how we come to end of Mrs. Dalloway by Virginia Woolf. I hope you took some we found this you know series of lectures interesting on this novel. And as I mentioned I have a published essay on it which I am happy to upload in the portal for you to read, and you know we move on to a different text in the next lecture.

Thank you for your attention.