Chapter VI

VIRGINIA WOOLF AND HER USE OF PSYCHOANALYTICAL METHODS
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While in her novels, Mrs. Desai usually makes an analysis of the psychic condition of her female characters particularly when they come to critical condition in life, Virginia Woolf uses psychology as a technique for the study of the mind of her main characters. As such in the novels of Virginia Woolf we have different kinds of psychological symbols which play different roles to add deeper meaning to her works. The various psychological symbols may be categorised as symbols of time, symbols of character, symbols of object, symbols of connections and various other symbols which she presents through nature, landscape, atmosphere and other elements of life. But the major symbols in her novels are used chiefly for projecting the psychological conditions and inner workings of the mind.

In this connection it may be recalled here that in her search for new technique and pattern Virginia Woolf finally emerged as one of the chief exponents of the novel of stream of consciousness in which psychological theory plays the chief role. In almost all
her novels Virginia Woolf has used this technique to explore the innermost feelings and labyrinths of the mind of her characters. Her novels therefore are laid down in the general technique of the stream of consciousness for which she draws ideas from various psychological theories to serve the purpose. In any case the central theme of her novels pivots round the psychological exploration of the mind of her characters.

As one moves to analyse some of her major novels, one finds that the dominating symbols are used to project the action and reaction of her various characters under the pressure of a particular psychological condition. And in that case it is the human mind that she tries to study from psychological point of view. This is chiefly the device that she makes use of in most of her novels in order to give an insight into the minds of her characters under certain social condition and situation in a given moment of time. Thus, in Jacob’s Room the young lovers are placed against an appropriate back ground as in the works of Brontes, Meredith or Hardy. Jacob and Clara collecting one bunch of white grapes and two of purple, lying curled and warm in the basket suggesting an innocent babe and two hearts aflame in their
desire, symbolizing their hidden desires; the green house, symbolic of the nursery, hints of their desire for children; the prophetic vision of nothing coming out is symbolized by the children playing with onions which yield nothing when all the layers are removed. Even, Wells, Shaw, or the sixpenny weeklies—'written by pale men in muddy boots, the result of creaking and screeching' of brains rinsed in cold water and wrung dry— which Jacob sees at Mr. Plumer's house, expressing modern literature, as contrasted to 'Homer, Shakespeare, the Elizabethans' in Jacob's room, became a symbol of the triviality and intellectual poverty of Mr. Plumer's mind, his shallow outlook of life. As Mr. Plumer, old Huxtable, Sopwith and Cowan the lights of Greek, Science, and philosophy burning in Cambridge seem not to be able to 'produce good people and good books', the light burning over Cambridge is not simple or pure, or wholly splendid. The creaking of the chair in the empty room after Jacob's death carries its own symbolic weight.

In order to study the mind of her character, Mrs. Woolf uses the similar technique in her other novels. In Mrs. Dalloway too, characters are used to give an insight into the various aspects of society and to symbolize certain conditions and states of mind.
The old woman is free to act in her own ways, to climb upstairs, stop or "gain her bedroom" for she is living above by herself and safe from the domination of Kilman. She becomes for Clarissa Dalloway, who herself, in order to enjoy the privacy, had refused to marry Peter, "a symbol of the privacy of the soul". Mrs. Dalloway sees the old woman once again after she has heard about the suicide of Septimus. The old lady quietly goes to bed alone and unconcerned with the social gathering, remaining 'aloof from active life; the noise of the party". With the Holmes and Bradshaws making life intolerable, or like the Smiths killing themselves, evokes once again the sense of the privacy of the soul that Clarissa wanted to preserve, as Frank Baldanza says, "isolation of the soul which, to Clarissa's mind, neither love nor religion can eliminate". The old lady symbolises through her gestures the change that empathy makes on Clarissa. Certain ordinary things of every day life acquire the added significance of a symbolic nature. As in Mrs. Dalloway, the fountain where Peter and Clarissa meet with its broken spout and a dribble only, like the dry fountain "which had long ceased to play", where Evelyn and Perrott meet in The Voyage Out, symbolizes the contracted and rigid
feelings which Clarissa had at that moment for Peter. Mrs. Woolf's interest in probing into the nature of life and death makes her, like Clarissa, see symbols of pulsating life as Peter watching the beauty of Bed ford Place leading to Russell Square, and seeing a piano, a gramophone and parties engaged in conversation. The ordinary things with their beauty pure and simple, offering a sense of absorbing, mysterious and infinitely rich life to Peter attain symbolic value. Clarissa Dalloway's concern for the physical show of life makes her see “the swing, tramp and trudge,” in the “bouncing ponies”, in the “whirling young men” and in the “laughing girls in their transparent muslins”.

In *The Voyage Out*, 'the hotel' and the 'villa' do not seem to represent, individual world or the 'social world' as James Hafley finds, but Mrs. Woolf uses them to symbolize two separate systems of life: the hotel had 'a slightly in human atmosphere' while escaping to the house was a genuine pleasure. Rachel's house at Richmond which, according to her own description of it, is rather a nice house, except that its a little dingy – this house with its four meals, its punctuality, and servants on the stair at half past ten, is a symbol of the Victorian conventional type of life.
that was imposed on the daughters of the house and which Mrs. Woolf, the feminist thinks, made the daughters inexperienced, raw and 'unlicked' even at the age of twenty-four. The rusty inkstand, the old newspaper, and pen with a broken nib reflect symbolically of the smallness and worthlessness of human life to Rachel. Thus, Mrs. Woolf brings out the symbolic implications of the transitoriness of human life through these ordinary things.

In her novel Night and Day, Virginia Woolf presents altogether a different insight into the mental condition that reflect essentially the personality of her character. In this novel, Katherine’s passion for mathematics and astronomy stands for her mental make-up and personality. Katherine prefers to work at Mathematics which, she thought, was directly opposed to literature. Mrs. Hilbery telling Denham, “I’m so glad you’ve made Katherine read poetry, Mr. Denham! and feel poetry and look poetry!” which becomes symbolic of Katherine's overcoming her dry impersonality of figures, her falling in love.¹¹

Her novel To The Lighthouse may be regarded as a major illustration of the technique of stream of consciousness. In this
novel, the title *To The Lighthouse* itself serves as a significant symbol, the dinner is symbolized by three "works of art" \(^{12}\): the perfectly successful *boeuf en daube*, the bowl of fruit exquisitely arranged by Rose, and the poem recited, whose words and rhythm provide a kind of music to support and universalize the mood visually created, while it brings together Mr. Ramsay and the guest who had earlier enraged him, Mrs. Ramsay, and the same guest who, she usually felt, disliked her.

It may be noted here that sometimes Virginia Woolf uses psychological devices to make a part of her structural organization which forms as a kind of art and craft of her fiction. Thus, in *To The Lighthouse*, Part I prepares the reader to understand the title of Part III, 'The Lighthouse'. Beginning with an actual lighthouse which stands out in the sea, Mrs. Woolf quickly allies this real lighthouse with a spiritual one. The relation between parts I and III, therefore, goes much deeper than the surface one supplied by the trip to the Lighthouse. 'Time Passes' is the necessary link between the two. The kaleidoscopic technique enables the shifting alternately from outside the window or the lawn to within the window or the drawing room making both the interior and the exterior fuse
together. The novel, being built on contrast between Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay is suggested at the very beginning.

Martin Gliserman considers that the overall pattern of *To The Lighthouse* is the Male-Female model. The center of the novel plays out the consequences of both the male and female models - the male damages, the female repairs. The other contrasts on which the novel rests is, as Bernard Blackstone writes between Lily giving the feminine viewpoint and William Bankes the masculine, both constituting a kind of Greek chorus commenting on the personalities of the Ramsay.

The individual sections are also artistically organized in section 5, of part I, beginning with the brown stocking and ending with it, which provides an external framework, throws valuable light on the narrative technique of Mrs. Woolf. Sometimes, as in chapter II, which is entirely kaleidoscopic, the thesis, the antithesis and the synthesis in the character of Mrs. Ramsay is offered-the thesis lying in the limitless range of experience "if life sinks down for a moment" and one loses personality and gets a sense of freedom and peace, the anti thesis evoked with Mrs. Ramsay's
mood and recognition of the inevitable facts of “suffering, death, the poor” which seem both “so much her, yet so little her” \(^{18}\); the synthesis making Mrs. Ramsay identify herself to the third “long steady stroke” \(^{19}\) of the lighthouse, which was her stroke \(^{20}\) seen in two different aspects first as an image of expansion and release, and then of contraction and confinement offering the final intuition of the essential truth of the nature of reality, subjective involvement in and objective detachment from life; truth and happiness resting in neither of the two spheres but achieved in a harmonious balance of the two.

Apart from her attempt at projecting the mind of her character, Virginia Woolf also uses symbols which serves as the connecting elements in her art of characterization and her device of creating proper atmosphere. For this purpose Virginia Woolf usually draws her symbols from nature and landscape; for example, the sea is such a pervasive presence in a number of Virginia Woolf’s novels as *The Voyage Out*, *Jacob’s Room*, *To The Lighthouse* and *The Waves* open at the edge of the sea where the reader begins. The unknown sea is always a challenge to survival for Mrs. Woolf. It does not provide an opportunities for renewal in spite of being
dangerous as in Joyce and Lawrence.\textsuperscript{21} In \textit{The Voyage Out}, love, like death is frequently imaged through the sea, which inherently functions a dual role – destructive, life-denying and creative, life-affirming. In chapter XVI the sea first appeals to Rachel and Terence as something more personal than the landscape – something which could be identified with England, home and comfort. Rachel soon sees a threat in the eternity of peace which the unbroken surface of the water represents.\textsuperscript{22} The sea is an implicit part of the togetherness of Rachel and Terence which is itself a kind of expansion of self as well as a potential constriction.\textsuperscript{23} In \textit{To The Lighthouse} the sea, with the sound of its waves heard throughout the novel, is connected with the symbol of the eternal flux of time and life, in the midst of our existence. The nature of the sea is kaleidoscopic, sometimes sounding to Mrs. Ramsay soothing and consoling like” some old cradle song,” and sometimes “like a ghostly roll of drums remorselessly beating and warning of death”\textsuperscript{24} and bringing terror, though the individual is reduced to nothingness in comparison with the power of sea. The sea surrounding the island on which the action takes place, suggests the human race. The waves act like symbols of movement of individual life carried towards the shore.
The movement has a dual aspect of being identified closely with existence in its alternating serenity and anguish. According to Irene Simon, Mrs. Woolf uses the sea to suggest opposite meanings: the sea is both destroyer and protector, engulfs individual elements and brings them together, threatens the ordered world and create harmony.\textsuperscript{25} To Mr. Ramsay, the sea is the enemy, to Mrs. Ramsay it can warn that everything is ephemeral and make her think of destruction of the island and its engulfment in the sea.\textsuperscript{26} Lily in Part III to grasp her vision by turning again and again to the sea can satisfy her need of distance and blue. \textit{The Wave} also reveals that the symbols of the wave and the sea which correspond to reality convey two things - the nature of reality and then simultaneous ceasing and existing:

\textit{The waves broke on the shore} \textsuperscript{27}

For Mrs. Woolf, the wave and sea symbols are linked with the life – cycle of human being like Bernard, Neville, Louis, Susan, Jinny and Rhoda right from birth to death and also after death. Death for the wave or a human being "is not annihilation but resurrection into a greater and more glorious life"\textsuperscript{28} Like Mrs. Ramsay and Mrs. Dalloway, Bernard realized this.
The sea is also seen as a pervasive force present both in England and Greece in *Jacob's Room*, the emblematic idea of the sea of life being repeated twice through conventional symbolism\(^{29}\) the world referred to as a boat travelling in a wide sea\(^{30}\) Dods Hill Church with its dead to a ship with all the crew abroad.\(^{31}\) *Mrs. Dalloway* uses the idea of the collective sea, the unity of all things, brings together the most disparate phenomena\(^{32}\) the green folds of Clarissa's dress become waves, the rhythm of her needle the rhythm of the ocean and her sitting room in London the seashore;\(^{33}\) like Septimus and Clarissa, Rezia feels enfolded by the ocean, image of universal life:

*The caress of the sea ...... hollowing them in its arched shell.*\(^ {34}\)

The sea symbol of *Between the Acts* divides and isolates. Reference is made to the sea earlier as a preparation for its use as the all inclusive, seminal medium\(^{35}\) - despite the distance of Pointz Hall from the sea: hundred miles, after a storm “you can hear a wave break”.\(^{36}\)

Another important Nature symbol: The Sun is significant as early as *Jacob's Room*.\(^ {37}\) The blazing sunset of Chapter I impresses
Betty with a sense of responsibility and danger, sunlight clears away darkness and displays everything clearly with a fresh vitality as in Lombard Street, or Jacob seeing the sunrise while traveling along to Greece in train Contradistinguished from the lamps of London or night-lamps at Cambridge coming from the windows of people like Huxtable. The sun has layers of meanings in Mrs. Dalloway depending upon the context of reference. The sun may mean life or draw us towards life as for Peter or for Septimus. Yet there is some thing to fear. The handling of the sun symbol communicates the narrative itself and the measure of the movement which constitutes the narrative. The extended symbol (the counsel to “fear no more” and the mockery) are associated with Clarissa A static symbol (life is good, the sun hot) is associated with Peter. Finally, the symbol serves to motivate, for as Clarissa comprehends the nature of Life (grows to understand the full significance contained in the expanding symbol attached to her), she acts, thinks and chooses differently. In the interludes of The Waves the diurnal course of the sun from sunrise to sunset is synchronized and technically matched with the conscious lives of six speakers including their infancy, childhood, youth and old age. In The Years also Mrs. Woolf employs
the setting sun symbol at the starting of the last section. “Present Day,”46 to suggest their running the course and the rising sun which brings in the new couple, to stand for the birth of a new class—the working class replaced by the leisured class.47

Trees, and birds are important symbols in the major work of Mrs. Woolf Septimus feels a kinship with trees:

The leaves being connected by millions of fibres
with his own body48

And prominent among his “messages” to mankind are: “trees are alive,49 “Men must not cut down trees”.50 Reference to birds like the rooks rising, falling, which Mrs. Dalloway sees while standing with Peter,51 represent her feelings and aspirations about a rosy budding life. Her emotions rising and falling like that of the rooks act as external symbols of her feelings in the presence of Peter who loved her and for whom she had tender feelings. The bird symbol is also obvious in Peter turning Miss Parry’s glass eye into a symbol.

It seemed so fitting—one of nature’s master pieces
that old Miss Parry should turn to glass. She would die like some bird in a frost gripping her perch. She belonged to a different age.52
Trees and birds also attain symbolic value in *To the Lighthouse*

William Bankes, unlike Mr. Ramsay, was not one of those men “who do their best work before they are forty”,\(^\text{53}\) is associated with the long-lived pear tree known to have borne fruit even though three hundred years old. The pear tree becomes a symbol of the utility and vigour which Lily Briscoe associated with William Bankes and Mr. Ramsay’s splendid mind. Lodged in the fork of the pear tree she sees:

\[
\textit{a phantom kitchen table, one of those scrubbed board tables, grained and knotted, whose virtue seems to have been laid bare by years of muscular integrity.}^{\text{54}}
\]

A hen straddling her wings to protect her chicks\(^\text{55}\) is also a symbol Mr. Ramsay’s saying ‘pretty – pretty’ illuminated Mr. Banker about Mr. Ramsay’s being simple and sympathetic to humble beings and gave him an insight into his unconscious desire to have a wife and children. Mr. Ramsay’s desire for fluttering wings of the chicks and clucking is what he saw the end of their relationship. But it is in the symbol of the three geese in *Jacob’s Room* that Mr. Woolf is very perfect:

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Three geese, half running, half flying, scuttled across the lawn with Johnny behind them, brandishing a stick.56

This works to give an insight into the intricate working of Betty's mind, to comprehend along with her unconscious reasoning and emotional reactions immediately. If she were to marry, for the second time her second husband might chase out her three sons, her geese. Birds too are employed as symbols in the interludes of The Waves to suggest what is to happen later. In Orland as Clifton Snider comments,57 "The Oak Tree," the poem and the actual tree itself, is the most important symbol. The tree stands for the "conjunction", the joining of opposites. Like the house itself, its roots go down to the collective unconscious and its branches breathe the air of consciousness.

Gardens, the country and flowers are also employed as symbols. In Mrs. Dalloway, Clarissa thinks of the garden at Bourton while thinking about her girlhood58 Rezia thinks about the Milan Gardens while thinking of her maidenhood and happiness.59 In Mrs. Dalloway, the country is employed as a symbol connected with the tender feelings of Peter. Whenever Peter thought tenderly about Clarissa he
thought of her very after "on board ship, in the Himalayas", he was always reminded of "some field or English harvest", he "saw her most often in the country, not in London". Nature is used as a symbol of the peaceful feelings of Sally "Despairing of human relationships" she goes into her garden and gets from her flowers a peace which men and women never gave her" However they are employed as appropriate symbols connected with the quiet feelings of Clarissa. She gets her peace from the flowers, in Miss Pym's shop. Miss Pym's shop with fragrance coming from fresh scented flowers radiant, soft, pure and sensuous attracts the sense of smell, touch, sight, its neatness and innocence heightened by the reference to fresh "frilled linen from a laundry, and the girls in muslin frocks and the almost blue-black sky" evoke visions of undisturbed happiness. The tender feelings of Richard Dalloway or the freedom and delight of Elizabeth are highlighted by using appropriate nature symbols when Richard Dalloway walks with Hugh Whitbread, through the streets. Of London after having lunched with Millicent Bruton, he becomes conscious of the sham and strenuous life of London. He thinks about the restful landscape of Norfolk which is a symbolic of the feelings of peace, rest and quiet which Richard
Dalloway desired to have at that moment. His daughters Elizabeth who had felt very stuffy inside the Army and Navy stores in the company of Miss Kilman also thinks about the country and dogs and wants to be out in the open air for from the oppressing presence of Miss Kilman. She was delighted to be free, the fresh air, being so delicious, is symbolic. In *The Years*, Kitty is sauntering out in the fields a perfect May morning when Londoners were still asleep. The fret and fury of London is a contrast to the countryside which becomes a symbol connected with peace and happiness. It is here that Kitty is happy completely.

An insect like the moth is also used as symbol in the works of Virginia Woolf. Harvena Richter finds the aspect of the moth symbol occurring in three novels. In *The Voyage Out* the moth appears at two places: in the center of the book when Rachel and Terence have discovered that they were in love, their love being fatal, and at the end of the book after Rachel dies. In *Jacob's Room* the death of the moth and the fall of the trees are directly linked with Jacob who collects “lepidoptera” including the dead head moth and the mysterious moth which he discovers in the forest and cannot accurately identify in Morris book on moths.
That same night "the tree had fallen", something "like a volley of pistol shots". In the next chapter the images of death of the free and the volley of pistol shots recur the sound is echoed just before Jacob dies. Mrs. Woolf says that the original name of *The Waves* was *The Moths*, abandoning the title meant making the moth symbol lie quiescent.

While making use of psychological symbols Virginia Woolf also turns to other devices in order to suggest how a character moves from reality to reverie and from artificiality to concrete realization of facts. In such cases V. W. makes use of literary allusions which also are used as psychological symbols to unfold the real state of mind of her characters. "Thus, *Mrs. Dalloway* is organized and enriched by literary allusions to a unique degree, unusual in any of Mrs. Woolf’s novels. The allusion to Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline* which appears at five key points, supplies central structure to the novel; give Clarissa’s experiences coherence and significance, link events in the life of different characters; create an intricate symbolic system. Shakespearean allusion gives symbolic dimension to the two figures who present alternative ways of life to Clarissa: Lady Bruton and Sally Seton. “Inorganic images” alluding to Shakespeare describe
Lady Bruton in two places while “flowery imagery surrounds Sally Seton”, Clarissa associates Sally with passion obvious in her quoting Othello. The Shakespearean quotation that unites the ideas of life and death comes from Cymbeline.

_Fear no more the heat O’ the sun_  
_Nor the furious winter’s rages_

This dirge sung over the body of Imogen, or her “show of death” is only “locking-up the spirits, a time, to be more fresh, reviving” (I. V. 40 – 42).

The most important death and rebirth symbols Clarissa and Septimus share are cold and the heat of the sun. The Cymbeline citation’s “heat o’ the sun” and winter’s cold provide the symbols for Clarissa’s recurrent simulation of death and rebirth: she throws herself into the heat of life, suffers and retreats to a cold place in a continual movement from passion to calm, from life to death. The heat-cold imagery, originating in the lines from Cymbeline and elaborated to symbolize the opposition between passion and frigidity, life and death, culminates in the party scene. The rebirth Clarissa experiences begin with a transformation of her emotional nature.
When Clarissa first saw the lines "Fear no more the heat
O' the sun .......,” (as at the last) Clarissa has a sense of life and
death as interlocking halves of one whole, as only a drop in the
ocean of existence instead of an individual with an identity to
lose; Clarissa accepts life and death as the inevitable “ebb and
flow” of the ocean to which she belongs, fearing neither the heat
of life nor the winter of death.80

In To the Lighthouse, literary allusions used symbolically
suggest the moods and emotional reactions of the characters. The
reference to the line from ‘The Charge of the light Brigade’ 81
acquires symbolical value, expressing as Bernard Blackstone finds:

\[
\text{the feeling he has at the moments, of being the } \\
\text{leader of a lost cause, worthy of pity but } unflinchingly \\
\text{doing his duty. } \]

82

This gives an insight into Mr. Ramsay’s thought and feelings
while evoking respect for him. Mr. Ramsay uttering ‘Alone’ and
‘Perished’ 83 symbolises his feelings and the condition of his mind at
that particular moment of his life after Mrs. Ramsay’s death. His
quoting from Cowper’s ‘The Castaway’, symbolises Mr. Ramsay’s
feeling of being over whelmed in deeper gulf. Mr. Ramsay does
not give up his attempt. His murmuring “someone has blundered”\textsuperscript{84} and “We perished, each alone”, \textsuperscript{85} while evoking the sense of chaos and loneliness, as analysed by Joan Berretl,\textsuperscript{86} symbolises the unflinching resolution to pursue his intellectual quest. Mr. Ramsay starting to sing at the conclusion of the dinner “Come out and climb the garden path”\textsuperscript{87} sounds to Mrs. Ramsay, as the words of a song. The song symbolises their feelings, for after the humdrum day, they were feeling restful in the soothing presence of Mrs. Ramsay. The Shakespearean sonnet, ‘From you have. I been absent in the spring’, which Mrs. Ramsay reads while sitting in her husband’s study,\textsuperscript{88} is another literary allusion used symbolically. The sonnet says that without the beloved “proud-pied April” with all its different flowers in odour and hue seems “winter” to the lover, illustrating Mrs. Ramsay’s love for her husband which she could not speak out. Mr. Ramsay reproached her and considered her heartless for she never could say what she felt. Virginia Woolf makes Mrs. Ramsay read this particular sonnet and reveals to the reader that it was not so. Mrs. Ramsay wanted to tell this to her husband that she loved him and was not a heartless woman. Allusions from religion and religious art evoke the reverence which the various characters in
novel feel. After seeing Mrs. Ramsay sitting with James in the window in a rapturous mood, William Bankes saw Lily’s painting of Mrs. Ramsay reading to James and thought of Raphael’s Mother and Child, objects of universal veneration. This allusion becomes a symbol of Mr. Bankes’ veneration for Mrs. Ramsay. Mr. Ramsay’s sharing bread and cheese with the old fisherman and his son is symbolic of Christ’s breaking bread with the fisherman and evokes the respect that James and Cam felt for their father.

In *Between the Acts* lines from Keats “Ode to a Nightingale” reveal the nature of Isa’s poetry, “to escape from reality to reverie”. The entanglements of reality hinder the voyage through poetry to an ideal world. Isa is forced to abandon her flights of fancy, and like Keats, return to drab reality. The allusion to Keats “Ode on a Grecian Urn”, implied in the lady’s picture, belongs to a world of art divorced from life. Like the urn the painting forces the observer to see it in terms of art “the curve” and “the straight” leaving human equivalents behind. Paradox communicates the disorientation of the viewer trying to apprehend the work of art in its team; the vase of the room is “silent” yet “sings” as Keats urn in the “bride of quietness”, “the foster-child of silence”, yet
speaks. In direct contrast, Miss La Trobe's art has no existence independent of her audience. Literary allusions in all the skits, with symptoms of the then language and behaviour of people for making the symbolism effective, reveal the range of literary allusions which is wide and encompasses the whole of literary history - Chaucer, Shakespeare, Tennyson, Dante, Restoration Comedy, Victorian Age and Modern Age to symbolize:

*All literature discussed in connection with real little incongruous living humour ... all life, all art ...... a rambling capricious but somehow unified whole.*  

Allusions ranging from echoes and half echoes, from, Shakespeare, Shelley, Byron and Tennyson has the aim of the author for her audience:

*to find a traditional body of myth in the evocation of a traditional literature.*

Often Virginia Woolf appears to make use of ordinary traditional things but even these commonsense things become what may be called minor symbols suggesting chiefly the psychological feeling and state of mind of her characters involve in different situation of life.
Thus, though apparently traditional in form, Virginia Woolf's first novel *The Voyage Out* employs a suggestive symbol in the title. The "transatlantic." voyage from London in England to Santa Marina in South America, plural in meaning is both a physical voyage out for Rachel, Hirst, Hewet, Susan and also a symbolic voyage out into the world of love, adventure and becoming a symbol of Rachel's growing and going out into the world, of our facing life as it is much like Miriam Henderson's *Pilgrimage*. The *Voyage Out* is partly "a Bildungs roman" like Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* or *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* 1795-96 where the protagonist's development from childhood to maturity is described. As E. L. Bishop writes, the novel traces Rachel Vinrace's voyage out: a journey from England to South America, an initiation into love and finally a passage out of life into death, along with concurrent mental voyage that leads both inward and outward making Rachel awaken to the world at large and to her own consciousness.

The symbolic title of *Night and Day* not only suggests Rodney's fluctuating affections for Katherine and Cassandra but
also symbolises the varying joy and dismay that Katherine and Ralph experience during their uncertainty. Ralph goes to tell Mary that he is in love with Katherine; Katherine expresses similar feelings while talking to Mrs. Hilbery. The portrayal of the shifting relationships of the characters, their changing moods from misery to happiness, making night and day become a symbol of the Night and Day of their feelings and emotions. Douwe W. Fokkema believes that in *To The Lighthouse* the title and leitmotif can be explained in accordance with what we consider the central and typically modernist meaning of the book. The Light house, also mentioned in the title of part III can be seen through “The window”, which is the title of Part I. The object seen and the object through which it is observed stand out as antonyms. The feature and the observation connects part I and part III. The journey, which took over ten years from the first proposal to the final accomplishment as Dorothy Bevies finds is the story, the journey being archetypal. It is as Joseph L. Blotner suggests, a ritual and symbolic voyage to the Lighthouse. Finally, it is significant to recall that in her attempt to present the exact state of mind of her characters, Virginia Woolf very artistically employs action and
incident in order to suggest the mental states of her character. Here, though action and incident may be treated as mere narrative elements in the general structure of her plot, various actions and incidents here become primarily symbolical to project the exact condition of thinking in the mind of the characters. Thus, Hirst and Rachel dancing to celebrate the engagement of Susan, where Rachel because of a good ear for rhythm, could dance well. Their inability to dance together becomes symbolic of their minds not being in harmony with each other, rather of their not being meant for each other. Later Rachel's collecting one grey stone after another and building them into a cairn quietly and carefully, symbolises her manner of thinking for building up a pattern of life for herself, particularly after the experience at the dance where she was very happy and where she had changed her view of life completely in being no longer a timid girl with her wits scattered.

Action in *Night and Day* is also used as symbol. Ralph and Mary going out walking to Lincoln, he "filled with a sense of the actual presence of Katherine," leans against a tree and says aloud "Katherine, Katherine," which hurts Mary who tears a long spray of ivy from the trees. This is symbolic of her feelings who
thinks that she must tear herself away from Ralph - her tree - because of his love for Katherine, though while discussing Denham's prospect of buying a cottage and writing a book, the winding of the ivy round her stick becomes suggestive of her feeling of re-clinging to Ralph. The throwing away of the ivy after fastening the coat securely along with the grasping of the stick firmly, symbolizes her decision and determination not to cling to Ralph as he did not belong to her any more. As a result of this she refuses to marry him when later, on their journey back home, he proposes to her.

The act of walking used symbolically in *The Voyage Out*, shows Rachel's exultation and suspicious of her falling in love; her unconsciously walking faster and faster becomes suggestive of her inner excitement. Hewet resorts to walking fast in spite of the heat of the sun when he sees Hirst slip into a chair by Rachel's side. The speed of his walk changes according to the prevalent mood of the moment - walking fast as long as he is tormented and the pace slackens after he starts speaking about his love for her.
Ralph and Katherine, in *Night and Day* are found walking, tramping or running according to their state of mind. When mentally upset Ralph walks “up the street at a great pace, cutting the air with his walking stick”;\(^\text{107}\) strides “with extreme swiftness” along the Embankment;\(^\text{108}\) runs up the stairs “two steps at a time”;\(^\text{109}\) tramps a beat up, and down; Katherine’ walking up and down, driving quickly, hastening to and from Lincoln’s Inn, or speeding in a cab, reflect the agitated states of her mind.\(^\text{110}\)

Sometimes characters express an idea, which they cannot convey adequately in a direct statement, by evoking it through symbols as in *The Voyage Out* and *Night and Day*. In *Night and Day*, Katherine uses flames and fires to explain her idea about Ralph: “What a fire! blazing splendidly in the night,”\(^\text{111}\) She thinks on looking at Ralph. Even in *The Voyage Out* Evelyn and Hewet, while discussing about men, come to appoint where Hewet cannot explain clearly what exactly he means by ‘people are nothing more’ which is confusing for Evelyn, strikes a match, points to the flame and says, “just that”.\(^\text{112}\) Evelyn visualizes his meaning in a flash making the flame become a symbol of the spirit of man, neither his body nor his qualities. This flame with a halo
around it and this image becomes central to Virginia Woolf’s theory of fiction when she speaks of life as a “luminous halo”. Thus, flames and fires, like the sparks issuing from Shelley’s ‘Burning Fountain’, symbolize the spirit.

Certain actions in *Mrs. Dalloway* are also of a symbolical nature. The different actions of Peter Walsh with “his old horn handled knife which Clarissa could swear he had these thirty years”, symbolizes his emotions and attitudes. His strange habit of always playing with his knife, that Clarissa had noticed of him, represents “his silly unconventionality, his weakness; his lack of the ghost of a notion that any one else was feeling”; his act of shutting the “knife with a snap” indicates his irritation regarding the thought that having a conservative husband was bad for some women. Thinking about his past life full of journeys, rides, quarrels, adventures, bridge parties, love affairs, work, work, work compared to the smugness of Clarissa’s life, he clenches his fist on his knife, and this clenching of his fist on the knife evokes an adventurous personality. The paring of his nails with his pocket knife or running his finger along his blade, give an idea of his mental attitude of being sharp enough for trimming his life according
to his liking. His love for Daisy the 'young, quite young'\textsuperscript{119} wife of a major in the Indian Army as woman wearing a red carnation, his straightening himself and 'stealthily fingering his pocket-knife',\textsuperscript{120} symbolise his desire to reassure himself of his being still young and free. At the same time thinking about the cold nature of women like Clarissa who can neither know the sharpness of passion, nor understand it, he feels that he should not have made a sniveling old ass of himself by showing his emotion to her. His introspections about his sufferings on being in love with Clarissa or his own jealousy – is symbolized by the way he views his pocket-knife, holding it before him at arm's length. This mental attitude is externalized by shutting the blade of his pocket-knife. Therefore, Jean Wyatt suggests\textsuperscript{121} that Peter's pocket knife is a phallic symbol incorporating the threat Clarissa attaches to sex, as well as an emblem of his habitual behaviour toward her breaking into her privacy, lacerating her with criticism and ripping open the civilized surface of life that protects her from emotions. He feels 'the soul must brave itself to endure' as he goes to attend Clarissa's party and thus he opens 'the big blade of his pocket knife'\textsuperscript{122} which symbolizes his brave preparation of himself to attend her party which he dislikes
and also to face the humbugs he hates. Therefore, the horn-handled knife reflects his thoughts, feelings and attitudes, while being a symbol not only of his sex and intellect alone but also his personality as a whole. A similar revelation can be drawn in *To The Lighthouse* as stated by J.R. Maze. Bankes uses the ready-made phallic symbol, a pen knife while asking Lily to explain the picture to him:

*Nothing could be cooler and quieter. Taking out a pen-knife, Mr. Bankes tapped the canvas with the bone handle.*

A simple action of Mrs. Dalloway’s mending her “green dress” is connected with her personality. Mending the dress, collecting the folds together, stands for drawing her parts together without showing the bad side of her with its “faults, jealousies, vanities and suspicious”. It has been rightly stated by Teresa L. Ebert that the act of collecting the folds of the dress becomes the metaphor for the continual cycle of the breaking waves and the sea itself, which in turn symbolizes the eternal rhythm of life: death and rebirth. Thus Mrs. Dalloway’s perception begins to delve beyond the surface details to establish underlying connections and her “metonymic language” moves increasingly toward metaphor until it becomes almost “pure metaphor".
The party in *Mrs. Dalloway* and the dinner party as action, in *To The Lighthouse* suggest important symbols of unity, vitality and action.

In *Between the Acts*, Isa's plucking and draping of a flower has symbolic value, the plucking of the flower suggests her desires to get hold of the man in grey - the gentleman, farmer who being well guarded by his wife, is inaccessible to her. After realizing this she drops him symbolically by dropping the flower.

Hence while making a general study of the novels of Virginia Woolf, one finds on the first instance that she is exploring a new-pattern of novel based on the technique of stream of consciousness. As one moves deeper into her novel, one has to find that while using this technique she is making use of the various psychological devices which aim at laying bare the state of mind of her character, the deep inner feelings, and the various level of consciousness which play vital roles in the life of a human being particularly based in a psychological crisis. Herein the greatness of her art and the effectiveness of her technique.
Besides these major symbols which act as very significant indicators throwing various shades of meaning in her novels, Virginia Woolf also makes use of some minor symbols which become quite meaningful and suggestive. Among these may be mentioned the numismatic symbols which once again reveal the artistic talent of the novelist in her technique of symbolism. Hence, Herbert Marder observers that coin symbolism appears both in Mrs. Woolf's feminist writings and novels. In the novels they tend to be related more to inner than to outer freedom, to the possession of one's soul in peace. Whereas in some cases the coin acts as a simple metaphor, in others it is used to suggest complex visionary experience in her fiction.

One can see deliberate use of coin symbolism in *Jacob's Room*. Fanny Elmer, the model in love with Jacob, reflects on the beauty of young men and the freedom of their lives:

> And isn't it pleasant, Fanny went on thinking, how young men bring out lots of silver coins from their trouser pockets, and look at them, instead of having just so many in a purse.
John Hawley Roberts writes that in *Mrs. Dalloway* the coin image that links life to a coin joins with the Shakespearean refrain and helps to unite Clarissa and Septimus. It first appears before the Shakespearean verse in page 10:

*She remembered once throwing a shilling into the serpentine*.

Irene Simon suggests that though the reminiscences of Clarissa are followed by a meditation on death it is only at the end of the novel that the destructive meaning appears. Therefore towards the end of the novel, Clarissa immediately recalls the idea of the coin when the news of Septimus death reaches her at her party:

*She had once thrown a shilling into the Serpentine, never anything more. But he had flung it away.*

The use of the coin image in *Three Guineas* is relatively simple when compared with the complex development of the same in *Mrs. Dalloway*. But in *The Years* the coin becomes a central symbol having the intrinsic solidity of a hard metal disc and the suggestiveness of Mrs. Dalloway's shilling. Eleanor wishing to pay her share for the cab which brought them, her inability to make her niece Peggy to accept the money, her holding of coins
in clenched fist, her talking about money and her feeling of happiness having coins in her hand suggest the emancipations of women while retraining its social implications.\textsuperscript{135}

Finally, it is interesting to note that Mrs. Virginia Woolf also makes use of symbols that serve her narrative purpose. In other words as observed by Dean Doner\textsuperscript{136} she makes her language so suggestive as to serve the role of scene. As for example, a simple use of poetic device to achieve progression is in the extension of a symbol as in the scene between Fanny Elmer and Jacob Flanders in \textit{Jacob's Room}:

\begin{quote}
And the whole machinery, rock and gear of the world was spun smoothly into those swift eddies and falls, she felt, as she stood rigid leaning over the barrier two feet from Jacob Flanders.

Her screwed up black glove dropped to the floor. When Jacob gave it her, she started angrily. For never was there a more irrational passion And Jacob was afraid of her for a moment so ------ so dangerous is it when young women stand rigid, grasp the barrier fall in love.\textsuperscript{137}
\end{quote}
The repetition of the words ‘rigid’ and ‘barrier’ mechanically joins the generalised concept to the particular scene. In the case of ‘rigid’ the word is simply repeated but ‘barrier’ at least, in the second time, established as a symbol, for the subject is now all young women; the specific term has been generalized. No longer does the word refer to the barrier in the promenade at the Empire, but it also refers to that barrier which exists between people who are not intimate and which in the process of becoming close friends or falling in love is pushed aside. At the same time, the abstract barrier is particularized, so that this use is being made with all the richness of symbol.

Here, it may be noted that the novelist makes use of certain images with such emphasis on repetition that the small words also become significant symbols suggesting a very important meaning in the novel. In this connection we may note three key terms which are important. In her novel *Mrs. Dalloway*: Sun, love, death; the sun alone being a real symbol, the other two being abstract nouns with great symbolic potentialities. Sun as a symbol, introduced in three contexts first - disregard for physical death, deflation of the pair which Lady Bruton’s supposed exclusion brings appearing
in a calm moment, greatly enriches the contexts although its basic meaning has not changed. The exact phraseology occurs twice again: in connection with Septimus Warren Smith and Clarissa. But ‘sun’ and ‘heat’ in connection with life and death occur throughout the book, by the time the exact phrase is repeated, it has been greatly extended in meaning. Peter Walsh remembers the time in Bourton when Clarissa refused to marry him:

- It is awful, he cried, awful, awful I. Still, the sun was heat. Still one get over things. Still life had a way of adding day to day

Here is heat of the sun not as a thing to be feared and the fear to be conquered, but as reassurance for living. The sun is also associated with Smith’s madness; it is beneficent for Peter in regent’s park and also for Smith later. Being ambivalent and paradoxical, terms like sun, love and death are themselves more significant and can burden the context more than skull or bones which may be given only by symbolic extension possible to all terms by extending the denotations through connotations.

In short it may be concluded that a critical study of the various symbols reveal that Virginia Woolf in all her novels
makes use of her symbols as systematically arranged in order to make an evolutionary pattern emerge. As the complete picture on a television screen is projected by the help of microwaves which get collected to give the required picture so also the symbols in the novels of Virginia Woolf perform the micro-waves to project her vision of reality. Her deep concern for the form of modern fiction made her experiment with the technique of symbolism and evolve it as a pattern in her fiction.

The symbols of Virginia Woolf have depth and complexity. This depth and complexity becomes ripe as the maturation of her art reaches its zenith in the middle phase of her career. Mrs. Woolf took her symbols from a direct apprehension of life although they do not crystallize clear and specific meanings by remaining to be fluid from abstract assignment. The symbols are unconventional and original. They demand the reader to go deeper and deeper into the heart of the matter in order to grasp the totality of the meaning conveyed. The major symbols including time, Lighthouse, the pageant or even the character symbols, though complex, are systematically arranged into organic wholes. The connecting symbols also organise a variety of new ideas like civilization, colour or literary allusions into
unconventional symbols, along with traditional symbolism drawn from sources like atmosphere, landscape and nature. The minor symbols like title, actions and incident, or ordinary objects are treated in an interesting manner in order to reveal the intended meaning. The symbols of technique illustrate the development of Virginia Woolf as an artist as far as organisation of her material is concerned. The organisation of the structure of fiction becomes more systematic and compact as the interest to evolve the symbols into a scientific format is deepened in its roots in novel after novel making Virginia Woolf appear more like a painter or a musician.
NOTES


2. Ibid pp. 32-33

3. Ibid p. 37

4. Ibid p. 172


8. : Clarissa Dalloway’s "Party Consciousness", *Modern Fiction Studies*, 11, 1956, p. 27


10. Woolf, Virginia : *Mrs. Dalloway*, p. 144–45


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