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## **TRAUMATIC JOURNEY AND RECOVERY IN VIRGINIA WOOLF'S "MRS. DALLOWAY"**

VIRGINIA WOOLF'UN "MRS. DALLOWAY" ADLI ESERİNDE TRAVMATİK YOLCULUK VE İYİLEŞME

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### **ÖZ**

Bu çalışmada, Virginia Woolf'un "Mrs. Dalloway" adlı eserinde yer alan iki ana karakter olan Clarissa Dalloway ve Septimus Warren Smith'in travmatik yolculuklarının ve bu durumdan kurtulma/iyileşme süreçlerinin incelenmesi amaçlanmaktadır. O dönemin edebi eserlerinde, yaşanan Birinci Dünya Savaşını ve bu savaşın doğurduğu etkileri görmek elbette şaşırtıcı değildir. Modernist yazarlardan olan Virginia Woolf, Birinci Dünya Savaşına bizzat tanıklık etmiş ve bu kanlı savaşın bir nevi aynası olarak Mrs Dalloway'i yazmıştır. Yukarıda isimleri verilen iki ana karakter de, hem toplumun hem de geçmiş anılarının baskısı altındadır, fakat bu karakterlerin yaşanan baskıdan kurtulma yöntemleri birbirinden son derece farklıdır. Tıbbi bir sorun olarak görülmeyip, basit bir stres olarak algılanan travma ne doktorlar ne de Septimus'u intihara sürükleyen toplum tarafından ciddiye alınmamıştır. Clarissa'nın yaşadığı travma deneyimi Septimus'un yaşadığı travma deneyiminden son derece farklıdır; Clarissa sürekli aklında olan ve onunla her anı her yere giden geçmişinden ve geçmişinin yarattığı baskıdan dolayı travma geçirmektedir. Bu iki karakterin hayata ve ölüme bakış açıları, yükledikleri anlamlar da birbirinden son derece farklıdır ki gösterdikleri iyileşme durumu da bundan kaynaklı olarak farklılık göstermektedir. Septimus için hayat tahammül edilemez bir işkenceyken, Mrs Dalloway için hayat her anlamda dolu dolu, coşkuyla yaşanması gereken bir hikayedir. Ve ölüm Septimus için birlikteliği, kavuşmayı çağrıştırırken, Mrs Dalloway için ayrılığı çağrıştırmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Travma, Savaş Bunalımı, Baskı, Ölüm ve İyileşme

### **ABSTRACT**

This paper aims at analyzing Mrs. Dalloway by Virginia Woolf in terms of the traumatic experiences and recoveries mainly focusing on two main characters, Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Warren Smith. It is not shocking to see the traces of this decade in the literary works of that age. As a modernist author, Virginia Woolf experienced World War I and Mrs Dalloway is a kind of mirror showing her witnessing to this bloody war. Both main characters in the above mentioned novel are under the oppression of their past memories and their society but their recoveries from this oppression are different. Not being accepted as a medical disorder but a simple stress, trauma is not taken seriously by the doctors and community who drives Septimus to a self sacrificing solution. Clarissa has a different traumatic experience from Septimus with her past always wandering in her mind and causing her to experience trauma. Their recovery experience is also differentiated in the sense that their points of view on life and death are not same. While Septimus takes life as an unbearable torture, Mrs. Dalloway thinks life is a story that should be experienced in every sense. And death means union to Septimus as it means separation to Mrs Dalloway.

**Key Words:** Trauma, Shell-shock, Oppression, Death, Recovery

## 1. INTRODUCTION

*“Fear no more the heat o’ the sun,  
Nor the furious winter’s rages.”<sup>1</sup>*

*Mrs. Dalloway* is a modernist novel exploring the pathetic past of the characters who experienced World War I and their separate future and it is also an experimental work that Woolf inspired from her own life. Virginia Woolf created two accurate characters whose traumatic journeys are quite vivid. One of them is Septimus, a shell-shocked veteran and the other is Clarissa, a middle aged, social English woman. Both of them witnessed World War I though Clarissa passively but Septimus actively. And this bloody war and their pasts left some irretrievable effects on these characters.

But it would be helpful to give some information about the psychological trauma that this paper aims analyzing in this novel. Trauma is a term used often in daily life to refer the stressful events. It is an individual experience coping with enduring stressful conditions. In psychological trauma, the points are:

- “The individual's ability to integrate his/her emotional experience is overwhelmed, or
- The individual experiences (subjectively) a threat to life, bodily integrity, or sanity.” (Giller, 1999: p.1)

These points can be applied both to Septimus and Clarissa to analyze their traumatic situations.

Those years in England were quite different from the past. Everything changed in a great deal and these dynamic situations affected everybody in that country. England started to get “modernized” as the days passed after the war and Peter, Dalloways’ old friend coming from India, witnessed this changing clearly:

*Those five years — 1918 to 1923 — had been, he suspected, somehow very important. People looked different. Newspapers seemed different. Now for instance there was a man writing quite openly in one of the respectable weeklies about water-closets. That you couldn’t have done ten years ago — written quite openly about water-closets in a respectable weekly. And then this taking out a stick of rouge, or a powder-puff and making up in public. On board ship coming home there were lots of young men and girls [...] carrying on quite openly; the old mother sitting and watching them with her knitting, cool as a cucumber. The girl would stand still and powder her nose in front of every one.* (Woolf, 2009: p.8)

## 2. SEPTIMUS’S TRAUMATIC JOURNEY AND HIS RECOVERY

To start the analyze with Septimus, he was a talented poet in Stroud living with his family but he decided to move to London “because he could see no future for a poet in Stroud; and so, making a confidant of his little sister, had gone to London leaving an absurd note behind him, such as great men have written” (Woolf, 2009: p.72). The time passes and the war hits England. “Septimus was one of the first to volunteer. He went to France to save an England”(Woolf, 2009: p. 73). In the army, he meets Evans, his officer, “Rezia who had only seen him once called him “a quiet man,” a sturdy red-haired man, undemonstrative in the company of women” (Woolf, 2009: p. 73) and Septimus has a big affection to Evans but unfortunately Evans is killed in the war. This tragic death changes the rest of Septimus’s life but not just after the war:

*Septimus, far from showing any emotion or recognising that here was the end of a friendship, congratulated himself upon feeling very little and very reasonably. The War had taught him. It was sublime. He had gone through the whole show, friendship, European War, death, had won promotion, was still under thirty and was bound to survive. He was right there. The last shells missed him. He watched them explode with indifference.* (Woolf,2009, p.73)

Sometimes later, Septimus realizes the fact, the pain of losing a friend and starts to turn into a shell-shocked -“affected with combat fatigue and mentally confused, upset, or exhausted as a result of excessive stress”<sup>2</sup>- veteran.

In the novel, the readers first meet Septimus when he is not able to cross the street in the middle of Bond Street to Oxford Street and the author introduces him like this: “Septimus Warren Smith, aged about thirty, pale-faced, beak-nosed, wearing brown shoes and a shabby overcoat, with hazel eyes which had that look

<sup>1</sup> Woolf, Virginia. *Mrs. Dalloway*. Oxford University Press. 2009. p.8. ( It was quoted from Shakespeare’s play Cymbeline.)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/shell-shocked> (14.12.2013)

of apprehension in them which makes complete strangers apprehensive too. The world has raised its whip; where will it descend?" (Woolf, 2009: p.12). In this quotation, pale-face and shabby coat signals something strange about this man. When Septimus declares that he will kill himself crossing the street, and Lucrezia – his "so simple, so impulsive, only twenty-four, without friends in England, who had left Italy for his sake, a piece of bone" (Woolf, 2009: p.14) Italian wife- wants to cry for help, the readers are sure Septimus will be traumatized character. Nancy Knowles quotes in her article from Judith Lewis Herman: "The violation of human connection, and consequently the risk of a post-traumatic disorder, is highest of all when the survivor has been not merely a passive witness but also an active participant in violent death or atrocity." (Knowles, 2001: p.46)

Evans's death hurts Septimus deeply and he could not get rid of his ghost till the end of his life. He sees him wherever he looks: "There was his hand; there the dead. White things were assembling behind the railings opposite. But he dared not look. Evans was behind the railings!" (Woolf, 2009: p. 21). And he talks to him with a big scare: "He sang. Evans answered from behind the tree. The dead were in Thessaly, Evans sang, among the orchids. There they waited till the War was over, and now the dead, now Evans himself— "For God's sake don't come!" Septimus cried out. For he could not look upon the dead." (Woolf, 2009: p. 59) Jessica J. McDonald claims in her thesis "Septimus struggling with repetition-compulsion; throughout the novel he repeatedly experiences hallucinations of his lost comrade." (McDonald, 2006: p.8) And McDonald gives place to a citation from trauma theorist Cathy Caruth about the sudden repetitions of this psychological disorder: "Trauma is not locatable in the simple violent or original event in an individual's past, but rather in the way that its very unassimilated nature – the way it is precisely *not known* in the first instance – returns to haunt the survivor later on" (Woolf, 2006: p.8-9).

Septimus's psychology is in such a mess that he even could not put up with some beauties around him such as the flowers. Flowers remind him the war and its losses. Cornelia Burian mentions "Such memoirs of flowers destroyed by bombs still appear relatively sane [...] The beauty of flowers, too, can no longer conceal the world's ugliness." (Burian, 2003: p.72) Even the wallpaper with the thick red roses reminds him death. In addition, Septimus sees flowers as a way of communication with the death. Before he commits suicide, he helps his wife make hats with artificial flowers.

Septimus sees himself "like a drowned sailor on a rock" (Woolf, 2009: p.58). He thinks that he was under the sea, he died, and returned back to the world but he is not happy to be alive again because his psychology is destroyed and there is no meaning in this world he can decipher. So he leaves everything in this world aside: "the sleeper feels himself drawing to the shores of life, so he felt himself drawing towards life, the sun growing hotter, cries sounding louder, something tremendous about to happen." (Woolf, 2009: p. 59). He feels himself lonely in this world because nobody understands him, neither his wife nor the doctors. He hates Dr. Holmes who is practitioner and Dr. Holmes takes Septimus's situation so tiny saying that "There was nothing whatever the matter [...] Why not try two tabloids of bromide dissolved in a glass of water at bedtime?" (Woolf, 2009: p. 77) Lucrezia tries to believe in doctors and struggles to attract Septimus's attention to the world out of his, but unfortunately it is useless: "So he was deserted. The whole world was clamouring: Kill yourself, kill yourself, for our sakes." (Woolf, 2009: p. 78)

Sir William Shaw is another doctor who checks Septimus. Though Sir William takes him more seriously than Dr Holmes, it is not enough to recover Septimus. To Sir William, "it was a case of extreme gravity. It was a case of complete breakdown — complete physical and nervous breakdown, with every symptom in an advanced stage" (Woolf, 2009: p. 81). This is exact diagnosis to make about him but Sir William's style to cure is very opposite to Septimus. Sir William offers Lucrezia to send him to one of his delightful homes to have a good rest: "It was merely a question of rest, said Sir William; of rest, rest, rest; a long rest in bed. There was a delightful home down in the country where her husband would be perfectly looked after." (Woolf, 2009: p. 82) Lucrezia is sure that her husband will never accept this treatment but Sir William insists on it because "He had threatened to kill himself. There was no alternative. It was a question of law. He would lie in bed in a beautiful house in the country. The nurses were admirable. Sir William would visit him once a week." (Woolf, 2009: p. 82)

Septimus is against this treatment because he does not want to live the rest of his life in the limitations of these two doctors: "So he was in their power! Holmes and Bradshaw were on him! The brute with the red nostrils was snuffing into every secret place! "Must" it could say! Where were his papers? the things he had written?" (Woolf, 2009: p.125) His papers are his life sources. He wrote them when he was a talented and reasonable man. He wants these papers to burn them down; implying the possibility that he will burn his life:

*“Diagrams, designs, little men and women brandishing sticks for arms, with wings — were they? — on their backs; circles traced round shillings and sixpences — the suns and stars; zigzagging precipices with mountaineers ascending roped together, exactly like knives and forks; sea pieces with little faces laughing out of what might perhaps be waves: the map of the world. Burn them! he cried. Now for his writings; how the dead sing behind rhododendron bushes; odes to Time; conversations with Shakespeare; Evans, Evans, Evans — his messages from the dead; do not cut down trees; tell the Prime Minister. Universal love: the meaning of the world. Burn them! he cried.”* ( Woolf, 2009: p.125)

He comes to the edge of his life. He is under the oppression of those two doctors. He gets tired of this world. He wants to get relaxed, he wants to sleep and rest but he is always disturbed by a noise or an image when he is alone or lonely:

*“He was very tired. He was very happy. He would sleep. He shut his eyes. But directly he saw nothing the sounds of the game became fainter and stranger and sounded like the cries of people seeking and not finding, and passing further and further away. They had lost him! He started up in terror. What did he see? The plate of bananas on the sideboard. Nobody was there [...] That was it: to be alone forever. [...] “Evans!” he cried. There was no answer. A mouse had squeaked, or a curtain rustled. Those were the voices of the dead.”* (Woolf, 2009: p.123)

Septimus can't stand this life the oppression by the doctors anymore, especially that Dr Holmes. When he tries to rest at his home, Dr. Holmes comes to the door to check Septimus. In spite of the fact that Rezia struggles not to let him in, he sneaks into the house and at this moment Septimus starts to plan killing himself but how. Lots of things flow in his mind: “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.” (Woolf, 2009: p.126) He never ever wants to see Holmes or hear his voice again, he is sure of that. In this situation, there is not any other way to get rid of and recover from this trauma except from the windows for Septimus. In fact, he likes this life, he waits till the last moment Dr Holmes enters the room to throw himself but at the end:

*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, 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.* (Woolf, 2009: pp.126-127)

That is the solution which Septimus finds to tackle over his psychological trauma. He kills himself as he announces at the very beginning of the novel. He gives the world and the doctors what they want of him; he throws himself to the hug of the nature and his old life. The war and the society are the murderers of Septimus as Caroline Batchelor points out in her article:

*What he suffers from is a classic symptom of shell shock, the distance that psychological trauma creates in interpersonal relationships and ensuing sense of alienation. The moment before he commits suicide, Septimus pauses, realizing that it is not life that drives him to kill himself. [...] It is humanity that is against Septimus. Humanity is responsible for the war that scars him and the society that shuns him.* (Batchelor, p.7)

To sum up, Septimus, the old talented poet who turns into a shell shock veteran after the war, experiences a traumatic journey throughout the novel. He gets bored the lifestyle he has. He is fed up with the treatments of those doctors. And his way to get rid of this trauma is to commit suicide throwing himself out of the window.

### 3. CLARISSA DALLOWAY'S TRAUMATIC JOURNEY AND HER RECOVERY

Clarissa Dalloway is the middle aged heroine who is always struggling to balance her inner world and the external world. Clarissa misses to travel through her inner world and to find herself because she lives in the world of fashion, parties and high society; so she cannot stay on her own and listen to the voice coming from her inside. Richard Dalloway, her simple, hardworking and sensible husband, takes the English traditions serious and has close associations with members of high society. So Clarissa has to follow her husband to catch the standards of that high society. She comes to such a point in this rush that she thinks she is invisible, nothing, unseen; she is just Mrs Richard Dalloway:

*That she held herself well was true; and had nice hands and feet; and dressed well, considering that she spent little. But often now this body she wore [...], this body, with all its capacities, seemed nothing — nothing at all. She had the oddest sense of being herself invisible; unseen; unknown; there being no more marrying, no more having of children now, but only this astonishing and rather solemn progress with the rest of them, up Bond Street, this being Mrs. Dalloway; not even Clarissa any more; this being Mrs. Richard Dalloway.* (Woolf, 2009: p.9)

To some critics *Mrs Dalloway* is a work criticizing the marriage because it puts the woman soul under the domination of masculine world to make the woman keep up with her husband and society. This situation causes some fractions in woman's world. David Eberly refers to this topic writing that 'Eileen Barrett has pointed out that *Mrs. Dalloway* offers a "critique of marriage [that] uncovers how this institution buries women's spirits under the domination of men.'" (Eberly, 2011: p.5)

Clarissa's marriage is a traditional marriage, that's right, but this traditional marriage drives her losing her individuality. After her illness, Richard insists her to sleep "undisturbed" in her bedroom and this causes her to suspect about her marriage, her womanhood and feels herself like a nun. In addition, this couple starts to get away from each other and their sexual relations are over : "feeling herself suddenly shrivelled, aged, breastless [...] Like a nun withdrawing, or a child exploring a tower, she went upstairs, paused at the window, came to the bathroom. The sheets were clean, tight stretched in a broad white band from side to side. Narrower and narrower would her bed be." (Woolf, 2009: p.26) And her bedroom seems her as an attic: "So the room was an attic; the bed narrow; and lying there reading, for she slept badly, she could not dispel a virginity preserved through childbirth which clung to her like a sheet." (Woolf, 2009: p.27) After her illness, she gets white and white. And this fact handicaps her looking at the glass but when she looks at it, she sees a woman first who will have a party that night, then Clarissa Dalloway and last herself. This is one of the signs showing the loss of her individuality:

*the moment of this June morning on which was the pressure of all the other mornings, seeing the glass, the dressing-table, and all the bottles afresh, collecting the whole of her at one point (as she looked into the glass), seeing the delicate pink face of the woman who was that very night to give a party; of Clarissa Dalloway; of herself.* (Woolf, 2009: p.31)

Clarissa is aware of the fact that she has something missing and she knows what she lacked in fact:

*It was not beauty; it was not mind. It was something central which permeated; something warm which broke up surfaces and rippled the cold contact of man and woman, or of women together. For that she could dimly perceive. She resented it, had a scruple picked up Heaven knows where, or, as she felt, sent by Nature (who is invariably wise); yet she could not resist sometimes yielding to the charm of a woman, not a girl, of a woman confessing, as to her they often did, some scrape, some folly.* (Woolf, 2009: p.27)

That is the problem in fact. Clarissa is more interested in women than the men. In fact, we can witness this fact when Clarissa thinks about her old friend Sally Seton with "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" (Woolf, 2009: p.28) Sally Seton is not a traditional lady, especially on the first pages of the novel. She has an amazing power, gift and personality. Wherever she goes, she attracts all the attention on herself. She is also a bit crazy; for example when she forgets her sponge, she runs in the hall naked. Clarissa has an ambiguous relationship with Sally; they are good friends but Clarissa lives the most precious moment when they kiss each others from their lips and Clarissa never ever forgets this moment. She always imagines this scene:

*She and Sally fell a little behind. Then came the most exquisite moment of her whole life passing a stone urn with flowers in it. Sally stopped; picked a flower; kissed her on the lips. The whole world might have turned upside down! The others disappeared; there she was alone with Sally. And she felt that she had been given a present, wrapped up, and told just to keep it, not to look at it — a diamond, something infinitely precious, wrapped up, which, as they walked (up and down, up and down), she uncovered, or the radiance burnt through, the revelation, the religious feeling!* (Woolf, 2009: p.30)

This is an unbelievable thing in that age. As Clarissa is aware of this fact, she just keeps it in her mind as a memory; she does not repeat it with Clarissa or any other women. But she does it because of the social oppression and this drives her suffering from a pain, a kind of trauma, in her inner world. She remembers that moment throughout her life; it repeats any time, like Septimus's trauma. The strange point that Clarissa

mentions about this memory is the purity of her feelings for Sally. It was different from a feeling for man. It was safe. And their common idea about marriage is that it is a catastrophe:

*The strange thing, on looking back, was the purity, the integrity, of her feeling for Sally. It was not like one's feeling for a man. It was completely disinterested, and besides, it had a quality which could only exist between women, between women just grown up. It was protective, on her side; sprang from a sense of being in league together, a presentiment of something that was bound to part them (they spoke of marriage always as a catastrophe), which led to this chivalry, this protective feeling which was much more on her side than Sally's. (Woolf, 2009: p.29)*

Another memory of Clarissa that makes her mind busy is Peter Walsh, a middle-aged man who is in dilemma about his age and identity. He can be assessed as a foil or rival to Richard because he was or is in love with Clarissa but she chooses Richard. And this choice leaves a question both in Clarissa and Peter's mind. Clarissa often questions in herself what would happen if she were with or married Peter:

*For they might be parted for hundreds of years, she and Peter; she never wrote a letter and his were dry sticks; but suddenly it would come over her, If he were with me now what would he say? — some days, some sights bringing him back to her calmly, without the old bitterness; which perhaps was the reward of having cared for people; they came back in the middle of St. James's Park on a fine morning — indeed they did. [...] So she would still find herself arguing in St. James's Park, still making out that she had been right — and she had too — not to marry him. 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. (Woolf, 2009: p.6)*

She does not remember why she didn't marry Peter though she finds him impressive now: "Now of course, thought Clarissa, he's enchanting! perfectly enchanting! Now I remember how impossible it was ever to make up my mind — and why did I make up my mind — not to marry him? she wondered, that awful summer?" (Woolf, 2009: p.35) But she is regretful to miss the chance of marriage with such an enjoyable man. When Peter comes to visit her on the day of her party, all her feelings refresh about Peter:

*If I had married him, this gaiety would have been mine all day! [...] Take me with you, Clarissa thought impulsively, as if he were starting directly upon some great voyage; and then, next moment, it was as if the five acts of a play that had been very exciting and moving were now over and she had lived a lifetime in them and had run away, had lived with Peter, and it was now over. (Woolf, 2009: p.40)*

This situation is another reason pulling Clarissa to experience a fight in her inner world: "She was upset by his visit. She had felt a great deal; had for a moment, when she kissed his hand, regretted, envied him even, remembered possibly (for he saw her look it) something he had said — how they would change the world if she married him perhaps;" (Woolf, 2009: p.132) She rejects Peter and changing the world in her youth but now she is not happy with her marriage. She sleeps undisturbed in her room. She has no sexual life with Richard anymore. And Richard does not say her "I love you" anymore. All these problems in her marriage make her remember her past, her memories and her loves.

As some critics highlight, the other reason of her trauma is her age. She is in her fifties and she always keeps in her mind that as she gets older, death comes closer. In fact Clarissa tries to hide her thoughts about her age as she hides all her weak sides: "She was not old yet. She had just broken into her fifty-second year. Months and months of it were still untouched." (Woolf, 2009: p.31) But readers can catch her situation if it is related with her illness and losing identity. Cornelia Burian writes: "Clarissa's fragility in the face of aging and illness signifies the fragmentation of her identity [...] Clarissa appears as a coherent self only in front of others; when alone, she feels shattered into irreconcilable fragments." (Burian, 2003: p.70) She creates a kind of defending system against her losing personality by hiding her inner world. In spite of all her efforts, when Clarissa escorts the Prime Minister, she becomes aware of her getting older once more. She seems very beautiful with her nice earrings in her green dress: "But age had brushed her; even as a mermaid might behold in her glass the setting sun on some very clear evening over the waves." (Woolf, 2009: pp.147-148)

Her age symbolizes not only her personality's fragmentation but also her scare of death. Clarissa enjoys the life, the simple life immensely but her talented sister's sudden death frightens her throughout her life. She does not find it right dying of such a young lady and this thought brings her the result of there is no God to blame:

*That phase came directly after Sylvia's death — that horrible affair. To see your own sister killed by a falling tree (all Justin Parry's fault — all his carelessness) before your very eyes, a girl too on the verge of life, the most gifted of them, Clarissa always said, was enough to turn one bitter. Later she wasn't so positive perhaps; she thought there were no Gods; no one was to blame; and so she evolved this atheist's religion of doing good for the sake of goodness.* (Woolf, 2009: p.66)

The exact moment when the readers come across Clarissa's fear of death is at her party. Lady Bradshaw-Sir William's wife- announces the news about Septimus's death. At that moment fear of death flashed in her body. She holds a party at her home but someone gives the news of death in the middle of her party- her life. That news interrupts her party and her life. She could not escape the impression of that bad news during her party: "Oh! thought Clarissa, in the middle of my party, here's death, she thought. [...] What business had the Bradshaws to talk of death at her party? A young man had killed himself. And they talked of it at her party — the Bradshaws, talked of death." (Woolf, 2009: p.156) She thinks over this death throughout the party: "there was the terror; the overwhelming incapacity"( Woolf, 2009: p.157). She questions the reason of this young man's suicide. Then she comes to the idea that death is a kind of solution, a union or an escape from this corrupted world: "Death was defiance. Death was an attempt to communicate; people feeling the impossibility of reaching the centre which, mystically, evaded them; closeness drew apart; rapture faded, one was alone. There was an embrace in death." (Woolf, 2009: p.156)After the news of that tragic death, she thinks how she escaped the trap of this life- death. It is thanks to Richard. Although she is not happy with Richard nowadays, she has a family- a husband and a daughter. Richard is in her life "reading the Times, so that she could crouch like a bird and gradually revive, send roaring up that immeasurable delight, rubbing stick to stick, one thing with another".( Woolf, 2009: p.157)

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Clarissa's traumatic journeys goes on throughout the novel but her recovery is not alike with Septimus's. Septimus kills himself to escape from his past, those modern doctors and his pain, but Clarissa turns back to her guests in her party and goes on enjoying party- and life. As Caroline Batchelor states: "Clarissa, unlike Septimus does not choose suicide. She maintains an individual identity through her party, acting as the hostess. [...] Although they choose different fates, the lives of Clarissa and Septimus are woven intricately together through the shell shock with which they react to the world." (Batchelor, p.8)

As a result, Clarissa Dalloway experiences trauma because of her past and some scenes she could not escape in her life. Her interest to women, her dilemma in choosing husband and her age as a signifier of death and losing her identity make stress in her to a great extent. But her recovery or solution is not common. In fact, it may not be exactly right to say that Clarissa recovers by returning to her party and life. She just chooses to go on life as usual; she cannot give up her habits.

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