Chapter VI

The Concept of Perfect Man
In Mrs. Dalloway
and
To The Lighthouse

Mrs. Dalloway

I

Highest bliss of human beings
be the personality. — Goethe

Virginia Woolf's quest for wholeness led her to the idea of personality, to the "androgynous vision" which had great affinities with the concept of Perfect Man presented by the Oriental Sufis (including Iqbal). The idea of personality was with her since the very beginning of her literary career, hence its presence in Night and Day the Voyage Out, Orlando, Jacob's Room etc. and then Mrs. Dalloway and the later novels.

Mrs. Dalloway, according to its author, is very difficult novel in which she had to "dig out beautiful caves behind her characters". The idea was that the "caves shall connect and each comes to daylight at the present moment, one June day in London".¹ This process of tunnelling of the caves (which continued till Between the Acts), takes us to the past memories through which present has been explained.

"... we have traced the stream
From the blind cavern whence is faintly heard
Its natal murmur, followed it to light and open day."

---Wordsworth.

* * *

Be a candle to the feast of the religion of the free
Knowing not the origin of Time
Thou art ignorant of everlasting life
Learn the mystery of Time from the words
"I have a Time with God."

- Iqbal, Secrets of the Self.

* * *

"... and myriads of things merged in one thing; and this figure, made of sky and branches as it is, had risen from the troubled sea as a shape might be sucked up out of the waves to shower down from her magnificent hands, compassion, comprehension, absolution.

---Mrs. Dalloway
Everyday events belong to the mundane. The world of memory belongs to the unconscious. Wordsworth says in the Prelude:

... we have traced the stream
From the blind cavern whence is faintly heard
It's natal murmer; followed it to light and open day.²

(The Prelude)

Iqbal writes in his article on Al-Jili:

"The Arabian Prophet, says the author, was once questioned about the place of God before creation. He said that God, before creation, existed in 'Amaa' (blindness). It is the nature of this blindness or primal darkness which the author now proceeds to examine. The chapter is particularly interesting, because the word translated into modern phraseology would be the "unconsciousness". He says that the unconsciousness is the reality of realities."³

The author of this thesis modestly ventures to explore the "nature of this primal darkness". (Amaa, unconsciousness) as presented by Virginia Woolf in Mrs. Dalloway. Effort has been made to delve deep into the "unconsciousness" of the central personality, Clarissa, her "other self" (Septimus) and a few others who help in this exploration (the multiplicity of Clarissa's self which is the essential trait of the Perfect Man).

³. Dr. Mohammad Iqbal, "The Doctrine of Absolute Unity" as expounded by Abdul Karim Al-Jilani in Three Articles of Iqbal, Published by Iqbal Academy, Hyderabad, (A.P.), 1979, p. 9.
The Perfect Man (of an Oriental Sufi) is the spirit of Divine Revelation inspired by the Light of Mohammad (نووُر مُحَمَّدٍ) or Logos, the doctrine common between all the great religions (including the ancient Egyptian religion. Thus the Logos idea presented by the Oriental Sufis (including Sri Aurobindo) and before them Plotinus (who was inspired by Egypt as well as India) is very deep rooted. Al-Jili treats the Perfect Man as the spirit whence all things have their origin, who soars upwards but comes back to the earth for the benefit of humanity. Iqbal writes about Al-Jili:

"In the first stage of his spiritual progress he (Perfect Man) meditates on the name, studies nature on which it is sealed; in the second stage he enters the stage of the Zaat' the Essence. It is here that he becomes the God-man, his eye becomes the eye of God, his life the life of God, his word the word of God—participates in the general life of nature and sees into the life of things". It will appear how strikingly the author has anticipated the Hegelian Dialectic and how greatly he has emphasised the doctrine of the Logos."^4

Al Jili, as presented by Iqbal, seems to have anticipated the great mystic seer, William Wordsworth, who participated in the general life of Nature and was able to "see into the life of things":

that blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,
Until the breath of this corporeal frame
And the motion of our human blood.
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep.
In body and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony and the deep power of joy
We see into the life of things". 5

These are the moments when the eye of the Perfect Man
becomes "the eye of God, his life the life of God". Here is
a couplet by Iqbal:

The hand of God is the hand of Man of Faith
Prevailing, initiating, determining and expediting.
"(Cordova Mosque)"

Ibn Farid, great Arabic Sufi, identifies himself
mystically with the creative will in all its manifestations.
He says:

And in the whole creation there is none save me that
speaks, or sees or hears". 6  (Taiyyatul Kubra v.174)
Virginia Woolf says through Bernard:

"Unfortunately what I see you do not see (the globe
full of figures" 7

5. William Wordsworth, "Tintern Abbey" in the Poetical Works
   of William Wordsworth, ed. E. de Schincourt, Oxford
   University Press, 1944, p. 259.
7 The Waves, p. 204.
All these writers quoted above describe a personal religious experience of the utmost intimate kind.

Ibn Farid's poem, feels Nicholson, shows the inner meaning of the Sufi definition of tauhid', or Unity of Being (wahdatul wujud دمرالوجود). In Mrs. Dalloway the same doctrine has been presented through the central personality, Clarissa who anticipates Mrs. Ramsay. (To the Lighthouse,) Bernard (The waves), Isa, Mrs. Swithin, Miss La Trobe (Between the Acts).

Virginia Woolf's effort, along with the great Sufis, was, to make the people see so that they could save the world, God's world. The attaining of "absolution" through freedom from self is characteristic of harmonious personality. Virginia Woolf has shown us the dilemma of modern man, i.e. "the death of the soul".

According to the doctrine of the Logos the Perfect Man is conceived as the first emanation from the Absolute identification with the person of Mohammad (haqiqat-e-Mohammadia). Heaven derives its light from the Divine Attributes which illumine the spirit of the Perfect Man who is the origin of the universe. All the prophets (including Jesus) were inspired by the Light of Mohammad as the Logos (mentioned in Hindu scriptures as Mahamad(محمّد)).

Virginia Woolf's Perfect Man, in company with his counterparts in the Oriental Sufis and Iqbal, has consciousness (زير), Unconsciousness (darkness, Amaa -- bekhudi.isFile), Universal Love (مقص), self-knowledge (خشناء).
courage and defiance, possesses spirit of an eagle, is capable of dwelling on the rocks of the mountain, loves privacy as well as society, is a blend of intuition and reason, hates cunningness, lies, hypocrisy therefore despotism, patriarchy, materialism, virulent masculinism (especially masculine concept of death) and tyranny. Her Perfect Man is a seer, a visionary, a traveller, a "darvesh" (Qalandar), is a harmonious whole, an entire human being.

Almost all Virginia Woolf's writings (even her traditional novels i.e. Night and Day etc. are a search for such a being. She was a visionary, a dreamer as well as a person of action (with the spirit of an eagle). She wrote, she created and thus enhanced life. She yearned for collecting the "orts, scraps and fragments" in one harmonious whole, "in one Virginia". This effort specifically started in Mrs. Dalloway and reached its culminating point in The Waves. Clarissa anticipates Bernard of The Waves:

".... What am I ? This ? No, I am that. Especially now when I have left a room and people talking and I behold the moon rising sublimely over the ancient chapel - then it becomes clear that I am not one and simple but complex and many. Bernard in public bubbles, in private is secretive. That is what they do not understand, saying I escape them,

am evasive. They do not understand that I have to effect
different transitions, have to cover the entrances and exits
of several different men who alternately act their parts as
Bernard. I am abnormally aware of circumstances".  

Clarissa also leaves the party and people talking and
goes to her "attic room". She also is not one and simple but
complex and many" and has to "effect different transitions",
representing the multiplicity and indivisibility of herself.
She, also, is abnormally aware of circumstances. She is an
epitome of Universal Love which binds human beings to each
other by "natural piety". Iqbal says in Javid Namah:

\[
\text{منتختت تاکانی تا پرایتیت} \quad \text{جاذیتارم}
\]

It is through Love that man can come face to face with
the Ultimate Self.

And in this flight this body of ours is no hindrance.  

In Mrs. Dalloway, Virginia Woolf's vision of evil may be
discerned. The worst enemy of man, she feels along with the
great Sufis, is his lower self which refrains man from doing
good. By transcending his lower self man attains integrity.
She seems to be agreeing with Rabia Basri, great Islamic
mystic that renunciation of the world brings peace and
desire for it, sorrow. War according to Virginia Woolf, is
outcome of the desire for world which is too much with us.
She believes in the synthesis of intellect and intuition for
the wholeness of personality. Clarissa represents this

9. The Waves, p. 64.
cleverness ( ) and Love. The ideal is an evolved form of Isis representing the Absolute Being whose special attributes are akin to the attributes indicated by Al-Jili and Hujweri etc. That pious being was all-pervading in far-off periods adorned with the grace ('jamal') and glory ('jalal') and perfection (kamal) who manifested herself in the form of mother in whose presence we go back to our lost Paradise. Addressing his Perfect Man, Iqbal says:

\[ \text{Thy glory and grace manifest faith} \]

He has glory and grace, thou, too, has glory and grace.

"(Cordova Mosque)"

Such a self being all-inclusive cannot negate anybody or anything (man, woman, child, flowers, air, tree, branches, roots, dejected beings (Septimuses), rejected ones (Peters). Clarissa's was an Isiac role. She, like Isis and Mary, is a healer. Hers was an effort to preserve and "guard" her own soul and consciousness. The lover ascends to the highest Beauty which is Truth. Religion as well as mysticism have been aspiring to get pleasure from the Infinite rather to conquer it.

Virginia Woolf was deeply interested in the concept of Time which was real for her as it was real for Iqbal and Sri Aurobindo. Iqbal finds a spiritual kinship between Islam and the West (he admired Goethe immensely who had written a poem in praise of Prophet Mohammad -- "Mahomesgesang" which had been translated by Iqbal in Persian with the title, (جومهوری))
and feels a great need of the proper study of Time for the
purpose of a synthetic attitude towards the Universe. He
says:

Thy thought measures length of Time
With the measure of Night and Day.\textsuperscript{11}

(Secrets of Self)

For Virginia Woolf as well this concept was of prime
importance as her purpose was the same as that of Iqbal.
Their concept of time is similar to that of Sri Aurobindo
who says: "All this is Brahma" and "This world is Brahma
itself". (Time is God" and "There is no time and space
except God" -- Quranic concepts derived by Iqbal). This
time-tension connects them, on the one hand with Western
thought (Goethe), and Oriental thought (Al-Jili). The
inspiration Iqbal drew from the life of Prophet Mohammad as
a revolutionary transformer of history (changing the lot of
mankind). The Holy Qur'an regarded time as an "organic
whole" (Sura Dahr'). Iqbal says:

"Learn the mystery of time from the words, I have a
time with God."\textsuperscript{12}

Virginia Woolf says: \textit{I am the thing in which all this
exists".}\textsuperscript{13}

Divine time is indivisible. These "moments of being" or
"spots of time" are real and fundamental facts of the

\textsuperscript{11} Iqbal, \textit{The Secrets of the Self}, XVII, p. 134.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., XVII, p. 134.
\textsuperscript{13} \textit{The Waves}, Hol. Draft 1, p. 7.
universe to be recaptured making the personality whole. They are full of past, present and future (drops to fall in future). Bergson referred to duration as the continuous process of the past which enters the future. This fullness of the moment, the drop, the circle, the round or global form (a favourite metaphor with the Sufis and Virginia Woolf) holds within it the entire world of the self. Mysteries of the self have been revealed by William James as well. According to him reality has myriad forms and the present self is different from the previous self. Only change is permanent reality— Iqbal says:

The writings of all these authors are a search for themselves. The Upanishads declare 'atmanam vidi, अत्मं विद्वि (know thyself). They believe in the primacy of living self. 'Stream of consciousness ---' (a concept presented by William James) has been discerned in Iqbal's poetry by the perceptive mind of Dr. Tara Chand Rastogi. He has quoted from Iqbal's Javid Namah the lines in which Rumi calls Iqbal 'Zinda Rud' (زیند رود Living Stream). 14 This living stream is Wordsworth's "living soul" which is opposite to the "death of the soul" 15 (an oft repeated phrase in Mrs. Dalloway and Between the Acts. Which is called "death of consciousness" by Iqbal and "self-oblivion" by Sri Aurobindo:

15. Mrs. Dalloway, p. 53.
"... Knowledge is no doubt the knowledge of the One the realization of Being. Ignorance is self-oblivion".\textsuperscript{16}

This pantheism is all-inclusive which could not negate anything - basic trait of the Perfect Man. Self knowledge is the name of truth keeping the self alive making it a living stream. Each man is a memory of his own self so is Clarissa in \textit{Mrs. Dalloway}. All time - personal, historical and racial has been merged to create this personality and those who support her, hence an intimate relationship between time and Personality.

In \textit{Mrs. Dalloway} it has been suggested that human life is lived according to the moments of being or spots of time not according to the hours of the Big Ben -circle being the favourite metaphor. Harvena Richter considers Virginia Woolf's writings to be symbolic of self akin to Mandala or chakra' of time and Personality in Indian philosophy and mysticism. In \textit{Mrs. Dalloway} memories are evoked. There is a circular movement of time. Iqbal says:

"There is no new happening in the Universe. Further we must conclude that the combination of energy centres which has once taken place must always return otherwise there is no guarantee for the return even of Superman... The world of today needs a Rumi to create an attitude of hope and to kindle the fire of enthusiasm for life."\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{17} Dr. Mohammad Iqbal, \textit{The Reconstruction of Religious Thoughts in Islam}, p.114-115.
These "energy centres" are "spots of time" creating a harmonious personality with an attitude of hope and which may kindle the fire of enthusiasm for life and such a personality is that of Virginia Woolf according to whom love is an affirmation and not a negation of personality uniting finite and Infinite Self. Like Sri Aurobindo she believes in freedom from self for strangest adventures.

Virginia Woolf appears as the sweep of the self and a vast expression of Divinity, a Living Stream (Zinda Rud). She is deeply distressed to see the disasters of war. Iqbal says in _Javid Namah_:

Why in the world does man devour another man?

Why does a nation feed on another nation?

The "walls of civilization, according to Virginia Woolf are in ruin to be rebuilt. Men, she sadly felt are mere fragments.

II

In Mrs. Dalloway, Virginia Woolf is telling us the story of the world from the beginning (in anticipation with _The Waves_) and told us the suppressed truths. It presents the doctrine of Unity of Being, the base of her writings. In it, the central personality, Clarissa cannot be known by mere appearances but by her silences (feelings, memories,
philosophising, phrases, i.e. Shakespearean tags which she utters to herself, reveries and visions.) As Virginia Woolf found the personality of Clarissa too "stiff" and "glittering" she created some other personalities to support her, i.e. Septimus, Peter etc. along with those of herself which she possessed in her personal, historical and racial past (unconsciousness). All of them have been merged together in order to create one personality. Real Clarissa was capable of many embodiments. Like Bernard of The Waves, whom she anticipated, she was one as well as many. There are many Clarissas - charming, selfish, sympathetic, a good woman, a foolish and sentimental woman, a hypocritical, insincere, a truthful one, a success, a failure, secretive, social.

These contradictions are characteristic of the personality of the Perfect Man. Through freedom from self integration of personality may be attained. Every step Satan is overcome is a step towards God. The constant struggle of man is the theme of Goethe, Sri Aurobindo, Iqbal and Virginia Woolf. Faust is rescued from the clutches of Satan by the divine powers which help him to move to higher levels. Iqbal says:

"Divine nature soars upwards, human nature sinks downwards, hence perfect human nature must stand midway between the two, it must share both the Divine and human attributes." 18

18. Iqbal, "The Doctrine of Absolute Unity..." p. 3.
Throughout the novel (Mrs. Dalloway) these "upward" and "downward" movements, (which have been called "backward and forward movements" in modern phraseology), have been presented. Clarissa's divine nature soars upwards and her human nature sinks downward. Finally, through self-realization she ascends and becomes a "living soul", a "living stream". Virginia Woolf says about Clarissa:

"That was her self--pointed"; dart-like, definite. That was her self when some effort, some call on her to be her self, drew the parts together, she alone knew how different, how incompatible and composed so for the world only into one centre, one diamond, one woman who sat in her drawing room and made a meeting point, a radiancy no doubt in some dull lives, a refuge for the lonely to come to, perhaps; she had helped young people, who were grateful to her; had tried to be the same always, never showing a sign of all the other sides of her - faults, jealousies, vanities, suspicious like this of Lady Bruton not asking her to lunch; which, she thought, is finally base...".  

Each man is a memory of his own self--blessed moods, moments of being, moments of guilt, fear, terror, ecstasy. This is what makes the world of Mrs. Dalloway. There was a spiritual presence in all the past or absent things ("invisible presences"). Out of emotions recollected in tranquillity this novel was composed (like "The Daffodils", The Prelude and Remembrance of things Past) etc.

19. Mrs. Dalloway, p. 34-35.
The idea behind the novel was, as it has been stated earlier as well, that the caves tunnelled out behind the personalities presented shall connect and each comes to daylight at the present moment. That present moment is one June day in London (after the World War I).

The very first sentence of the novel "Mrs. Dalloway said that she would buy the flowers herself" suggests Clarissa's complete participation in the objects of Nature (on which is "sealed the name of God"). While busy doing preparations for the party she is giving that very night, in which the Prime Minister also has been invited, she indulges in reveries "tunnelling out the caves of the past" while she was at Bourton before her marriage thirty years ago. This way time has been related with Personality. She remembers:

"What a lark, what a plunge. How fresh, how calm stiller than this, of course the morning was, like the flap of a wave, chill and sharp and yet solemn, feeling as she did standing there at the window, that something awful was to happen, looking at the flowers and the rooks, rising, falling standing".  

These lines, in themselves a symbolic poem are suggestive of Clarissa's racial past. The words "waves, solemn, rising, falling have deeper implications. Clarissa's whole life has been presented by means of her relationships with others as well as herself. The most important one is with a person whom she has neither seen nor will ever see,

i.e. Septimus Smith, her "other self" or "double". Lines from Cymbeline" Fear no more the heat of the sun/nor furious winter's rages", have been woven into Clarissa's and Septimus' reflections in order to unite them. Clarissa's thoughts often go towards death although apparently she is very normal and social. She had the oddest sense of being herself "invisible, unseen, unknown" as she is no more Clarissa but Mrs. Dalloway. She is entirely disillusioned by her present life playing the roles of a mother, a wife and hostess.

She reaches Miss Pym's shop where flowers, "delphiniums, roses and masses of carnations" etc. provided a sanctuary of peace for her sick soul. She feels that this beauty, scent, colour and Miss Pym appreciating her were a wave which she let flow over her and surmount that hatred. Septimus with his wife Rezia is also sitting in a nearby park. The descriptions of the car, the aeroplane, the people walking on the street are suggestive of Clarissa's love for life, for London. Septimus, who was shell shocked, is not willing to take interest in outside world due to deep distress. For him (who is Clarissa's other self) "leaves were alive, trees were alive and the leaves were connected by millions of fibres with his own body ... a child had cried. Rightly far away a horn had sounded. All taken together meant the birth of a new religion". The

self of septimus is attaching itself by fibres to particular objects. In The Waves Louis felt that "his roots were threaded like fibres in a flower-pot, round and round about the world". The "rising and falling of sparrows is synonymous with the "rising and falling" of waves and sinking of mothers". The archetypal imagery being symbolic of Isis and Horus - is related with Virginia Woolf's personal (new) religion which refers to Higher Consciousness.

Clarissa felt herself extremely distressed and lonely "shrivelled aged" while told by her maid servant that her husband, (Richard Dalloway) would lunch out with Lady Bruton. There was an "emptiness at the heart", an "attic room" (symbolic of privacy of soul). It was something "central which permeated, something warm which broke up surfaces and rippled the cold contact of man and woman or women together". She could not resist yielding to the charm of a woman. She remembered Sally Seton, her girlhood friend, whose "power was amazing, her gift, her personality", her love for Nature which provided peace for her better than human beings, her ignorance of sex, of social problems. Clarissa remembered the strange thing which was the "purity and integrity" of her feeling for Sally which had a quality which could only "exist between women ..." which was protective on her side.

26. Mrs. Dollaway, p. 32.
27. Ibid, p. 32.
While mending her green dress a calm content descended on her. She is indulged in a reverie which anticipates Mrs. Ramsays' reveries. She was "roused" from that vision by the front-door bell. She made to hide her dress like a "virgin protecting chastity, respecting privacy". She felt heavenly to see Peter, her previous lover. He had been a failure in the worldly sense (seeking a job after his arrival from India where he had been living since she had rejected him). Still the future of civilization lies in the hands of men like him with their ideals, philosophy, love for literature (things common between him and Clarissa at Bourton). Clarissa, he felt had become worldly insincere, hypocritical (mending her dress for the party, introducing her daughter as "this is my Elizabeth"). He believed that our self, fish-like, inhabits deep seas and lives among obscurities. He criticises her by the word "sentimental" and "these incessant parties... From here the process of the regeneration of Clarissa's self starts. He is the saviour of her soul. And then his knife which he opened and shut being symbolic of his passion for Clarissa. Peter is a solitary traveller, hence his departure from her and wandering through the London streets and hearing the bell of ambulance that has taken Septimus' dead body (after his suicide) and reflecting upon the "triumph of civilization". Later in the evening at the end of the party we can feel a "terror" and

28. Ibid. p. 37.
"ecstasy" felt by Peter at the sight of Clarisa. Peter-Clarissa relationship has been called enigmatic.

Septimus, tortured by the psychiatrists jumps from a window on the very day of the party at which the psychiatrist, Dr. Bradshaw, a guest, mentions this pathetic case and shocks Clarissa - 'death at my party'. There is a deep, mysterious relationship between Clarissa and Septimus. The original idea had been that Clarissa would commit suicide but somehow Septimus became Clarissa's double with whom she felt identified. She was happy that he had thrown it away. She feels that her own life has been tarnished by corruption, lies, chatter, hypocrisy. Whatever she has lost has been presented by Septimus. His death is a defiance of the evil forces represented by the psychiatrist. Virginia Woolf's hatred of those who tyrannically dominate others under the garb of humanity and protection is made manifest here. She feels that London has swallowed up many million young men called Septimus who was one of the first to volunteer, went to France to save an England (which consisted Shakespeare's plays and Miss Isabel Pole in a green dress), developed courage and manliness, got promotion, drew the favours of his officer, Evans, became very friendly with him. When Evans was killed in the war, Septimus felt very little. He was shell shocked, his brain was perfect. It was the fault of the world then that he could not feel, he could not shed tears which deeply affected him. He was afflicted by war, by the world.
Septimus' lack of feeling resulted in many contradictions in his personality. He feels guilty that he did not care when Evans was killed (his natural feeling being numbed by war). He feels guilty (as his conscience is alive) as to why did he marry his wife, Rezia without loving her. He defies all those codes which demand from him the so-called sense of proportion. His suicide, which is nothing but martyrdom, becomes an act of defiance against authority, against the rapacious attack into the privacy of soul. Clarissa grasps the situation because she has faith in the dignity of man and love for those who breathe. Iqbal says:

Loftier than heavens is the stature of man.

The essence of civilization is respect for man.

Javid Namah.

The inability to feel was Virginia Woolf's greatest problem in 1912-13 when everything had lost its meaning and psychiatrists were unable to comprehend her inner self which was in utter despair. Roger Poole writes:

"... The description is terrifying however and one can feel exactly how the world appeared to her when she was called 'mad'. It is suddenly destitute, grey, motionless, sapless... without hope, without water, without green, without life... If the world can thus be drained emptied as the ebb of the colour happens, then the state may well have

some psychological explanation but it also needs a name which can be used with respect and modesty by those who are not afflicted... an act of almost religious respect should be put in the place of assertive technical talk. Some few others have described the state -- Bechet, Shakespeare ... but I know no other description of the actual transformation than Virginia's ... The world bleeds to death in front of her eyes and gradually the colours and reality of the world are restored. This is not madness. The problem is ours. For we have to reckon with a reality of which Virginia has given the first description in the literature of the world.\textsuperscript{30}

N.C. Thakur considers Septimus to be one of those visionaries who "have been martyred because of theirs visions".\textsuperscript{31}

Harvena says:

"In another sense Septimus is the prophet possessed of a divine madness" as he raves against a wicked generation and foresees a future world in which there is "Universal Love" and "no crime".\textsuperscript{32}

Septimus was perfectly all right before committing suicide. In a humorous mood he passed a comment about the hat Rezia was sewing "it is an organ-grinder's monkey's hat".\textsuperscript{33}. For weeks they had not been so happy. Then suddenly he remembered that Dr. Bradshaw wanted to separate them. "(Must", "must" why "must"). It was because he had talked of

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{30} Roger Pole, \textit{The Unknown Virginia Woolf}, p. 196-197.
\bibitem{31} N.C. Thakur, \textit{The Symbolism of Virginia Woolf}, p. 61.
\bibitem{32} Harvena Richter, \textit{The Inward Voyage}, p. 120.
\bibitem{33} Mrs. Dalloway, p. 127.
\end{thebibliography}
killing himself (his wife told him being extremely merciful).

Then both of them looked at the diagrams and designs and the map of the world -- mountains, sea pieces, waves ... poems, Ode To Time etc., ... Evans, Evans "Burn them", he cried: "do not cut down trees, Universal Love". Rezia thought that she would preserve those beautiful poems and she would also go to the asylum if they compelled him to go there. Septimus thought she was a flowering tree and through her branches looked out the face of a lawgiver who had reached a sanctuary where she feared no one ... men who talked of proportion, who saw nothing clear, yet ruled, yet inflicted. "Over them she triumphed". He did not want to die. Life was good. Then -- in came Dr. Holmes putting her aside. "I will give it to you" he cried and "flung himself vigorously violently down Mrs. Filmer's area railings".

"The coward", cried Dr. Holmes. There was no one in the least to blame (he told Mrs. Filmers), and why the devil he did it.

The news of Septimus' death delivered by Dr. Bradshaw before Clarissa disturbed her a lot -- death at my party. The party, her greatest apparent concern in the novel, anticipates the pageant of Between the Acts. It is a device in the novel, an attempt to bring out unity to history. She

34. Ibid, p. 131.
35. Ibid, p. 131.
36. Ibid, p. 132.
37. Ibid, p. 132.
38. Ibid, p. 133.
had made the invitees present to see (into the life of things) a vision giving relief from agony. Her failure was that she could not make Dr. Bradshaw etc. see the vision (except Peter). Throughout her life Virginia Woolf tried to make people see a world of values related with natural things -- a world whole and entire. Clarissa's effort to unite her guests in a single vision is defeated by the feelings of hypocrisy, hatred, patriarchy, masculinity. Through the party, British society has been ridiculed delightfully. British society with all its pomp and show, insincerity and hollowness has been presented to us. Apparently a grand success but underneath lies ugliness and artificiality. It is a satire on modern civilization. The Prime Minister (symbol "of greatness") has been very delightfully ridiculed. Lady Bruton is there who did not like illness in politician's wife (Clarissa had recently recovered from illness), Bradshaws were there whom Clarissa hated. Lady Rossetter (Sally Seton) was there, her daughter Elizabeth was there feeling proud of her father's position (as her mother was a mere hostess) Peter also is there feeling how insincere Clarissa was saying to everyone "How delightful to see you".

But actually Clarissa was not there, was not herself. For her own part it was too much an effort. She was not enjoying it. Everytime she gave a party she had this feeling of being something not herself and that everyone was unreal one way.
The novel ends with Peter's mixed feelings of "terror" and "ecstasy" to see Clarissa while she comes from the "attic" room which serves as a Cloister to her.

III

In Sri Aurobindo's writings the vision of the mother as the most reliable spiritual guide occurs frequently. In Virginia Woolf's writings as well the mother is the most reliable and sincere guide (remindful of Al-Jili's interpretation of the word mother as origin دَمْثِيَ). They are searching for the lost origins - the Absolute being دَمْثِيَ.

In Mrs. Dalloway, Peter Walsh, in his reverie, sees the glimpses of real Clarissa through her racial past. His dream woman is not worldly like Clarissa, not rich like Clarissa, not even Clarissa who lived at Bourton who (although, then loved to discuss politics and poetry) had rejected him cruelly. The solitary traveller indulges in a vision:

"By conviction an atheist perhaps, he is taken by surprise with moments of extraordinary exaltation. Nothing exists outside us except a state of mind, he thinks; a desire for solace ... for something outside these miserable pigmies. But then, if he can conceive of her, then in some sort she exists, he thinks and advancing down the path with his eyes upon sky and branches he rapidly endows them with womanhood; sees with amazement how grave they become, how
majestically, as the breeze stirs them, they dispense with a
dark flutter of the leaves, charity, comprehension,
absolution... Such are the visions which ceaselessly float
up ... often overpowering the solitary traveller ... and
myriads of things merged in one thing; and this figure, made
of sky and branches as it is, had risen from the troubled
sea (he is elderly, past fifty now) as a shape might be
sucked up out of the waves to shower down from her
magnificent hands compassion, comprehension, absolution. So
may I never go back to lamplight ... rather let me walk
straight on to this great figure who, with a toss of her
head mount me on her streamers and let me blow to
nothingness with the rest... Such are the visions. The
solitary traveller is soon beyond the wood; and there,
coming to the door with shaded eyes, possibly to look for
his return, with hands raised, with white apron blowing, is
an elderly woman who seems (so powerful is this infirmity)
to seek, over the desert, a lost son; to search for a rider
destroyed, to be the figure of the mother whose sons have
been killed in the battles of the world”.

The visions described here delve deep into Clarissa's
unconsciousness (Amaa, blindness, primal darkness which is
the reality of realities). Peter's reveries about Clarissa
as mother figure resolve the enigmatic Peter—Clarissa
relationship. Peter yearns for the Isiac role of Clarissa.
The words "charity", "comprehension", compassion and
"absolution" are the very essence of this novel. The figure
of the mother reminds us of (besides Isis & Mary) the mother rising out of waters to console her troubled son in the great Indian epic Mahabharata. Mothers and acceptance of oblivion are the basic concerns of Virginia Woolf.

In *Mrs. Dalloway* one of the reasons of Clarissa's misery resulting in death-wish is that her daughter, Elizabeth does not denounce patriarchy. She has no resentment at the injury done to her mother by her father. There is a distaste in Clarissa for Doris Kilman who represents popular corrupt Christianity (misrepresenting love and religion) which denied Mary cult (or Isis - Cult). Could such a woman represent love and religion; could she be in touch with "invisible presences"? Kilman was just the opposite to Mrs. Swithin of *Between the Acts* who represented real Christianity. Clarissa herself is a "sinking mother" whose child has been separated from her. Both Virginia Woolf and Iqbal, along with Sri Aurobindo bleed to see the sinking and falling of mothers (the decline of intuitionism resulting in war). In the same way septimus, (Clarissa's other self,) also bleeds to see the fall of Universal Love in the form of war. They feel agony about their lost origins. Virginia's prophetic strain is akin to that of the Oriental Sufis. They are the spokespersons of the Absolute Being, the Higher Consciousness.

The inner voyages of Clarissa, Septimus as well as Peter, as they are extentions of each other, suggest Clarissa's harmonious personality. Sri Aurobindo and Iqbal
had presented a concept of man who could save God's world on
whom is laid the burden of the past, the "burthen, of
mystery"\textsuperscript{39} which is "lightened"\textsuperscript{40} in the "blessed mood."\textsuperscript{41} These
are the moments when one "sees into the life of things and
becomes a living soul."\textsuperscript{42} Here is a reverie of Clarissa:

"Quiet descended on her and a calm content, as her
needle drawing the silk smoothly to its gentle pause
collected by green folds together and attached them to the
belt. So on a summer's day the waves collect, overbalance
and fall; collect and fall and the whole world seems to be
saying" that is all..." more and more ponderously until even
the heart in the body which lies in the sun on the beach
says too "that is all". Fear no more, says the heart. Fear no
more, says the heart committing its burden to some sea which
sighs collectively for all sorrows and renews, begins,
collects, lets fall. And the body alone listens to the
passing bee the wave breaking".\textsuperscript{43}

The "burden and sighs of some sea" anticipate Mrs.
Ramsay's and Isa's musings and the "bellowing cows" of
\textit{Between the Acts}. This "burden of some sea which sighs
collectively for all sorrows" is the "burden of the mystery
of this unintelligible world which is lightened when one is
laid asleep in body becomes a living soul". There is no

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{39} Wordsworth: "Tintern Abbey", \textit{The Political Works of
Wordsworth}, p. 260.
\item \textsuperscript{40} Ibid, p. 260.
\item \textsuperscript{41} Ibid, p. 260.
\item \textsuperscript{42} Ibid, p. 260.
\item \textsuperscript{43} \textit{Mrs. Dalloway}, p. 37.
\end{itemize}
wholeness without being exposed to the heat of the sun.
Sewing is a creative activity, a kind of 'yoga' bringing in peace (anticipating Mrs. Ramsay's knitting).

Clarissa found beauty everywhere whether flowers or the youth who "had preserved the thing that mattered". Clarissa's as well as Septimus' visions of beauty are very similar. Virginia Woolf's occasional ridicule of Clarissa and profound sympathy for Septimus suggests that neither Clarissa (representing so-called normal people) is totally sane (she is suffering from psychic illness) nor Septimus is totally insane as his brain was perfect to read Dante and Shakespeare. For both of them, in company with Keats, "beauty is truth" which refers to the Absolute Being manifested in phenomena of the Universe. Here is a reverie (a capturing of the unconscious) of Septimus, Clarissa's other self:

"Long streamers of sunlight fawned at his feet. The trees waved ... we create beauty, the world seemed to say ... To watch a leaf quivering in the rush of the air was an exquisite joy ... up in the sky swallows swooping, flinging themselves in and out round and round ... and the flies rising and falling and the sun spotting now on this leaf now that all of this calm and reasonable as it was, made out of ordinary things as it was, was the truth now, beauty that was the truth now, beauty was everywhere".

45. Mrs. Dalloway, p. 77-78.

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Septimus' participation in the objects of Nature—sun, trees, leaf, sky swallows, flies is akin to that of Clarissa. They found beauty everywhere. Clarissa, being the incarnation of the Great Goddess (symbolised by cow) had lost her calf—a thing of beauty, i.e. Septimus who was a victim of war, who was deeply distressed and whose brain was perfect. Phyllis Rose writes:

"She can imagine how a man like Bradshaw, obscurely evil "capable of some indescribable outrage forcing your soul could drive a young man to protect himself through death". Here the world "forcing" has connotations of rape and Septimus' death-scene, in which he jumps out the window to avoid the relentless bearing down on him of the doctors suggests melodrama in which the virginal girl leaps off the cliff rather than submit to a sexual assault". 46

This "protecting oneself through death" seems to be quite strange but convincing. Every moment when our soul is irrationally dominated by "obscurely evil forces", we commit spiritual suicide. Septimus protected his soul through physical death. Clarissa, feeling his disaster, is playing an Isiac role. Septimus, like that "virginal girl" jumped out the window for preserving his soul, for guarding his self through death otherwise he loved life. He did not want to die. Life was good. 47 Clarissa's heart bleeds for his

47. Mrs. Dalloway, p. 132.
martyrdom. Both she and Septimus are epitomes of Universal Love.

While Clarissa came to know about the suicide of a young man (that is what Sir William was telling her husband) she felt deep agony. He had been in the army. "Oh, thought Clarissa, in the middle of my party, here is death". Then she went to her "attic room" (a symbol of the privacy of soul). It was so strange to go there while the party was going on. Peter walsh wished he had not come. How insincere Clarissa was, how hypocritical. Thinking about the guests' he, simultaneously is thinking about the past:

"Clarissa was pure hearted that was it. Peter would think her sentimental' so she is for she had come to feel that it was the only thing worth saying what one felt. Cleverness was silly. One should say simply what one felt." Suddenly Peter asks:

"But where is Clarisa? The attic room which has parrallelism with a mystic's cloister) is the place wherein Clarissa can feel whole and pure again, safe from the divisions and passions outside. She seeks therein a sense of oneness experienced by the religious mystic. For preserving and guarding her soul from those who "astray", who could not see what she was capable to see, she comes to her attic room and groans on the death of a man who had killed himself whom she had never seen or known. Had she known him she would

48. Ibid. p. 162.
49. Ibid. p. 170
50 Mrs. Dalloway, p. 165.
certainly have protected him from that brutal psychiatrist. She has created a home as well as a party which goes on but still she feels lonely and fragmented amidst the people (like a desert lilac). In the attic room she comes to know of her real self now: 'mercy', 'charity', 'comprehension', 'absolution'. It was a moment of self-realization in which she becomes a "light", a mind as "luminous" as it is rare in which reason and intuition unite in perfect harmony producing androgynous mind which is creative:

"A thing there was that mattered, a thing wreathed about with chatter, defaced, obscured in her own life, let drop every day in corruption, lies, chatter. This he had preserved. Death was defiance. Death was 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... But this young man who had killed himself - had he plunged holding his treasure. It is were now to die, it were now to be most happy, she had said to herself once ... coming down in white. Or there were the poets and thinkers. Suppose he had had that passion and had gone to Sir William Bradshaw, a great doctor, yet to her obscurely evil ... extremely polite to women, but capable of some indescribable outrage forcing your soul that was it, if that man had gone to him and Sir William had impressed him. Life is made intolerable, they
make life intolerable, men like that. She had escaped and the young man had killed himself. 51

Clarissa sees into the life of things. Iqbal says:

\[
\text{کے لڑن خالی را مام انست من دو نا آمیز اذ تام انست (زبیر جمی)}
\]

He alone is the true leader who sees
Before him we are all imperfect.

(Zabur-i-Ajam)

Clarissa felt that somehow it was her disaster, her disgrace and punishment to see sink and disappear here a man, there a woman in this profound darkness and she forced to stand here in her evening dress. She had schemed, wanted success. She had felt that she had lost herself in the process of living. She did not pity that man who had killed himself. The words came to her "Fear no more the heat of the sun". She must go back to them. She felt glad that he had done it, thrown it away while others went on living. She must go back, find Sally and Peter and return to her former roles. Clarissa, who moves away from the attic room to the hall, will be a woman of great strength and direction, a changed person as she had come to feel that it was the only thing worth saying what one felt. True knowledge had awakened a healthy sense of life in her. Clarissa's soul is regenerated through self-knowledge and Universal Love. Hers is an Isiac role. Iqbal says:

51 Mrs. Dalloway, p. 162-63.
Vision without strength is magic
Vision, along with strength, is prophecy.

"Zabur-i-Ajam"

In everyone there is something of Nature and Beauty. Clarissa's "I" is blended in the "thou" of Septimus. The lover lives with the "thou" in real time. The whole universe lies within the Perfect Man. She is optimistic and defiant. She challenges Nature and conquers it. She wants to demolish all the stale values of life so that new life may be created. First she comes to know herself then proceeds towards the world like the Perfect Man of Rumi, and Iqbal etc. Being self respecting she bows only before God. She is determined to turn falsehood, hypocrisy and lies into ashes. She keeps her desire under the control of God's will. She is now close to God and God bestows Divinity upon her. Now she is going to be indifferent to the worldly affairs and act according to her real self to rise above the mundane. Now she is:

As a star uncompanioned moves in heaven
Unastonished by the immensities of the space,
Travelling infinitely by its own light.

The great are strongest when they stand alone.  

Now she is capable of "carrying the world's future on her lonely breast". Her self is going to become a source of welfare of humanity-a comfort for them. Her God-given

strength can battle against doom. "Now she is capable of saying openly:

"There is God", "there is no death", "trees are alive", "universal Love and Time" - some of the ideas uttered by Septimus that Virginia Woolf later considered in *To the Lighthouse*, *The Waves* and *Between the Acts* etc. She is no more ready to conform to the sense of proportion and is against conversion. Now, (like Septimus) she is not going to hide her longing for death, death which is mingling, communion. There is an embracement in death which is Universal Love (ishq ِ). The circle ends from where it had started. Life continues after death. Thus man defeats after he had died. Death as an annihilator ceases to be. Life subsides in reality as the waves subside in the sea.

Why should he fear?

When he was less by dying? (Rumi)

Both Iqbal and Virginia Woolf believe in the permanence of life behind the world of phenomena. Iqbal, like Rumi looks on death without fear or anguish (so also Virginia Woolf) as it represents for them a continuation of life rather than its annihilation Rumi says:

*Your fear of death is really fear of yourself,*

*see what it is from which you are fleeing.*

(The Beauty of Death)

Interpreting this line Nicholson writes:

"Death, whether physical (idtirari) or mystical (ikhtiar) is like a mirror in which everyone sees the image of himself: if his nature be good and his action righteous, he will be in love with death; otherwise he will loathe it and flee in terror from the reflection of his own wickedness".⁵⁴

Both Clarissa and Septimus are good and righteous therefore in love with death. Hence the Shakespearean tag "Fear no more the heat of the sun" repeated by both of them. Iqbal says:

Though death may lay its hands on thy body
Access it has not on the centre of thy being.

Iqbal, in his poem "In Memory of Late Mother", has presented his faith in the immortality of soul. In this poem he says that in the presence of mother we are just like an innocent child who is free from all cares. We laugh and return to our lost paradise. It is impossible that the pearl called life may scatter after death. Life continues. What has been interpreted as the mortality of life has been interpreted by Iqbal the mortality of death and a link of the process of evolution:

The fire of life is not doomed to become ashes,
This is the pearl not destined to break.

"In Memory of Late Mother"

⁵⁴. Ibid. p.62 (footnotes)
Saiyid Hamid, a modern sage and mystic seer, is very appreciative of Iqbal's vision which is prophetic. He says in one of his articles on Iqbal in which he has compared this poem with Tennyson's "In Memoriam" and Milton's "Lycidas":

"So far as the comprehension of man's dignity and grandeur is concerned Iqbal has no rival in world literature".  

This approach is harmonious and uniform as to pay heed to this poem of Iqbal "(In Memory of Late Mother)" which is very characteristic one (containing the essence of Javid Namah in which is to be discerned the core of his poetry). The author of this thesis would like to say with utter humility that there is a peer (if not rival) of Iqbal concerning the "comprehension of human dignity and grandeur" and that peer is Virginia Woolf. In Mrs. Dalloway Clarissa's deep sympathy and mercy for Septimus -- the insulted, the humiliated, the rejected, the hated one whom the "sane" compelled to commit suicide (because he was "insane"!). She identified herself with that man. This type of self-identification is peerless in the history of world literature. Her personality is integrated in the true sense of the word.

Life and death in the conventional sense do not matter. Life would be attainment of perfect self and death

correspondingly a failure in this regard (death of soul). Clarissa's was a dead self before self-realization. Both Sri Aurobindo and Iqbal presented before man the ideal of self-realisation. They believed in self-affirmation and not in self-negation. Clarissa's coming back to reality is her self-affirmation. She, like Hajweri's "sky-traveller" is reconciled with earth. She anticipates Mrs. Ramsay who "travels the sky" soars upwards" (like Al-Jili's Perfect Man) but comes back to the earth for the benifit of humanity. She inherits the ancient culture "a perfect woman nobly planned", a spirit yet a woman too". She stands for peace, truth and justice. Her emergence from the attic room is a blessing to mankind. She is like a "rose with many petals" and knows the mystery of part and whole" (Iqbal) She does not want to renounce this world which is real. Both Aurobindo and Iqbal have faith in the ascension of self to the realms of higher consciousness, the beyond which is also within. But simultaneously they say that the strength of Higher consciousness should be realised for the spiritual progress of man on earth. They were prophetic. Like Rumi they believe in the development and survival of personality and attainment of moral perfection. Iqbal presents an example of Mohammad who, inspite of his Ascension (Elf) came back to this earth for the upliftment of humanity not to be lost in the world but to absorb it within himself.

They knew this great truth that the word of God is the commandment of Absolute Reality. Their Perfect Man, like
Jili's Perfect Man, loves life, beauty of Nature, knowledge, has grace (jamal جمال) and glory (jalal جلال), is very useful for society. They knew that the 'Book' is Absolute Reality, its essence is 'Rehman-ur-Rahim' (رَحْمَانُ الْرَّحْمَٰنِ) "comprehension," "charity," "absolution" - God's names and attributes. According to Jili everything in its origin is beautiful. Everything has been preserved in 'lauh-e-mahfooz' "sacred tablets".

Virginia Woolf, like Jili and Iqbal, occasionally has mentioned "sacred tablets (لَوحُ مَخفُوف)." Every form is an object of God's grace. Every object that is intensely manifested is named 'jalal' (جلال). For every 'jalal' (majesty) there is jamal (grace جمال), for every 'jamal' there is 'jalal'. The 'terror' and 'ecstasy' created in the heart of Peter Walsh to see Clarissa (at the very end of the novel) represent these attributes of the Perfect Man:

"...تَأَجَّلُوا يَقِيلُ اللَّهُ وَالجَالِلُ مَرْضِعًا لَّهُ عَلَى جَانِبِهِ وَالجَالِلُ مَرْضِعًا لَّهُ عَلَى جَانِبِهِ (نازلان ٢٨-٣٠)"

Thy majesty and beauty are the sign of God-intoxicated
Thou too art majestic and beautiful he too is majestic and beautiful.
- Iqbal ("Cordova Mosque")

The pantheism of these writers and mystics accommodates the individuality of God and individuality of man. The unknown God is known through intuition. Spirit and matter are one for these mystics. Matter has consciousness, residing in material objects. Sri Aurobindo feels..."
'Brahma' (ब्रह्म) is silent manifested in activity. Time, for all of them, is real. Arabi feels that God can never be seen immaterially and the vision of God in woman is the most perfect of all.

The Perfect Man of Jili utilizes all his potentials for the benefit of mankind. Prophet Mohammad's is such a personality to be imitated for the attainment of perfection. Iqbal's observations on Jili are very significant reflecting Jili's influence. They enable us to understand Jili's Perfect Man who emerged with a prophetic grandeur. Jili interprets his own thought accepting the sacred self of the Holy Prophet as a lighthouse. Iqbal as well as Virginia feel, along with Jili, that the Absolute Self, who had given up Her Absoluteness comes back within the Perfect Man without whom this task would have been utterly impossible. The common traits between the Perfect Man of Jili, Iqbal and Virginia Woolf are knowledge (self-knowledge), determination, majesty, grace, beauty of Nature, magnitude etc.

In Mrs. Dalloway, the Absolute comes back within Clarissa who is an epitome of charity and absolution", of Universal Love, peace and justice. She is motherly, protective; she creates, harmonizes and thus enhances life. Virginia Woolf's women, like the leading women of Shakespeare and Aurobindo (Savitri), possess androgynous and harmonious minds harbouring a hidden man in their "girlish hearts" (Rosalind and Portia). Thus sexes do not alienate.
Thus within the human personality the process of instruction can take place within man and woman. In the present age intuitive faculties have been cruelly curbed resulting in despotism, tyranny and spiritually and morally diseased society leaving men mere fragments.

This fragmentation of modern man is the root cause of his tragic sense of isolation and anxiety. He is in search of a soul. Thus intuitive aspects (Higher Reason), "charity, comprehension, absolution"^56 have to act more liberally within the individual and society. Justice, peace and love have to be prevailed for preserving man's soul, for guarding" his self".

Virginia Woolf yearned for the evolution of woman as a harmonious personality. She was a Feminist only in the sense Ibn'l Arabi, Rumi, Al-Jili, Dante, Shakespeare, Iqbal and Aurobindo etc. were feminists; in the sense all the great religions of the world were in their origin. She tried to establish the relationship of the advocated matters with the spiritual life of women and interpreted these laws of mind and spirit which have never been written on paper. The light of universal ideas has brightened her novels which are all poetry, mysticism and prophecy - poetry which is home­coming, mysticism which is going beyond, the beyond which is also within. Clarissa goes beyond which is also within.

After gaining perfection through self-realisation and

Universal Love, she becomes the spirit of Divine Revelation inspired by the Light of Logos.

Dante in *The Divine Comedy* has been all-inclusive absorbing many influences. It has a comprehensive, mythical pattern of death and rebirth, descent and ascent (like the Mairaj legend). The oft repeated words in *Mrs. Dalloway*, "death of the soul". Death, death, death" refer to Clarissa's worldly degenerated self and later on her regenerated self while she is enlightened in true knowledge and become desireless and does not need anything more. This process of death and rebirth of soul reminds us of the great literary classics i.e. *The Oedipus Rex, King Lear, Faust, The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, *The Prelude, Faust*, etc.

Descent: degeneration -- "the world is too much with us" (with Clarissa, the central personality)

Ascent: regeneration -- "charity, comprehension, absolution -- self-realization through Universal Love, deep sympathy with and love of the objects (flowers, air, human beings - i.e. Septimus) on which is "sealed the name of the Absolute Being"

Descent: Coming back of Clarissa to reality, to her "sole self" in a prophetic way as she has to perform great tasks in the world.

Like Iqbal's Perfect Man Clarissa seems to say:
Now wait for me as the task of the world is immense.

With the help of love we can enjoy the dhat (ذات), the Real Person, the Absolute Self. He alone is the true man who can enjoy the epiphany of self. Such a man alone is truly free and creative.

Iqbal says in Javid Namah:

What is Mairaj but a change in consciousness?

(attaining direct contact with Reality in prayer and meditation which the Holy Prophet styled as the Ascension of every Muslim)

Direct contact with Reality is possible through Universal Love. Such a person is truly free and creative and so is Clarissa after attaining true knowledge. In Tattriya Upanisad such a person has been highly eulogised who is enlightened in true knowledge and has become desireless possessing the "one bliss of Brahma (١). With the help of Universal Love Clarissa enjoys the Absolute Self. The great change in her consciousness enables her to transcend her lower self and enjoy real bliss. Hers is a liberated self, "free" traversing "soaring in heavens" and then coming back to the earth. She is a Living Stream.

To The Lighthouse

To The Lighthouse, though apparently a work of art, is a great imaginative and mystical treatise by Virginia Woolf in which her spiritual guidance is suggestive of her own "porous" and "androgynous" mind. The real source of this novel is in far-off periods, both dark and bright - when in the whole universe there was an all pervading spirit - the Absolute Being. Plotinus said:

"We always move round the One....

In this Choral Dance the soul sees the fountain
Of life and the fountain spirit, the source
Of being, the cause of Good, the root of Soul.

Heaven derives its light from the Divine Attributes which illumine the spirit of the Perfect Man. Man, according to Sufis is the origin of the Universe. The Perfect Man is the spirit of Divine Revelation. All the Prophets were inspired by the light of Mohammed (speaking as the Logos and the Logos idea was common between the ancient Egyptian religion as well as the Upanishadic religion). Rumi says:

"The idea which is first, comes last into actuality in particular the idea that is eternal."^58

Light has been considered to be the archetype of knowledge, illumination and self. Virginia Woolf, the

mystic-seer, starts the final section of her novel *The Years* with a description of a scene aglow with light, "An edge of light surrounded everything". (p. 329). Passages comparing the personality to a source of light occur in several other books of Virginia Woolf, for instance in *The Voyage Out* where Terence Hewet describes the self as a flaming wick. The same metaphor is found in the essay on "Modern Fiction":

"Examine for example an ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives myriad impressions. From all sides they come, an incessant shower of innumerable atoms and as they fall they shape themselves into the life of Monday or Tuesday. Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged but a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelop surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end".

The self has been compared to the beam from a lighthouse in *Orlando*. Lighthouse image is related to the idea of androgyny. The image of lighthouse for Virginia Woolf became a symbol of the marriage of the opposites by implications of the androgynous mind.

As stated earlier Al-Jili treats the Perfect Man as the spirit whence all things have their origin. He tells about the psychological constitution of the Perfect man - spirit, heart, intelligence with the corresponding celestial beings

which are said to be created from them. Coleridge also has dealt with the psychological constitution of a man possessing an androgynous mind and directed our attention towards the origins.

The origin, the Higher Consciousness, is that Absolute Being who had been identified with "life itself" - source of peace and completion. It is only by discovering the existence of some inner, unknown force that runs through our lives that humanity solves the mystery of life. Virginia Woolf was referring to mind as luminous as it is rare in which masculine and feminine principles unite in perfect harmony.

The Perfect Man, according to Jili is the spirit whence all things have their origin. Mrs. Ramsay is such a spirit. She creates the family, is an embodiment of a spiritual principle. She, besides creating sons and daughters, creates meaning by giving harmonious form to their lives in common. The pure mother lives in order to bear children whose glimpses are to be seen in *The Waves* by the personality of Susan. Mrs. Ramsay represents the truth by intuition as opposed to the truth of reason. *To The lighthouse* is a contest between the two kinds of truth - Mr. Ramsay's and Mrs. Ramsay's. Mrs. Ramsay knows by intuition which is higher Reason.

Herbert Marder quotes F. L. Overcrash's arguments that "Mrs. Ramsay is the central figure in an elaborate allegory of The Bible in which she takes the parts of Eve, the Virgin
Mary and Christ" (To The Lighthouse - Face to Face, Accent, Winter, 1950, p. 109-112). Mrs. Ramsays, who portrays Julia, Virginia's own mother, (thought by some to 'look like Madonna') is the lighthouse - a symbol of light of civilization. Such personalities are needed for the solution of the dilemma of modern man who is a victim of anxiety. The dinner party symbolizes Mrs. Ramsay's creative powers. The party begins with a group of isolated individuals. She creates a sense of harmony making civilized life possible. She embodies a set of values. Virginia Woolf has suggested that without the harmonising influence of women there would be no civilization. Mrs. Ramsay pitied men always as if they lacked something - women never as if they had something. So Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Brisco are intuitive while Mr. Ramsay stands for intellect. (Both Bergson and Dr. Radharishnan stress on the incapacity of intellect to grasp the whole). Mrs. Ramsay could not follow the ugly academic jargon. Intellect lacks peace and reconciliation and produces restlessness. Devoid of human touch, like modern science, it becomes harmful and hurting showing lack of consideration for other people's feelings. Both Mr. Ramsay and Charles Tansley are unmindful of the feelings of others. James felt extreme happiness when told by his mother that voyage to the lighthouse depended on weather being fine the next morning. But Mr. Ramsay asserted that it would not be fine as the wind was due west. He hurts his wife's feeling, too, by saying 'Damn you' to
her because she doubted his opinion and said that the wind often changed. Mr. Ramsay could not tolerate the supreme intuitive knowledge of his wife. (as Leslie Stephen could not bear Julia). It has been remarked about Virginia Woolf's mother Julia that 'She alone spoke the truth... That was the source of her everlasting attraction.' Hers is the immediate knowledge that comes when one has attained freedom from self. According to Virginia Woolf "intellect, although divine, often acts the cannibal among other activities so that where the mind is biggest, the Heart, the Senses, Magnanimity, Charity and Tolerance, kindliness scarcely have room to breathe. (Orlando, p. 193.)

This transcendence of Time and Space when one is free for the "strangest adventures", is a unique trait of the Perfect Man. Iqbal says:

*Thy thought measures length of Time*

*With the measure of Night and Day;*

*Be a candle to the feast of the religion of the free*

*Knowing not the origin of Time*

*Thou art ignorant of everlasting life*

*Learn the mystery of Time from the words "I have a time with God".*

"Time is a Sword" from Secrets of The Self

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Special purpose behind the transcendence of Time and Space is to awaken consciousness and self-respect. Time regarded as Destiny forms the essence of things. It is Time regarded as Organic whole that the Holy Quran describes. Destiny has been misunderstood in and outside the world of Islam. Iqbal had made Time say these words about itself. Samuel Alexander had revealed this fact that Time is the Absolute Reality - identity of God. This point could not be uttered by Bergson. Iqbal has criticised Bergson in an elated mood. According to him the error of Bergson consisted in regarding Time as prior to Self to which alone pure duration is predictable. Zoroaster, who had equally inspired Iqbal as well as Virginia Woolf, had accepted an ancient origin. It was natural for them to pay heed to him. Consequently their writings became endowed with that bitterness for which Goethe said that a poet must be something of an Atheist. Islamic culture has been categorised with Zoroastrian culture. There were differences of opinion regarding the original God.

Both Virginia Woolf and Iqbal make thought an emotion. Intellect and Reason become love at the heights of their evolution. There are to be found contradictions in Iqbal's concept of Time and Space. "Time is God"\[6\], he says. On the other hand he says "There is no Time and Space except

61.

Life is of Time, and Time is of Life
Do not abuse Time, the Prophet commanded.

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His self-contradictory views remind us of the tradition, (Hadith-e-Qudsi, Ṣunna) of "la tasabbud Dahr, (there is no Time except God"). Both are right at their places. It is a journey from finite to infinite, from limited to limitless, from Time to Eternity, to Transcendental life- life hereafter. Prof. S. P. Singh rightly says that while we try to understand something great we concentrate on smaller things.

Transcendence of Time and Space is essential for complete absorption into the Absolute Reality, for becoming the Vicegerent of God upon earth after attaining Divine virtues. Mrs. Ramsay, possessing Divine attributes is sincerely concerned with society, her own family (especially the youngest one James). She is deeply distressed while a voyage to the lighthouse has been frustrated and her son's spirits dashed. But there is a moment of transcendence. Virginia Woolf presents Time in relation with personality in the following passage:

"..... and it was a relief when they went to bed. For now she need not think about anybody. She could be herself, by herself. And that was what now she often felt the need of, to think; well, not even to think, To be silent; to be alone ... and one shrunk with a sense of solemnity, to be oneself, a wedge-shaped core of darkness, something invisible to others... and this self having shed its

62. There is no time and Space except God.
attachments was free for the strongest adventures. When life sank down for a moment, the range of experience seemed limitless.... our apparitions, the things you know us by, are simply childish. Beneath it is all dark; is all spreading, it is unfathomably deep; but now and again we rise to the surface and that is what you see us by. Her horizon seemed to her limitless. There were all the places she had not seen; the Indian planes; she felt herself pushing aside the thick leather curtain of the church in Rome. This core of darkness could go anywhere for no one saw it. They could not stop it. There was freedom, there was peace, a resting on a platform of stability. 63

This inner voyage of Mrs. Ramsay, while she transcends Time and Space, suggests an essential trait of an integrated and harmonious personality, i.e. love of travelling. The Perfect Man of both Virginia Woolf and Iqbal is a traveller seeking truth for the benefit of others. It is a guest for the moral which is beautiful. In its positive aspect the characteristic principle of mystical morality is Universal Love ('ishq'). Romantic and Sufistic image of a traveller has been presented both by Virginia and Iqbal.

Mrs. Ramsay is a traveller, a seeker after truth having come from Heaven to serve mankind possessing a "heavenly bliss". 64 She is a messenger of peace, justice and love having absorbed morality, ethics, humanism, the spark of

63. Virginia Woolf, To The Lighthouse, p. 72-73.
64. Virginia Woolf, To The Lighthouse, p. 1.
consciousness. Virginia Woolf further presents the individual consciousness of Mrs. Ramsay which is related with collective unconscious:

*Losing personality one lost the fret, the hurry, the stir; and there rose to her lips always some exclamation of triumph over life when things came together in this peace, this rest, this eternity; and pausing there she looked out to meet the stroke of the lighthouse, the long steady stroke, the last of the three which was her stroke... often she found herself sitting and looking with her work in her hand until she become the thing she looked at -- that light for example. And it would lift up on it some little phrase like that -- "Children don't forget, children don't forget"-- which she would repeat and begin adding to it. It will end, she said, it will come, it will come when suddenly she added. "We are in the hands of the Lord".\(^{65}\)

This perfect blending of Mrs. Ramsay in the objects observed, i.e. light (which is symbolic of the Absolute Reality and is identified with the light of Mohammed) is metaphorical and mystical being indicative of Universal Love possessed by her. Deep love for humanity as well as Nature makes her feel that she is the soul of the society and she is one.

*Now the remark "We are in the hands of the Lord" suddenly "tolls" Mrs. Ramsay backs to her "sole self".*

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Whatever we read after this is suggestive of the "atheism" of Virginia Woolf. Mrs. Ramsay was annoyed with herself for saying "O Lord". She did not mean it. Roused from her mystic moment she took over her knitting and "met the third stroke" and it seemed to her like her own eyes meeting her own eyes" (p. 74) searching as she alone could search into her mind and her heart, purifying out of existence that lie, any lie". (p. 74)

One of the essential traits of an integrated personality is complete identification with the objects of observation. While praising anything or anybody we praise ourselves. This self-identification is based on self-knowledge which is utterly different from vanity. Virginia Woolf writes about Mrs. Ramsay:

She praised herself in praising the light without vanity, for she was stern, she was searching, she was beautiful like that light. It was odd, she thought, how if one was alone, one leant to things, inanimate things, trees, streams, flowers, felt they expressed one, felt they became one, in a sense were one... There rose and she looked and looked with her needles suspended, there curled up off the floor of the mind, rose from the lake of one's being a mist, a bride to meet her lover. What brought her to say that "we are in the hands of the Lord"?, she wondered. The insincerity slipping in among the truths roused her, annoyed her. She turned to her knitting again. How could any Lord have made this world? she asked. With her mind she had
seized the fact that there is no reason, order, justice but suffering, death, the poor. There was no treachery too base for the world to commit. She knew that. No happiness lasted she knew that. She knitted with firm composure. 66

Mrs. Ramsay's sternness at the heart of her beauty and remoteness pained her husband. He felt that he could not protect her. The truth was that he made things worse for her due to his irritability. He had lost his temper over the lighthouse. when Mrs. Ramsay was aroused from her vision the children were in the baths - there was only the sound of the sea. Those moments of transcendence filled her with ecstasy. She was aloof in her sadness, in her beauty. Her husband had no courage to protect her and she needed no protection.

According to Thakur "God - intoxicated" people, like Indian saints, after having realized their relationship with the universe and humanity, swing between "contemplation and action". 67

Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Brisco serve others, create unity and harmony and pacify the nerves of the modern intellectual society - the Ramsays and Tansleys of the world. 68

Thakur rightly says that integrated personalities swing between action and contemplation. Action ('amal') is a prominent attribute of the Perfect Man (insan-e-kamil).

66. To The Lighthouse, p. 74.
68. Ibid., p. 180.
of Iqbal, Sheikh Hujweri and so also of Virginia woolf. Hujweri had advised men to be massive in nature like mountains.

Virginia Woolf's stress on marriage and love is suggestive of her Sufi bent of mind reminding us of Hujweri's emphasis on marriage as all marriages are mystical - the union of the opposites. By her mere presence at dinner table Mrs. Ramsay merges them all into a party. After her death there is chaos because the unifying Mrs. Ramsay is not there. She has the power to bring this and that together in order to create harmony, to create something complete and entire. Besides creating unity and harmony Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Brisco, like the saintly people, radiate peace and have a calming influence. Mrs. Ramsay is very dissatisfied with the inadequacy of human relationships.

After her death Mrs. Ramsay becomes symbol of wholeness towards which Mr. Ramsay sails. "There are two Mrs. Ramsays", says Marder, the living woman, who, in spite of the tremendous force of her personality, shares the weaknesses of other mortals, and the perfect symbolic figure towards whom her husband and her friend turn in aspirations as towards a liberating ideal". 69

Mrs. Ramsay is achieving freedom from self, and indulges in the task of renunciation. The lighthouse remains a symbol of wholeness. Mr. Ramsay renounces traits

69. Herbert Marder: Feminism and Art, P. 128.
that he carries to excess. A reconciliation between father and son takes place. Herbert Marder sums up the events leading to this reconciliation. Jame's denouncement of his father suggests Virginia woolf's own denouncement of patriarchy. James wishes to stamp out despotism and tyranny - which cuts off people's right to speak. Cam also remembers her father's "submit to me attitude". James remembers his father's demands of sympathy. His resentment is at the injury being done to his mother by his father. Marder says:

"For in order to solace her husband, Mrs. Ramsay must transform herself into a fountain of sympathy; the effort required is both physically exhausting and spiritually degrading". 70

James feels that "She alone spoke the truth; to her alone could he speak it". That was the source of her everlasting attraction for him. She was the person to trust. But while he thought of her he was scared of his father. James, having a conflict in his mind, stares towards the symbolic lighthouse. At the same time Lily is also trying to find out a resolution of this conflict while painting. The conflict may be resolved only through the mediation of Mrs. Ramsay. The husband becomes reconciled at last with the spirit of his dead wife. The grudges fall. The gift given by James' father to him is freedom to be himself. Mr. Ramsay praises his steering -- the praise

70. Ibid, p. 148.
which he needed badly. The symbolic regeneration of the father brings the novel to a close. In Lily's mind Mr. Ramsay and the lighthouse seem to merge. She also has played her part in his transformation. Herbert Marder writes:

"From close by, as witnessed by Cam and James, the landing is real. But Mr. Ramsay has changed. He is strikingly youthful, stepping before them toward the goal, transformed, so that in his bearing he seems to embody newfound freedom, as if he were rejecting the masculine deity, and casting off his one-sidedness for ever". He rose and stood in the bow of the boat, very straight and tall, for all the world, James thought, as if he were saying, 'There is no God' and Cam thought, as if he were leaping in space, and they 'both rose to follow him as he sprang, lightly like a young man, holding his parcel, on the rock".71

This attaining of the androgynous vision through freedom from self is characteristic of the integrated personality. Virginia woolf has showed us the way, told us the way out for the dilemma of modern man, his one sidedness and barrenness of soul. She, being a mystic poet, yearned for the creation of integrated personalities so that the world could be united.

71. Herbert Marder: *Feminism and Art*, p. 128.
Iqbal says in *Javid Namah*:

> If Poesy aims at creating Perfect Man,
> Poetry is equivalent to Prophecy.

*Javid Namah*

According to the doctrine of Logos and the Perfect Man (developed by Arabi), man is conceived as the first emanation from the Absolute who reflects all the Divine Attributes and who is the archetype of the Universe. The most striking feature of this concept is its identification with the person of Mohammed. The doctrine of the pre-existence of Mohammed arose at an early date (conceived as celestial light, a spark of consciousness), which took abode in Adam and in the whole succession of prophets. "Mystics", says Sidney Spencer "are united with Mohammed". So also, feels the author of this thesis, Virginia as well as Mrs. Ramsay are united with that celestial light, with the spark of consciousness (which has been given the name of "stream of consciousness".

Ecstatic contemplation and intuition, comprehension of bliss and joy may release one from strife, vanity, sterile egotism and the associated restlessness of which Mr. Ramsay was a prey. Peace, ('shanti', शांति ) born of the self-realization and realization of the Absolute, of the Higher Consciousness, imparts a glow, a celestial light, a halo to

the Perfect Man (as Mrs. Ramsay is). N. C. Thakur rightly says:

"The dazzling beauty of the Grecian, blue-eyed, straight-nosed Mrs. Ramsay, whose face the Graces seemed to have composed in 'meadows of asphodel' made the labourer leave his work and gaze at her (p. 50-28). It sent Mr. Bankes into raptures. Lily thought that 'her face was all lit up - without looking up -- she looked radiant'. To her husband she looked astonishingly beautiful... This symbolizes, what Radhakrishnan calls 'Brahmatejas' - the radiance that God - intoxicated have".  

Mrs. Ramsay, being intuitive and possessing a personality whole and entire, deplored strife, divisions, differences:

Strife, differences of opinion, prejudices twisted into the very fibre of being ... Mrs. Ramsay deplored. They were so critical, her children. They talked such nonsense. She went from the dining-room, holding James by the hand, since he would not go by others. It seemed to such nonsense - inventing differences, when people, heaven knows were different enough without that.  

Those differences were the outcome of intellect. One could not imagine Mrs. Ramsay reading or writing as she was extremely intuitive. Her isolation is due to the lack of fine relationship for which she yearned. The beams of the

73. N. C. Thakur: The Symbolism of Virginia Woolf, p. 79.  
74. Virginia Woolf: To The Lighthouse, p. 11.
lighthouse crossing the dark waters at night represent the Universal Love of Mrs. Ramsay which unites all her friends and gives meaning to their lives. Mrs. Ramsay heals the tensions and makes them feel a pleasurable sense of union. She was capable of establishing personal relationships.

Sheikh Ali Hujweri asks the sky-traveller to be reconciled with earth. Mrs. Ramsay travels the skies (transcends Time and Space) but comes back to the earth, to her "sole self" for the benefit of humanity. She has affinity with Wordsworth's skylark, is the "type of the wise who "soar but never roam and are true to the kindred spirit of Heaven and Home". She is the inheritor of the ancient culture -- "perfect woman nobly planned" who comforts and commands, is a "spirit still and bright with something of angelic light. She is the messenger of peace, truth, justice and Universal Love. Hers is a free spirit challenging the forces of Nature. Like the Perfect Man of Iqbal and Al-Jili she is an embodiment of highest virtues. She is like a "rose with many petals". Her appearance is a blessing to mankind. She knows the mysteries of part and whole. She is a very appropriate illustration of Arabi's opinion that God can never be seen immaterially. and that

76. Wordsworth, "To The Skylark", from The Poetical works of Wordsworth, p. 266.
77. Ibid. "She was a Phantom of Delight", ed. Selincourt, p. 214.
78. Dr. Mohammed Iqbal, The Secrets of Self, tr. Nicholson, Lahore, 60, p. 34.

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Vision of Him in woman is the most perfect of all. Like Arabi Virgina Woolf modified the religious code on non-prophetic authority. Iqbal also ultimately agreed with Arabi and Jili concerning the doctrine of Unity of Being (his poems "In Memory of Late Mother" and couplets eulogising Universal Love).

Arabi anticipated Wordsworth on a tribute to the heavenly influence of children:

... for the child was with God a short while ago since he is newly come into this world, where the father is further away and one that is further from God is subject to one that is nearer to Him.79

In *To The Lighthouse* Mrs. Ramsay and James, mother and son (Madonna and the Child) illustrate the words of Arabi. Mrs. Ramsay, who stands for Isis, possesses Universal Love at the utmost. Through this towering and integrated personality Virginia Woolf has given a message for humanity. Mrs. Ramsay lives in union with the Logos and therefore may claim to be an animating principle of the Universe.

For Aurobindo, Iqbal and Virginia Woolf, the unknown God is not really unknowable (as their Pantheism was vast and all-inclusive). He can be known through intuition. Through material objects we approach Higher Consciousness which is manifested through the world forms using the individual as a centre. Mrs. Ramsay is such a centre, one

as well as many, "life itself", source of peace and completion. Like Al-Jili's Perfect Man, she is a spirit whence all things have their origin. Mrs. Ramsay is such a spirit. She embodies a spiritual principle. She creates children and gives harmonious forms to their lives in common. She represents the truth by intuition or Higher Reason which is Universal Love with the help of which ultimate reality is known.

Iqbal says:

Art thou a dew drop? thy destiny is to perish
An ocean? Thy destiny is to endure.