

**Twentieth-Century Fiction**  
**Prof. Avishek Parui**  
**Prof. Soham Chakraborty**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology, Madras**

**Lecture - 54**  
**Mrs. Dalloway - Part 10**

Hello everyone. My name is Soham Chakraborty and I am a PhD scholar at IIT Madras working under supervision of Dr. Avishek Parui. Today we are going to discuss a few key points from the novel Mrs. Dalloway and relate the concepts to other texts where we see certain common elements.

(Refer Slide Time: 00:31)




Mrs. Dalloway

- ▶ After the First World War
- ▶ Haunted by the War
- ▶ Spectral presence of the War
- ▶ Memories of the War




Mrs. Dalloway takes place after the First World War has ended. However, instead of finding the characters in a relieved state that the war is now over, we find that they are still haunted by the war. The presence of the war in the novel is often spectral and in the novel Virginia Woolf tries to stress the importance of the spectral - the ghost like. Memories become a key element in our exploration of what these ghostly presences from the past mean to us. Even though we see that there is no possibility of a reunion between Peter Walsh and Clarissa Dalloway, Septimus Smith and Evans yet the characters keep resorting to their memories of these people to imagine with them present in the present in a more intimate way.

(Refer Slide Time: 01:21)



## Mrs. Dalloway

- ▶ Clarissa opening the windows vs the imprisonment of Septimus Smith
- ▶ The different significances of the flowers – dead growth
- ▶ Solid Objects by Douglas Mao



The novel begins with the image of Clarissa throwing open the French windows of her house. This creates a sense of openness a sense of connection with the outside world. This also helps us to have to see to situate this openness in contrast and of the confinement of Septimus Smith. Septimus also commits suicide by throwing himself out of the window. So, this act of opening the window in the early morning letting in the sun and the light becomes clouded in apprehension of what is to come. Also note how like T S Eliot's the Wasteland the novel begins with a reference to flowers.

The lilacs that Eliot opens his poem with in the Wasteland do not signify regeneration a new beginning. Rather, the flowers signify a dead growth a tumorous growth. This is deadness springing from deadness reproduction without generation. We can refer here to a book by Douglas Mao called Solid Objects to understand the roles plants and flowers play in the novel.

(Refer Slide Time: 02:36)



## Mrs. Dalloway


- Flowers and plants in the novel figure not only the nonlinguistic (things as opposed to words), but also the nonhuman or nonsentient (things as opposed to people), thus securing the link between a crisis of significance and the brute facticity of the object world. This crisis of significance and brute facticity of the outside world is often represented in the novel through a tendency of rationalization. We will get back to how objects and their functions signify a forced rationalization of a post-war world where fragmentation has already occurred.



The title of his book *Solid Objects* is also bought from one of Virginia Woolf's short stories. Mao points out that flowers and plants in the novel figure not only as the non-linguistics - things opposed to words, but also non-human or non-sentient things that are opposed to people opposed to living things. Thus securing the link between a crisis of significance and the brute facticity of the object world. The crisis of significance and the brute facticity of the outside world that Mao talks about is often represented in the novel through a tendency of rationalization.


We will get back to how objects and their functions signify a forced nationalization of a post world war where fragmentation has already occurred. The flowers and plants as we were mentioning create a bond between the non-sentient and sentient things in the novel.

(Refer Slide Time: 03:23)



## Mrs. Dalloway

- ▶ Humans vs. Plants
- ▶ Plants as a condition of deadness for Septimus Smith
- ▶ Big Ben as object
- ▶ Big Ben as Big Brother
- ▶ Quantification of time
- ▶ Big Ben as Phallogocentric




As Peter Walsh says I prefer men to cauliflowers. There is a certain elevation of the human function of being alive as opposed to the perceived inertness of the plants. It is Septimus whom we find vigorously asserting that plants have life. Septimus who is chastised by Dr. Holmes for not being able to connect with other things becomes a metaphoric plant in the novel. He is alive we know that. However, he feels dead inside due to his inability to continue with life. When Rezia bring some roses in the room Septimus imagines his dead friend Evans picking them up in Greece the flowers thus already become tinged with death.

Even though in the novel Woolf beautifully describes how when Rezia puts the flowers in the vase the sunlight comes from outside and the light bounces off the roses to fill up the whole room, but here we see in Septimus's head the plucked flowers signify a sort of deadness that he associates with Evans. In the world of objects one of the most prominent presence is that of the Big Ben.

The name Big Ben bears an uncanny resemblance to the name for the autocratic ruler of 1984 by George Orwell. The ruler there in the novel 1984 is called Big Brother. The overarching nature of clock time in the novel the call of modernity that is that has made quantification of time possible and important to everyday life is expressed in the adjective big. It is not only that the clock in size is big, but it is also big in its authority to tell time. The name Ben also hints at the fact that this quantification of time the


rationalization of life has also been largely a masculinist project. The Big Ben thus becomes a phallogocentric object - a symbol of male power in society where the clock keeps communicating in a one-sided way where others must obey what it communicates. The description of Big Ben captures the mood perfectly in the novel and I quote here.

(Refer Slide Time: 05:30)



## Mrs. Dalloway

- ▶ "The sound of Big Ben striking the half-hour struck out between them with extraordinary vigour, as if a young man, strong, indifferent, inconsiderate, were swinging dumb-bells this way and that."
- ▶ Contrast this to the clock in Clarissa's room, that:
- ▶ "... always struck two minutes after Big Ben, came shuffling in with its lap full of odds and ends, which it dumped down as if Big Ben were all very well with his majesty laying down the law, so solemn, so just, but she must remember all sorts of little things besides."



"The sound of the Big Ben striking the half hour struck out between them with extraordinary vigour as if a young man strong, indifferent, inconsiderate were swinging dumb-bells this way and that" see how reckless this declaration of time, how masculine this declaration of time is constructed in the novel.


The emancipation to such restriction of time comes in the form of a smaller more personal clock in the possession of Clarissa Dalloway. This clock that I quote, "always struck 2 minutes after Big Ben came shuffling with its lap full of odds and ends which it dumped down as if Big Ben were all very well with his majesty laying down the law. So, solemn, so just, but she must remember all sorts of little things besides."

So, this clock which is a little thing in itself which is also a little late only 2 minutes late holds the promise of going back in time a little - a leniency not allowed by the rigid timekeeping of the Big Ben. It is a reminder of the personal freedom in our lives, the possibility of little joys that we can enjoy.

(Refer Slide Time: 06:39)

## Mrs. Dalloway

- ▶ Masculinist uni-directional mode of communication in Big Ben, Dr. Bradshaw and Dr. Holmes
- ▶ "Before Big Ben strikes. There! Out it boomed. First a warning, musical; then the hour, irrevocable."
- ▶ "The word 'time' split its husk; poured its riches over him; and from his lips fell like shells, like shavings from a plane, without his making them, hard, white, imperishable, words, and flew to attach themselves to their places in an ode to Time; an immortal ode to Time."



We see this politics of men in power not listening like Big Ben I mean it is it is with masculinist project it is always a one-sided communication. They would not listen, they would rather that you listen to their diagnosis.


So, we see this politics of men in power not listening of participating in one-sided communication in the figures of Doctor Holmes and Doctor Bradshaw. These doctors barely let Septimus speak and only speak themselves. Woolf perfectly captures the ominous declaration of time in the lines quote I quote, "before Big Ben strikes there out it boomed first a warning, musical then the hour irrevocable."

The scientific quantification of time coincides with the suspicion of other forms of scientific rationalization in the story. We can see Septimus musing that one must be scientific above all things in this light. When Rezia utters the phrase: it is time in the novel the couple are planning to go to Bradshaw's and they are sitting and Rezia mentions to Septimus that they must move start moving that it is time to move. The word time is registered by Septimus like the persona in Keats' poem Ode to a Nightingale and the persona in that poem experiences the term 'forlorn' on in this way. So, it brings the persona back from a reverie, from an introspection.

I quote from Woolf again from the novel, "the word time split its husk poured its riches over him and from his lips fell like shells like shavings from a plane without his making them hard, white, imperishable words and flew to attach themselves to their places in an


ode to time and immortal ode to time.” So, we see here how Woolf also kind of makes that connection herself. This becomes an ode to time and a kind of an offering to time in a very religious sense of the term.

(Refer Slide Time: 08:41)



## Mrs. Dalloway

- ▶ The life of objects
- ▶ The glove shop – impossibility of a seamless world
- ▶ Septimus as object-like, liminal, between the alive and the dead
- ▶ Affects of numbness



The significance of looking at objects to understand changes in society is also reflected in Clarissa’s ruminations about a glove shop where before the war one could buy almost perfect gloves. The war has nullified the war has in this way nullified any possibility of fitting in like the gloves do not fit the arms anymore.


Any possibility of seamlessly continuing of society. We now have people like Septimus Smith in society who cannot fit in. Septimus himself becomes an object like an object-like person as he continues to fail to have emotional connection. When Rezia reaches out for his hand to cross the street she thinks to herself she had a right to his arm though it was without feeling. So, we see how the anatomy of Septimus is slowly becoming without feeling, it is becoming numb and we have already listened on how modernity creates these affects of numbness of not being able to feel mostly.

So, as we saw so he was relating himself with trees. He is slowly becoming like a tree - a kind of liminal existence between what is live and what is not alive. So, almost like his limbs are turning into branches of that tree which you can hold on to tug on to, but the tree as we perceive is not having any human connection or having any human feelings in that way.

The pieces of Septimus become mechanistic they become devoid of feeling. We are again brought back to a similarity with the Wasteland where professor Parui has discussed how human manoeuvres become mechanistic. Septimus is almost like the car that breaks down just the car it is the car breaks down opposite mulberry shop. Just as the car bears the promise that no doubt that greatness was seated within, greatness was passing hidden down bond street. The greatness of Septimus is also hidden within him that is refusing to come out.


However, Septimus occupies a space between the dead objects and living organisms in the novel. He becomes like a tree as we have already discussed which we know to be alive, but we choose to overlook the fact whenever convenient that is why it is so easy for us to cut down trees.

(Refer Slide Time: 10:56)



Mrs. Dalloway

► Douglas Mao: "The generous reader, of course, will take Septimus's point to be that trees are conscious—that when they say "we accept; we create" they really mean it—but the transient strangeness that attends his announcement is enough to indicate why it is that trees and other plants that make especially useful synecdoches for the nonsentient world here: with their uncanny air of death-in-life, of being nearly but not quite sentient, they foreground the absence of feeling in the object world as few other objects can."




As Douglas Mao again points out I quote, "The generous reader of course, will take Septimus's point to that to be that trees are conscious that when they say we accept we create they really mean it. But the transient strangeness that attends his announcement is enough to indicate why it is that trees and other plants that make especially useful synecdoches for the non-sentient world here. With their uncanny air of death in life of being nearly, but not quite sentient, they foreground the absence of filling in the object world as few other objects can."




Septimus' presence - his presence in the novel is thus like also the presence of war - a ghostly one where he is neither dead nor alive. His suicide at the end stresses the impossibility to move on the other side of the living. Once we have been pushed to inhabit the side of the dead. Even though the last shells Miss Septimus directly, they connect with him in a more insidious way the shockwave reaching far outside the time and space of war.

(Refer Slide Time: 12:04)



Mrs. Dalloway

- ▶ Confinement as a result of masculinist medical practices
- ▶ Carried out by Dr. Holmes and Dr. Bradshaw
- ▶ Disregard for the patient's narrative




This confinement is also caused by the experience of masculinist medical practices as a mode of treatment. This is carried out in the novel by Holmes and Bradshaw. These practices often neglect the experiences of the victim and barely look forward to listening to him. Holmes constantly insinuates that there is nothing wrong with Septimus - and this causes Septimus to experience a crisis in masculinity as he is haunted by things that are not really there.

(Refer Slide Time: 12:32)

## Mrs. Dalloway

- ▶ Ideas of blockage and entrapment
- ▶ The car in Mrs. Dalloway and the nose of Madame Sosostris in *The Wasteland*
- ▶ Candelabras, glittering stars, breasts stiff with oak leaves
- ▶ Empire that is caught in the circuit of deadness –the queen herself blocked
- ▶ Fickleness and airiness of words
- ▶ The indexical quality of words and signs
- ▶ Walter Benjamin in his essay *The Storyteller* pointed out how men return from war not with stories, but often with an inability to speak.



The car also highlights the sense of an on setting of blockage in English society. As we have seen in the *Wasteland* the idea of immobility, of being trapped becomes an important sensation after the war. Like the blocked nose of Madame Sosostris that signifies a blockage in society, the car in Mrs. Dalloway with its promise of royal passengers also becomes a symbolic representation of a dead end.

The blockages have reached every hierarchy in society and Woolf muses that more unlike anything I am quoting here, “more unlike anything there has ever been than one could conceive and the queen herself held up the queen herself unable to pass.” So, we here see that the queen herself is implicated in this change of society. When Clarissa finally, sees the car receding she also associates his arrival with the presence of other objects, to blaze among candelabras, glittering stars, breasts stiff with oak leaves.

So, we see how she relates this with other objects candelabras, glittering stars and breasts stiff with oak leaves. She manages to associate the war with the crisis of the empire which will manifest in its entirety some years later. When the second world war bankrupts England and it is hard and it had to let go of many of its colonies. And Woolf in a prophetic way manages to relate those effects to a much earlier time and she points out how for all in the hat shops and tailor shops strangers looked at each other and thought of the dead of the flag of empire. The empire is itself implicated in the deadness and the death it has caused.

So, the empire is kind of caught in a circuit of deadness of deadness and we see that in the mind of the common people it reaches up to the queen. It can the queen herself can be blocked the progress of empire, the spreading out of the empire can thus be blocked through a war like that. And as we have mentioned that the second world war actually causes England to let go of their colonies and give independence to most of countries.

Words thus become airy in the novel always going out of grasp always failing to communicate something objective. This is represented in the novel in the scene where the aeroplane inscribes words of smoke in the sky that different people read in their own ways. The fact that these words are made out of smoke kind of points to the impossibility of communicating meaning under such a society that whatever smoke might come up it will probably soon vanish and that there are no constancy to words, there are there is no way we can have faith in those words. That is why we see Shakespeare becoming such an important figure in the play that his words contain something that is true about the whole of English culture that is true across time.

But we see that in some ways Shakespeare is also under question in the novel because words are slowly starting to disintegrate. They are slowly starting to make less sense and they are slowly starting to move out of the grasp of human beings. This is representative in the novel in that scene where the aeroplane inscribes words of smoke in the sky that different people read in their own ways. Like the car breaking down the airplane generating smoke becomes a throwback to the war of a plane falling out of the sky. Woolf writes and I quote here “suddenly Mrs. Coates looked up into the sky. The sound of an aeroplane bored ominously into the ears of the crowd. There it was coming over the trees letting out white smoke from behind which curled and twisted actually writing something.” The car and the plane become things first in this way where their functions are decoded later.

So, when the we first encountered the car breaking down we encounter in the form of someone screaming out that oh was that a gunshot that we heard in the street. So, first we think of is it a gunshot then we realize it's a car then suddenly we see a plane coming out of the sky and then we realize, okay, so the smoke is actually to print words and not a kind of breaking down, a threat.

The presence of the words becomes more important to Septimus than the attempt to actually convey something. So, the words the fact that they are they are in that shape and form are more important to Septimus than their ability to communicate any meaning because in Septimus's head it is already getting very difficult to communicate what he means what he wants to say. As Douglas Mao points out what others try to read as linguistic science Septimus reads first as an index.

Once again through what the smoke index is the attempt to communicate itself along with the promise that eventually these indices will be transformed into true signs. He could not read language yet. Then as sheer sensuousness apart from any communication except that of beauty. A few paragraphs later he similarly fixes upon the music of spoken language rather than the meanings of the sounds uttered. This becomes apparent when the sounds of the letter k r become more important to Septimus than the whole word.

As Walter Benjamin points out in his essay the storyteller the men that return from wars did not come back with more stories to tell. What they came back with was less stories to tell what happened was due to shell shock due to post traumatic stress disorder they could not tell their stories anymore. they had kind of gotten inside themselves. They had found refuge within themselves in a sort of escape within the self and this communication, the storytelling became an impossible project.


As Walter Benjamin points out in his essay the storyteller that men return from wars not with more stories, but often with an inability even to speak. Septimus here becomes a representative figure of such a diagnosis. The war has caused Septimus to feel that it is men manly. It is manly, it is pertaining to a man, it is masculine to bottle up emotions to not express emotions. This has caused him to slowly move into a condition where he can barely speak anymore, where his marriage is an impulsive decision taken out of his fear that he cannot feel anymore. So, his marriage was also an impulsive decision that he took because he felt that he cannot feel anymore.

So, in a desperate attempt he married a person and we can see the disastrous consequences of such a hasty decision. Woolf here takes another opportunity to relate Septimus's existence to an object to a tree. When Septimus is moved by the human voice in the same way he imagines a tree would be. So, we again find the Septimus and tree parallel being brought in.

(Refer Slide Time: 19:30)

## Mrs. Dalloway

- ▶ "A marvellous discovery indeed – that the human voice in certain atmospheric conditions (for one must be scientific, above all scientific) can quicken trees into life!"
- ▶ London as a place where non-British people have come in
- ▶ Multiplicity of experiences of immigrants
- ▶ Experience of Rezia – her experiences of confinement, Rezia as a small bird
- ▶ "I am alone; I am alone! she cried, by the fountain in Regent's Park (staring at the Indian and his cross), as perhaps at midnight, when all boundaries are lost, the country reverts to its ancient shape, as the Romans saw it, lying cloudy, when they landed, and the hills had no names and rivers wound they knew not where – such was her darkness;"



Woolf writes “A marvellous discovery indeed that the human voice in certain atmospheric conditions for one must be scientific above all scientific can quicken trees into life!” The distortion of objects has also brought a distortion in perception. We encountered the episode of a car parking opposite mulberry’s window and how people think that the sound is that of a gunshot. This scenario reminds us of the initial backdrop of the forge in Charles Dickens’s “Great Expectations” where cannons are fired intermittently in the background. So, we always hear the sound of a cannon firing something going off, but unlike the characters in the Dickens novel, loud noises in Mrs. Dalloway always reminds one of the war. This helps to highlight the effect of the war continuing from the battlefields into the inner lives of London.

We see here London not as anymore as a pristine space of British identities, but a space where others from across the borders have crept in in multiple ways. Septimus has brought Evans back from the war, Peter Walsh has brought his wife from India. This novel thus makes possible for more multicultural representations of London in coming years. Brick Lane by Monica Ali being one of many examples where the city has also been the locus of experiences of people who have come from outside the borders. So, we now see people from third world countries moving to London and writing about their experiences there.

Next we can move into exploring the experiences of Rezia in the novel. the experience of confinement that takes place in Septimus also creeps into Rezia. She also starts feeling trapped in the marriage. Love she thinks makes her more solitary than harbor feelings of companionship with her husband. As the medical authorities constantly deny Septimus the right to speak, Rezia as a woman feels more stifled. She comes to dislike the doctors too. She thinks to herself, "Nothing he was selfish so men are for he was not ill Doctor Holmes said there was nothing the matter with him. She splayed her hand before her. Look her wedding ring slipped she had grown so thin. It was she who suffered, but she had nobody to tell." And we can see almost this is also a sort of kind of recalling where her skin where her flesh is almost recoiling within herself as she is getting thinner and her ring is falling off her fingers.

So, she cannot tell anyone about her experience about her suffering and this relates to us to Benjamin and Benjamin also in his essay the storyteller highlights how storytelling becomes a key aspect of maintaining the sanity of human existence. She has left a more comfortable company of women in Italy for a world that is filled with men in England. This contact with a masculinist colonial society successfully alienates Rezia more and more. Like the disillusioned Marlow from the Heart of Darkness, she imagines the land bereft of the spectacle of civilization in an older condition of it is existence. I quote here "I am alone I am alone! She cried by the fountain in Regents Park staring at the Indian and his cross as perhaps at midnight when all boundaries are lost the country reverts to its ancient shape as the Romans saw it lying cloudy when they landed and the hills had no names and rivers wound they knew not where such was her darkness."


For Rezia any attempt from Septimus to communicate himself becomes traumatic as his speeches cause her to go into a fit and call for the doctor. So, Rezia is actually traumatized by any attend from Septimus to speak because when Septimus is speaking, he is not often speaking to another person, but speaking to himself. He is saying something in his sleep or wakefulness and this drives Rezia to be more and more anguished as she thinks that her husband is slowly growing mad and madder.

So, if in spite of listening to what he is trying to speak what Rezia does is try to find a solution to make him stop talking like that and this causes Septimus to recoil more and more within himself as he is obstructed from speaking. She stops listening to Septimus

and for Septimus also her actions become interruptions in his mode of thought, where she can only interrupt his reveries.


The becoming tree of Septimus causes anxieties in Rezia. Woolf writes I quote here, “She was like a bird sheltering under the thin hollow of a leaf who blinks at the sun when the leaf moves starts at the crack of a dry twig. She was exposed, she was surrounded by the enormous trees, vast clouds of an indifferent world exposed, tortured and why should she suffer why.” So, she was like a small bird whom even the breaking or the snapping of a twig can make her feel anxious and then she is surrounded by big trees that that that kind of scare her.

(Refer Slide Time: 24:41)



## Mrs. Dalloway

- ▶ Requirement of space for women for relationships to flourish
- ▶ “For in marriage a little licence, a little independence there must be between people living together day in day out in the same house; which Richard gave her, and she him.”
- ▶ The impossibility of love in the novel



We can find Woolf asserting the fact that women need their own space in a relationship when she remarks “For a marriage a little license a little independence there must be between people living together day in and day out in the same house which Richard gave her and she him.” So, for Clarissa she needs a certain amount of space for a relationship to flourish, she needs her own space in a relationship for it to flourish, but we see that these gaps. So, these gaps where love takes place between two people slowly they turn into cracks they turn cracks where the possibility of love falls through and we see that these people are slowly pushed into living the solitary lives that they choose for themselves.

And, so impossibility of love becomes a condition in the novel. Love becomes an impossible condition in this novel. Despite the mutual attraction between her and Peter Walsh Clarissa reminds herself how, but with Peter everything had to be shared everything gone into and it was intolerable and when it came to that scene in that little garden by the fountain she had to break with him or they would have had been destroyed both of them ruined she was convinced.

So, Peter Walsh as too passionate for her, a passion that might have destroyed both their lives. So, she some she chose someone like Mister Dalloway instead. A married life without the possibility of love can be exhausting. Clarissa ruminates to herself how she had become Mrs. Dalloway not even Clarissa anymore. This being Mrs. Richard Dalloway. So, her identity becomes totally obsolete.

Woolf tries to capture the sense of loss of identity through the title of a novel where we do not get to know anything about the premarital identity of Clarissa. So, it is just Mrs. Dalloway. It is nothing else then there is not even a mention of Clarissa in the title. Marriages are portrayed as restrictions in the novel as Peter Walsh thinks how, I quote, “With twice his wits that is her husband’s wit she Clarissa had to see things through his eyes one of the tragedies of married life”. But love is often forbidden due to certain social standings making some unions impossible.


However, the loss of love remains a painful memory as Peter Walsh thinks, It was impossible that she should ever suffer again as Clarissa made him suffer. So, the loss of love becomes a pain becomes a pang in the heart, but it is something that we see one cannot go back to because of class differences and other markers in society.



(Refer Slide Time: 27:20)

## Mrs. Dalloway

- ▶ Mental disease and stigma
- ▶ Rezia's embarrassment and anxiousness due to the mental condition of Septimus
- ▶ "People must notice; people must see. People, she thought, looking at the crowd staring at the motor car; the English people, with their children and their horses and their clothes, which she admired in a way; but they were 'people' now, because Septimus had said, 'I will kill myself'; an awful thing to say. Suppose they had heard him? She looked at the crowd."
- ▶ Pretences of normalcy



Now, we will look into some ideas of mental disease and stigma and we will look at the connections that Woolf makes between mental disease and stigma in the novel. There is a hint of stigma around mental illness that Rezia Smith experiences due to her husband Septimus. While navigating through the streets of London we often see her getting anxious with the thought that people must notice. So, this idea that people will notice a mental illness that it must be hidden becomes very important in the novel.


She thinks and I quote, "People must notice people must see people she thought looking at the crowd staring at the motorcar the English people with their children and their horses and their clothes which she admired in a way, but they were people now. Because Septimus had said I will kill myself an awful thing to say suppose they heard him she looked at the crowd."

So, this fear of the crowd getting to know the innermost thoughts of the couple of getting to know suicidal thoughts becomes a taboo in the novel that that cannot be expressed that cannot that others cannot see. Septimus must keep up all the pretences of normalcy as his advice to participate in common activities like playing cricket. When Septimus speaks to himself in the streets Rezia tries to divert his attention. A fear of his madness coming out in the open becomes apparent in the following except. "Look she repeated for he must not talk aloud to himself out of doors o look she implored him, but what was there to look at a few sheep that was all."

Looking, however had different dimensions for Peter Walsh after the war. He sees a new freedom in the society where I quote “Every woman even the most respectable had roses blooming under glass, lips cut with a knife, curls of Indian wing there was a design art everywhere. A change of some sort had undoubtedly taken place. What did the young people think about Peter Walsh asked himself.”

We can see that the parallel here in the renewed sexual urgency that is expressed in the conversation of women in the Wasteland. The action of putting on makeup can now be done in the open and as Walsh marvels at the girl would stand still and powder her nose in front of everyone. This is also reflective of how the girls in the Wasteland also openly discuss birth control pills. So, we see there is a sort of sexual freedom that the war makes possible in a post war England where the middle class can talk openly about attractions for people from the other sex or any other kind of sexual attraction.


(Refer Slide Time: 30:02)



## Mrs. Dalloway

► London as a prohibitive, incarcerating space

"London has swallowed up many millions of young men called Smith; thought nothing of fantastic Christian names like Septimus with which their parents have thought to distinguish them."	Unreal City, Under the brown fog of a winter dawn, A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many, I had not thought death had undone so many. Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled, And each man fixed his eyes before his feet.
Mrs. Dalloway	The Wasteland



The novel thus tells stories of people who cannot realize their full potential in the story city of London. It is a prohibitive incarcerating space. Woolf mentions and I quote here about London. “London has swallowed up many millions of young men called Smith. Thought nothing of fantastic Christian names like Septimus with which their parents have thought to distinguish them.”

We can compare this with the Wasteland, where the poet marvels looking at the lines of clerks on London bridge the death had undone so many. So, while in Wasteland Eliot

looks at the rally of the clerks on London bridge and he thinks a sort of deadness in Woolf we see she is being a little more empathetic sympathetic to the person. Instead of seeing them as anonymous dead people just marching through the streets she thinks that there must be something redeeming in the name Septimus that parents with certain hope had given the name Septimus to a life that must not be wasted like this wasted within London with it is imperial objectives that causes a World War to take place to begin with.

What we find in the novel is thus London where things are breaking down humans are turning into automatons and experience of war that makes a return to normal life almost impossible. Thanks for listening today. Please let us know the questions you might have using the forum.

Thank you.